

THOMAS KLIKAUER

**HEGEL'S MORAL
CORPORATION**



Hegel's Moral Corporation

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Hegel's Moral Corporation

Thomas Klikauer

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To

Rosa Luxemburg

*(Rosalia Luxemburg, Polish: Róża Luksemburg; 5 March 1871,
Zamość, Vistula Land, Russia – 15 January 1919,
Berlin, Germany)*

*Before World War I, Rosa Luxemburg advocated that
German workers should not shoot at French workers.
But German conservatism and nationalism decided otherwise.
Instead of following Rosa Luxemburg, they started two
World Wars and created Nazism. Today, a German call to
arms against France would be met with utter disbelief.
Finally, Rosa Luxemburg's dream is reality. If only
German conservatism would have listened to Rosa
Luxemburg instead of murdering her . . .*

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Preface

This book is not predominantly a philosophical book but a book about two versions of a corporation – one business oriented and dedicated to shareholder-value and profit-maximisation and one dedicated to moral life – *Sittlichkeit*, in Hegelian terms. The book is not written by a philosopher but by an author who has delivered a substantial critique on managerial capitalism in *Managerialism – Critique of an Ideology* (Klikauer 2013; Clegg 2014; Jaros 2014). In any case, merging Hegelian philosophy, ethics, and corporations is not as easy as it might appear. This is for several reasons: Hegel is widely recognised to be one of the most complicated philosophers. Hence an engagement with Hegel’s ethics provided a number of challenges when, for example, specific Hegelian terms such as *Geist*, *aufheben*, and *Sittlichkeit* needed to be used appropriately either in their original German form as applied by Hegel and/or with their general German meaning. Perhaps Hegel’s concept of *Geist* is the single most challenging one (*Geist* in Hegel does not mean spirituality – it has next to no religious connotations). A book on *Hegel’s Moral Corporation* needs to separate Hegel’s ethics from his general philosophy because only Hegel’s ethics, ethical life, and *Sittlichkeit* is of concern for the book. If one seeks to apply Hegel’s ethics to the world of business, management, and corporations, his ethics needs to be stripped down to the absolute core, separating the ‘essential’ from the non-essential and ‘accidental’ as Hegel would have it.

While there are Hegel interpretations from very different perspectives and orthodoxies, the book follows the British philosopher Houlgate’s (2011:1) notion that ‘no single orthodox . . . is presented here’. What is sought instead is a comprehensive picture of Hegelian ethical philosophy that is closest to a truthful representation of Hegel’s work. Hegel’s sometimes rather complex and difficult originals (primary literature) are clarified through using contemporary Hegel-interpretations (secondary literature). But even on interpretations, Hegel’s philosophy has issued certain contextual demands that had to be taken into account when writing on Hegel, as German philosopher Marcuse (1941:72f.) has outlined. Hegel appears to be one of those philosophers who have generated a considerable volume of secondary literature and several schools of thought called Hegelians, all of which have developed significant

insights into Hegel's philosophy. Those who have developed Hegel's philosophy further (e.g. Marx, Feuerbach, Stirner, Adorno, Anderson, Habermas, Honneth, Marcuse, Taylor) had to be separated from those who predominantly have had an interest in interpreting Hegel's philosophy (e.g. Hartmann, Henrich, Jameson, Kojève, Neuhouser, Pippin, Wood).

Since Hegel has only ever published four books, some of his philosophy is only available as lectures and lecture notes; hence, a quest for historical documents became unavoidable. Conflicts between Hegel's original German versions and sometimes diverging English translation(s) also had to be solved. Many initial translations of German literature have been undertaken by using 'translate.google.com' which more often than not provided a rough idea which demanded significant adjustments rather than a comprehensive translation. Additionally, most journals in English-speaking countries had been digitalised by the time of the writing of this book while access to German journals such as the all-important 'Hegel Studies' demanded the manual checking of volume by volume in libraries in Germany.

There are conflicting accounts inside the community of philosophers who are considered 'Hegel experts'. These conflicts have been left aside in order to focus on the task at hand – Hegel's Moral Corporation – relying on the most commonly recognised version of Hegel's ethics. The outcome of the examination of Hegel's ethics was applied to management, business, and corporations. Since Hegel's ethics deals mostly with human beings, the book necessarily deals more with the human side of the corporation (e.g. Human Resource Management, organisational theory, organisational behaviour, organisational psychology, and organisational studies) than with its rather technical-engineering side. If corporations are to be understood in their affirmative textbook version – often written by those who Baritz (1960) has called 'The Servants of Power' – the emerging picture of corporations would be highly one-dimensional. Therefore non-textbook sources had to be used in order to provide a comprehensive and truthful representation of 'what corporations are'.

