



Marx's Resurrection of Aristotle

Norman Levine

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ISBN 978-3-030-57034-7 ISBN 978-3-030-57035-4 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57035-4>

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This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG. The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

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Introduction

As a means of clarifying later portions of this book, it is necessary to introduce three clarifications. These clarifications fall under three categories: Methodological and Linguistic; Revisions; The Enlightenment Left.

Methodological

Marx's *The Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* no longer exists as a single text. The research of Jürgen Rojahn¹ documents that *The Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* was a construction of the Soviet scholar David Ryazanov. The first publication of *The Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* appeared in the 1932 Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe (MEGA I and MEGA II). But these manuscripts did not form a complete text, but were rather a compilation of disparate drafts written by Marx in 1844 and compiled into a single text by Ryazanov. Therefore, in the remainder of Marx's *Resurrection of Aristotle I* will not employ the term *The Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* but rather use the term *The Manuscripts* as a means of illuminating their fragmented nature. However, one essay in *The Manuscripts*, "Critique of

¹Rojahn, Jürgen, "Die Marxschen Manuskript aus dem Jahre 1844 in der neuen Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, Vol. 24 (1985), pp. 647–663.

the Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy as a Whole,” is a totality in itself and will be referred to in later portions of Marx’s Resurrection of Aristotle.

Similarly, *The German Ideology* was initially published in 1932 in MEGA I and was edited by V.V. Adovatskii. However, recent research by Tervel Carver and Inge Taubert/Hans Pelgar² establish that the first chapter, the “I, Feuerbach” chapter was also a creation of Ryazanov. Replicating his editorial imagination in *The Manuscripts* Ryazanov compiled the “I. Feuerbach” from scattered comments and diffused notations by Marx. However, the invalidation of the “I. Feuerbach” chapter does not extend to chapter two, or “The Leipzig Council.” Contrary to the “I. Feuerbach,” chapter two, the “The Leipzig Council,” is a complete, self-contained chapter. Therefore, in Marx’s Resurrection of Aristotle I will not employ the term *The German Ideology*, but rather “The Leipzig Council.”³

Linguistic

Chapter 3 of Marx’s Resurrection of Aristotle is entitled “The Pneumatology of Labor.” This chapter is devoted to the distinguishing Marx’s theory of labor as a pneumatology from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century economics. Whereas Marx understood the stages of the modes of production as expressions of the pneumatology of labor, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century economics explored the laws of economic development. A complete discussion of this difference is found in Chap. 4.

However, at this point I want to acquaint the reader with the linguistic distinctions that will appear in Marx’s Resurrection of Aristotle. I inform the reader about these linguistic distinctions as a form of preparation so when the reader confronts these terms they will be forewarned about their individual meanings.

The term “pneumatology of labor” will only be used in reference to Marx’s theory of production. A synonym for the pneumatology of labor

² Rojahn, Jürgen, “Marxismus-Marx-Geschichtswissenschaft-1844,” *International Review of Social History*, Vol. 28 (1983), pp. 2–49.

³ Carver, Terrell, “The German Ideology Never Took Place,” *History of Political Thought*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (Spring, 2010), pp. 107–127.

is the phrase the phenomenology of labor. These phrases are used to particularize Marx's theory of production, to isolate its uniqueness.

The history of the theory of production is divided into two parts: economics and the organic mode of production. The term "economics" will be used to explain the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century theories of production. Thomas Malthus, David Ricardo, and Adam Smith were examples of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century economists, and within this text economics will be used as synonyms for seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Political Economy. Economics was the study of the theory of production derived from natural law, mechanistic materialism, or the Enlightenment Center. Contrary to economics was the theory of production deriving from Aristotle, which is called the organic form of production. In Athenian Greece, the household was the center of production and agriculture was the basis of the household. In the household mode of production, the subject and object enjoyed a reciprocal relationship. The subject, the laborer, had unhindered access to the object, nature, a reciprocal relationship existed between subject and object, or production was carried on for use and not for exchange.

Aristotle and Marx were representative of the organic mode of production and it was from this perspective that Marx wrote his critique of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Political Economy.

Revision

The year 2016 witnessed the publication of my book, *Marx's Rebellion Against Lenin*.⁴ Pages 108 to 116 of this book contain an analysis of Marx's *The Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature*. Chapter 1 of my new book, *Marx's Resurrection of Aristotle*, puts forth a more detailed study of Marx's dissertation. In the years separating the publication of *Marx's Rebellion Against Lenin* and the appearance of *Marx's Resurrection of Aristotle* alterations evolved in my assessment of Marx's dissertation. I take this moment to outline these revisions. A description of these modifications will equip the reader to

⁴Levine, Norman, *Marx's Rebellion Against Lenin* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

better understand the redrafting and reconstruction of Marx's Rebellion Against Lenin and Marx's Resurrection of Aristotle.

Marx's definitive enrollment into Left Hegelianism takes place in 1842 and his journalism, "The Leading Article in No. 179 of the *Kölnische Zeitung*" is the clearest documentation of this conversion and allegiance.

This statement amounts to a revision of the interpretation put forth in my previous book *Marx's Rebellion Against Lenin*. In that book I stated: "The 1841 Dissertation confirms Marx's conversion to the Left Wing form of Hegelianism."⁵ I take this opportunity to revoke that assertion.

Left Hegelianism, as previously stated, was basically a combination of two philosophic tendencies: subjective consciousness and critique. Subjective consciousness was an expression of the principle that self-consciousness was the ground of truth. The ultimate criteria for the establishment of truth was the commitment, the affirmation of the subjective consciousness of a subject. Secondly, this autonomy of consciousness must be joined by critique, the turning of subjective consciousness against a reality of the external. Critique was the negative weapon in the hands of subjective consciousness to uncover and reveal the flaws of reality. Left Hegelianism only existed when critique became the major function of consciousness.

