

Like the other volumes of MEGA<sup>2</sup> IV, this one too is going to be of great help for the interested students. So far, owing to the privileging of the finished writings of Marx, among other things, Marx-studies remained largely oriented upon the question of the specificity of Marx's intellectual and practical *break* from the earlier contributions to science and socialism. Now, with the publication of the volumes of MEGA<sup>2</sup> IV, we are getting materials that represent the *continuity* which links him with the earlier thinkers and activists. Thus, grounds are being created, for appreciating both the lines of continuity and the points of departure in Marx. Time for yet another round of multiple course corrections in our understanding of Marx's interventions in political economy and strategic political thought.

Pradip Baksi

*Congrès Marx International. Cent ans de marxisme. Bilan critique et perspectives.* Actes du colloque organisé à l'initiative de la revue *Actuel Marx* (PUF, CNRS) avec la collaboration de l'Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Filosofici aux Universités de Paris I et Paris X, les 27–30 septembre 1995. Publié avec le concours du Centre National du Livre et de l'Université de Paris X (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1996), 318 p. FF 148. ISBN 2-13-047794-1.

This volume assembles twenty papers, plus a brief statement by Wolfgang Fritz Haug on his dictionary of Marxism, all of them from the plenary sessions of an international Marx conference held in Paris in September 1995. The conference was one of a series that has been sponsored by the Paris-based journal *Actuel Marx* in recent years. Several other volumes of papers from the 1995 conference have also been published. Many believe that the larger than anticipated attendance of several thousand indicated a revival of interest in Marxism in France, after nearly two decades of rejection by the French intellectual public. It may also have presaged, at least indirectly, two other turns of the left in recent French history: the 1995–96 strike wave and the election of the current Socialist-Communist-Green government in 1997.

While no editor is listed for the volume, one presumes it was put together by Jacques Bidet, author of the preface. Many of the papers go beyond the sloganeering one often finds at plenary sessions at large conferences, raising some important questions about Marx and Marxism, not only in relation to their actuality for contemporary society and politics, but also as theory and as history. Although the majority of the twenty-one authors are French, the volume contains seven papers by scholars from other countries, including Italy, the U.S., Britain, Spain, Benegal, and Russia, and, if one includes Haug's piece, Germany.

One of the most serious contributions is the essay by *Actuel Marx* editor Jacques Texier on "Revolution and Democracy in the Political Thought of Marx and Engels" that begins the volume. Texier wishes to steer a path between "the point of view of F. Feher on Marxism as an intrinsically undemocratic way of thinking" and "the idyllic thesis (Avinieri, for example) that makes Marx quite simply a democratic thinker" (p. 20). Texier examines Blanquism, Jacobinism, and the concept of permanent revolution in Marx's thought, referring particularly to the year 1850. Overall, he carries out a finely

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<sup>1</sup> MEGA<sup>2</sup>, Vol. I/10, p. 281;

<sup>2</sup> MEGA<sup>2</sup>, Vol. I/10, p. 285;

<sup>3</sup> *Rubel on Karl Marx: five e* London, 1981), p. 241.

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*Une critique et perspective d'Actuel Marx* (PUF, Studi Filosofici aux Universités de Paris). Publié avec le concours de la Commission de la Recherche Scientifique (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1983-047794-1).

Wolfgang Fritz Haug on the occasion of an international Marx conference was one of a series that has been published in recent years. Several other conferences have been published. Many believe that the current revival of interest in Marx is being led by the French intellectual and political turns of the left in recent years, and the current Socialist-Communist

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Marx editor Jacques Texier on "Marx and Engels" that begins with a point of view of F. Feher on "Marx as an idyllic thesis of a democratic thinker" (p. 20). In his view of permanent revolution in the world, he carries out a finely

textured analysis. However, at one point, he characterizes Marx's radicalism in 1850, when he called for "Revolution in Permanenz", as virtually Blanquist. Texier also writes that "for a very long time, the positions of Marx and Blanqui virtually coincided" (p. 34). Some will question this, given the public criticism of conspiratorial revolutionary groups that Marx and Engels co-authored in April 1850, during the very period that Marx's Blanquism was supposedly at its height. In their April 1850 review of two books on conspiratorial organizations, Marx and Engels express sympathy for these French revolutionary groups, but also sharp criticism, not only of bourgeois but also of proletarian conspiratorial organizations. They especially single out the professional conspirator as an historic figure, mentioning Blanqui by name and then concluding: "These conspiracies never of course embraced the broad mass of the Paris proletariat..."<sup>1</sup> Marx and Engels write further that the events of 1848 showed, with respect to the conspiratorial groups, "that in the modern revolution this section of the proletariat is also insufficient and that only the proletariat as a whole can carry the revolution through."<sup>2</sup>