One of the most exact representations of what corporations do has been developed by former *Harvard Business Review* editor Magretta (2012). Since most academic and non-academic (e.g. *Harvard Business Review*) management and business journals provide most uncritical pro-corporate research findings, more than these sources were required. But Hegel's dialectical requirement not to focus solely on positives but also to include the negatives (to see both sides: positive and negative) demanded the extensive use of critical non-textbook-like literature on corporations.

Acknowledgements

Initially, my 2007 book *Communication and Management at Work* led to the first engagement with the world of moral philosophy, a theme that was carried forward in *Management Communication – Communicative Ethics and Action* (2008), and was more generally approached in *Critical Management Ethics* (2010), *Seven Management Moralities* (2012), and *Seven Moralities of Human Resource Management* (2014). *Hegel's Moral Corporation* continues this exploration of ethics by focusing on the moral philosophy of German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831). For their original and continuous support I would like to thank all those who have given me their time and assistance in the initial conception of this book and by providing constructive criticism throughout the writing period. Special thanks go to Andreas Arendt (ultra-fast scanning and forwarding of material), Stephen Ackroyd, Sybol C. Anderson, Joe Berendzen, Jay Bernstein, Karin de Boer, Petra Gehring, Gerhard Göhler, Ágnes Heller, Lisa Herzog, Stephen Houlgate, Douglas Kellner, Wolfgang Kersting, Hannes Kuch, Piotr Markowski, Jan Müller, Stefan Müller, Alben Neschen, Ulrike Pappert, Terry Pinkard, Paul Redding (for assistance and discussions), Jürgen Ritsert, Tina Röck, Nathan Ross, Christoph Schmidt am Busch, Alison Stone, Allen Speight, Kenneth R. Westphal (extensive email contact and guidance), Richard Dien Winfield, and Allen Wood (commenting favourably on some of my previous Hegel publications).

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Despite the public image of being a technologically advanced country, Germany lags behind when it comes to digitalising academic journals.

By the time of this research (2011–2015), digitalisation was still being done only by individual publishers that digitalised some journals but not others, some volumes but not others. Some publishers did it but most did not. This made it necessary to go through volumes of philosophical journals and often dust-covered books in ‘four’ maze-like medieval German libraries (with some built in the year 1547) at Technische Universität Darmstadt. I am grateful to UWS for a few weeks of ‘self-funded’ research (2011–2015) and for supporting my attendance at the Hegel Congress 2011 (before cuts to conference attendance) in Stuttgart (Hegel’s birthplace) where I was able to meet many world-renowned Hegel scholars who provided an indispensable source of knowledge for this project.

The ability to speak German and access German Hegel sources has been indispensable. Machine-translation (www.translate.google) faulted immediately when facing Hegel’s language (e.g. *den Rahmen des Staates zu sprengen* does not mean to ‘blow up the state’). Hence, all translations had to be my own, done to my best ability as the closest approximation to the truth. I am also indebted to the employees of the ‘US-Congress Library’ who have catalogued books to perfection.

My appreciation also goes to those colleagues at UWS who shielded me from the worst excesses of Managerialism. My foremost gratitude, however, goes to my parents. Without their support my transition from being a local country boy attending Hauptschule (and an engineering apprenticeship) to the world of academia would never have been possible. I am endlessly indebted to the German trade union foundation, the Hans-Böckler-Stiftung. Finally, I would like to thank Palgrave’s team, especially Liz Barlow, Kiran Bolla, and Maddie Holder.