The union of critique, Bruno Bauer, and subjective consciousness, Hegel, is only fashioned by Marx in "The Leading Article in No. 179 of the *Kölnische Zeitung*."⁶ The union of the ideas of Bauer and Hegel was only initially demonstrated in the 1842 article in the "*Kölnische Zeitung*." Only then does Marx fully recreate philosophy as an unbounded negativity against the external world.

By uniting critique with subjective consciousness Marx turned Left Hegelianism into a negation of the external. Whereas Hegel employed philosophy to affirm reality, Left Hegelianism turned philosophy into a tool to invalidate reality.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

⁶ Marx, Karl, "The Leading Article in No. 179 of the *Kölnische Zeitung*" in *Karl Marx-Fredrich Engels Collected Works* (New York: International Publishers, 1975), Vol. I, pp. 184–202.

The Enlightenment Left

The term “Enlightenment Center” refers to the broad pan-European cultural development of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. The Enlightenment Center was based upon the principles of Natural Law and Natural Rights. Some of the leading spokespersons of the Enlightenment Center were Thomas Hobbes, David Hume, and John Locke. These men were some of the leading advocates of the principles of Political Science and Political Economy.

The Enlightenment Left was essentially a French development and was a rejection of the Enlightenment Center. The Enlightenment Left were eighteenth-century communists who rejected the idea of private property and state. The Enlightenment Left saw private property as the beginning of class domination and the state as the epitome of class dictatorship. In contrast to the Enlightenment Center, the Enlightenment Left called for the destruction of the state and the replacement of the state by civil society. Some of the members of the Enlightenment Left were Gabriel Bonnet de Mably, Etienne-Gabriel Morelly, Gracchus Babeuf, Theodore Dezamy, Comte de Saint-Simon, and Jean-Jacque Rousseau.

The Enlightenment Left agreed with the Enlightenment Center’s conception of the Historicism of the modes of production. The Enlightenment Left agreed that a primitive form of society existed before the state. However, they disagreed with the Enlightenment Center’s interpretation of this primitive society. According to the Enlightenment Center this primitive society was a state of perpetual warfare. Thomas Hobbes, a member of the Enlightenment Center, in his book *The Citizen*,⁷ described the primitive state as a constant state of warfare. The Enlightenment Center upheld the principles of natural jurisprudence, which advocated that natural law dictated that humanity advance, transcend primitive society, and construct a state because a state granted greater security and social cooperation than the primitive society. The Enlightenment Center conceived the state as the apex of political inventiveness, it was both necessary and an improvement.

⁷Hobbes, Thomas, *The Citizen*, ed. Howard Warrender (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983).

The Enlightenment Left rejected Enlightenment Center's view of primitive society and the state. The refutation of the Enlightenment Center's view of primitive society is found in Morelly's Code of Nature. Rather than the Hobbesian view of inherent warfare, Morelly presented primitive society as exhibiting inherent sociability. Based upon an anthropological perception Morelly presented primitive society as operating in terms of the instinctive human need for sociability. Humans were not inherently selfish and antagonistic, but on the contrary, driven by the need for mutual recognition and social interconnection.

Whereas the Enlightenment Center extolled private property and the state, seeing the state as the defender of individual rights to private property, the Enlightenment Left condemned both private property and the state. The Enlightenment Left adhered to the ideas of Rousseau, although Rousseau was not himself a representative of the Enlightenment Left, contained in his essay "A Discourse on the Origin of Inequality" that private property destroyed the equality of primitive society and was the origin of the dictatorship of the state. Adhering to this vision of the inherent sociability of primitive society, the Enlightenment Left called for the abolition of private property and the reinstatement of the communism of primitive society. The revolutionary creed of the Enlightenment Left advocated a dual revolution, the extinction of both private property and the state as a means of returning to a civil society.

The embodiment of the Enlightenment Left doctrine of a dual revolution was Gracchus Babeuf in his opposition to the Jacobins. Babeuf renounced Robespierre and Saint-Just because they only fought for a political revolution, the demolition of the bourgeoisie class state by the introduction of universal suffrage. Babeuf attacked Robespierre and Saint-Just because they stopped short of the social revolution, or the extinction of private property. A communist revolution could only be achieved by a dual revolution, or community could only be achieved by the eradication of both state and private property.

The Enlightenment Left led a revolt against the lexicon of the Enlightenment Center. The principle of equality replaced the idea of right; the concept of need substituted for the idea of profit; the concept of a society based upon mutual reciprocity superseded the ideas of class

and state. The Enlightenment Left created a new vocabulary for the discussion of social governance and distribution.

Marx was a continuation of the Enlightenment Left. His absorption of the Enlightenment Left theory fell into four categories: (a) His rejection of both private property and the state as the outcome of private property; (b) His acceptance of the principle of the inherent sociability of the human species and that this mutual reciprocity formed the foundation of “civil society”; (c) This “civil society” based on mutual reciprocity would become the governing order, or the government would be a manifestation of a society denuded of private property; (d) The supersession of the model of the Jacobin Revolution which was merely a political revolution and the embrace of the theory of a two-stage revolution, simultaneously both a political and social revolution.

The above description of the Enlightenment Left is merely intended to introduce the reader to this concept in an attempt to allow them greater insight when the phrase is used again in later chapters of this book. The author will present a more comprehensive view of the Enlightenment Left in a forthcoming book on this subject.



