Whether Marx's Misunderstanding of Hegel's Texts, or Marx's Projection of his own Problematic on them?*


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1. Professor Norman Levine's contribution

Broad in scope, highly condensed in content, Professor Norman Levine’s recent book, *Marx’s Discourse with Hegel* will surely attract many scholars of Marx, especially those interested in the relationship between Marx and Hegel.

The subject of the relationship between Marx and Hegel first emerges when Marx stated his debts to Hegel in a footnote in the value form in both the first edition of Book One [Erster Band] as well as in the Afterword to the second edition of Book One of *Capital*. Lenin’s aphorism in his *Philosophical Notebook* that nobody can understand Marx’s *Capital* without reading Hegel’s *Logic* has thrown further light on the nature the relationship. The present reviewer will refrain from commenting on the historiography on the relationship and will focus on Professor Levine’s ambitious work.

1−1. The most important contribution that Professor Levine makes is in his clear comprehensive bibliographic information on Hegel’s works (a) that Marx referred and (b) that he did not; Hegel’s works (b−1) that Marx did not access in spite of being possible and (b−2) that have been published after his death. Needless to say, Hegel’s works of (b−2) are omitted from the Marxist scholarship on the relation between Marx and Hegel.

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Professor Levine attaches great importance to Hegel’s works of (a) and (b−1), especially to the latter. Witnessing Hegel’s works (a) to that Marx accessed in each work from his dissertation, via The Holy Family, to The German Ideology and in his personal library. Professor Levine thinks that Marx owes his intellectual development very much to Hegel. However, Marx has rarely cited directly Hegel’s texts; rather Marx has sometimes been critical against Hegel, for instance, in The Holy Family or The Poverty of Philosophy. In such a context, Marx seems as if he were a disobedient student of Hegel. Something must be hidden in Marx’s textual methodology.

1-2. Professor Levine’s second contribution concerns his re-setting of the origin of Marx’s intellectual development, which is traditionally dated from 1843 Autumn in Paris. Professor Levine focuses instead on Germany in 1837, when Marx was writing his doctoral dissertation ‘On the difference between the Democritean and Epicurean philosophy of nature’, and his preparation in 1840−41. The dissertation has been rather out of focus of Marx scholarship.

1-3. The third point to mention as of importance is that Prof. Levine shows where correlations between Marx and Hegel are traceable, or where Marx is uncorrelated with Hegel even on the same subject. Regrettably, Prof. Levine gives only a few citations from Marx, so that the readers must see Marx through Levine’s framework in order to contrast Marx and Hegel. The present reviewer would now like to express several critical remarks regarding Professor Levine’s work. The discussion in the present review article rather concerns in details and is comparatively controversial in order to match Prof. Levine’s mighty ceaseless inquiry into what Marx did think.

The reviewer wonders if it is necessarily true as Professor Levine argues that Marx sometimes misunderstood Hegel. Marx’s texts on Hegel are rather de facto projection by Marx of his own problematic. That is naturally different from the original context. Marx has already attained his own methodology as early as his doctoral dissertation that reverses thinker’s intended systematization in order to reveal a rational kernel unconsciously hidden within. The reviewer puts a search light into Marx’s own texts to trace Marx’s problematic that continues from the 1841 doctoral dissertation, via The Paris Manuscripts, to Capital, referring Hegel’s works that Marx did read in his lifetime, wondering whether or not Marx scholars really know and understand Marx, or misunderstand, even though Marx’s access to Hegel’s works is limited as Prof. Levine proves. Would Marx have changed his own view of Hegel, had he had access to those texts that he really did not?

2. What is the main attainment in Marx’s Doctoral Dissertation?

2-1. Marx’s projection of his own problematic on Hegel’s texts

Professor Norman Levine inquires into Marx’s alleged misunderstanding of Hegel, as if Marx himself has always been understood correctly. Marx remains his audiences some particular hindrance against correct reading his texts, especially, his published text of critique of political economy.

In his letter of 22nd February and 31st May of 1858 to F. Lassalle (MEW, vol. 29, p.551, p.560), Marx writes that he used to condense (kondensieren) content in his own description. Marx takes strategy to conceal (verstecken) content against Proudhonism (MEW, vol.30, p.207). The two ways of condensing and concealment hinder from our understanding of Marx’s texts, especially his published critique of political economy. Further, Marx’s economic concept has complex structure, as
shown later in [4−2].

Moreover, Marx reads text, including Hegel’s, from his own standpoint. In his 1841 doctoral dissertation, Marx had already established his own methodology to utilize text as follows.

‘Its [historiography’s] concern is to distinguish in each system the determinations themselves, the actual crystallizations that pervades the whole system, from the proofs, the justifications in argument, the self−presentation of the philosophers as they know themselves; to distinguish the silent, persevering mode of real philosophical knowledge from the voluble, exoteric, variously behaving phenomenological consciousness of the subject which is the vessel and motive force of those elaborations’ (MEGA2, IV/1, p.695; MECW, vol.1, p.506).

Marx does not read texts as an obedient student who just follows his master’s way of writing. Marx’s methodology focuses on ‘the actual crystallizations pervading the whole system’ of which most philosophers are usually unconscious; rather their subjective intellectual interests rest on other aspects.

