

Editorial Note

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Why Crisis and Critique?

The publication of the first issue of *Crisis and Critique* undoubtedly imposes the question on us: 'why yet another journal in philosophy?' Furthermore, why a *Marxist* journal of philosophy? This question is in itself complicated, given the 'crisis of Marxism' – not only a crisis which has lost reference to Marx, but one that is inscribed in Marxism itself.

The Left today, in all its orientations and traditions, is caught into a theoretical and political cul de sac: apart from the repetition of old formulas and citations of various authors, as well as in the (re)invention and elevation of trivial figures into the guiding names of our struggle, the Left cannot provide a new vision for humanity. The Left is disoriented, the burden of the failure of the Communist experiments of the previous century and its (mostly) catastrophic outcomes weigh too heavily on our shoulders. In addition, the rise of right-wing forces and religious 'fundamentalism' is equally worrisome. The right wing or populist political parties, across Europe and elsewhere, are ruthlessly appropriating the discourse which traditionally belongs to the left and distorting it according to their own political agenda. The working class is, in this distorted perspective, divided into working people of particular countries, always potentially threatened by immigrants, low wages in neighbouring countries, global market competition, etc., instead of being a united class of people exploited by global capital, i.e. holding the "proletarian position". The same goes for the religious 'fundamentalists' with their insistence on theocracy, who propose a return to the invented tradition, or even worse: the theological-religious struggle, instead of accentuating the emancipatory potential of religions, is becoming a struggle for dress and dietary codes. Against this, we should recall Mao Zedong's dictum: "Marxism comprises many principles, but in the final analysis they can all be brought back to a single sentence: it is right to rebel against the reactionaries."

So, why '*Crisis and Critique*', a name which is taken up from the projected journal of Bertolt Brecht and Walter Benjamin that never came into existence? In very different times and ideological-political conjunctures, but yet in a similar spirit, this journal, published by the Dialectical Materialism Collective, seeks to establish a philosophical platform for interaction, debate and exchange between different orientations of critical Marxist scholars.

Back in his time, Marx called for 'a ruthless criticism of everything existing' and our task is to turn our critical powers towards the existing Marxism itself. The task of a Marxist philosopher or theoretician is to critically re-think the hitherto existing Marxist theoretical traditions, as well as the practices of the politics of emancipation. Therefore, we will not prioritise or espouse any particular tradition or orientation within Marxism. In this sense, Dialectical Materialism is a Marxist Forum.

We live in the time of crisis, even a double crisis: a crisis of the Left or Marxism, and a crisis of the capitalist mode of production itself. That is to say, on top of our list of current uncertainties - ideological, political and economic, we should add 'theoretical'. We do not have a theory of the present. In this regard, the aim of this journal is to critically examine and comprehend not only the existing conjunctures, but also the possibilities of reinventing the idea of radical emancipation, under the name of Communism.