1

The Tyranny Greece Over Marx

Part One: Marx's Doctoral Dissertation

In order to properly access the influence Aristotle and Greek philosophy exerted upon Marx, it is also necessary to study Hegel's analysis of Greek philosophy contained in Volumes I and II in his Lectures on the History of Philosophy.¹ Marx's 1841 doctoral dissertation, *On the Differences Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature*, is a refutation of the historiography of Greek philosophy as presented by Hegel in Volumes I and II. However, in order to locate Marx's initial absorption into the study of Aristotle and Greek philosophy, it is first necessary to return to Marx's 1837 letter to his father.

At the age of 19, while a student at the University of Bonn, Marx wrote to his father that he was abandoning his initial desire to study law,

Butler, Eliza Marian, *The Tyranny of Greece Over Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1935). Butler's book presents the tyranny of Greece over Germany as extending to Adolf Hitler. I disagree that German Fascism was an expression of Greek Humanism. Nevertheless, I do believe that a tyranny of Greece over Germany was prevalent in the works of Hegel, Marx, extending to Friedrich Nietzsche, and then declining in Western culture.

¹Hegel, George Wilhelm Friedrich, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, trans. E.F. Haldane (Lincoln: University of Nebraska press, 1995).

the profession of his father. Instead Marx embarked upon the pursuit of philosophy. He wrote to his father that he authored a 24-page manuscript entitled “Cleanthes, or the Starting Point and Necessary Continuation of Philosophy.”² This work is now extinct. However, it is important to point out that Cleanthes was a Greek Stoic philosopher who lived from 330 BC to 230 BC. Cleanthes was the successor of Zeno and was the second head of the Stoic school in Athens. Marx comments on Stoicism at length in his 1841 dissertation.

Marx’s knowledge of Greek and Latin was confirmed in this 1837 letter to his father. He wrote: “At the same time I translated Tacitus’ *Germania* and Ovid’s *Tristia*, and began to learn English and Italian by myself.”³ Prior to entering the University of Bonn, Marx was a student at the Gymnasium in Trier. His Certificate of Maturity from the Trier Gymnasium noted that Marx already knew Latin, Greek, and French.⁴ Marx’s proficiency in languages, particularly in Latin and Greek, was already established before he commenced his dissertation studies.

Fortified by his command of Greek, Marx’s 1837 letter to his father certifies his first acquaintance with Aristotle. In that letter Marx wrote: “I translated in part Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*.”⁵ In addition, Marx’s 1837 letter draws attention to his involvement with Hegelian philosophy when Marx wrote: “While I was ill, I got to know Hegel from beginning to end, together with most of his disciples.”⁶ Lastly, this letter also confirms Marx’s acquaintance with Bruno Bauer, the beginning of his association with the Left Wing Hegelians.⁷

The 1837 letter was the moment of the fusion of Aristotle and Hegel in the thought of Marx.

In 1837 Marx transferred from the University of Bonn to the University of Berlin. While at the University of Berlin, Marx took courses from

² Karl-Marx-Friedrich Engels *Collected Works* (New York: International Publishers, 1975), Vol. I, p. 18.

³ *Ibid.*, p.17.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 643–644.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

Friedrich Karl von Savigny, Eduard Gans, and Bruno Bauer.⁸ His interest in Greek Humanism continued because in late 1839 he took a course of Euripides's *Iphigenia in Aulis* and was graded as "diligent" by the professor.⁹

Marx completed his doctoral dissertation and received his Doctor of Philosophy degree in 1841 from the University of Jena.¹⁰ In July of that year he planned to enlist as a Privat-Docent at the University of Bonn and begin an academic career. However, in the autumn of 1841 Bruno Bauer, a young Hegelian, was banned from teaching at the University of Bonn and consequently Marx surrendered his academic ambitions and started his career in journalism. In August 1841 Marx's fiancé, Jenny von Westphalen, wrote to Marx and in that letter referred to him as a "Hegelian gentleman."¹¹

The following pages will offer an analysis of Marx's doctoral dissertation, *On the Differences Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature*. However, before embarking upon this analysis it is first required to comment upon the disappearance of the manuscript. Marx's original copy of the manuscript is lost, and what remains is an incomplete copy in the hand of an unknown person. In addition to this incomplete copy written by an unknown person, there also exist notebooks by Marx. The notebooks are not a text, but rather references to books Marx utilized in his research. These notebooks contain comments Marx wrote as he explored the writings of Plutarch, Cicero, Diogenes Laertius, and Sextus Empiricus and the opinions of these ancient authors on the writings of Democritus and Epicurus. Lastly, Marx did read the surviving works of Democritus and Epicurus in themselves. Nevertheless, regardless of the incompleteness of Marx's dissertation, what survived of his dissertation does allow the contemporary reader to ascertain an accurate assessment of his evaluation of the history of ancient Greek philosophy, in addition to Marx's judgment of Hegel's presentation of ancient

⁸ Ibid., pp. 699–700.

⁹ Ibid., p. 700.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 705.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 707.

Greek philosophy as put forth in Volumes I and II of his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*.