1

Introduction: Hegel's Philosophy of Corporations

The corporation is the only institution of civil society upon which Hegel unqualifiedly bestows the epithet 'sittlich'.¹

Business ethics is often seen as an oxymoron because business and ethics seem to be mutually exclusive. Perhaps this is even more so when moral philosophy is being linked to corporations. Reading through standard business ethics textbooks, one finds it is hard to avoid the impression that the field of business ethics is aware of this. It appears as if business ethics shields business and corporations from moral philosophy, reducing it to a few introductory pages that superficially 'highlight' selected elements of business ethics. As a consequence, it has become quite common in books and textbooks on business ethics, management, and corporations to focus on so-called key ethical themes such as virtue ethics, Kantian ethics,² utilitarianism, and perhaps occasionally on Rawls' ethics of 'Justice as Fairness'. Most textbooks, however, quickly proceed with a short overview of other ethical issues (marketing, wellbeing, whistle-blowing, etc.). In other words, one finds 'the relegation of moral and political problems and value judgements to the extreme margins of [managerial] textbooks'.³ The issue of management ethics seems to be a surface-structure rather than a deep-structure issue (Chomsky 1957). Remaining at the surface, standard management literature rarely finds managerial themes such as corporations discussed in the light of specific philosophers.⁴

As a consequence, it appears rather unusual for a scholarly book in the general area of management to engage with a specific aspect of moral philosophy, for example, Hegel's *Sittlichkeit*,⁵ linked to a specific managerial institution: the corporation.⁶ But a book on Hegelian *Sittlichkeit* linked to corporations can illuminate today's role of management in

2 Hegel's Moral Corporation

relation to corporations because 'Hegel has especially positive things to say about the corporation'.⁷ Such a book is not an overall examination of management ethics found in standard textbooks on management, nor is it a critical assessment of management on the base of a wide range of moral philosophies.⁸ In contrast to more general books on management, this book examines one single institution of management – corporations – from the standpoint of a specific philosopher: German philosopher G. W. F. Hegel (1770–1831).⁹ This is in line with the fact 'that Hegel wishes philosophy to confront "reality" i.e., economics in general and political economy in particular'.¹⁰ To honour this Hegelian commitment, this book investigates Hegel's engagement with modern economy within which Hegel placed the corporation.¹¹ In essence, this book is concerned with just six paragraphs – *Philosophy of Right* (1821:§§250–256) – of Hegel's entire philosophical work.

There appears to be a near total neglect or 'veil of ignorance'¹² when it comes to including Hegelian philosophy in management ethics.¹³ This applies across the board to nearly all writers of textbooks on management ethics and even more so to standard management textbooks. If management ethics is viewed from the perspective of one of the most used models in management, the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis that operates with defender, prospector, analyser, and reactor, for example, the following picture emerges.¹⁴ The field of management ethics carries connotations of being Miles and Snow's 'defender' rather than their 'prospector' because management ethics appears to defend its position enshrined in the narrow box of the perceived three to four so-called key themes of ethics which are virtue ethics, deontology, utilitarianism, and perhaps Rawls' 'Justice as Fairness'.¹⁵

Many publications of management ethics (the morality of management seen as an internal issue) and business ethics (focusing more on external issues) do not prospect beyond the much trumpeted standard range of four to five key themes. Unlike these, this book on Hegel and corporations seeks to engage with moral philosophy outside the three standard themes of virtue ethics, Kantian ethics, and utilitarianism. It is because of this self-imposed limitation or, as Rawls might see it, 'veil of ignorance'¹⁶ that the field of business ethics hardly ever ventures deeper into moral philosophy and contemporary developments within it.

In other words, the standard approach of business ethics shows the very opposite of what the US television show *Star Trek* has popularised as 'to boldly go where no man has gone before'. The final frontier of

most management ethics writers is to stay inside the box of what is perceived to be standard ethical theories. Management ethics is not on a mission to explore new worlds. It does not seek out new life and new ethical theories nor does it 'boldly go where no man has gone before'. In other words, management ethics remains asphyxiated inside its defender status; it displays ignorance towards what lies beyond the confinements of its three to four key themes, and the field is characterised by a staunch avoidance of prospecting beyond the well-documented depth of traditional and contemporary moral philosophy. Given that, it is not surprising that management ethics is a field that shows total ignorance towards Hegelian philosophy (cf. Klikauer 2013a). This is in spite of the fact that Hegel wrote comprehensively on morality, ethics, and ethical life.¹⁷ Hegel remains the only classical philosopher who directly engaged with the corporation – *Die Korporation*.¹⁸