Though Prof. Levine writes of Marx’s de−linkage from Hegel, ‘The years 1843 to 1844 are the borders of Marx’s delinking from Hegel’ (Levine, p.180), the break can be traced two years earlier in 1841 (or three years earlier in 1840) in the appendix of his doctoral dissertation, where Marx had already criticized Hegel on religion, and writing,

‘Hegel interpreted the conclusion from the world to God as meaning; “Since the accidental does not exist, God or Absolute exists.” However, the theological demonstration is the opposite: “Since the accidental has true being, God exists.” God is the guarantee for the world of the accidental.’ (MEGA2, I/1, p.90; MECW, vol.1, p.103–104)

‘The accidental’ above concerns Kant’s antinomy 3 in his Critique of Pure Reason where he inquires in to whether the universe is subjectively free (that is, objectively accidental) or naturally determined. Interestingly from the viewpoint of the formation in Capital, Marx criticizes Kant who argues the universality of religion, and writing,

‘Kant’s example [of ‘one hundred Taler’ in his Critique of Pure Reason] 1 might have enforced the ontological proof. Real Talers have the same existence that the imagined gods have. Has a real Taler any existence except in the imagination, if only in the general or rather common imagination of man? Bring paper money into a country where this use of paper money is unknown, and everyone will laugh at your subjective imagination. Come with your gods into a country where other gods are worshiped, and you will be shown to suffer from fantasies and abstractions.’ (MEGA2, I.1, p.90; MECW, vol.1, p.104; bold letter citor).

Marx treats both god and money as relative existences in space, inquiring into why multitudes believe in such validity−limited existences as absolute, and why philosophers including Hegel engage in the justification of the absolute existence of God, just as bourgeois economists who justify money or presuppose its natural undeniable existence. Marx will soon shift to the critical analysis of money in his critique of political economy from autumn 1843 in Paris by way of the article ‘The Jewish Question’ in The German−French Annual. In The Paris Manuscripts, he writes, ‘Hegel’s standpoint is that of modern political economy.’ (MECW, vol. 3, p.333) and ‘The Logic — money of spirit, the speculative, the value of thought of man and nature (Die Logik — das Geld des Geistes, der

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Eighteen years later, Marx recognizes the same reading way in his letter of May 31st 1858 to Ferdinand Lassalle (1825–1864).

‘Even in case of those philosophers who give their works systematic form, for instance Spinoza, the real inner structure of his system is entirely different from the form in that he consciously describes.’ (MEW, vol. 29, p.561)

Such a textual reading text by Marx, including of Hegel, is neither a misreading nor a misunderstanding. It is surprising that the young Marx just twenty–two years old in 1840 had already formed his own critical methodology of critically reading texts. The cited next statement in his Afterword to the second German edition of Capital that Levine quotes in his Marx’s Discourse with Hegel (p.298) must be understood in the sense of the letter cited above that again confirms Marx’s own methodology that now works on Hegel’s dialectic itself.

‘The mystification which dialectic suffers in Hegel’s hands, by no means prevents him from being the first to present its general form of motion in a comprehensive and conscious manner. With him it is standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again, if you would discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell’ (Das Kapital, Erster Band, Dietz Verlag Berlin, 1962, p.27; Capital, vol. 1, trans. by S. Moore and E. Aveling, ed. by F. Engels, Progress Publishers, Moscow 1965, p.20).

2-2. Marx’s direct studies of original texts of the ancient Greek natural philosophers, Aristotle and Spinoza

[Aristotle’s De Anima] Marx’s critical textual analysis works, not only on the Ancient Natural Philosophers of Democritus and Epicurus, but also on Aristotle’s De Anima and Spinoza’s A Theologico−political Treatise (see MEGA2, IV/1, p.155ff, p.233ff).

Prof. Levine discusses Aristotle’s ‘On the Soul’ (De Anima), referring to Hegel’s History of Philosophy, as follows,

‘It is vital to my argument to note that Marx read Hegel’s History of Philosophy and that Marx knew this extended commentary by Hegel on Aristotle. Marx at least read, although he later overlooked, Hegel’s respect materialism’ (Levine, p.281).

However, the fact we have in MEGA2 is entirely different. Although Marx probably had come to know Aristotle’s De Anima by reading Hegel’s History of Philosophy, Marx also read De Anima, independent of what Levine calls Hegel’s ‘materialism’ context, and he took notes to the effect that he did not start from the head on De Anima, but from the last part on nous just after on phantasia (imagination or Einbildung) from his own ‘truth−falsehood’ problematic in connection to his critique of Kant’s epistemology, discussed below.

MEGA2 documents this fact (see MEGA2, Dietz Verlag Berlin, 1976, IV/1, pp.155–182). Marx inquires into what determines truth or falsehood, relating Kant’s paralogism that human reason (Vernunft) may reverse ‘ideality’ into ‘reality’ in the same way of Descartes thesis, cogito ergo sum : here cogito (I think) is the transcendental Subject that is just ideal par excellence, sum (I exist) signifies real existence. Descartes reverses ideal cogito (I think) into real sum (I exist) by means of ergo (therefore) : ergo is ‘fallacy of ambiguous middle’ (Kant). Marx comments in his note of Aristotle’s De Anima.

‘It is entirely correct from every viewpoint when Aristotle declares that synthesis [connection]
is the ground of all falsehood. Representing or reflecting thought is generally a synthesis [connection] of being and thought, that of generality (die Allgemeinheit) and individuality (die Einzelheit), and that of semblance [Schein] and essence [Wesen]. Then, further all incorrect thoughts exist as well as incorrect representation, consciousness etc. of synthesis of such determinations that do not belong to each other, being external in themselves, and are not immanent relationship of objective and subjective determinations’ (MEGA, IV/1, p.164 : English translation cit).