In Volume I, Hegel begins his discourse on the history of philosophy with the pre-Socratic Ionian school. Thales was the major representative of the Ionian school and Thales was a spokesperson of Ionian materialism when he claimed that water was the substance of the universe. For Hegel Thales was the first to “begin the history of philosophy.”¹²

Pre-Socratic philosophy quickly advanced to the Eleatic School, composed of Xenophanes, Parmenides, Melissus, and Zeno. A Platonic Idealist, Hegel extolled the Eleatic School because “thought thus becomes for the first time free for itself in the Eleatic School.”¹³ In particular, Hegel singled out Parmenides of the Eleatic School as a “striking figure in the Eleatic School”¹⁴ and went on to praise Plato for writing his dialogue *Parmenides*, which expounded the idea that Mind was the determining influence on human evolution.¹⁵

The Eleatic School, presupposing the determinative influence of Mind in social development, continued in the work of Heraclitus. In Volume I, Hegel admitted “there is no proposition of Heraclitus which I have not adopted in my *Logic*.”¹⁶ In addition, Hegel asserted that Heraclitus was a leading advocate of the dialectic.¹⁷ However, the dialectic of the school of Heraclitus was not the dialectic of Plekhanov and Engels. The dialectic of Heraclitus was a precursor of the dialectic of Spinoza, or the dialectic in Heraclitus meant negation, or definition. Dialectic in ancient Greece, as we shall see in Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, meant contradiction in order to define or contradiction in order to isolate the *differentia specifica*.¹⁸

Pre-Socratic philosophers progressed into the philosophy of Leucippus and Democritus. For Hegel, Leucippus was “the originator of the famous atomic school”¹⁹ and Democritus perpetuated Eleatic atomic theory.

¹² Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Vol. I, *ibid.*, p. 171.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 249.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 279.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 278.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 282–285.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

Following Eleatic philosophy, Democritus denied the supremacy of sense perception; he was not an empiricist. Democritus derived his theory of atomism from rational speculations. Based on the logic of Mind, Democritus maintained that the atoms fell in a straight line and this was a major point of dispute between Democritus and Epicurus. Whereas Democritus maintained that the atoms fell in a straight line, Epicurus critiqued Democritus and argued that atoms swerved as they fell, or the theory of declination.

In Hegel's *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, the pre-Socratic school advanced to the Socratic school of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle and the Socratic school was the apex of Classical Greek philosophy. Following the Socratic school, in the Alexandrian age, Greek philosophy fell into decline, or the Stoic and Epicurean and Sceptical schools were all symptoms of decline. In particular, Hegel criticized Epicurus because of his belief that sense perception was the ground of ideas. Hegel always denounced empiricism, and as of late 1830 in his *The Philosophy of Mind*, he wrote: "Pure thinking knows that it alone, and not feeling or representation, is capable of grasping the truth of things, and that the assertion of Epicurus that the true is what is sensed, must be pronounced a complete perversion of the nature of mind."²⁰ The Alexandrian age was an introduction to the Augustian age, or in Hegel philosophy continued its decline throughout the Roman Empire.

Marx's dissertation, *The Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature*, was a direct refutation of Hegel's history of Greek philosophy. In his dissertation, Marx agreed with Hegel that Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, or the "wise men," represented the epitome of Greek thought. But Marx refuted Hegel and claimed that Epicurus, the Sophists, and the Sceptics were also symbols of the greatness of Greek philosophy. The Alexandrian age, in which Epicurus, the Sophists, and the Sceptics wrote, was an age of philosophical greatness. For Marx, the decline of ancient philosophy only commenced in the Augustian age or Caesar's imperial Rome.

The major thesis of Marx's dissertation was to negate Hegel's presentation of the history of Greek philosophy, but this should not be

²⁰ Hegel, *The Philosophy of Mind*, trans. William Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 224.

interpreted as meaning that Marx embraced empiricism without qualification.

Marx's relation to Hegel was composed of two areas: (A) areas of discontinuity; (B) areas of continuity. In relation to Marx's dissertation, I will first address the areas of discontinuity.

1. In terms of the area of disassociation, Marx refuted Hegel's interpretation of the historiography of Greek philosophy. In addition, Marx did not agree with Hegel's denunciation of empiricism and sense perception. In terms of political theory, Hegel was a Prussian Monarchist and rejected the Aristotelian idea of a Republic and the communal structures of the polis. In contradiction, Marx called for the overthrow of the state and the refounding of government on the basis of a communal structure.
2. In terms of the areas of continuity, I will divide this section into the following five subdivisions: (1) Subjective Consciousness; (2) Philosophy Confronts the World; (3) Socrates and the Need for Political Participation; (4) Hegelian Logical Categories; (5) Praise of Aristotle. With the exception of the praise for Aristotle, the areas of continuity in Marx were grounded in terms of logical categories. The following discussion of the abovementioned five subdivisions will be entirely drawn from the surviving pages of Marx's doctoral dissertation.

1. Subjective Consciousness

Following Hegel in extolling the freedom of self-consciousness, Marx praised Epicurus as one of the first to advocate the freedom of self-consciousness. Even though Marx and Hegel disagreed in their evaluation of Epicurus, Marx traced the continuity of the doctrine of subjective consciousness from Epicurus to Hegel to Bruno Bauer. In his dissertation, Marx wrote: "Therefore: just as the atom is nothing but the natural form of abstract, individual self-consciousness, so sensuous nature is only the objectified, empirical, individual self-consciousness, and this is the

sensuous.”²¹ Later on in his dissertation, Marx returned to the same theme regarding the transcendence of self-consciousness when he wrote: “If abstract-individual-self-consciousness is posited as an absolute principle, then, indeed, all true and real science is done away with, inasmuch as individuality does not rule within the nature of things themselves.”²²

The ultimate goal in life for Epicurus was the achievement of ataraxy, or inner peacefulness. Ataraxy was a life lived without inner turmoil or distress. Self-consciousness must subordinate itself to the ethical goal of life, or ataraxy. Therefore, self-consciousness possessed the authority to deny anything that withheld the goal of ataraxy. Consequently, Epicurus denied the existence of meteors. According to Epicurus, the belief in meteors introduced elements of uncertainty and anxiety in human life and for this reason self-consciousness possessed the ethical duty to deny the existence of meteors.