Whatever the merits of Marx's 1850 position on "revolution in permanence" were, and I personally believe there are many, his position should not be characterized so easily as either Blanquist or a momentary aberration. It is true that Marx adopted a more cautious stance in the conservative 1850s and the moderately progressive 1860s, but he arguably returned to the radicalism of 1850 during the Paris Commune. However, at no point does Marx show any affinity with the ultra-vanguardism of Blanqui, even when he solidarized with the latter as a political prisoner and a great proletarian revolutionary. Maximilien Rubel once characterized Marx's attitude toward elitist forms of revolutionary organization as follows: "In his battle against the charismatic anti-liberal party politics of Lassalle and his heirs, on the one hand, and against the romantic-histrionic conspiratorial activity of Bakunin and the Western European and Russian versions of that activity on the other, Marx fought two tendencies within the labor movement that were diametrically opposed to the creative principle of proletarian self-emancipation."<sup>3</sup> Had he been looking for a strong Blanquist dimension not in Marx but in Marxism, especially in France, Texier might have come closer to the mark, given the history of ultra-vanguardism in the French Communist Party as well as many of the Trotskyist and Maoist groups. However, to do so would have meant making far more of a distinction than Texier does between Marx's thought and what others subsequently made of it.

In his brief chapter on "The Challenge of Globalization", the Dakar-based economist Samir Amin, often considered an uncritical Third Worldist, shows what appears to be an evolution in his thinking. He urges opposition not only to global capitalism, but also to neo-fascist tendencies within many Third World countries today, giving the following injunction: "Put otherwise, exit from from 'global colonialism' and liberal mythology, and refuse any falling backward into neo-fascist illusions. These are the great principles from which one can develop useful reflections on the construction of a counter-project that is humanist, universalist, and careful to respect the diversity (but not the inequality) of democracy" (p. 89).

<sup>1</sup> MEGA<sup>2</sup>, Vol. I/10, p. 281; see also MECW, Vol. 10, p. 316.

<sup>2</sup> MEGA<sup>2</sup>, Vol. I/10, p. 285; see also MECW, Vol. 10, p. 321.

<sup>3</sup> *Rubel on Karl Marx: five essays*, ed. by Joseph O'Malley and Keith Algozin (New York and London, 1981), p. 241.

In one of three contributions on Marxism and the former Soviet bloc, Balkans historian Catherine Samary contests analytical Marxism's reading of Marx as a determinist and essentially unilinear thinker. Referring to Marx's 1881 letter to Vera Zasulich and to the writings of Lenin and Trotsky on the possibility of Russia skipping the stage of capitalism, she argues that Marxism has been more successful than is generally supposed in comprehending the multilinearities of global social development. However, Samary also critiques both Lenin and Trotsky for having established the single party state, and for having banned even political factions within that single party, thus paving the way for Stalin. Marxism, she concludes, needs to be developed not as the "suppression of 'bourgeois democracy' and its 'formal' rights," but, following Marx himself, as the extension of that type of democracy, "which is why direct democracy is essential for the emancipatory socialist project" (p. 118).

One of the more interesting sections of the volume, entitled "Capitalism, Nature, Culture," groups together papers on feminism and ecology. Here Michael Löwy's chapter, "The Marxist Dialectic of Progress and the Present Situation of the Social Movement," raises some particularly serious issues. Löwy delineates two essentially different dialectics of progress in Marx's writings. The first and better-known one "is a dialectic that is Hegelian, teleological, and closed, tendentially Eurocentric" (p. 197). Here Löwy refers to Marx's 1853 writings on India and his notion there of progress, albeit not without contradictions, through capitalist development. Forms of this notion "served as the basis for the so-called 'orthodox Marxism' of the Second International" and later, for "Stalinist productivism." However, Löwy also discerns in Marx "another 'dialectic of progress' that is critical, non-teleological, and fundamentally open" (p. 199). In this regard, he mentions not only the critiques of capitalist modernization in *Capital*, but also to "the interest by Marx and Engels in the work of Maurer or Morgan on the forms of 'primitive' communalism, from the Iroquois tribes to the German 'Mark'" (p. 200). Here, as with the letters to Mikhailovsky and Zasulich, he concludes, "we are miles away [aux antipodes] from the evolutionist and determinist reasoning in the articles on India in 1853" (p. 200). Löwy also brings Luxemburg and Trotsky into his sketch of a more critical dialectic, ending his essay with a discussion of ecological movements in his native Brazil as well as other Third World countries.