Further in the note on *De Anima*, Marx comments as follows.

‘Generally, just in the same way that 
*chorista ta pragmata* (thing [Sache] is separable), or thing [Sache] exists in and for itself from matter [Materie], *(that is, things [Dinge] in themselves are separated from matter, or are separable through abstraction)*, thus behaves what are for *nous*’ (ibid., S. 163 : bold letter, ( ) original).

Nous separated from essence speculates to fall in falsehood, but nous that is itself essential is true. Interestingly, in his doctoral dissertation, Marx uses the term ‘imaging understanding (der imaginierende Verstand)’ (MEGA2, I, p.17), probably based on the second (B) edition of Kantian *Critique of Pure Reason* where he connects Imagination with Understanding, changing the definition in the first (A) where imagination is most basic that gives rise both of sense and understanding.

**[Set concepts of Alienation and reification]** In his doctoral dissertation, Marx asks what separates a thing (Sache) into parts and what connects these parts in reified form, as for instance with religion. A thing (Sache) that a person has produced may become independent from them unexpectedly. Marx names the situation ‘alienation (Entfremdung) and reification (Versachlichung)’. The separated (alienated) things are not always connected so that recovers the original form; rather it takes false form which maintains the cause of the separation (alienation). In *The Paris Manuscripts* Marx calls this ‘supersession (Aufhebung) within alienation’. What motivates Marx in the doctoral dissertation to research the most basic cause of truth or falsehood? It is the cause of religion and money (MEGA2, I/1, p.90) : both will be his life time subject, continuing strongly connected. Though Marx’s shifts from a critique of religion to that of political economy, this does not signify that he abandons his critique of religion, but rather a further inquiry into false consciousness.

The key words here in his study of *De Anima* are *chorismos* (separation, Trennung) and *synthesis* (connection, Verbindung). Thing may arbitrarily be separated and is connected through social abstraction. Marx uses the term ‘alienation (Entfremdung)’ to refer to separation, and reification (Versachlichung) to refer to a false connection of the separated or alienated. Alienation and reification themselves are not material concept, but are relational par excellence. Reification is never ‘an extreme form of alienation’ to the same direction. On the contrary, it is material phenomenon of an alienated connection. The concept of alienation and reification will be key words in the formation of *Capital* ; both also appear in the *Grundrisse*.

‘It is clear to the economists that the existence of money presupposes the reification (Versachlichung) of the social connection’ (MEGA2, IV/1.1, p.93) ; ‘Money is *reified* medium.···Individuals have alienated (entfremdet) their own social relationship from themselves’ (ibid., p.99 ; italics citor)

2-3. Marx’s critique of Kantian epistemology

Marx microscopically searches into fragments of the Ancient Greek Natural Philosophers, Democritus (460?−370? B.C.) and Epicurus (341?−270 B.C.), in order to confirm that Kantian epistemol-
ogy can not adequately recognize the cause of religion and money.

Kantian epistemology consists of sense (Sinnlichkeit), understanding (Verstand) and reason (Ver-
nunft). Marx reveals that the three elements had already been separated as such by both Democri-
tus and Epicurus, about twenty-one hundred years before the first publication of Kant' Critique of
Pure Reason in 1781.

Democritus rejects sense as unreliable and seeks objects of understanding, leaving his home for
further empirical facts, and lastly comes to recognize his own ignorance. While Epicurus is confi-
dent of sensuous experience and is satisfied with what he comes to know by sense, indifferent to
think by understanding.

Both of them think that the atom is conceivable only with reason.

Therefore, the three moments of Kantian epistemology of sense, understanding and reason are
separated by both philosophers, and the moments are differently; sense is affirmative to Epicurus,
negative to Democritus; understanding is affirmative to Democritus, negative to Epicurus; and for
both of them, reason is separated from sense and understanding and is only active in conception of
atom, most abstract being.

Marx treats Kant with great irony. While Prof. Levine introduces Study of Hegel by Rosenkranz,
Introduction to Hegelian philosophy, Marx read Rosenkranz' History of Kantian Philosophy (see
MEGA2, IV/1, p.277–288) and makes a joke about Rosenkranz, writing 'The Kantian, on the con-
trary, are as it were the appointed priests of ignorance, their daily business is to tell their rosaries
(Rosenkranz) over their own powerlessness and the power of things.' (MECW, vol.1, p.428–429;
MEGA2, IV/1, p.619). 'Rosenkranz' here signifies a double function, the philosopher and the rosary
of student faithful to the Master Kant. Marx was never any obedient student of any master in his
life time.

2-4. Kantian four antinomies in Marx’s note for the Doctoral Dissertation

It is very noteworthy that the first of seven notes that Marx took in the preparation of his doctoral
dissertation includes the following sentences which evidence his interest in the four antinomies of
Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason. That proves that one of Marx’s main themes of the doctoral disserta-
tion is critique of Kantian antinomies.

As to Antinomy 1 (whether there is beginning in time and limit in space, or not), the first note reads,

'The universe is unlimited by reason of the multitude of bodies and the extent of the void.'
(MEGA2, IV.1, p.17 ; MECW, vol. 1, p.411 : bold citor)

As to Antinomy 2 (whether universe constitutes of part or it is just whole),

'Since they [atoms] have a certain size, there must be something smaller then they are. Such
are the parts of which they are composed. But these are necessarily to be considered together
as permanent community' (MEGA2, IV/1, p.19 ; MECW, p.412 ; [ ] citor).