In addition, contrary to Democritus, Epicurus upheld the theory of the declination of the atoms. Democritus held that atoms fell in a straight line, but Epicurus maintained that atoms swerved as they fell. Declination allowed Epicurus to explain the large formations of matter, rocks, or planets. When atoms experienced declination, this explained how large formations of matter evolved because as individual atoms collided, the atoms interconnected, fused, into large bodies of matter.

Epicurus employed the freedom of subjective consciousness to advance the theory of declination. Atomic theory was first asserted by Democritus, and Epicurus, building upon the theory of Democritus, used his axiom of subjective consciousness to explain the existence of matter through declination. According to Epicurus, the explanation of the natural world must accord with the laws of self-consciousness.

Marx was an advocate of Epicurus’s theory of self-consciousness because it was the inception of a long evolution of self-consciousness that flowed into Hegel, the Left Hegelians, Bruno Bauer, and Marx’s entrance into Bauer’s Doctors Club.

²¹ Marx, “The Doctoral Dissertation”, in Karl Marx-Friedrich Engels Collected Works, Vol. I, *ibid.*, p. 65.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 72.

2. Philosophy Confronts the World

Marx embraced the Epicurean principles of the freedom of self-consciousness because it was the ground of the confrontation between philosophy and the external social reality.

In Volume II of his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Hegel asserted that thought was the creation of the world. Hegel wrote: “It is the creation of the world, in it everything has its determinate form in regard to everything else, and this constitutes the substance of things. Since, in the third place, substantiality or permanency in the faculty of thought is determination, its production, or the flowing out of all things from it, is of such a nature that it remains filled with all things, or likewise absorbs all immediately.”²³

The Epicurean idea of the freedom of self-consciousness, the confrontation between self-consciousness and the social, was the substructure of Hegel’s, Kant’s and Marx’s adoption of critique. Hegel applied the concept of critique to the fields of philosophy, ethics, and culture; however, Marx expanded the notion of critique to include politics. In Marx, critique meant the confrontation between subjective consciousness and the state. Marx arrived in Paris in 1844 and wrote his *The Manuscripts*. In the Preface to these manuscripts, Marx wrote: “I have already announced in the *Deutsche-Französische Jahrbücher* the critique of jurisprudence and political science in the form of a critique of the Hegelian philosophy of laws.”²⁴

3. Socrates and the Need for Political Participation

Hegel’s Volume I of *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* contains extensive comments on the thought of Socrates. For Hegel, Socrates was the epitome of the “wise man.”²⁵

According to Hegel, the forefather of Socrates was Anaxagoras. In the period prior to the rise of the Socratic school, Anaxagoras was the first to

²³ Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Vol. I, *ibid.*, p. 420.

²⁴ Karl Marx-Friedrich Engels *Collected Works* Vol. III, *ibid.*, p. 231.

²⁵ Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Vol. I, *ibid.*, pp. 474–475.

proclaim that Thought was the substance of the world. Anaxagoras advanced the idea that Thought was the generative principle in the evolution of humanity.²⁶ Being was an outgrowth of thought, or *vous*.²⁷

Based upon the supremacy of the *vous*, Anaxagoras propounded the supremacy of self-consciousness. Socrates perpetuated this principle and advanced the principle of the freedom of subjective consciousness, or the freedom of subjective consciousness attained its zenith in the thought of Socrates.²⁸ For Hegel, Socrates was the symbol of the “wise man.”²⁹

For Hegel, an individual became a “wise man” by his participation in politics. Hegel applauded Socrates for his participation in Athenian politics. Socrates was a symbol of the unification between philosophy and political engagement, or philosophy’s confrontation with the world. The greatness of Athenian Greece was an expression of the Socratic model, or the engagement of the “wise man” into the political. Hegel maintained that the modern world, Europe during the Enlightenment, was a period of decline from the greatness of Classical Greece because Enlightenment individuality replaced the Athenian involvement in the state, or man as a political animal.

However, Hegel’s *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* was published in 1830, the era of the Hohenzollern Monarchy. Consequently, when Hegel advocated political participation in 1830 he was calling for the loyalty to and obedience to Prussian absolutism.

Marx’s relation to the Socratic Model in Hegel was composed of both continuity and discontinuity. From the point of view of continuity, Marx agreed with Hegel in the adherence to the Socratic Model. Like Socrates, the philosopher must critique the world. Marx’s discontinuity with Hegel arose because he did not want philosophy to justify political autocracy. Philosophy was not the handmaid to Monarchy.

Marx was awarded his doctorate in philosophy in 1842. The Prussian autocracy denied him a teaching position at the University of Bonn because of Marx’s association with Bruno Bauer and the Left Hegelians.

²⁶Ibid., p. 320.

²⁷Ibid., p. 329.

²⁸Ibid., pp. 384–389.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 474–475.

Following his blockade by the Prussian autocracy, Marx started his career in journalism and went to work for the *Rheinische Zeitung*, a newspaper of Liberal opposition to the Prussian Crown. In 1841 Marx was a Liberal and he unleashed his philosophic attack on the Prussian Crown. Marx turned philosophy against the world. He restricted the Socratic Model, or the “wise man” no longer used philosophy to improve the state but rather the “wise man” must use philosophy to oppose, to Liberalize, the Hohenzollern Monarchy. The “wise man” in 1841 was a political reformer, not yet a revolutionary. The “wise man” operated from the Anaxagorean-Socratic principle of the freedom of self-consciousness.