Since its invention, management ethics has remained in blissful ignorance of even those philosophers who have extensively dealt with one key managerial issue: corporations.¹⁹ Perhaps the only significant exception is Alister MacIntyre's article on 'Why are the Problems of Business Ethics Insolvable?' (1983) and his work is not even directed towards the corporation. No modern philosopher has dealt with corporations in the way Hegel has.²⁰ Not surprisingly, Hegel is not only the first but remains the only modern philosopher ever to engage with corporations on a systematic (*Philosophy of Right*, 1821),²¹ philosophical (through his overall work), and ethical level (*Phenomenology*, 1807).²² Most importantly, he engaged corporations from the standpoint of his moral philosophy that he calls *Sittlichkeit*, which is Hegel's key term [*Schlüsselbegriff*] and which is commonly translated into moral life.²³ No other modern philosopher who has developed a comprehensive ethical system has included corporations in such a system.²⁴ Hegel remains the only philosopher to have achieved this. In the words of American philosopher William Maker (1987:22), 'Hegel is a thinker of modernity who has conceptualised the family, economics [and corporations], society, and the state in a distinctively modern and original way.'

This book first examines Hegel's link between corporations and his ethics of *Sittlichkeit* or ethical life. This is the morality link between *Sittlichkeit* and corporations. It closes the gap in standard management literature. Secondly, it presents somewhat of a critical extension of Hegelian moral philosophy on corporations because it reaches well beyond Hegel's outlines of Hegelian corporations in the early 19th century. In other words, it is not Hegelian but Neo-Hegelian in its

approach because it does not remain within the confines of Hegel but applies his philosophy to the corporations of the 21st century.²⁵ It fulfils what more recently Herrmann-Pillath & Boldyrev (2014:6) have noted as 'modern corporations have something to learn from the Hegelian model of *Korporationen*.' To achieve this, one needs to contrast Hegel's *sittliche* corporations against modern business corporations.²⁶ Perhaps more than almost all classical writings on business corporations,²⁷ it was the corporate CEO of the world's largest insurance corporation (AIG) – Hank Greenberg – who best summed up the basic moral philosophy of corporations:²⁸

All I want in life is an unfair advantage.

Contrasting this with Hegel's *sittliche* corporation as outlined in his *Philosophy of Right* (1821) is in itself a very Hegelian approach.²⁹ But it is also, as Hegel's predecessor Kant would have said, a project that contrasts 'what is' ('unfair corporations', Greenberg) with 'what ought to be' (*sittliche* corporations), thereby extracting the essence of corporations.³⁰ To sharpen the contrast between Hegel's '*sittliche* corporation' and the 'modern business corporation', one must acknowledge that modern business corporations have positive aspects; for example:³¹

corporations bring lighting, air conditioning, automobiles, jetliners, and clothing, computers, smart phones, plasma screens televisions, video games, and movies.

The overall picture of modern business corporations in this book still tends to focus on the critical aspects of the business corporation. This enhances the task of the book found in contrasting Hegel's moral-philosophical concept of a *sittliche* corporation with the modern business corporation. But all of this is not to be understood as an 'old versus new' issue as Hegel's moral philosophy and his *sittliche* corporation carry forward ethical demands onto today's business corporations. And neither is Hegel's philosophy an issue for history books.

In the words of German philosopher Glockner (1965:420), 'In truth, Hegel has created only one work. It has not appeared in bookstores. It is living and working in his mind.' It is today's task to carry forward Hegelian philosophy and to apply it in order to analyse present-day phenomena such as the business corporation.³² As Italian Neo-Hegelian philosopher Ferrarin writes, 'What matters in the study of the ancients [and Hegel

as well] is thus not so much the degree of fidelity and authenticity with which we reconstruct past philosophies, but rather the relation between our own philosophy and its time.³³ This is a very Hegelian statement.³⁴

The value of this becomes most obvious in the chapters of this book. Ferrarin (2011:436) continues with ‘the history of philosophy for Hegel is thus not a matter of retrieving givens, but of engaging in a living exchange with our predecessors’.³⁵ Perhaps this is exactly what, in the words of British philosopher Zygmunt Bauman (1987), divides legislators from interpreters. In short, there are those who can interpret Hegel. Sometimes they do so with the utmost precision. And then there are those philosophers who understand Hegel’s philosophy in order to move beyond the narrow confinements of Hegel’s specific words to become ‘legislators’ in their own right. This occurs when they create their own philosophy based on Hegel’s work. They create their own philosophical view by reaching beyond Hegel. In Ferrarin’s words they engage in a ‘living exchange with our predecessors’ to develop their own philosophy. They are philosophers – not mere interpreters – who engage in philosophical theories rather than theoretical interpretations.