As to Antinomy 3 (whether human being is free or is determined by natural necessity),

Necessity, which has been introduced by some as the ruler over all things, is not the ruler, he main-
tains, over that some of which depends on chance and some on our arbitrary will. Necessity is not
subject to persuasion; chance, on the other hand, is inconstant. But our will is free' (MEGA2, IV
/1, p.13, Apparat, IV/1, p.600 ; MECW, p.408 ; italics original).

Antinomy 4 (whether there is absolute necessary being [God] or not),
‘Gods verily there are. For the notion of them is evident. .....Not the man who denies the gods worshipped by the multitude, but he who affirms of the gods what the multitude believe about them is truly impious. For the utterances of the multitude about the gods are not true preconceptions, but false assumptions.’ (MEGA, IV/1, p.11−12 ; MECW, p.406 ; italics original)

Marx’s solution to the antinomies is that atom supersedes (aufhebt) these four antinomies. The first two antinomies are similar in that they articulate a contradiction between finiteness and infinity. As Kant argues that if there is a beginning in time, something must be before the beginning, and in the same way, if there is a limit in space, there must be something beyond it. To set a beginning or a limit is to give rise contradiction between finiteness and infinity that Kant calls ‘semblance of reason (Schein der Vernunft)’. However, Marx argues that the people’s daily lives are trapped in the appearance of religion or money as infinity. The theoretical task is thus to analyze the cause and structure of such appearances.

Atom is unity of both, being finiteness that holds infinity, because atom includes other atoms eternally and is included within other atom. Atom is a set that includes other atoms as element and is element as being included within other atom. A human being has by nature an atomistic way of thinking in the sense above. As will be commented upon later (see [4−4]), commodity at the head of Capital is atom in modern economic form. Commodity is simultaneously set of huge commodities and its element. Commodity is economic atom that gives rise birth of money.

In the first antinomy of his Critique of Pure Reason, Kant argues,

‘An infinite time must be regarded as having passed away in the enumeration of all co-existing things. However, that is impossible. For this reason, an infinite aggregate of actual things (ein unendliches Aggregat der wirklicher Dinge) cannot be considered as a given whole, consequently, not as a contemporaneously given whole’ 2

Marx criticizes Kantian rejection of coexistence of what is next to one another and what is one after the other, writing in the 1859 Critique of Political Economy,

‘In the actual process of circulation, C−M−C presents itself as infinite accidental of what is next to one another and what is one after the other (als unendlich zufälliges Nebeneinander und Nacheinander) of miscellaneous linkage of the various total metamorphoses. The actual circulation of commodity appears ...as a simple set (als bloßes Aggregat) of many purchases and sails that coexist as what is next to one another and what is one after the other’ (MEW, vol.13, p.75 ; bold letter citor).

Evidently, Marx’s Critique here implies against Kantian Critique. The reason why Marx affirms the coexistence of ‘Nebeneinander and Nacheinander’ is founded on recognition that trader’s ideal decision−making establishes contract of commodity exchange. Purchase of commodity and its sail are done simultaneously in one moment. Even though two traders exist on the reverse sides on the globe, their trade is done at the moment when offer is accepted. The exchange takes no time in the mind of the traders. Trade establishment is ideal in instant, but the carrying out takes real time that costs. Therefore, shortening of the real time is ultimate imperative for trader. That causes development of highly rapid system of communication and transportation. Marx’s Grundrisse describes such movement in ‘II Particularity of Capital’. Capital hastens the so−called ‘the great civilizing influence

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of capital’ in that context.

Money is thus the central problem since Marx’s Doctoral Dissertation. Marx’s conclusion of the study is that atom is media that supersedes Kantian antinomies. The concept of atom is media to settle the antinomies through simultaneously being ‘set and element’, just the same way capitalist money supersedes in form of commodity capitalist separation between man and nature, or labor and means of production including land.

3. The Paris Manuscripts reconsidered with Marx’s notes of A. Smith’s Wealth of Nations

3-1. Does philology of Marx’s writings bring high wall against theoretical analysis?

Prof. Levine declares that he shifts his subject of Marx study from framework of The 1844 Manuscripts of Paris and Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit to that of Marx’s Capital and Hegel’s Science of Logic. Broadly, the present commentator shares with Levine’s project on condition that Marx’s critique of political economy is made clear based on its original context.

Surprisingly, Professor Norman Levine estimates the limit of The Economic-philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 published in MEGA2, writing,

“‘The Manuscripts’ were not generalizations, they were not introductions to Marx’s later system. It is a distortion of ‘The Manuscripts’ to read them as a totality, as a propaedeutic to his mature theory of social development.’ (Levine, p.205)

Those theoretical limitations of ‘The Manuscripts’ is hard to justify when careful traces are carried on the philological evidences of Marx’s study of political economy in 1843–44.

In the Third Manuscripts, Marx wrote, ‘Hegel’s Logic is money of spirit’. That signifies that Marx had already begun the project of the critique of National (Political) Economy in light of Hegel’s Science of Logic.