4. Hegelian Logical Categories

On the logical level Marx borrowed Hegelian categories, but, on the historical level, Marx employed these categories to disprove Hegel’s interpretation of Democritus and Epicurus and the passage of Greek philosophy. The Hegelian logical categories that Marx used in his dissertation were three, Negation, Essence-Appearance, and Abstract-Concrete, and the following paragraphs in this chapter will discuss each of these separately.

(a) Negation

In the dissertation Marx also utilized three other Hegelian logical categories as synonyms for negation and these additional categories were repulsion, contradiction, and self-determination.

In order to logically establish the declination of the atoms, Marx took advantage of the Hegelian concept of negation. Epicurus negated the Democritean concept that atoms fell in a straight line and this negation was the ground of the Epicurean theory of the declination of the atom.³⁰

A synonym for negation was repulsion. Self-consciousness employed repulsion in order to establish its individuality, or individuality came into existence when self-consciousness was distinguished from the Other.

³⁰ Karl Marx-Friedrich Engels Collected Works, Vol. I, *ibid.*, p. 49.

Repulsion was the activity of securing the freedom of self-consciousness.³¹

Contradiction was employed by Epicurus to validate his theory of declination. Epicurus's concept that atoms swerved when they fell was a contradiction of the properties of the atoms as understood in ancient Greece. Nevertheless, Marx maintained that Epicurus was justified in employing the concept of declination because it was the only means by which Epicurus could explain the formation of atoms into masses of matter. Marx justified Epicurus's use of Hegelian logical categories as instruments in accounting for the coagulation of atoms into masses.³²

The logics of negation, repulsion, and contradiction were the causes of self-determination. Self-determination or individuality could not emerge unless negation, repulsion, and contradiction did establish its separateness, its distinctiveness from the surrounding world.³³

Marx used Hegelian logical categories to establish the superiority of Epicurus over Democritus. In so doing, Marx negated Hegel's preference for Democritus over Epicurus.

5. Praise for Aristotle

In order to properly grasp the influence Aristotle exerted upon Marx, it is first necessary to study the influence Aristotle exerted on Hegel. Not only did Hegel himself exercise an enormous influence on Marx, but Marx's esteem for Aristotle was a reiteration of Hegel's esteem for Aristotle.

Hegel's admiration of Aristotle was most clearly expressed in Volume II of his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*. In that book, Hegel wrote: "The fulness with which I have set forth the principle content of the Aristotelian philosophy is justified both by the importance of the matter itself, because it offers to us a content of its own, and also by the circumstances already mentioned that against which no philosophy have

³¹Ibid., p. 52.

³²Ibid., p. 54.

³³Ibid., p. 52.

modern times sinned so much as against this, and none of the ancient philosophers have so much need of being defended as Aristotle.”³⁴

In addition, Volume II of the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, which was published between 1833 and 1836 after Hegel’s death in 1830, contains Hegel’s most extended commentary on the works of Aristotle. The discussion at this point will focus on Hegel’s analysis of Aristotle’s understanding of the dialectic and the syllogism. The book of Aristotle that Hegel refers to when discussing the differences between the dialectic and syllogism were the *Analytica Priora*, the *Analytica Posteriora*, the *Topica*, and the *Metaphysics*.³⁵

Aristotle’s most extended discussions of the dialectic and syllogism are to be found in his *Analytica Priora*³⁶ and *Analytica Posteriora*.³⁷ In both these studies, Aristotle drew a distinction between the dialectic and the syllogism. Within the domain of logical categories, the function of the dialectic was to contradict. Contradiction established identity, or contradiction meant to exclude, and exclusion was the step that led to the attainment of particularity.

Whereas contradiction meant the conquest of a particularity, the syllogism was the advancement to a new individuality. The syllogism was not limited to negation, but rather was dedicated to an advance, or the overcoming of a universal in the progress toward a new individuality. The equation for the syllogism was Universal-Particular-Individual. In the syllogism, a Universal was contradicted by a Particular, but then advanced to a higher stage of a new Individuality. Whereas the dialectic meant negation, or termination, the syllogism meant fusion, or blending, which was an advance to a higher Individuality, from which a new process of reasoning emerged.

In Hegel’s *Logic*, which is the first volume of his *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, which was published in 1830, Hegel initiated his discussion of the differences between the dialectic and the syllogism.

³⁴ Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Vol. II, *ibid.*, p. 224.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

³⁶ Aristotle, *Analytica Priora*, *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: The Modern Library, 2001), pp. 65–82.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 119–136.

Pages 244–256 offer an in-depth analysis of the syllogism,³⁸ while pages 115–118 describe the uniqueness of the dialectic.³⁹ In Hegel, the dialectic and syllogism were two separate logical forms.

Hegel displayed a high regard for Aristotle, however, for Hegel the peak of ancient Greek philosophy was Plato. Hegel was an Idealist, for him the originative force in human evolution was Mind, and he looked upon Plato as the initiator of the primacy of Mind. Plato's theory of the Idea was the historical precursor of Hegel's theory of Mind. Both Plato and Aristotle considered thought, consciousness, as the causal agent of social development.

The continuity and discontinuity in the Hegel-Marx relationship is evidenced in their disparate evaluations of Plato and Aristotle. In terms of continuity, both men revered Plato and Aristotle. In terms of discontinuity, while Hegel placed Plato at the summit of Greek thought, Marx placed Aristotle at the summit of Greek thought. The discontinuity arose because Hegel perpetuated Platonic Idealism, while Marx perpetuated Aristotle's naturalism.