One could raise several questions about Löwy's schema, however. First, while it is true that parts of Hegel's writings, especially the *Philosophy of History*, exhibit the type of teleological progressivism that Löwy critiques, other elements of Hegel's work arguably point in a more multilinear direction, one that includes for example retrogression as well as progress. Second, it is possible that Marx was just as Hegelian in the second period as the first. Third, Löwy truncates Marx's 1850s writings when he builds his analysis solely around the 1853 writings on India. Here he leaves aside not only the writings on China in that year and those on China and India in 1856-59, but also and more importantly, the more multilinear model of historical development that Marx puts forward in the "Grundrisse". Also, one could note with regard to my second point above that Marx wrote the latter during the very period when he also read and even made an outline of Hegel's *Logic*, something he told Engels was of assistance in conceptualizing his economic categories. Despite these objections, however, Löwy's contribution is perhaps the most original in this volume. It demonstrates that it is possible to use a serious reading of Marx's own texts as the ground, albeit not the substitute, for the analysis of contemporary social issues.

The two contributions offer different attitudes toward Marxism, and the Present contributes a vehemently different attitude toward Marxism, and the Present that "Marx in effect wrote a division between the sexes, a naturalist, in other words, that roots gender and sex to turn Marx against what he considers to be a version of a chapter ironically entitled "masculine phantasm" of "nor Fraisse actually engaged have been much harder for his writings on women." How of a larger phenomenon, that at the very time when a wide range of economists, are being drawn

In an essay near the end of the volume, the philosopher Lucien Sève also offers a critique of the latter. He is one of the leading theorists of the critique of six decades of Proudhon's reading" of *Capital* on the basis of Marx's positive vision of a mode of ownership (and he remained blind to relations of increase in productivity, inherent in that..." (p. 278). he prefers to call socialism) committed to raising the standards of daily life, especially in the these systems of thought and he suggests, it is important to conclude: "Looking at it in the 21st century is socialism" (p. 284). *Capital* and the "Grundrisse" although he mentions alienation by Marx in 1844. Nor does he see only a society of productivity including working people, and the 19th century's cruelest dictatorship

<sup>4</sup> For contrary interpretations, and a departure for today, see Raya I. Prigogine, *Philosophy of Revolution*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (pp. xi-xx).

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The two contributions on Marx and feminism in the same section exhibit a very different attitude toward Marx's writings from those in the rest of the volume. These two contributions vehemently reject Marx's writings on women. In a chapter on "Feminism, Marxism, and the Present Situation of the Struggle in France," Christine Delphy writes that "Marx in effect wrote little on women, as against Engels. Marx, with regard to the division between the sexes – and this is the main criticism against him – was resolutely naturalist, in other words, non-Marxist" (p. 136). Delphy develops a materialist feminism that roots gender and sexuality in social rather than natural processes, here attempting to turn Marx against what she considers to be his own position, but still using what she considers to be a version of his overall materialist methodology. Geneviève Fraisse, in a chapter ironically entitled "Labor Is Freedom," argues that Marx was a prisoner of the "masculine phantasm" of "the great fear of the end of the family" (p. 158). Neither Delphy nor Fraisse actually engage Marx's writings very directly. Had they done so, it would have been much harder for them to support their dismissive generalizations about Marx's writings on women.<sup>4</sup> However, Delphy's and Fraisse's contributions are representative of a larger phenomenon, the continued rejection of Marx even by many leftwing feminists, at the very time when a wide variety of intellectuals, from poststructuralists to mainstream economists, are being drawn to his work anew.