3-2. Marx’s unique way of taking notes of A. Smith’s Wealth of Nations

More importantly, Marx had taken two times notes of A. Smith’s Wealth of Nations, firstly in such a particular order: starting from Chapter One of Book One to Chapter Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven, and after citing a few starting sentences of Chapter Eight, Marx (seemingly suddenly) jumped to Chapter Two of Book Two, passing over most of all Chapter Eight, all of Nine, Ten and Eleven. Notably, Marx focuses on paragraph on money in Chapter Two of Book Two. And then, Marx changes the style of taking notes, putting the following eight titles with citations related with each subject.

I. Wage of labor (MEGA2, IV/2, p.346)
II. Profit of capital (ibid., p.349)
III. Wage and profit in various employments (ibid., p.351)
IV. Rent of land (ibid., p.353)
V. On different two parts in which fund divides itself (ibid., p.357)
VI. On accumulation of capital, or on the productive and unproductive labor (ibid., p.360)
VII. On fund that is laid on interest (ibid., p.360)
VIII Different employment of capital (ibid., p.361)

The titles indicate that Marx then already had distinct problematic of the critique of political econ-
omy. The first half part of The First Manuscripts is divided into three parts, wage, profit and rent that correspond exactly to the above of ‘I. Wage of labor’, ‘II. Profit of capital’, ‘III. Wage and profit in various employments’, and ‘IV. Rent of land’. It is noteworthy that Marx fills all the three columns of Page VI with the citations related only with wage. That utilization indicates that capital and land-property derive profit and land-rent from ‘surplus value’. Marx already uses in his note of Wealth of Nations (WN) the term ‘Mehrwerth’ (MEGA, IV/2, S.362) in the sense of Das Kapital.

3.3. Marx’s note of Wealth of Nations and The Paris Manuscripts

The above title ‘III Wage and profit’ corresponds to Chapter Ten of Book One of WN that inquires the relationship between wage-labor and capital on that Marx analyzes in pages from XIII to XVI of the First Manuscript. Thus, from the beginning of The Paris Manuscripts, Marx started the systematic critique of political economy. The investigation of the relationship of the three revenues is the prototype of ‘The Trinity formula’ of Book Three of Das Kapital.

In the half last part of so called ‘Alienated Labor’, Marx grasps alienated labor in four definitions from viewpoint of wage laborer.

1. Alienation of laborer from product of labor
2. Alienation of labor in production process
3. Alienation from species life (or Gattungsleben)
4. Alienation of man with each other (or destruction of primitive community)

Definition (1) is the result of the process of capitalist production. Definitions (3) and (4) are prepositions of capitalist production of (2) and, then notably, definitions (3) and (4) are the same with definition (1). All definitions are chained with each other as circular process, or capitalist reproduction that corresponds to Chapter Three of Book Two of WN, or the title above VI. Here in The Paris Manuscripts, reproduction is not divided into two parts as in Part Three of Book One and Part Three of Book Two of Capital. The theoretical distinction becomes clear in The 1861–63 Manuscripts; that distinction is influential for Marx to reconsider the most abstract relationship between value-form and exchange-process that is shown in the first German edition of Book One of Capital in 1867.

When Marx encounters theoretical fission between Chapter Five on simple commodity and Chapter Six on commodity capital of Book One of WN, he soon leaps to Chapter Two of Book Two on capital money. The shift signifies that he finds the problem of realization of commodity capital into capital money [(C’—M’) in process of (C—M—C(Lp+Pm)···P···C’—M‘)] in comparison with (C—M). However, the problem is conditioned on two aspects of competition and social reproduction amongst many capitals. Which ordering is correct, from competition to reproduction, or from reproduction to competition?

The problem catches his theoretical analysis not only in the Grundrisse, but in The 1861–63 Manuscripts and The 1863–65 Manuscripts, especially in ‘The Third Section Commodity as Product of Capital’ of ‘Chapter Six Results of Immediate Process of Production’ of the latter Manuscripts. The year 1844 Paris is decisive, setting the starting line for his life time long investigation into the appropriate system of critique of political economy. The notes of WN by A. Smith and Elements of Political Economy by James Mill are to use in the Grundrisse. Marx evidently writes the Grundrisse, referring The Paris Manuscripts and the notes. He is problematically persistent throughout his life time.
In its basic order of *The Paris Manuscripts*, the Aristotelian analytical method works from concrete forms to abstract one, through *de-­mediating* into the most *immediate* form. Marx’s project here is an inquiry into the reverse order of description (or presentation) of his forthcoming critique of political economy after *The 1847 Poverty of Philosophy*. *The Paris Manuscripts* is thus basically method-organized.

Dr. Jürgen Rojahn’s philology of *The Paris Manuscripts* provides exact information. Referring to Rojahn’s study, the late Ryuji Yamanaka, one of the Japanese Marx scholars, edited on his own editorial idea the manuscripts in the title of *Marx’s Paris Manuscripts* in such order from the First Manuscripts, *via Commentaries on James Mill*, to the Second and to the Third in Japanese translation (Ochanomizushobo, Tokyo, 2005). He did not put the Commentaries on James Mill after the end of the Third like Ms Inge Taubert’s mistaken edition.

Yamanaka’s edition encourages Marx scholars to reconsider the theoretical motives of *The Paris Manuscripts*. The philological study should not mislead to assume that *The Paris Manuscripts* holds no significance for the formation of *Das Kapital*. On the contrary, it is the monumental inauguration of the critique of political economy by Marx. That is why Marx wrote in the Preface to *The 1859 Critique* that his own critical viewpoint of political economy had been *firstly* demonstrated in *scientific style* in *The Poverty of Philosophy* published in 1847. If the early Marx in 1840s research would have been fragmental without clear problematic strategy, his remark in the Preface must be something wrong. What is it? Prof. Levine is too much cautious about *The Paris Manuscripts* in face of philological debates over the early manuscripts in including *The German Ideology* that really happened, especially in Part on Feuerbach, as the first tackling of Marx’s (and Engels’) historiography of pre-capitalist forms and primitive accumulation. The *Grundrisse* includes the second formulation in the paragraphs titled ‘Forms which precede capitalist production’.