Marx's esteem for Aristotle was displayed in both his doctoral dissertation itself and his Notebooks to the dissertation. This esteem took two forms, exhortation and bibliographical. These exhortations were displayed on two occasions in the dissertation and on one occasion in the Notebooks. In the dissertation, Marx referred to Aristotle as "Greek philosophy's Alexander of Macedon,"⁴⁰ and a page later stated that Greek philosophy "reached its zenith in Aristotle."⁴¹ In the Second Notebook to his dissertation, Marx described Aristotle as "the acme of ancient philosophy."⁴²

On the bibliographical side, Marx's dissertation itself contained an extensive list of footnotes, listing the sources he consulted as he did research for his doctorate. In this bibliography Marx noted the following books of Aristotle he read: *On the Soul*, *On the Heavens*, *On Becoming*

³⁸ Hegel, *The Logic*, Part One of the *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, trans. William Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), pp. 244–256.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 115–118.

⁴⁰ Marx, *Karl Marx-Friedrich Engels Collected Works*, Vol. I, *ibid.*, p. 34.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 34.

and Decaying, Metaphysics, and the Physics. In addition to the above citations, Aristotle's Rhetoric must be included, which he stated he translated in German in his 1837 letter to his father. Finally, in Marx's Sixth Notebook he notes that he read Aristotle's *On the Nature of Animals*.

Absent from Marx's dissertation bibliography is a mention to Aristotle's *Topica*, *Analytica Priora*, and *Analytica Posteriora*. These were books of Aristotle that Hegel mentioned in Volume I of the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*. But the fact that Hegel mentions these three works and that Marx did not can be explained by the areas of Aristotelian thought Hegel and Marx were investigating. In his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* Hegel studied the logical structures of the thought of Aristotle, and consequently he concentrated on these three works because they were definitive sources of Aristotle's logic. Conversely, Marx's dissertation dealt with the scientific theories of Heraclitus and Epicurus, and therefore Marx was most concerned with the scientific speculations of Aristotle. The differences in the goals of their research led Hegel and Marx to concentrate upon different aspects of Aristotelian philosophy.

In addition, in his dissertation Marx does not comment on the *Politics* nor the *Nicomachean Ethics* of Aristotle. Again, in the dissertation, Marx was consumed with the scientific theory of Aristotle. Nevertheless, it is certain that Marx knew the *Politics* and *The Nicomachean Ethics* because he refers to them frequently in his post-dissertation writings and, as further pages in this book document, they exercised a predominant influence on the shaping of Marx's political theory.

Marx's knowledge of Classical Philosophy, both Greek and Roman, was not only limited to Plato, Aristotle, Democritus, and Epicurus. The Notebooks to his dissertation illustrate the comprehensive nature of his grasp of Classical Greek and Roman philosophies and cultures. Marx left behind seven Notebooks.

The First Notebook contains citations from the work of Diogenes Laertius, which were contained in a book by Pierre Gassendi. This Notebook not only draws upon the work of Diogenes Laertius but also references Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and in addition Aristotle's *Physics*.⁴³

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 405–416.

The Second Notebook refers to Diogenes Laertius, Sextus Empiricus, and to Plutarch's book *That Epicurus Actually Makes a Pleasant Life Impossible*. Plutarch's interpretation of Epicurus drew major denunciations from Marx. Plutarch's critique of Epicurus was based on the assertion that the Epicurean notion of change, of the constant uncertainties introduced into mind by the persistence of time, made ataraxy, or inner peace, unattainable. Marx rejected Plutarch's critique, and instead argued that the Epicurean notion of the freedom of subjective consciousness offered sufficient grounds for the realization of ataraxy.⁴⁴

In addition, Marx's Second Notebook alludes to the work of Pierre Gassendi and Ludwig Feuerbach. Marx was critical of the work of Gassendi because he doubted how Gassendi's Christianity, his belief in divine intervention and the immortality of the soul, could be reconciled with the Epicurean ideal of secular ataraxy. More importantly, the Second Notebook also makes reference to Feuerbach's book *History of Modern Philosophy*. Marx's 1841 dissertation was Marx's first reference to Feuerbach.⁴⁵

The Fourth Notebook centers upon a discussion of Lucretius's *On the Nature of Things*. Marx applauded Lucretius for two reasons: first, he believed that Lucretius had a better grasp of Epicurean philosophy than Plutarch; second, because Marx appreciated Lucretius's adherence to sense perception since, in this regard, Lucretius perpetuated the Epicurean tradition.⁴⁶

Marx's Fifth Notebook is a commentary on how Seneca and Clements of Alexandria interpreted Epicurus.⁴⁷ His Sixth Notebook again returns to the work of Epicurus. In addition, it contains a citation of Plato's *Timaeus*.⁴⁸ The Seventh Notebook is a compilation of quotations that Marx took from Cicero's *On the Nature of the Gods*, which deals with Epicurus.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 417–422.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 423.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 469.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 478–488.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 497.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 503–509.

This brief summary of Marx's dissertation and Notebooks demonstrates his comprehensive knowledge of both Greek and Latin philosophy, history, and culture. The following pages in this chapter will make evident how Marx's extensive knowledge of Greek and Roman history influenced his thought throughout his lifetime.