This book provides access to Hegel’s ethical philosophy on corporations from the standpoint of *Sittlichkeit*. It is also written in the Hegelian *Geist* or spirit.³⁶ ‘Hegel, unlike Fichte, did not have much confidence in teaching philosophy to the masses [but writing on philosophy one] must recognise that the people might possibly elevate themselves to it [philosophy]; but it must not lower itself to the people.’³⁷ In line with Hegelian writing, this book is an attempt to teach Hegelian philosophy to those inside management studies who can think ‘outside the box’ of the so-called four key ethical themes. Nevertheless, it also honours Hegel’s demand not to lower itself to the level of standard management studies. Hence, this book might be underwhelming to serious philosophers and a bit overwhelming to management students, perhaps because it concerns the – at times – almost incomprehensible writings of Hegel.

Understanding the philosophical writings of German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel remains unthinkable without understanding his immediate predecessors, his influential group of friends, and his historical period.³⁸ ‘Hegel was a child of his time’³⁹ and throughout his life he had a strong and close working relationship with his contemporaries. This extended also to one of his best known predecessors. It is not helpful to understand Hegel’s concept of *Sittlichkeit* and how it relates to corporations in isolation from Kant’s *Trilogy of Critiques* – *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), *Critique of Judgement* (1790), and *Critique of*

Practical Reason (1788).⁴⁰ Hegel can be said to be faithful to Kant's critical theory.⁴¹ Apart from Kant, Aristotle was in many respects Hegel's great model and master philosopher.⁴² Building on Aristotle and Kant, Hegel came to be seen as without a doubt one of the towering figures of modern thought.⁴³ On the downside, he has been called obscure,⁴⁴ difficult to understand,⁴⁵ and highly intellectualistic.⁴⁶

On the upside, 'Hegel magisterially exploits the resources of the German language of his day' (Rockmore 1997:4) and is not easy to translate into English. He uses specific German terms such as *Geist* and *Sittlichkeit* that are sometimes non-translatable and for some other terms the English language only provides close approximations: *Sittlichkeit* is not just ethical life and *aufheben* does not only mean to subvert. It is quite conceivable that this is also the reason why Hegel is one of those very rare philosophers who has a dictionary in his name for explaining Hegelian terms.⁴⁷ Given those complexities, it is not at all surprising that Hegel has been misunderstood, misinterpreted, misappropriated, misused, abused and seems to be one of the most demonised philosophers.⁴⁸ However, this becomes less of a problem when digging deeper into Hegel's philosophy of *Sittlichkeit* and his writings on corporations because very few philosophers have ever dared to venture into the complex, dense, and demanding philosophical specifics of Hegelian *Sittlichkeit* in relation to corporations.⁴⁹

From the outset it is important to focus our attention on the fact that Hegel's moral philosophy represents a philosophy of freedom [*Freiheitsphilosophie*]⁵⁰ – 'the category of freedom pervades all areas of Hegel's philosophy'.⁵¹ He wrote his philosophy of freedom as far as this was possible to achieve given the circumstances of his life under Prussian authoritarianism and censorship.⁵² Hegel was born in a part of the southern hinterland that was to become Germany.⁵³ During Hegel's time Germany was still defined by Germanic miniature states [*Kleinstaaten*] before it became a full-fledged unified country. This occurred after Hegel's death. His life at the dawn of Enlightenment in Germany was dominated by a depressing mixture of militarism, chauvinism, backwardness, religion, conservatism, and authoritarianism that forced Hegel to be constantly aware of the watchful eyes of the totalitarian Prussian censorship.⁵⁴ This might explain his avoidance of the most feared word among 19th-century – and perhaps even early-20th-century – German authorities: democracy.⁵⁵ It may also explain his writings on religion and his work on the state.⁵⁶ On the other hand, there is an assessment of Hegel as argued by German philosopher Horkheimer, who states,⁵⁷

Hegel's work did more serious harm to that reactionary institution than all the use of the latter could derive from this formal glorification. Reason is a poor ally of reaction. A little less than ten years after Hegel's death (his chair remained unoccupied that long), the King appointed a successor to fight the 'dragon's teeth of Hegelian pantheism', and the arrogance and fanaticism of his school.

