

# Intellectuals and the Liberated Marx: Žižek and Karatani

Nadir Lahiji

Abstract: For more than three decades the *ghost* of the ‘*liberated Marx*’ has been haunting the intellectuals of the world. At a certain point, Marx was *liberated* from Marxism. In this essay I argue that on the contemporary intellectual scene, Slavoj Žižek and Kōjin Karatani, whom I endeavor to pair, are the two prominent thinkers who more than anybody else paved the way for an understanding of this *liberated Marx*. In this sense, they themselves are the exemplars of ‘*the liberated intellectuals*’. By the term ‘intellectual’ I mean a specific thing against its conventional understanding. I go to Kant for an exposition of the term that will be elaborated in this essay. Žižek and Karatani are the *genuine* readers of Marx. Each, in his singular way, has released Marx from the misorientation of the century-old *Marxism*. Moreover, what is important in their readings is that Marx is recognized as a *philosopher*. This is important. Marx must be properly returned to the philosophical lineage of German Idealism to which he belongs. For this essay I have an exclusive objective. I confine myself to discussing ‘*the Unconscious*’ as the ‘Returned of the Repressed’ of ‘Communism’ in Marx, as elucidated by both of our prodigious thinkers.

Keywords: Communism, Unconscious, Intellectual, Marxism, Derrida, Marx, Engels, Kant

## I

Men of intellectual ability and breadth of mind! I venerate your talents and cherish your human feelings. But have you also fully considered what you are doing, and what your attacks on reason are likely to lead to? You doubtless wish that *freedom of thought* should remain inviolate; for without it, even the free flights of your genius would soon come to an end.

—Kant, ‘What is Orientation in Thinking?’<sup>1</sup>

Jacques Derrida in his *Specters of Marx* wrote: ‘The responsibility, once again, would here be that of an heir. Whether they wish it or know it or not, all men and women, all over the earth, are today to a certain extent the heirs of Marx and Marxism’<sup>2</sup>. Except that Derrida forgot to mention that, among these ‘men and women, all over the earth’, the *genuine* heirs of Marx are *freed* from Marxism—freed from the *canonized* Marx. Marx is not continuous with Marxism. Marx has been *recovered* from Marxism. The latter had for long obfuscated the former.

Translating ‘spirits’ into ‘ghosts’, Derrida said that Marx was accompanied by many ‘ghosts’ in his life. Here we should note that Hegel’s *Geist* is etymologically related to ‘ghost’.<sup>3</sup> In this regard, we can say that the ghost of a *certain* Marx, that is, the *liberated* Marx, has been

haunting the intellectuals of the world. The intellectuals who are haunted by this specter are themselves the *liberated* intellectuals—liberated from a century long *Marxism*. Unliberated Marxists and, for that matter, *servile* non-Marxist intellectuals, are in a ‘holly alliance’ to conjure away specters of the liberated Marx.

Exactly at what moment did the *liberated* Marx arrive on the scene? In his introduction to the Penguin ‘deluxe edition’ of *The Communist Manifesto*, published in 2011, Marshall Berman wrote the following:

After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, this system came apart very fast. All over Eastern Europe, Marx statues were torn down. Pictures of people doing this were page one material for a while. Readers who love Marx can only be thrilled at his loss of sanctity. His canonization after 1917 was a disaster. A thinker needs beatification like a hole in the head!<sup>4</sup>

What actually did happen in 1989? If we follow Berman, the answer is that after the crash of 1989, as Boris Buden has put it, ‘even Karl Marx went through a double liberation: *a life freed from Marx has recovered Marx freed for the intellectuals of the world*’<sup>5</sup> [emphasis mine]. As David Leopard in his *The Young Marx* has noted, the actual Soviet communism undoubtedly distorted our knowledge of Marx’s work. Leopard properly surmises that ‘its subsequent collapse might provide an unexpected opportunity, not to bury Marx, but better to understand him’.<sup>6</sup> We are, ever since, in this period of understanding Marx ‘better’.

On the contemporary intellectual scene, Slavoj Žižek and Kōjin Karatani are the two distinct thinkers among ‘the intellectuals of the world’ who have understood Marx ‘better’. They are *liberated* intellectuals, each in his own unique way, as I will examine later. Each must be identified as a *genuine* reader of Marx releasing him from Marxism. In their respective readings, a place is secured for Marx as *philosopher*, returning him to the proper lineage to which he belongs: German Idealism. I will submit the terms ‘intellectual’ and ‘Marxism’ to a close examination in my attempt to bring out the two interrelated elements in Žižek’s and Karatani’s singular readings of Marx, namely, the notions of ‘*the Unconscious*’ and ‘Communism’.

I begin by first posing this question: What kind of *intellectual* was Marx himself? In a letter to the novelist Berthold Auerbach, dated September 2, 1841, Moses Hess described the young Marx who had just earned his doctoral degree:

the greatest, perhaps, the only real philosopher living today ... Dr. Marx ... is still a very young man and going to give the death blow to medieval religion and politics. He combines the sharpest wit with the most profound philosophical gravity; imagine Rousseau, Voltaire,

Holbach, Lessing, Heine and Hegel united in one person—and I mean united, not thrown together—there you have Dr Marx.<sup>7</sup>

This ‘Dr Marx’, we should note, is the intellectual who later in his lifetime liberated himself twice, first from ‘German philosophy’ and second from the intellectual circle of young Hegelians. Therefore the year 1989 should really be marked as the *third* stage in Marx’s liberation, a *posthumous* liberation. In relation to the young Marx’s characterization by Hess in 1841, we come to the year 1848 when *The Communist Manifesto* was drafted. Berman writes that ‘one group whose identities as workers was crucial for Marx was his own class: intellectuals’.<sup>8</sup> He quotes from *The Manifesto*: ‘The Bourgeoisie has stripped of his halo every occupation hitherto honored and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage-labourers’. Berman goes on to say that ‘This does not mean that these activities lose meaning or value. If anything, they become more urgently meaningful. But the only way people can get the freedom to do what they can do is by working for capital. Marx himself had to live this way.’<sup>9</sup>

As is well-known, at one point in time, Marx separated himself from Marxism. In a letter that Friedrich Engels wrote to Eduard Bernstein in 1882 he famously quoted Marx writing to his son-in-law, Paul Lafargue in French: ‘*Ce qu’il y a de certain c’est que moi, je ne suis pas Marxiste.*’ [‘If anything is certain, it is that I myself am not a Marxist.’]<sup>10</sup> Žižek in his short *The Relevance of the Communist Manifesto*, published in 2019, cites this statement to say that in Soviet translation it was rendered as: ‘If this is Marxism then I am not a Marxist’.<sup>11</sup> Žižek perspicuously takes this mistranslation as an indication that in Soviet Marxism ‘even Marx was a Marxist and participated in the same universal knowledge that composes Marxism; the fact that he created the teaching later known by this label made no difference. So his denial above does not refer just to a specific, wrong version that falsely proclaimed itself to be “Marxism”’.<sup>12</sup> Žižek goes on to say that Marx meant something ‘more radical’ in the fact that ‘a gap separates him, the creator who has a substantive relationship with his teaching, from the “Marxists” who follow his teaching’.<sup>13</sup> Žižek concludes with a typically witty citation of a joke by the Marx Brothers. It goes like this: ‘You Look like Emmanuel Ravelli.—But I am Emmanuel Ravelli.—So no wonder you look like him.’ In Žižek’s paraphrasing: ‘The guy who is Ravelli does not look like Ravelli, he simply is Ravelli. In the same way, Marx himself is not a Marxist—one among others; he is the point of reference exempted from the series, because it is by reference to him that others are Marxists. And the only way to remain faithful to Marx today is to stop being a Marxist and to repeat instead Marx’s grounding gesture in a new way’.<sup>14</sup>

Our two prodigious thinkers, Žižek and Karatani, are an intellectual pair who have carried this Marx’s ‘grounding gesture in a new way’; I will return to this when I take up the problem of ‘Marxism’ in more detail later.