In an essay near the end of the volume entitled "The Question of Communism," philosopher Lucien Sève also raises some interesting issues, especially given the fact that he is one of the leading theoreticians of the French Communist Party. In an implicit critique of six decades of Party orthodoxy, Sève attacks the way in which a "reductionist reading" of *Capital* on the issue of private versus state property has seemed to obscure Marx's positive vision of a post-capitalist society: "Holding as decisive the question of the mode of ownership (and not even that of real possession) of the means of production, it remained blind to relationships and logics that were more fundamental, such as the type of increase in productivity, with the sacrifice of both human beings and nature that is inherent in that..." (p. 278). Here Sève is critiquing not only Russian communism (which he prefers to call socialism) as well as Western social democracy, each of them in his view committed to raising the standard of living, but neither of them interested in transforming daily life, especially in the workplace, in an emancipatory direction. He terms both of these systems of thought and practice socialism rather than communism. For this reason, he suggests, it is important today to raise once again Marx's vision of communism. He concludes: "Looking at it in conceptual terms, what has died at the end of the twentieth century is socialism" (p. 284). Sève develops some of these points through texts from both *Capital* and the "Grundrisse"; however, he never refers to the young Marx. In addition, although he mentions alienation once in passing, he avoids the term humanism as used by Marx in 1844. Nor does he refer explicitly to the fact that the Soviet Union was not only a society of productivism and alienation, but also one where millions of people, including working people, were slaughtered, starved, or worked to death by one of the century's cruelest dictatorships.

<sup>4</sup> For contrary interpretations, ones that view some of Marx's writings on women as a point of departure for today, see Raya Dunayevskaya, *Rosa Luxemburg. Women's liberation. and Marx's philosophy of revolution*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Urbana, 1991) and the Foreword to this edition by Adrienne Rich (pp. xi–xx).

As a whole, this volume develops some important issues and shows an effort by a number of Marxists to come to grips with the new situation since 1989. There quite a few discussions of Marx and democracy as well as frequent efforts to look anew at Marx's thought in order to see beyond the ways in which it has been applied in this century. There are two curious silences, however, when one steps back and looks at the book as a whole. First, some of the essays take issue implicitly with post-structuralism's critiques of Marxism, whether on the so-called grand narrative or what post-structuralists term the "privileging" of class or the economy by Marxists. However, there is far less open engagement with or even mention of what much of the rest of the world regards as the dominant trend in contemporary French social thought. In fact, there is far less discussion here of this type of "French thought" than there has been at most comparable conferences in the 1990s in the U.S., for example. A second curious feature of the volume is the lack of any serious engagement with Hegel, even as many are trying to develop Marxism anew. Except for Löwy's rather dismissive discussion, mentioned above, and a passing reference to Hegel's concept of negativity by a U.S. contributor, Fredric Jameson, Hegel is notable in this volume for the presence of his absence. In this sense, structuralism and post-structuralism, which since the 1960s have helped to undermine so many Hegelian and humanist approaches not only to Marx, but also to social thought more generally, may have been more of a presence at this conference than would be apparent at first glance.

Kevin Anderson

Olufemi Taiwo, *Legal Naturalism. A Marxist Theory of Law* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1996), X, 215 p. £ 23.95. ISBN 0-8014-2851-3.

Gegen den Strom zu schwimmen, ist schwer genug. Gegen den Strom zu denken, ungleich schwerer. Es sei denn, man nimmt den Zeitgeist nicht erst wahr. Mit solch einer gewissenmaßen natürlichen Immunität scheint Taiwo, Assistant Professor at Loyola University of Chicago, wohl nigerianischer Herkunft, gesegnet zu sein. Unbekümmert um das Jubilieren allenthalben über den Zusammenbruch der sozialistischen Gesellschaftssysteme Europas 1989 wie um die gängige Meinung, daß die eigentliche Ursache dafür die Geburtsfehler in Marxens Gedankensystem seien,<sup>1</sup> bekennt Taiwo, daß sein Ziel darin bestünde, "to construct a substantive Marxist theory of natural law", und seine Hoffnung, "that such a theory of law will advance our knowledge of the nature, evolution, and end of law" (S. 34).

Anders als Paschukanis, der eine marxgemäße Rechtstheorie vor allem an der Warenform von Arbeitsprodukten festmachte,<sup>2</sup> anders als diejenigen, die marxistisches

<sup>1</sup> Vgl. H. Klenner, "Was bleibt von der marxistischen Rechtsphilosophie?", *Archiv für Rechts- und Sozialphilosophie*, Beiheft Nr. 50 (Stuttgart, 1992), S. 11ff.

<sup>2</sup> Siehe E.B. Paschukanis, *Allgemeine Rechtslehre und Marxismus* (Freiburg und Berlin, 1991), S. 106ff. Das in Russisch geschriebene Werk wurde erstmals 1924 in Moskau publiziert; Taiwo hat die englische Ausgabe (London, 1980) benutzt.

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<sup>3</sup> Siehe: Christoph Schefol  
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<sup>4</sup> Siehe Heinz Monz, *Gerec  
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<sup>5</sup> Siehe: Imre Szabó, *Kar  
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