In other words, 'formal glorification' (Horkheimer) and the avoidance of Prussian censorship might well account for Hegel's dense, inaccessible, and at times highly unintelligible writing style that made it possible for Hegel to engage with the philosophy of freedom while simultaneously avoiding detection by the Prussian censors. One might even suspect that the unsophisticated state-servants [*Staatsbeamte*] of the official and secret police simply gave up on Hegel's texts and failed to understand them, deeming his work incomprehensible and therefore insignificant.⁵⁸

In short, Hegel managed to get his work past the censor while still being able to write on human freedom, one of the most dreaded words in the dictionary of German conservatism. The ability to sidestep censorship while writing on human freedom might well be his greatest and remaining achievement. It kept him employed in various – and for a serious philosopher perhaps rather demeaning – positions such as house tutor, newspaper editor, school principal, etc. Only very late in his life did Hegel become a full tenured professor.⁵⁹ One might regard Hegel's short-term precarious employment situation as always on the edge of joining the ranks of the working poor. Despite all this, employment tended to ease a lifetime of financial problems while simultaneously re-allocating valuable time away from philosophy. Nevertheless, it assured that Hegel's writings on human freedom, for example, were not lost. This occurred during a time when German conservatism did everything in its power to prevent the freedom movement – that originated in the French Revolution of 1789 – from entering German states and, worst of all, German minds as a beautiful sunrise.⁶⁰ In the words of American Neo-Hegelian philosopher Robert Pippin (2010:43),

It is easy to summarise in Hegel's own terms his answer to the 'How important is freedom?' question: absolutely important. Everything Hegel writes about, from the history of religion to the relations between universal and particular, has to do in one way or another with the realisation of the freedom problem, and his entire philosophy could be summarised in one phrase, however, initially opaque: that the Absolute is freedom.

Hegel's philosophy sees freedom as the absolute (*das Absolute*). Yet it was birthed in the 19th-century authoritarian German states fearful of human freedom. The historic freedom versus authority conflict must have been daunting for Hegel who was well aware that engaging in a philosophy of freedom might disable his dream of teaching and writing philosophy at university level. The very same fear has been expressed by nearly everyone who sought to teach Hegel's philosophy of freedom after Hegel's death. Perhaps the very same applies today when someone seeks to teach Hegel's philosophy of human freedom at a management school.⁶¹ Unlike 19th-century authoritarian censorship, today's management schools 'publicly' honour academic freedom in their official ethics codes, that is, the right to publish books on Hegel, human freedom, *Sittlichkeit*, and corporations. However, such schools also reserve their right to hire and promote those who contribute directly to management's quest for shareholder-value and profit-maximisation, code-worded 'The Real Bottom Line' (Magretta 2012:129–140), those whom Baritz has called The Servants of Power.⁶² The Servants of Power might not view Hegel's ethics of freedom as a contribution to management studies, let alone to management.

Hegel and Hegelianism

There is a blissful and perhaps systematically engineered ignorance by The Servants of Power and management studies towards Hegel's philosophy of human freedom and *Sittlichkeit*. And it happens in spite of Hegelianism as a well-developed body of scholarly research,⁶³ and despite the existence of Hegel societies and Hegel study groups in most English-speaking countries, as well as rafts of journals dealing with Hegelian philosophy including specific Hegel study journals such as the *Owl of Minerva* (USA), *The Bulletin of the Hegel Society of Great Britain*, and *Hegel-Studien* (Germany). Today, there are numerous philosophers who either have written on Hegel or are outright Hegel experts. And there are also relatively high numbers of Hegel followers and philosophical themes that started during Hegel's lifetime. Many of those who continued after his death are reaching into today's world inside and outside of philosophy and general academia. In terms of management and business studies, nevertheless, most Hegelian themes are still blissfully ignored, just as any history of thought that led to today's management ethics is ignored. Also ignored is the fact that Hegel was one of the main philosophers of the 19th century and that he had a substantial number of followers in Germany, France, Italy, England,