Here we first need to examine who exactly we call an ‘intellectual’. For its definition I can only go to Immanuel Kant. But first some preliminary remarks are in order. Yesteryear may be remembered as the time of an ‘intellectual laziness’ named ‘Marxism’. That intellectual laziness failed to bring out and distinguish the two elements in Marx, namely, the literary ‘metaphorical’ *style*, in contrast to his scientific theory, which results in confusion of the two and therefore an injustice to his real theoretical-scientific work. This is what Ludovico Silva in his groundbreaking *Literary Style of Marx* has told us.<sup>15</sup> The outcome of this intellectual laziness is the missing of ‘Marx, the intellectual’, Silva says. Nowadays we are fortunate in having been able to overcome that intellectual laziness. Žižek and Karatani, in my view, stand out today as two thinkers and *intellectuals* who have begun to read Marx independent of *Marxism*. Here I use ‘Marxism’ in a pejorative sense as a term for ‘anti-intellectual’ in specific sense of the term. I should also point out that the very term ‘Marxism’, as we are told by Karatani, was coined immediately after Marx’s death by none other than his intellectual friend Friedrich Engels. I will come back to this point after examining the meaning of term ‘intellectual’.

## II

Who is an ‘intellectual’? Or, more properly, who is a *liberated* intellectual? Let me put it first in this way: This privileged figure named ‘the intellectual’ is the one who is *affected by the liberated Marx who in turn was affected by Kant through Hegel*. This intellectual is *philosophically grounded in political theory* in Kantian terms. Kant had possessed a set of distinct political theory that has only recently been brought to our attention.<sup>16</sup> The figure of the intellectual is first and foremost that of an *enlightened man*. Karatani and Žižek have both drawn our attention to the distinction between the notion of *private use* of reason as opposed to *public use* of reason, against our own received understanding of public and private, a distinction that Kant himself had brought out in his essay ‘An Answer to the Question: “What is Enlightenment?”’. Kant’s essay was written in September of 1784 and was published in December of the same year. It is proper to read Kant’s ‘answer’ in conjunction with other short essays he wrote after the publication of the first edition of *Critique of Pure Reason* in 1781, namely, ‘Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose’ (November 1784), ‘What is Orientation in Thinking’ (1786), ‘Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch’ (1795), and ‘The Metaphysical Elements of Right’ (1797). These essays finally culminated in the last book Kant wrote that was entitled *The Conflict of the Faculties*, published in 1798.

Kant famously begins by saying that ‘*Enlightenment is man’s emergence from his self-imposed immaturity*’, telling us that ‘*Immaturity* is the inability to use one’s own understanding without guidance of another’.<sup>17</sup> He wrote: ‘It is so convenient to be immature!’<sup>18</sup> And further,

'If it is now asked whether we at present live in an *enlightened* age, the answer is: No, but we do live in an age of *enlightenment*'.<sup>19</sup> Elsewhere he wrote: '*To think for oneself* means to look within oneself (i.e., in one's own reason) for the supreme touchstone of truth; and the maxim of thinking for oneself at all times is enlightenment'.<sup>20</sup> For enlightenment, Kant said, all that is needed is *freedom*: 'And the freedom in question is the most innocuous form of all—freedom to make public use of one's reason in all matters'. Everywhere, he continues, we hear: 'Don't argue!'. The tax officer says do not argue and pay your taxes. The clergyman says do not argue and believe! Kant here mentions the King of Prussia, Frederick II (the Great), as the 'only ruler in the world' who said: '*Argue* as much as you like and about whatever you like, *but obey!*'.<sup>21</sup> If this means 'restriction on freedom everywhere', then what kind of restriction would prevent enlightenment? Kant's answer to his own question goes as follows: 'The *public* use of man's reason must always be free, and it alone can bring about enlightenment among men; *the private* use of reason may quite often be very narrowly restricted, however, without undue hinderance to the progress of enlightenment'.<sup>22</sup> The same tax officer and the same clergymen cannot act in freedom because they are under the command from outside. But, 'Conversely, as a scholar addressing the real public (i.e., the world at large) through his writings, the clergyman making *public* use of his reason enjoys unlimited freedom to use his own reason and to speak in his own person. For to maintain that the guardians of the people in spiritual matters should themselves be immature, is an absurdity which amounts to making absurdities permanent'.<sup>23</sup> This is the crux of the matter. The *intellectual* lives in the age of the *enlightenment*, which is not yet an *enlightened* age. The intellectual work is incomplete and its task is interminable. Moreover, in a larger context of Kant's political theory as related to moral law, nature and freedom, an intellectual is the one who makes 'A philosophical attempt to work out a universal history of the world in accordance with a plan of nature aimed at a perfect civil union of mankind', which 'must be regarded as possible and even as capable of furthering the purpose of nature itself'.<sup>24</sup>

If we choose Kant's definition we must then conclude that the much recycled term 'public intellectual' is essentially a contradiction in term.

In the annals of history, Socrates must be seen as the *first* intellectual. He was exemplary, and still to be emulated today, precisely based on the tenets of the Kantian notion of 'cosmopolitan', and his political theory. In his ground-breaking *Isonomia and the Origins of Philosophy*, Karatani reflects on 'The Riddle of Socrates', bringing up Kant and Marx to shed light on the aforementioned distinction between *private* and *public* reason in the case of the *historical* Socrates. Karatani begins by saying that the riddle of Socrates lies in the instances of his 'fighting for truth and justice, not from a public but from a private [position]. This was a contradiction, because to be in the private sphere was to be apolitical.