The unique writing order in the *Third Manuscripts* that starts from critique of political economy and shifts to that of philosophy and returns to that of political economy, two times in all, justifies the ‘one project’ understanding. For example, the master–slave relationship in Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* is not abandoned after *The Paris Manuscripts*, not even in the *Grundrisse*. As Marx demonstrates in Chapter on Capital in the *Grundrisse*, where Hegel’s *Logic* is applies systematically, the more highly capitalist technology in form of fixed capital of machinery develops where living wage-workers step up to ‘the general intellect’ as subjective factor of the machinery system, though most of them remain in simplest laborer attached to huge mechanism, the clearer the wage-workers become conscious of their own capability that they must recover the title with that they open way for simplest laborers to join the same work; such strategy prepares the coming post-capitalist society. That is Marx’s phenomenology that critically succeeds Hegel’s.

4. Marx’s *Capital* and Hegel’s Syllogism

4-1. ’Method’ and ’system’, ’form’ and ’content’ are separable?

Prof. Levine inaugurates a new Marx research project that stands on separation of ‘form’ and ‘content’, and that of ‘method’ and ‘system’ and succeeds only the former of form and method. However, next citation of a foot note from the first edition of Book One of *Capital* that reads differently, as follows,

‘It is not surprising that economists who are entirely under the influence of material interest
have failed to see the meaning of form (Formgehalt) of relative representation of value, while even professional logicians before Hegel had failed to see the content of form (Forminhalt) of paradigm of judgment and that of syllogism,’ (*Das Kapital*, re-publication of the original text of the first edition, Far Eastern Publishers, 1959, Tokyo, p.21; citator’s English translation).

‘Formgehalt’ and ‘Forminhalt’ above give evidence that form and content (or meaning) are separable and the separation firstly emerges as ideal or theoretical abstraction and they are separated (alienated) and connected in reified form in practical actuality, as already shown in Marx’s commentary on Aristotle’s *De Anima*. Marx’s materialism has Aristotelian tradition that attaches greatest importance to ‘cause of matter’ to understand what exists from viewpoint of onto–epistemology. That is indifferent to Lenin’s ‘reflection’ misunderstanding. Any method is adequate that is able to follow content that consequently constitutes system of development of form, especially in the case of Marx’s critique of political economy. Marx rather maximizes the idealistic speculative nature of capitalism in order to see the outcome. In that sense Marx’s method is rather idealistic, paradoxically that necessitates the study of the continental idealism, especially philosophy of Kant and Hegel to realize Marx’s approach to capitalism.

4-2. Immediate commodity exchange implies ‘Moebius Band’

Immediate exchange of commodity gives typical example between two commodity owners K and L, where form and content organizes themselves interrelated spirally.

Theoretically, each commodity [CK, CL] ideally separates itself into two attributes of use-value (content) and exchange-value (form) through exchange relation itself.

Not commodity itself, but its subject, commodity owners of CK and CL unconsciously reverses the situation in their own self-consciousness in exchange process. They presume self-deceptively that commodity by nature has two elements of use-value and value, although factually private exchange of goods negatively abstracts use-value and positively value, just as Marx remarks in *Capital* (*Das Kapital*, Erster Band, Dietz Verlag Berlin 1962, S.51).

Now, commodity of K [CK] moves from K to L [see ↦ 2 in Figure (I) below] and commodity of L [CL] from L to K [3 ↦ 4], simultaneously. Each movement implies double sense; not only movement of use-value but that of exchange-value. That is, movement of [CK] transfers from K to L, both of use-value of [CK] and exchange-value that exists in [CK] as the price of buying [CL], and contrastively, movement of [CL] transfers from L to K, both of use-value of [CL] and exchange-value that exists in [CL] as the price of buying [CK].


Two pair moments of ‘selling[1,3]’ and buying[2,4]’ and ‘paying[1,3]’ and receiving [2,4]’ move contrary directions, progressively and retrospectively.

1 selling [CK] by K→2 buying [CK] by L
1’ paying by K the price of buying [CL] →2’ receiving by L the price of selling [CL]
3 selling [CL] by L→4 buying [CL] by K
3’ paying by L the price of buying [CK]→4’ receiving by K the price of selling [CK]

Then, let sign ∞ signify transformation into the opposite from selling to buying, or from paying
to receiving, and sign double parentheses [[ ]] mean round connection of the four elements, the four elements reorganize themselves just shown as below.

\[ \text{movement of use−value between K and L} \]
\[ \text{movement of exchange−value between K and L} \]

Each movement transfers into the opposite form between K and L, from selling to buying, and paying the price and receiving it, coming back to the starting point. Therefore, commodity exchange constitutes the topology 'Moebius Mand' where movement arrives to the starting point from backward, turning itself 180 degrees two times (cf. two times of \( \infty \)). Here in the commodity exchange, transformation occurs two times each for use−value and exchange−value, then, two times of two times, that is, four times as shown four \( \infty \) above.