Australia, the USA, and so on. Hegel's followers were that substantial in numbers that they even split into diverging subgroups after Hegel's death in 1831.⁶⁴ The first of these groups of Hegel followers became known as the 'Young Hegelians' who carried forward Hegel's philosophical heritage after his death.⁶⁵ They are commonly divided into two groups as shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 shows five types of Hegelians. The table starts with the famous chasm of Hegelian philosophers who lived either at the time of Hegel or shortly afterwards. These 19th-century Hegelians can be divided into two opposing groups: the Left and Right Hegelians. Those philosophers who lived during the 20th century and carried forward Hegel's philosophy might be termed modern Hegelians. While the early part became weaker with the death of most of its main proponents, the remaining philosophers tended to focus on Hegel's work. Those philosophers who are currently engaging with Hegelian philosophy and/or developed Hegel's philosophy further are shown as two 21st-century groups. One group consists of purely Hegelian philosophers while the second group is often called 'Neo'-Hegelian philosophers. The dividing line between both can be found by using the terms

Table 1.1 The Hegelians

Period	Names given	Some of the main representatives
19th century	Right or Old Hegelians	Heinrich Leo, Herrmann Lübbe, Michelet, Karl Friedrich Göschel, Hermann Friedrich Wilhelm Hinrichs, Johann Edward Erdmann, Eduard Gans, Carl Ludwig Michelet, Georg Andreas Gabler and Karl Rosenkranz
19th century	Left or Young Hegelians	David Friedrich Strauss, Edgar and Bruno Bauer, Friedrich Feuerbach, August von Ciszokowski, Max Stirner, Moses Heß, Arnold Ruge, Kierkegaard, and a certain Karl Marx
20th century	Modern Hegelians	Alexandre Kojève, Jean Hyppolite, George Lukács, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse
21st century	Current Hegelians	Stephen Houlgate, Charles Taylor, Axel Honneth, Bruce Gilbert
21st century	Current Neo-Hegelians	Robert Pippin; 'Pittsburgh Neo-Hegelians' (Brandom & McDowell); Paul Redding, Kenneth Westphal

- 'Neo-Hegelian': for philosophers who have an interpretation of Hegel that tries to render Hegel compatible with some broader contemporary set of normative considerations about how to engage with philosophy.
- 'Hegelian': for philosophers who are more or less convinced that Hegel 'got it right' and does not need the type of accommodation to the present that Neo-Hegelians attempt.

But before this development could occur, many of the 19th-century Hegelians were censored, prosecuted, isolated, became jobless or marginalised, and were forced to live in exile culminating in the Young Hegelians' exile in Paris and Marx's émigré in England. Later two key 20th-century Hegelian philosophers, Theodor W. Adorno and Herbert Marcuse, escaped to the USA when German Nazis burned books first and people later (Klikauer 2011). Meanwhile, many Right Hegelians embraced mainstream supporting positivism.⁶⁶ This challenged the critical wing of Hegel's legacy on philosophical grounds inside and outside of Germany. Today, Hegelian philosophy is well anchored in many of Germany's universities (Frankfurt, Berlin, Heidelberg, etc.).

Essentially, German society of the 21st century is somewhat more representative of Hegel's philosophy of *Sittlichkeit*, for example, when compared to Hegel's 19th-century *Kleinstaaten* with their feudal leftovers of authoritarian–militaristic mini-emperors. In most European countries and modern societies, many of Hegel's institutional teachings such as family, civil society, the state, and other selective aspects of his philosophy such as human freedom and even parts of Hegelian *Sittlichkeit* have become part of society. Nevertheless, other parts of Hegelian philosophy remain unchanged. While the foundation of ruling has changed from 19th-century authoritarianism to 20th-century democracy, both – albeit in different ways – still establish rulers and the 'to be ruled'. In other words, we might have changed from hitting one another until the strongest ruler remained standing to the use of a pen under the equation: 'x = democracy', but the ruler versus ruled dichotomy remains. In Hegelian terms, there are still masters and slaves, there are still rulers and the ruled (over), and there are still management and employees. In short, Hegel's master–slave dialectics remains prevalent in corporations, society, and politics.⁶⁷

The political applications of selective moments in continental philosophy are designed to secure political and economic rule. Originally developed as Kantian and Hegelian, critical philosophy was converted into 'positive' philosophy. This came as a reaction to Hegel's insistence

that 'the negative' is relevant to understand the truth.⁶⁸ Hegelian philosophy is thoroughly dialectical demanding to examine both sides that, rather oversimplified, have been seen as 'positive and negative' and 'pros and cons'.⁶⁹ Any blunt rejection of the negative element in Hegelian philosophy resulted in a one-dimensional focus on the positive. This one-dimensional view aided the invention of positivism and empiricism (Marcuse 1966). While previously being an insignificant subarea of philosophy, today positivism has been accelerated to an unquestioned and all-guiding paradigm.