Socrates lived this paradox, and it rendered both his life and his death enigmatic'.<sup>25</sup> The *historical* Socrates is not the fictional *character* Plato tried to portray him as in his *Dialogues*, according to Karatani. 'What Socrates brought about', Karatani writes, 'was an inversion of the value associated with public and private capacity. This was first of all to place the private in a position of superiority to the public, hence [making it] political'.<sup>26</sup> Contrary to Plato, who tried to attribute his own idealism and his notion of philosopher-king to Socrates, we must not forget that, as Karatani notes, Socrates refused to become a public figure. Nevertheless, 'he neither would rest content merely with the private. He did remain a private figure within the polis; however, never did he neglect to continue to truly fight for the right. Plato sought the true form of polity rooted in this Socrates'.<sup>27</sup> But, nevertheless, Karatani writes, Socrates's position is nowhere close to that of Diogenes or Plato. Rather, Socrates's position is this: 'act publicly while remaining in your private station, which is to say, while remaining within the polis, be cosmopolitan. From this perspective, Socrates seems more political than the Cynics, while being cosmopolitan in comparison to Plato'.<sup>28</sup> It is at this point that Karatani makes his point clear by referring to Kant's 'What is Enlightenment?'. Karatani reiterates Kant's notion of *public* and *private* in succinct terms yet adds an illuminating point to its original meaning: 'For Kant, to act in accord with the position of the state is the private, while the universal standpoint (of the citizen of the world) is the public. To truly be public, one must take up a private station that transcends the state. Of course, such a cosmopolis transcending the state as such does not exist. What Kant is saying is that while existing as an individual within the state, one should make judgments and act as a citizen of the world. That is to say, Kant's inversion of value between public and private is neither Plato's nor Diogenes's, but rather Socrates's position.'<sup>29</sup> To make his point even clearer, Karatani masterfully brings up Marx's *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*. Reminding us that Hegel had placed state above civil society, Karatani states that here civil society is conceived as 'system of desire, while the state transcends this at the rational level', which means that 'in civil society people function in a private capacity, while in the state they become public citizens; That is to say, they assume their true form. Marx inverted the position. If people exhibit their real form in private capacity, there is no need to assume a public sphere. To put it in Marx's terms, if people exhibit their "species-being" in civil society, there is no longer any need for the political state above that. That is to say, if one can dissolve the class antagonisms within civil society, the state as a political entity will be superseded.'<sup>30</sup> We will come back to Socrates later when discussing the *unconscious* agency in Marx brought out by Žižek and Karatani both.

Žižek takes up Kant's inversion of *public* and *private*, offering his own interpretation in the context of his discussion on Communism.

In the second part of his *First as Tragedy, Then as Farce*, entitled the 'The Communist Hypothesis', in the Section '*Public Use of Reason*', Žižek first puts forward an 'elementary definition' of communism: 'in contrast to socialism, communism refers to singular universality, to the direct link between the singular and the universal, bypassing particular determinations'.<sup>31</sup> Citing Paul who said that from the Christian standpoint 'there are no men and women, no Jews or Greeks', thereby claiming that, in Žižek's words, 'ethnic roots, national identities, etc., are *not a category of truth*. To put it in Kantian terms: when we reflect upon our ethnic roots, we engage in a *private use of reason*, constrained by contingent dogmatic presuppositions; that is, we act as "immature" individuals, not as free humans who dwell in the dimension of the universality of reason'.<sup>32</sup> Here Žižek takes issue with Richard Rorty's misconception of difference between public and private 'space' to say that, on the contrary, for Kant 'the public space of the "world-civil-society" exemplifies the paradox of universal singularity, of a singular subject who, in a kind of short-circuit, bypassing the mediation of the particular, directly participates in the Universal'.<sup>33</sup> Quoting a passage from Kant's 'What is Enlightenment', Žižek says the following: 'The paradox of Kant's formula "Think freely, but obey!" (which, of course, poses a series of problems of its own, since it also relies on the distinction between the "performative" level of social authority and the level of free thinking where performativity is suspended) is thus that one participates in the universal dimension of the "public" sphere precisely as a singular individual extracted from, or even opposed to, one's substantial communal identification—one is truly universal only when radically singular, in the interstices of communal identities'.<sup>34</sup>

### III

I now come to the problem of Marxism in relation to the figure of the 'intellectual'. Boris Buden takes issue with the famous passage in *The Communist Manifesto* that Berman had cited. It is a well-known passage:

All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and men at last are forced to face ... the real conditions of their lives and their relations with their fellow men.<sup>35</sup>

'This vision has been proved wrong', Buden asserts. He remarks that 'In fact, individuals in capitalism can never face the reality in which they live and social relations in which they are involved, in their immediacy. It is the fetishistic character of commodity production that prevents this from happening, or, more precisely, makes these individuals experience their

mutual relations as relation between things'.<sup>36</sup> Buden wants to affirm that 'As far as capitalism puts both intellectuals and workers into the same wage-relation, they also share a common class and historical position', and therefore, 'This is why Berman can see in today's intellectuals of the world the rightful heirs to the emancipatory legacy of the historical workers' movements, those proletarians who once had nothing to lose but their chains'.<sup>37</sup> However, in Buden's view, 'intellectuals of the world' still have something to lose: 'the freedom that Berman has implicitly ascribed to their social role and that makes it possible for them to detach themselves from historical praxis and encounter "directly" the authentic world of Marx's ideas'.<sup>38</sup> He properly finds this 'freedom' of the intellectuals in the 'public use of reason' by invoking Kant. As was said above, this would mean that, as citizens of the world and 'scholars' addressing the general public, intellectuals can argue freely in using their reason publicly. This might explain, in Buden's words, why 'Berman and all genuine readers of Karl Marx have welcomed "a life without Marx" brought about by the crash of 1989'.<sup>39</sup> Buden keenly makes the following observations:

In Kant's sense, it liberated Marx's writings from their private use—by, for instance, those apparatchiks of an official Marxism, also known as Marxologues, who were not able to read Marx and discuss his ideas freely because they had to obey their totalitarian masters, the Party and the state. In other words, the post-1989 liberation of Marx's writing might be understood as a sort of reappropriation by public reason. It has liberated Marx as author, who is now finally free—to address, as a scholar (*Gelehrte*), 'the intellectuals of the world', or, in Kant's parlance, the society of world citizens (*Weltbürgergesellschaft*).<sup>40</sup>

At this point we might yet ask: What did actually happen in 1989? If we follow Berman the answer is that after the crash of 1989, and, as I have already mentioned above, this is the crux of matter so it is worth reiterating here, 'even Karl Marx went through a double liberation: a life freed from Marx has recovered Marx freed for the intellectuals of the world'.<sup>41</sup> Among its consequences, Buden notes, is the fact that, as a result of the 'democratic revolutions' in the aftermath of 1989, everybody talked about 'transition to democracy' but not the restoration of capitalism. This relates to the notion of the 'abstract figure of the so-called free and equal individual'. We should remember that this 'abstract figure' originally belonged to the bourgeois capitalist society, yet in the former system of 'actually existing socialism' the same figure 'was banned from the political life of the state. Nevertheless, it reappeared in a place where it essentially does not belong as such, in the sphere of civil society'.<sup>42</sup> Thus Buden remarks:

Recalling the young Marx's critique of the limits of bourgeois political emancipation, inspired by Hegel and epitomized in the concept of the bourgeois *Homo duplex*, one might say that in the struggle for freedom under the conditions of the one-party system the abstract political figure of *citoyen* moved over to the realm of its non-political doppelgänger, the *bourgeois*. Here, on the stage of civil society, behind the backs of the party-state, the abstract political figure of *citoyen* performed a sort of monodrama, disguised in the costume of a living flesh-and-blood person. It was best personified in the image of an anti-communist dissident heroically fighting for human rights.<sup>43</sup>

And further:

The left critics of historical communism were never anti-communists. Rather, they remained at all times within the horizon opened up by the emancipatory promise of Marx's critique of capitalism, sharing its highlights, shortcomings and contradictions, and taking active part in the theoretical disputes and dramatic political conflicts that accompanied the communist movement from its very beginning—for which they often paid dearly.<sup>44</sup>