【Immediate commodity exchange implies 'Moebius Band'】

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3 See H. Uchida, *op. cit.*, p.28.
It is very interesting that the next two incidents happened in the same year 1858; one when Marx formulated commodity circuit formula (C→C') in the last part of the Grundrisse, writing paragraph of ‘1) Value’, that is de facto ‘commodity as set and element’, and the other when the German mathematician August Ferdinand Möbius (1790–1868) found ‘Möbius Band’ that was documented in his note.

By way of demonstration of value-form and exchange-process, commodity breaks into commodity and money. Both are two elemental forms for the movement of capital that necessarily turn into material production to produce capital in form commodity, returning to the starting form (from simple commodity to commodity capital). Thus, Marx’s Capital develops into system of commodity (capital) circuit. Marx’s method is not one-way progressive just as commonly misunderstood, but doubly progressive-retrospective in movement of use-value and exchange-value, as proved above. His focus of description shifts from one form to next, formulating syllogism, from simple commodity, to money as potential capital, to conditions of production in form of commodity, to production, and to commodity capital (C→M→C [Lp+Pm]→P→C') (here, Lp signifies labor-power; Pm, means of production).

It is noteworthy that, for commodity-owners, commodity-exchange essentially takes no time, nor space, because commodity exchange happens ideally in their mind in instant. Actual trade to carry out needs real time and commodity generally moves in space. The two is essentially different, but is interrelated in actuality. Here is readable Kantian paralogism that counterfeits ideality of the transcendental thinking Subject to be reality of its existence, just like Descartes’ cogito ergo sum. That is why Marx writes in The 1859 Critique of Political Economy, both are possible coexist of what is one to another in space (Nebeneinander), and what is one after the other in time (Nacheinander), just as already mentioned.

4-3. Prof. Levine’s Pair of ‘Universality-Particularity’

Prof. Levine proposes the pair of Universality and Particularity to make analysis of Capital. However, there are two problems.

The first is whether or not, it is necessary to make distinction between Generality and Universality. The German word ‘die Allgemeinheit’ in Marx’s usage signifies something that has not established its own purpose (telos) that matches to the term Generality, and the term Universality is what is established its own end that Aristotle calls entelecheia. That is universality. Things in capitalism are not entelecheia for the Aristotelian Marx; they are rather in process of being unfinished or in ‘pre-history’.

The second is that Prof. Levine’s pair lacks ‘Individuality (die Einzelheit)’. Just shown in the Grundrisse Marx utilizes Hegel’s syllogism of Generality, Particularity and Individuality to constitute ‘Chapter on Capital’, just like the present reviewer showed in his Marx’s Grundrisse and Hegel’s Logic, Routledge 1988. Prof. Levine does never mention the Grundrisse in his recent book, Marx’s Discourse with Hegel. Marx did discourse with Hegel in the Grundrisse, systematically. Instead, Prof. Levine leaps from The Paris Manuscripts, over the Grundrisse, to Capital. The Grundrisse is the definitely unescapable mediation of The Paris Manuscripts and Capital. Moreover, Marx writes to Engels in his letter of January [about 16] 1858 (MEW, Bd.29, p.259) that his re-reading of Hegel’s Logic is very effective to writing the Grundrisse.
Hegel’s syllogism in Marx’s *Capital*

Hegel’s syllogism consists of three moments, Individuality (die Einzelheit), Particularity (die Besonderheit) and Generality (die Allgemeinheit). Three figures are shown as follows.

Figure 1) Individuality → Particularity → Generality [F1 (I−P−G)]
Figure 2) Generality → Individuality → Particularity [F2 (G−I−P)]
Figure 3) Particularity → Generality → Individuality [F3 (P−G−I)]

On the other hand, ‘process of production of commodity capital’ is shown as follows.

\[
C \rightarrow M \rightarrow C(Lp+Pm) \rightarrow P \rightarrow C'
\]

([where C: commodity, M: money, Lp: labor power, Pm: production means, P: production, C': commodity capital, M': money capital.]

For reference, Marx makes a short comment in *The 1859 Critique* (MEW, Bd. 13, p.76) on correspondence of Marx’s formula of capital circuit to Hegel’s syllogism, as below,

‘Commodity—money—commodity can be reduced abstractly in logic into [Hegel’s] syllogism form of Particularity—Generality—Individuality, where Particularity takes form of the first extreme, Generality joins as medium both extremes together and Individuality sets itself on the last extreme.’ (MEW, vol. 13, p.76)

Then, Commodity corresponds to Particularity [C=P], Money to Generality [M=G], Conditions of production (Labor power and Production means) and Production itself to Individuality [C(Lp+Pm)→ P→I].

Now, three figures are written by economic notations as,

\[
F1 (I−P−G)= [C(Lp+P)\rightarrow P\rightarrow C']
F2 (G−I−P)= [M'\rightarrow C(Lp+Pm)\rightarrow P\rightarrow C']
F3 (P−G−I) = [C'\rightarrow M'\rightarrow C(Lp+Pm)\rightarrow P]
\]

The syllogism reveals how Marx’s *Capital* constitutes syllogistic structure that is hidden in economic terms. Three figures of the syllogism enchain spiral system through all the three books (Bücher, not volumes [Bände]) of *Capital*. Circuit of capital in each book of *Capital* corresponds to pairs of figures, as below.