Prior to his matriculation at the University of Bonn, the young Marx attended the Gymnasium in Trier. One of the examination papers Marx wrote at the Gymnasium was entitled "Does the Reign of Augustus Deserve to Be Counted Among the Happier Periods of the Roman Empire?"⁵⁰ In this examination paper, the young Marx praised the Augustan Age of Rome, and this was an opinion he reversed in his 1841 doctoral dissertation, which identified the Augustan Age as one of decline. The young Marx's Certificate of Maturity from the Gymnasium at Trier further certifies that he was competent in Greek, Latin, and French.⁵¹ It is important to take note of Marx's Gymnasium studies because of the impact they exerted throughout his life. A recent study by Professor Anthony Grafton describes Gymnasium studies in early nineteenth-century Germany as concentrating on philological studies and the interpretation of singular classical texts. The German Gymnasium in the 1830s was dedicated to an anti-Enlightenment and anti-French Revolutionary formula, remaining focused on philology and textual interpretation.⁵² The above references to the young Marx's training at the Trier Gymnasium are worthy of attention because they provide the academic background for the research he did in later life. The mature Marx, the Marx of the *Grundrisse*, the 1864–1865 Manuscripts and *Das Kapital*, was an inexhaustive researcher. His philological and textual studies at the Trier Gymnasium trained him to study the origins of capitalism, the economic and intellectual precedents of capitalism, with the same detail that he studied Democritus, Epicurus, Plato, and Aristotle.

Marx's dissertation did not terminate the tyranny of Greece over Marx. Aristotle's subsumption of Marx continued until Marx's death. The following pages of this chapter will record the history of this subsumption

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 639–642.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 634–644.

⁵² Grafton, Anthony, *From Humanism to the Humanities* (London: Duckworth, 1986).

and this history will be divided into the following subdivisions: (1) The Rheinische Zeitung and Letters to Arnold Ruge; (2) The Parisian Period; (3) The London Period; (4) The Grundrisse; (5) The 1863–1864 Manuscripts; (6) Das Kapital.

1. The Rheinische Zeitung and Letters to Arnold Ruge

This subdivision will be divided into the following parts: (a) Introduction; (b) The Continuation of the Tyranny of Greece over Marx in the Rheinische Zeitung and Marx's Letters to Ruge; (c) The Enlightenment Center and the Enlightenment Left; (d) Debates on the Laws of the Theft of Woods; (e) Marx's Rejection of Natural Law; (f) The Hegelian Left; (g) Feuerbach; (h) Aristotle's Subsumption of Marx; (i) Civil Society.

(a) Introduction

Marx was editor of the Rheinische Zeitung from 1842 until his resignation from the paper on March 17, 1843.⁵³ Under his editorship, the Rheinische Zeitung was a Liberal newspaper. Marx had not yet converted to communism. As a Liberal, Marx defended the principle of a free press. He defended the free press against the censorship of Hohenzollern Monarchy. As a Liberal, Marx did not call for the overthrow of the Prussian Monarchy, but rather its reform.

According to Marx, the failures of the Prussian Monarchy resulted from the Crown's unity with the Lutheran Church and the Feudal Estates of the Landed Nobility. This Triple Alliance empowered the Prussian government to exercise censorship of the press. In particular, it allowed the Prussian state to define the conditions for divorce. In his November 1842 article, "The Divorce Bill," Marx critiqued the Prussian Divorce Law because it granted the power to define marriage to the state. For Marx, marriage was not a Church or State institution, but rather a moral decision made by free individuals.⁵⁴ It is important to note that Marx was

⁵³Karl Marx-Friedrich Engels Collected Works, Vol. I, *ibid.*, p. 376.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 274–276.

anti-Feudal Estates, but not yet anti-class. Marx identified the Feudal aristocracy as a decadent institution, but in 1842 he had not classified them in political economic terms as a class.

In the *Rheinische Zeitung* Marx again displayed his loyalty to Hegel's theory of philosophy. In 1842, philosophy for Marx confronted the world, or the task of philosophy was to render the world more philosophical.⁵⁵ The fact that philosophy must transform the world evolved out of the principle of the freedom of consciousness, or consciousness must be free in order to carry out its mission of remaking the world.⁵⁶ The freedom of consciousness was a synonym for the freedom of subjective consciousness, a principle embraced by Hegel. Finally, the freedom of subjective consciousness served as the ground of criticism. In Marx's articles on "Debates on Freedom of Press"⁵⁷ and his "Leading Article in No. 179 of the *Kölnische Zeitung*"⁵⁸ and "In Connection With the Article 'Failures of the Liberal Opposition in Hanover,'"⁵⁹ Marx repeatedly extolled the importance of criticism. By 1842, Marx embraced the value of critique and continued the employment of critique in his 1844 Paris Manuscripts. A line of continuity ran from the *Rheinische Zeitung* to his Paris Manuscripts.

In two articles in the *Rheinische Zeitung*, "Communism and the Augsburg Allgemeine Zeitung" and "Communism and the Augsburg Allgemeine Zeitung: Editorial Note," Marx disavowed any interest in communism.⁶⁰ In the "Editorial Note," Marx copied a statement from the *Aachener Zeitung* stating that communism did not exist in Germany, but did exist in England and France. It is not surprising that after his resignation from the *Rheinische Zeitung*, Marx first went to Kreuznach and then moved on to France to start his exile.

The fact that Marx was neither a revolutionary nor a communist in 1842 is further evidenced by his relation to Robespierre and the French

⁵⁵ Ibid., "Leading Article in No. 179 of *Kölnische Zeitung*", p. 195.

⁵⁶ Ibid., "Comments on the Latest Prussian Censorship Instruction", p. 131.

⁵⁷ Ibid., "Debates of Freedom of Press", p. 159.

⁵⁸ Ibid., "Leading Article in No. 179 of *Kölnische Zeitung*", p. 185.

⁵⁹ Ibid., "In Connecting with the Article Failures of Liberal Opposition in Hanover", p. 265.

⁶⁰ Ibid., "Communism and the Augsburg Allgemeine Zeitung" and "Communism and the Augsburg Allgemeine Zeitung" Editorial Note, pp. 215–223.