This brings us back to the central point that is the notion of the '*liberated Marx*': *Recovering Marx from Marxism*, linked to Marx's relation to his life-long friend Friedrich Engels. Here I must reiterate that the hallmark of this '*liberated Marx*' concerns, first and foremost, the recovery of Marx as a *philosopher* and not as a 'political economist', and this must prompt the tracing of his philosophical roots to post-Kantian German Idealism, in particular to Hegel. Here I want to point out that, as Tom Rockmore has incisively argued, in our attempt to 'recover' Marx, it is important that we free him from Engels as the 'first Marxist'. There is a 'grain of truth' in what Rockmore says: 'Marxism is the series of misunderstandings of Marx's theories'.<sup>45</sup> This concerns the alleged expressions of the categorical difference between 'materialism' and 'idealism', between 'science' and 'philosophy', which goes back to Russian Marxist philosopher, Georgii Plekhanov, Lenin's teacher, and all the way up to Louis Althusser.<sup>46</sup> In a broader context, the distinction between Marx and Marxism leads to the more clear understanding of Marx's appropriation and critique of Hegel, but also his critique of political economy and modern industrial society which derive from a 'single unitary conceptual vision'. As Rockmore points out, 'if the aim is to understand Marx, then it is crucial to go beyond politically motivated Marxist claims for distinctions in kind between Marx and Hegel, or again between Marx and philosophy, or even between philosophy and science; for it is only in this way that one can see that in the final analysis Marx is not only a philosopher, or a

German philosopher, but a German Hegelian, hence a German idealist philosopher'.<sup>47</sup> This lineage should prompt us to bring out the notion of *Spirit* in Marx.

Derrida in *Specters of Marx* says that Marx was accompanied by many 'ghosts', as mentioned above, and goes on to invoke Paul Valéry, who in his landmark 'Crisis of the Spirit' of 1919 wrote about Hamlet's specters:

But he is an intellectual Hamlet. He mediates on the life and death of truths. His ghosts are all the objects of our controversies, his remorse is all the titles of our glory.... If he seizes a skull, it is an illustrious skull—"Whose was it?"—This one was *Lionardo*.... And this other skull is that of *Leibniz* who dreamed of universal peace. And this one was *Kant qui genuit Hegel, qui genuit Marx, qui genuit*.... Hamlet does not know what to do with all these skulls. But if he abandons them! ... Will he cease to be himself?'<sup>48</sup>

To put Valéry's 'And this one was *Kant qui genuit Hegel, qui genuit Marx, qui genuit*...', in the context of the historical situation that has emerged since 1990 must prompt a reconsideration of the classical German philosophy, Kant and Hegel, with Marx as its heir. In this respect, we have to abandon the view, as Karatani puts it, which 'believes that Kant was superseded by Hegel, and Hegel in turn by Marx'.<sup>49</sup> To rethink these figures is at the same time to touch the moment of the '*intellectual break*', the moment, to repeat, 'when *Marxism died so that Marx might be liberated*'. To put it in Berman's terms again, this is the moment that '*has recovered Marx freed for the intellectuals of the world*'. In this respect, it is proper to reflect on the relation between Marx and his life-long friend Engels.

'Marxism' is the invention of Friedrich Engels, the friend, political colleague, financial supporter and editor of the works of Marx published after his death in 1883. Marx had a solid education in philosophy, with a Ph.D. awarded to him in 1841. Engels did not have any formal training in philosophy. He only attended Schelling's lectures in 1841; he was a talented autodidact, an amateur in philosophy, who would often give simplistic and weak accounts of Kant, Hegel, and German Idealism, according to Rockmore. Engels aligned Marxism with science, having a tendency closer to what is now called scientism.<sup>50</sup> After Marx's death, Engels wrote a series of articles for *Die Neue Zeit* which were later collected in a slim volume and published in 1888 entitled *Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy*.<sup>51</sup> Engels begins the short 'Foreword' to the book by citing Marx's Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy* of 1859, writing that 'Karl Marx relates how the two of us in Brussels in the year 1845 set about working in common "the opposition of our view"—the materialist conception of history which was worked out especially by Marx—to the ideological view of German philosophy, in fact to settle

accounts with our previous philosophical conscience”<sup>52</sup>. He further states that the intent of his book is ‘a short, connected account of our relation to the Hegelian philosophy, of our point of departure as well as of our separation from it, [which] appeared to me to be required more and more’, adding that it is ‘Equally a full acknowledgement of the influence which Feuerbach, more than any other post-Hegelian philosopher had upon us during our period of storm and stress.’<sup>53</sup> Taking issue with Engels’ claim, Rockmore comments that the latter’s suggestion that ‘Marx and he share a single non-ideological view of philosophy as ideology implies that there is in fact a shared view, that it is not ideological, and that there is in fact a break with Hegel and philosophy’.<sup>54</sup> This is not true, as Rockmore emphatically asserts. Marx, contrary to Engels, never broke with Hegel or philosophy. It was Marxism that was ideological. Marx was not ideological. And more importantly, Marx’s position is not ‘extra-philosophical, but rather, belongs to German idealism’.<sup>55</sup>

Engels in his *Ludwig Feuerbach* cites Hegel’s famous statement from *Philosophy of Right* that ‘All that is real is rational; and all that is rational is real’.<sup>56</sup> He goes on to offer his rather unsophisticated interpretation of this in portraying Hegel as an unconditional political supporter of the contemporary monarchy and its repression.<sup>57</sup> Rockmore remarks that ‘Feuerbach’s revolutionary importance lies in the transition from idealism to materialism, which refutes philosophy in establishing nature as independent and simply destroying the (Hegelian) “system”’.<sup>58</sup> According to Engels ‘if Philosophy culminates in Hegel, and if Hegel is refuted by Feuerbach, then philosophy is over’.<sup>59</sup> ‘Yet to sustain this argument’, Rockmore points out, ‘it would need to be shown that Feuerbach has successfully criticized Hegel’.<sup>60</sup> Engels reads Feuerbach as a reformulation of ‘Hegelian idealism in a materialist manner’.<sup>61</sup> In this respect, Engels argues for the distinction between idealism and materialism, and the opposition between philosophy and science. Engels wrote:

While materialism conceives nature as the sole reality, nature in the Hegelian system represents merely “alienation” of the absolute idea, so to say, a degradation of the idea. In all circumstances thinking and its thought-product, the idea, is here the primary, nature the derived element, which only exists at all by the condescension of the idea. And in this contradiction they floundered as well or as ill as they could.<sup>62</sup>

In the section ‘Idealism and Materialism’ of *Ludwig Feuerbach* Engels says that the ‘paramount’ question of philosophy is the ‘relation of thing to being, the relation of spirit to nature’.<sup>63</sup> As Rockmore notes, Engels ‘who is interested in cognition, is concerned with whether thought can know being. He sees philosophy as divided on the question of knowledge’.<sup>64</sup> Engels wrote: ‘But the question of relation of thinking and being has yet

another side: in what relation do our thoughts about the world surrounding us stand to this world? Is our thinking capable of the cognition of the real world? Are we able in our ideas and notions of the real world to produce a correct reflection of reality? In philosophical language this question is called the question of the “identity of thinking and being,” and the overwhelming majority of philosophers give an affirmative answer to this question’.<sup>65</sup> Engels cites Kant and carelessly lumps him in with Hume as a ‘skeptic’, as Rockmore notes. This is what Engels said:

In addition there is yet another set of different philosophers—those who question the possibility of any cognition (or at least of an exhaustive cognition) of the world. To them, among the moderns, belong Hume and Kant, and they have played a very important role in philosophical development. What is decisive in the refutation of this view has already been said by Hegel—in so far as this was possible from an idealist standpoint. The materialistic additions made by Feuerbach are more ingenious than profound. The most telling refutation of this as of all other philosophical fancies is practice, *viz.*, experiment and industry.<sup>66</sup>

He continues to remark that ‘If we are able to prove the correctness of our conception of a natural process by making it ourselves, bringing it into being out of its condition and using it for our own purpose into the bargain, then there is an end of the Kantian incomprehensible “thing-in-itself”’.<sup>67</sup> This ‘crude’ passage, as Rockmore puts it, reveals Engels’ ‘misunderstanding of Kant’.<sup>68</sup> At the end, in response to or in refutation of Engels’ argument in *Ludwig Feuerbach*, we must acknowledge that Marx, ‘overcomes Hegel by overcoming Hegel’s view of dialectic, which is an “ideological perversion” [Engels’ term], in favor of concepts as “images of real things”’.<sup>69</sup> And, ‘In putting forward the idea that knowledge mirrors an independent reality, Engels clearly parts company with Hegel, and with anything Marx ever says, in restating a reflection theory of knowledge familiar in forms of empiricism. This theory was later adopted and made canonical for Marxism’.<sup>70</sup> Toward the end of *Ludwig Feuerbach*, in the section ‘Dialectical Materialism’, Engels remarks that ‘Out of the dissolution of the Hegelian school, however, there developed still another tendency, the only one which has borne real fruit. And this tendency is essentially connected with the name of Marx.’<sup>71</sup> He then, in humility, goes on to say the following in the footnote:

Here I may be permitted to make a personal explanation. Lately repeated reference has been made on my share in this theory, and so I can hardly avoid saying a few words here to settle this particular point. I cannot deny that both before and during my forty years’ collaboration with Marx I had a certain independent share in laying

the foundations, and more particularly in elaborating the theory. But the greater part of its leading basic principles, particularly the realm of economics and history, and, above all its final, clear formulation, belong to Marx. What I contributed—at any rate with the exception of a few studies—Marx could very well have done without me. What Marx accomplished I would not have achieved. Marx stood higher, saw further, and took a wider and quicker view than the rest of us. Marx was a genius; we others were at best talented. Without him the theory would not be what it is today. It therefore rightly bears his name.<sup>72</sup>

As said above, Engels is nevertheless responsible for the invention of Marxism after Marx's death. A long time ago, before recent discussions on this point, it was the French writer Michel Henry who, already in 1976 in his *Marx: A Philosophy of Human Reality*, intervened with regard to the 'divorce' between Marx and Marxism. He wrote: 'it is the extraordinary fact that *Marxism was constituted and defined in the absence of any reference to Marx's philosophical thought and in total ignorance of it*'.<sup>73</sup> He points out that Plekhanov, Lenin, Stalin, and so many others, had neither knowledge of the 1844 *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, nor of *The German Ideology*—which was published only in 1932—'at a time when "dialectical materialism" had already been presented as a finished doctrine'.<sup>74</sup> He goes further, saying that 'Engels, who signed, we might say, *The German Ideology* with Marx, remains in fact totally unrelated to the fundamental philosophical content which unfolds in this explosive text', and adding that 'one has only to compare the original with the summary Engels gives of it after Marx's death in his *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*: the two texts have nothing in common'.<sup>75</sup> Significantly, Henry is an earlier critics of Louis Althusser, holding him to be responsible for 'The elimination of Marx's philosophical thought in favor of dogmatic theses of dialectical materialism' which in his words 'had been constituted and defined over almost half of a century'.<sup>76</sup> He quotes Althusser who in his *For Marx* said the following: 'we cannot say absolutely that "*Marx's youth is part of Marxism*" unless we mean by this that, like all historical phenomena, the evolution of this young bourgeois intellectual can be illuminated by the application of the principles of historical materialism'.<sup>77</sup> Taking Althusser to task, Henry writes: 'Not only are the philosophical writings nothing but the writing of "youth," those of a young German bourgeois, but the possibility that they could provide an explanation for the later work and constitute the genesis of this work is categorically excluded'.<sup>78</sup>

#### IV

I now come to my central point, on what I stated above about the relation of 'the unconscious' in psychoanalytical terms to Communism in both Karatani and Žižek. To bring out this relation is in confirmation of my point that our two thinkers are the *genuine* readers of Marx. We find in both the argument, made in different ways, that Marx had anticipated Freud. Karatani cites a well-known passage from Marx's *Capital* in his *Marx: Towards the Center of Possibility*. Marx wrote:

Hence, when we bring the products of our labour into relation with each other as values, it is not because we see in these articles the material receptacles of homogeneous human labour. *Quite the contrary*: whenever, by an exchange, we equate as values different products, by that very act, we also equate, as human labour, the different kinds of labour expended upon them. *We are not aware of this, nevertheless we do it*. Value, therefore, does not stalk about with a label describing what it is. It is value, rather, that converts every product into a social hieroglyphic. *Later on*, we try to decipher the hieroglyphic, to get behind the secret of our own social products; for to stamp an object of utility as a value, is just as much a social product as *language*. The recent scientific discovery, that the products of labour, so far as they are values, are but material expressions of the human labour spent in their production, marks, indeed, an epoch in the history of the development of the human race, but, by no means, dissipates the mist through which the social character of labour appears to us to be an objective character of the products themselves.<sup>79</sup>

Karatani's remarks on this passage go as follows:

When he says that 'we are not aware of this, nevertheless, we do it', Marx is speaking of the unconscious in downright Freudian terms. Lacan emphasized that the unconscious is structured like a language. In the same way, the value-form, under erasure within the form of money, is precisely what Marx referred to here as a 'hieroglyph'. It is invisible within our unconscious; only its results are reflected. As Freud argued, to be conscious of something is to phonetically lingualize it. What we consciously cognize merely takes the form of money as phonetic script. Political economy begins from this 'consciousness'. In other words, to say this is also to emphasize that political economy has always tacitly presupposed money. Insofar as every reflection or analysis, no matter how rigorous, is located within this always-already formalized 'consciousness', its results are always mistaken for its causes.<sup>80</sup>

Turning to Žižek on the same notion that Karatani touched upon above, it is useful to remember that it was originally in the first chapter of the book *The Sublime Object of Ideology* entitled ‘How Marx Invented the Symptom’ that Žižek brought up ‘The Unconscious of the Commodity Form’, a statement that directly refers to Lacan who had said it was Marx who first ‘invented the notion of symptom’. Žižek initially cites Alfred Sohn-Rethel’s reflection on the historical *abstract* mode of thinking as related to *commodity* in the critique of political economy, only to relate it to the Kantian ‘transcendental subject’. It must be mentioned in passing here that according to Karatani, this Kantian ‘transcendental’ notion is fundamentally an ‘unconscious structure’ which is the condition of the possibility of experience. In this respect, Žižek writes that in the ‘structure of the commodity-form it is possible to find the transcendental subject: the commodity-form articulates in advance the anatomy, the skeleton of the Kantian transcendental subject—that is, the network of transcendental categories which constitute the a priori frame of “objective” scientific knowledge’.<sup>81</sup> Žižek continues by saying that:

Before thought could arrive at pure *abstraction*, the abstraction was already at work in the social effectivity of the market. The exchange of commodities implies a double abstraction: the abstraction from the changeable character of the commodity during the act of exchange and the abstraction from the concrete, empirical, sensual, particular character of the commodity (in the act of exchange, the distinct, particular qualitative determination of a commodity is not taken into account; a commodity is reduced to an abstract entity which—irrespective of its particular nature, of its “use-value”—possesses the “same value” as another commodity for which it is being exchanged).<sup>82</sup>

Žižek follows up his remark above by crucially bringing the Freudian unconscious into his argument:

In this way, the transcendental subject, the support of the net of a priori categories, is confronted with the disquieting fact that it depends, in its very formal genesis, on some inner-worldly, ‘pathological’ process—a scandal, a nonsensical impossibility from the transcendental point of view, in so far as the formal-transcendental a priori is by definition independent of all positive content: a scandal corresponding perfectly to the ‘scandalous’ character of the Freudian unconscious, which is also unbearable from the transcendental-philosophical perspective. That is to say, if we look closely at the ontological status of what Sohn-Rethel calls the ‘real abstraction’ [*das reale Abstraction*] (that is, the act of abstraction at work in the very *effective* process of the exchange

of commodity), the homology between its status and that of the unconscious, this signifying chain which persists on ‘another Scene’ is striking: *the ‘real abstraction’ is the unconscious of the transcendental subject*, the support of objective-universal scientific knowledge.<sup>83</sup>

In the space allowed for this essay I cannot go into the vast question of the ‘unconscious’ in relation to Marx and, for that matter, to ‘communism’, in Karatani and Žižek. I must in conclusion reiterate my point that Karatani and Žižek, coming differently from the tradition of Kantian Marxism and Hegelian Marxism, respectively have in fact effectively inaugurated a *break* with Marxism by returning to Marx and his *Capital*—more substantially in the case of Karatani in his groundbreaking *The Structure of the World History*. Each, I stress, in his own singular way, took up Marx grounded in philosophical *and* psychoanalytical theories. And, at the same time, they both *correct* the misconception of Marxists on the notion of *ideology*, coming to it by different routes of criticism.

A common insight can be discerned in the work of our two exemplary thinkers, which amounts to a tremendous foresight as to how Marx must be read in order to *recover* him from Marxism, that is, to free him for the *liberated* intellectuals. It would be appropriate to end here by invoking Derrida once again who made some decisive remarks in his *Specters of Marx*. After stating succinctly that ‘It will be always a fault not to reread and discuss Marx’, Derrida goes on to bring up the notion of *responsibility* in reading Marx and points out the fact that there is indeed more than one *spirit* of Marx. He incisively says the following:

When the dogma machine and the “Marxist” ideological apparatuses (States, parties, cell, unions, and other places of doctrinal production) are in the process of disappearing, we no longer have any excuse, only alibis, for running away from this responsibility. There will be no future without this. Not without Marx, no future without Marx, without the memory and inheritance of Marx: in any case of a certain Marx, of his genius, of at least one of his spirits. For this will be our hypothesis or rather our bias: *there is more than one of them, there must be more than one of them*.<sup>84</sup>

It is noteworthy that Karatani and Žižek, each with his own unique sensibilities, have taken up this notion of *spirit* to bring up the *unconscious* agency in connection to Hegel’s *Geist*. It was first Hegel who, very much aware of the *unconscious* agency, coined the term ‘*unconscious Spirit*’ in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Hegel anticipates the psychoanalytical concept of the *unconscious*.<sup>85</sup> Here we come back to Socrates, to a passage from Hegel’s *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* in which Hegel brings out the ‘unconscious impulse’ in Socrates. This passage is

cited by Karatani in his *Isonomia and the Origins of Philosophy* where he discusses the notion of Daimon in Socrates. Hegel wrote:

Since everyone here has his personal mind which appears to him to be his mind, we see how in connection with this, we have what is known under the name of Genius [*daimonion*] of Socrates; for it implies that now man decides in accordance with his perception and by himself. But in this Genius of Socrates—notorious as a much discussed *bizarrierie* of his imagination—we are neither to imagine the existence of protective spirit, angel, and such-like, nor even of conscience. For conscience is the idea of universal individuality, of the mind certain of itself, which is at the same time universal truth. But the Genius of Socrates is rather all the other and necessary sides of his universality, that is, the individuality of mind which came to consciousness in him equally with the former. His pure consciousness stands over both sides. The deficiency in the universal, which lies in its indeterminateness, is unsatisfactorily supplied in an individual way, because Socrates' judgment, as coming from himself, was characterized by the form of an unconscious impulse. The genius of Socrates is not Socrates himself, not his opinions and convictions, but an oracle which, however, is not external, but is subjective, his oracle. It bore the form of knowledge which was directly associated with a condition of unconsciousness; it was a knowledge which may also appear under other conditions as a magnetic state. It may happen that at death, in illness and catalepsy, men know about circumstances future or present, which in the understood relations of things, are altogether unknown. These are facts which are usually rudely denied. That in Socrates we should discover what we expect comes to pass through conscious reflections in the form of the unconscious [makes it seem exceptional].<sup>86</sup>

Karatani, who continues the tradition of Kantian Marxism, pays his respect to Hegel at the same time by employing his term 'unconscious Spirit' by expanding on it and bringing out its relevance to Marx, who famously once declared himself as the 'pupil' of that 'mighty thinker'. In this sense, we must be speaking of Marx's *Geist*. Karatani's attempt may be considered to be partially in line with that of Žižek's invocation of Hegel's 'tarrying with negative'. Here I take the opportunity to reiterate that, in the footsteps of our two prodigious intellectuals, we must not let ourselves, in Derrida's words, be at *fault by* not reading and rereading Marx. We must not fail in *recovering* Marx '*freed for the intellectuals of the world*'.

And finally, I take the liberty to intervene into Valéry's famous statement cited by Derrida only to transgressively add to it two more names. It will go like this:

This one was *Lionardo*.... And this other skull is that of *Leibniz* who dreamed of universal peace. And this one was *Kant qui genuit Hegel, qui genuit Marx, qui genuit Karatani et Žižek* ...