**Book I of Capital** (circuit of commodity from simple commodity to capital commodity)

\[
(C\rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow C')
\]

F3 (C'→ M'→ C(Lp+Pm)→ P) F1 (C(Lp+P)→ P→ C') F2 (M'→ C(Lp+Pm)→ P→ C')

**Part 1 of Book II** (circuit of money capital)

\[
(M\rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow M')
\]

F2 (M'→ C(Lp+Pm)→ P→ C') F3 (C'→ M'→ C(Lp+Pm)→ P) F1 (C(Lp+P)→ P→ C')

**Part 1 of Book II** (circuit of production capital)

\[
(P\rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow P)
\]

F1 (P→ C'→ M') F2 (M'→ C(Lp+Pm)→ P→ C') F3 (C'→ M'→ C(Lp+Pm)→ P)

**Part 1 of Book II** (circuit of commodity capital)

\[
(C'\rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow C')
\]

F3 (C'→ M'→ C(Lp+Pm)→ P) F1 (C(Lp+P)→ P→ C')

**Part 2 of Book II** (turnover of capital)

\[
(P\rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow P)
\]

F1 (P→ C'→ M') F2 (M'→ C(Lp+Pm)→ P→ C') F3 (C'→ M'→ C(Lp+Pm)→ P)

**Part 3 of Book II** (reproduction and circulation of the aggregate social capital)
Commodity capital circuit \([C'\rightarrow\ldots\rightarrow C']\) is basically common formula to each book of *Capital*. Then, *Capital* begins with commodity and ends in the same form. The whole system of *Capital* organizes itself in continuity by Hegel's syllogism.

In short, Marx's *Capital* constitutes of syllogism as below.  

Basic formula of *Capital* is \(C'\rightarrow\ldots\rightarrow C'\) that unites both circuits of \(M\rightarrow\ldots\rightarrow M'\) as valorization and \(P\rightarrow\ldots\rightarrow P\) as expanding use-value production that physically mediates the valorization and constitutes of the whole system in the three volumes of *Capital*

As shown above, progress of figures in horizontal ‘time order’ correspondingly reappears in retrogress of figures in vertical ‘space order’. Both are possible to coexist only in capitalist idealistic perspective for valorization. Center figure of each circuit takes role of mediation; for instance, in the circuit of commodity capital, \(F_1\) mediates both the first extreme \(F_3\) and the last \(F_2\). Each of the first extreme figure moves retrospectively \((F_3\rightarrow F_2\rightarrow F_1)\) and prospectively in each circuit \((F_3\rightarrow F_1\rightarrow F_2)\), simultaneously. The reversely double spiral in progress and retrogress expresses development of the principal movement of simple commodity exchange that matches with ‘Moebius Band’, just as shown above [4–2]. The advancement in each circuit results in retreat that returns at last to the first starting figure. The successions through figures are not immediate, but spirally reverse movement that mediates structure of \([set\rightarrow(element=set\rightarrow(element))]\), for instance, \([F_1\rightarrow F_2\rightarrow F_3\ [F_2\rightarrow F_3\rightarrow F_1\ (F_3\rightarrow F_1\rightarrow F_2)]]\). The central pair of figures \([F_2\rightarrow F_3\rightarrow F_1]\) is, on one side, set that includes the last pair \([F_3\rightarrow F_1\rightarrow F_2]\) as element and the central pair itself is

\[\text{figures in horizontal} \quad \text{figures in vertical}\]

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4 Audience who has basic knowledge of Group Theory in mathematics may see through ‘isomorphism’ between Marx’s formalization of circuit of commodity capital and Hegel’s syllogism. In order to match in the formalization, Topology of ‘Moebius band’ that is applied to Marx’s Logic Space must develop to Group Theory where topological ‘element’ becomes moment of ‘permutation’ and ‘set’ is redefined as ‘group’ that maintains its structure by self-reproducing or reflection (Rückbeziehung). The present reviewer is preparing to prove in his coming article that Marx’s critique of political economy systematically bases its theoretical structure with the same kind of logic as Group Theory, although Marx did not know the two founders of Group Theory, Niels Henrik Abel (1802–1829) and Évariste Galois (1811–1832).
element included in another set of the first pair \( [F_1 \rightarrow F_2 \rightarrow F_3] \). Further, not only each pair of figures, but each figure itself is simultaneously both set and element, for instance, the central \( F_3 \) of the pair \( [F_2 \rightarrow F_3 \rightarrow F_1] \) is such doubly defined existence. Marx’s *Capital* is syllogism of syllogisms that continues logically in infinity, just as capitalism seems eternal existence. Commodity that gives rise syllogism of three figures is both set and element, just as written in the first paragraph of Book One of Capital as below,

‘The wealth of those societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails, appears (erscheint) ‘as a huge set of commodity’ (als ‘ein ungehueren Warenansammlung’), each commodity being as its elemental form (als ein Elementarform).’ (*Das Kapital*, Erster Band, Dietz Verlag Berlin, 1962, p.49; *Capital*, vol.I, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1965, p.35; citation in English partially altered, bold letter citor)

As well-known in topology, set of set that does not include itself as element is ‘empty set \( \emptyset \)’, just in the same way as in Hegel’s syllogism. Circuit of commodity capital is ‘empty set’ that does not include itself, but includes ‘two empty sets’ as elements of circuit of money capital and that of production capital. Marx’s *Capital* is the theory of capitalist global valorization grounded on ‘empty set’ of \( (C'\rightarrow C') \) that syllogistically includes ‘two empty sets’ as elements of \( (M\rightarrow M') \) and \( (P\rightarrow P) \).