Note: This essay is related to a larger book project I am undertaking, tentatively entitled 'Marx's Unconscious: On Karatani and Žižek'. I would like to use this occasion to make some autobiographical remarks. I owe my specific understandings of Marx, also Kant and Hegel, in large part to Žižek's and Karatani's work. I first came across Žižek's *The Sublime Object of Ideology* shortly after its publication in 1989 while I was browsing a bookstore in Atlanta at the time that I was teaching at Georgia Tech School of Architecture. Not knowing the author at all and not being able to pronounce his name, I pulled the book off the shelf and began to page through it. I noticed the name of Jacques Lacan—I had to buy it, mainly because of the fact that while I was a Ph.D. student at the University of Pennsylvania I had read Jacques Derrida's *Of Grammatology* in which I had come across the name of Jacques Lacan—mainly in the 'Translator's Preface'—but also because of the fact that as a critic of architecture I had taken interest in Derrida's intervention in the discourse of architecture at the time. This was the beginning of my reading of Žižek. As for Karatani, I came across his *Architecture as Metaphor* after its publication in 1995. The book had been sitting on my desk for more than ten years during which time I read it over and over again struggling to understand the complex argument laid out in it. While I was keeping up with Karatani's later books, I felt that I have finally managed to understand his philosophical argument in *Architecture as Metaphor*. As a non-philosopher reader of modern German philosophy and the work of Marx, I ventured to write a book about Karatani's early book that I published in 2024 entitled *Kōjin Karatani's Philosophy of Architecture*. I have since kept my interest in both thinkers which, in part, led to my second book on Karatani entitled *The Unconscious Spirit of Communism: Karatani's Reconstruction of Marx*, which is forthcoming by Brill. Here, by paraphrasing Hegel, I can only say that Žižek and Karatani in my mind may be considered to be *identical* thinker in *difference* in their respective philosophical work on Marx.

1 Kant, 1991, p. 247.

2 Derrida, 1994, p. 91.

3 Inwood, 1992, in 'Spirit'.

4 Berman, 2011, p. 1.

5 Buden, 2019, P151.

6 See Leopard, 2007, p. 8.

7 Quoted in Rockmore, 1976, p. 21.

8 Berman, 2011, 11.

9 Berman, 2011, pp. 11-12.

10 In MECW, 1975, volume 46, p. 353.

11 Žižek, 2019, p. 58.

12 Žižek, 2019, p. 58.

13 Žižek, 2019, p. 58.

14 Žižek, 2019, pp. 58-59.

15 For the term 'intellectual laziness' and the distinction between metaphor and scientific theory in Marx I am following Ludovico Silva in his groundbreaking *Marx's Literary Style*, 2023. I will come back to this work later.

16 In this respect see the excellent remarks by Reiss in his 'Introduction' to *Kant*, 1979, 1991, See also Saner, 1973.

17 Kant, 1991, p. 54

18 Kant, 1991, 'An Answer to the Question: "What is Enlightenment"', p. 54.

19 Kant, 1991, 'An Answer to the Question: "What is Enlightenment"', p. 58. Kant further noted: 'As things are at present, we still have a long way to go before men as a whole can be in a position (or can even be put into a position) of using their own understanding and well in religious matters, without outside guidance. But we do have distinct indication that the way is now being cleared for them to work freely in this direction, and that the obstacle to universal enlightenment, to man's emergence from his self-incurred immaturity, are gradually becoming fewer. In this respect our age is the age of enlightenment, the century of *Frederick*', p. 58.

20 Kant, 1991, 'What is Orientation in Thinking', p. 249.

21 Kant, 1991, 55.

22 Kant, 1991, p. 55.

23 Kant, 1991, 'An Answer to the Question: "What is Enlightenment"', p. 57.

24 Kant 1991, 'Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose', p. 51.

25 Karatani, 2017, pp. 114–115.

26 Karatani, 2017, p. 115.

27 Karatani, 2017, p. 116.

28 Karatani, 2017, p. 116.

29 Karatani, 2017, p. 116.

30 Karatani, 2017, p. 117. In this respect, Karatani in the footnote refers to what Marx wrote in *On the Jewish Question*. There Marx wrote: 'Human emancipation will only be complete when the real, individual man has absorbed into himself the abstract citizen; when as an individual man, in his everyday life, in his work, and in his relationships, he has become a *species-being*; and when he has recognized and organized his own powers (*forces propres*) as *social* powers so that he no longer separates this social power from himself as *political* power', p. 151, n. 12.

31 Žižek, 2009, p. 104.

32 Žižek, 2009, p. 104. In this relation, Žižek brings up 'the opposition between Kant and Rorty' regarding the dimension of public and private that he says is rarely noted. He writes: 'Both sharply distinguish between the two domains, but in opposite ways. For Rorty, the great contemporary liberal *par excellence*, the private is the space of our idiosyncrasies where creativity and wild imagination rule and moral considerations are (almost) suspended; the public, on the contrary, is the space of social interaction where we are obliged to obey the rules in order not to hurt others. In Rorty's own terms, the private is the space of irony, while the public is the space of solidarity', p.104.

33 Žižek, 2009, p. 104.

34 Žižek, 2009, p. 105. Žižek further remarks that 'It is Kant who should be read here as critique of Rorty. In his vision of public space characterized by the unconstrained exercise of Reason, he invokes a dimension of emancipatory universality *outside* the confines of one's social identity, of one's position within the order of (social) being—precisely the dimension so crucially missing in Rorty', p. 105.

35 Quoted in Buden, 'It Is Getting Darker Around the Central Sun of Freedom', p. 158. Buden explains that he took the quote from Berman's book and that 'translation is more accurate, since Berman himself slightly altered the standard translation made by Samuel Moore in 1888', 158, n. 35. The translation in the Penguin deluxe edition is slightly different and goes as follows: 'All fixed, fast frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses, his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind', in Marx and Engels, 2011, p. 68.

36 Buden, 2019, p. 158.

37 Buden, 2019, pp. 137–138.

38 Buden, 2019, p. 138.

39 Buden, 2019, p. 138.

40 Buden, 2019, , pp. 138–139. Buden further adds that 'it is not difficult to recognize in Berman's notion of "the intellectuals of the world" an older intellectual figure, which, in fact, still echoes in Kant's notion *Weltbürgergesellschaft*—the so-called "republic of letters": an international community of scholars of which Kant, for instance, was a typical member. It emerged at the time of the Renaissance, and as a new historical form of intellectual exchange it prepared and finally made possible the Age of Enlightenment', p. 139.

41 Buden, 2019, p. 151.

42 Buden, 2019, p. 153.

43 Buden, 2019, p. 153.

44 Buden, 2019, p. 154.

45 See Rockmore, 2002, p. 1. For my reflection on the issue of the relation of Marx to Marxism I follow Rockmore's convincing argument.

46 For more on this see Rockmore, 2002, chapter 1.

47 Rockmore, 2002, p.161.

48 Valéry wrote this passage in his 'La Crise de l'esprit.' Quoted by Derrida 1994, p. 5.

49 Here I am following Karatani in his groundbreaking *The Structure of World History: From Modes of Production to Modes of Exchange*, 2014. P. 302.

50 I am following Rockmore, 2006.

51 See Engels, 2018, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy* (New York: International Publishers, 2018). As Rockmore points out, in its simplicity this book became an influential source for generations of Marxists who were 'unable or unwilling to read Marx's own often

difficult but infinitely more rewarding texts'; see Rockmore, 2006, p. 55.

52 Engels, 2018, p. 7.

53 Engels, 2018, pp. 7–8.

54 See Rockmore, 2006, pp. 55–56. Also see Rockmore, 2002.

55 Rockmore, 2006, p. 56.

56 Engels, 2018, p.10. The more correct translation of Hegel's statement is: 'What is rational is actual; and what is actual is rational'; see Hegel, 1991, p. 20.

57 Engels writes: 'That was tangibly a sanctification of things that be, a philosophical benediction bestowed upon despotism, police-government, Star Chamber proceedings and censorship. That is how Frederick William III and his subjects understood it. But according to Hegel everything that exists is certainly not also *real*, without further qualification. For Hegel the attribute of reality belongs only to that which at the same time is necessary: "The reality proves itself to be necessary in the course of its development." A particular governmental act—Hegel himself cites the example of "a certain tax regulation"—is therefore for him by no means real without qualification. That which is necessary, however, proves itself in the last resort to be also rational; and, applied to the Prussian state of that time, the Hegelian proposition therefore merely means: this state is rational, it corresponds to reason in so far as it is necessary; and if it nevertheless appears to us to be evil, but, still, in spite of its evil character, it continues to exist, then the evil character of the government is explained and justified by the corresponding evil character of the subjects', 2018, p. 10.

58 Rockmore, 2006, p. 57.

59 Rockmore, 2006, p.57.

60 Rockmore, 2006, p. 57.

61 Rockmore, 2006, p. 57.

62 Engels, 2018, pp. 17–18.

63 Engels, 2018, p. 21.

64 Rockmore, 2006, p. 57.

65 Engels, 2018, p. 21. Engels adds: 'But the question of relation of thinking and being has yet another side: in what relation do our thoughts about the world surrounding us stand to this world? Is our thinking capable of the cognition of the real world? Are we able in our ideas and notions of the world to produce a correct reflection of reality? In philosophical language this question is called the question of the "Identity of thinking and being," and an overwhelming majority of philosophers give an affirmative answer to this question. With Hegel, for example, its affirmation is self-evident; for what we perceive in the real world is precisely its thought content—that which makes the world a gradual realization of the absolute idea, which absolute idea has existed somewhere from eternity, independent of the world and before the world. [...] But that in no way prevents Hegel from drawing the further conclusion from his proof of the identity of thinking and being that his philosophy, because it is correct for his own thinking, is therefore the only correct one, and that the identity of thinking and being must prove its validity by mankind immediately translating his philosophy from theory into practice and transforming the whole world according to Hegelian principles. This is an illusion which he shares with well-nigh all philosophers', pp. 21–22.

66 Engels, 2018, p. 22.

67 Engels, p. 23.

68 Rockmore, 2006, p. 57.

69 Rockmore, 2006, p. 58.

70 Rockmore, 2006, p. 58.

71 Engels, 2018, p. 42.

72 Engels, 2018, pp. 42–43.

73 See Henry, 1983, p. 3.

74 Henry, 1983, p. 3.

75 Henry, 1983, p. 3. Henry expands by saying: 'On the one hand, Engels' summary includes extremely serious historical errors, since he reverses the order of Feuerbach's and Stirner's influence on Marx, which alone is sufficient to render unintelligible the internal development of Marx's thought during these critical years. Further, we see how in place of the brilliant and decisive intuitions of *The German Philosophy*, which overturn the concept of being as it has dominated Western thought since ancient Greece and unsettle the philosophical horizon within which this thought has always moved, Engels substitutes an exasperated dull, banal discourse, which at the very most, marks a return to the immediate and superficial past, to the materialism of Feuerbach and to that of the eighteenth century. And yet, even this materialism, just as the idealism which is naïvely opposed to it, is presented in such an external form that any possible philosophical sense is lost', p. 3.

76 Henry, 1983, p. 8.

77 Quoted in Henry, 1983, p. 9. See also Althusser, 2005pp. 83–84.

78 Henry, 1983, p. 9. Henry goes on to say that 'Rejected on the level of the given and considered as

an ideology, the philosophical work is no longer a source of enlightenment but a dead letter, opaque, capable of receiving its light only from elsewhere. Between what enlightens and what is enlightened the break is radical indeed and such that, on the one side we find only ideological concepts and, on the other, the set of scientific concepts which constitute the “theory”. The ideological concepts are unusable; their only possible use consists in providing an object for the application of Marxist theory’, p. 9.

79 Quoted in Karatani, 2020, pp. 24–25.

80 Karatani, 2020, p. 25.

81 See Žižek, 1989, p.16.

82 Žižek, 1989, p. 17.

83 Žižek, 1989, p. 17.

84 Derrida, 1994, p. 13.

85 See Mills, 2002.

86 Quoted in Karatani, 2017, p. 120.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Althusser, Louis, 2005, *For Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster, London and New York: Verso.
- Berman, Marshall, 2011, 'Tearing Away the Veils: *The Communist Manifesto*' in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, intro. Marshall Berman, Deluxe Edition, New York: Penguin Books.
- Buden, Boris, 2019, 'It Is Getting Darker Around the Central Sun of Freedom', in *Capitalism: Concept, Idea, Image, Aspects of Marx's Capital Today*, eds. Peter Osborne, Éric Alliez, Eric-John Russel, London: CREMP Books.
- Derrida, Jacques, 1994, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf, intro. Bernd Magnus and Stephen Cullenberg, New York and London: Routledge.
- Engels, Friederich, 2018, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy*, New York: International Publishers.
- Hegel, 1991, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, ed. Allen W. Wood, trans. H. B. Nisbet, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Henry, Michel, 1983, *Marx: A Philosophy of Human Reality*, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).
- Inwood, Michael, 1992, *A Hegel Dictionary*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Kant, Immanuel, 1991, 'An Answer to the Question: "What is Enlightenment"', in Reiss, ed. *Kant: Political Writings*.
- Kant, Immanuel, 1991, 'What is Orientation in Thinking?', in *Kant: Political Writings*, ed. and Intro. H. S. Reiss, trans. H. B. Nisbet, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Karatani, Kōjin, 2017, *Isonomia and the Origins of Philosophy*, trans. Joseph A. Murphy, Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Karatani, Kōjin, 2020, *Marx Towards The Center of Possibility*, ed., trans. with an Intro by Gavin Walker, London and New York: Verso.
- Karatani, Kōjin, 2014, *The Structure of World History: From Modes of Production to Modes of Exchange*, trans. Michael K. Bourdaghs, Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Leopard, David, 2007, *The Young Marx: German Philosophy, Modern Politics, and Human flourishing*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mills, Jon, 2002, *The Unconscious Abyss: Hegel's Anticipation of Psychoanalysis* (Albany: State University of New York).
- Reiss, H. S., 1976, 1991, 'Introduction' in *Kant: Political Writings* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Saner, Hans, 1973, *Kant's Political Thought: Its Origins and Development*, trans. E. B. Ashton, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Rockmore, Tom, 2006, *In Kant's Wake: Philosophy in the Twentieth Century*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Rockmore, Tom, 2002, *Marx After Marxism: The Philosophy of Karl Marx*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Silva, Ludovico, 2023, *Marx's Literary Style*, Foreword by Alberto Toscano, London and New York: Verso.
- Žižek, Slavoj, 2009, *First as Tragedy, Then as Farce* (London and New York: Verso).
- Žižek, Slavoj, 2019, *The Relevance of the Communist Manifesto*, Cambridge: Polity.
- Žižek, Slavoj, 1989, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London and New York: Verso).