The dominance of this paradigm made the origins of critical rationalism that started with Kant's Trilogie of Critiques disappear in many areas. Despite this, Hegel developed Kantian philosophy as speculative philosophy. His speculative philosophy focuses on negativity and dialectics.⁷⁰ In historical terms, the development of 18th-century Kantian and 19th-century Hegelian philosophy occurred, just as Enlightenment itself, as a reaction to the monistic authority of religious belief-systems that supported the Dark Ages, the Inquisition, and the Ancient Regime.⁷¹ While France ended all this with the French Revolution of 1789, Germany only ever experienced a 'revolution'⁷² of the *Geist* and this only in parts of an educated and enlightened class.⁷³ During the 19th century and in some cases well after World War II, various German counter-forces directed against Enlightenment still sought to prevent modernity, Kantianism, and even more so Hegelian philosophy.

But neither Kantian nor Hegelian philosophy simply presented a counter-opinion. 'In philosophy, we cannot just use one position to oppose another position . . . that is opinion [according to] Luthers' 'here I am, I cannot help it' . . . in philosophy, however, criticism has to be rational . . . another philosophical conception cannot simply be destroyed by criticism, but it must be *aufgehoben*.⁷⁴ Philosophical concepts like this not only have historical significance but are also important for today, for our understanding of the world, the way civil society, management, and corporations work. Hegelian philosophy might mean for management and business studies what is described in the following.

When management and business studies reject critique and Hegel's 'dialectical negative' outright, they do not view processes such as 'thesis → anti-thesis → synthesis' as rational – which is something Greek philosophy did roughly 2,000 years ago and which continues until today.⁷⁵ Simultaneously, this rejects philosophical attempts to unify positives and negatives under Hegel's dialectic of reconciliation. Instead, management studies view critique that includes positives and negatives in Martin Luther's opinionated way, 'Here I am, I cannot help it.'

This expresses an opinion, not a philosophical–rational critique based on the inclusion of negatives. Management studies' rejection, marginalisation, isolation, and dislike of critique and the negative have been designed to prevent a critique that outlines the inextricable part of anything that exists, namely, the negative: there is no day without night; no darkness without light; no birth without death; no management without employees; and no strategic management without the management of daily affairs.

Inside managerial thinking every critique is re-framed simply as opinion versus opinion rather than the philosophical–rational critique of positive → negative → synthesis. Those who have been assigned the job to protect management from critique – Baritz's *The Servants of Power* – are organised under the heading of management studies. They re-frame any philosophical–rational critique as mere opinion. This is the task of management studies and once accomplished an opinion can attack any non-managerial and anti-Managerialism view.⁷⁶ All this is, perhaps, a five-centuries-old Lutheran idea (Martin Luther, 1483–1546) but management studies not only cling to it but also ignore the philosophical–rational critique of Hegel (1770–1831). In sum, dismissing, marginalising, and rejecting a philosophical–rational critique on management as mere opinion perceived as an attack on management shows opinionated thinking rather than an understanding of European Enlightenment, continental philosophy, and the Hegelian project (Moggach & Lledman 1997:540). Hegelian philosopher Pippin (2010:110) summarised this in the following way:

Looking at the Hegelian project . . . of course, leads us to a decisive and somewhat unstable turning point in European or what we now call Continental philosophy, the point where Kant's great inventions, his attempts to re-conceive a purely rational philosophy in the face of the collapsing authority of traditional rationalism and the unsatisfying modesty of modern empiricism, inventions like his notion of transcendental subjectivity, or of only 'practical reality', are being reconceived in this developmental way, and that means also socially and historically, and where his self-legislating moral subject is reconceived as such more than a practically necessary idea and is instead animated with an historical life.⁷⁷

In order to prevent 'the collapsing authority' and the rise of Kant's 'self-legislating moral subject', King Frederick William IV of Prussia

(1795–1861) commissioned German philosopher Schelling to destroy the dragon seed of Hegelianism.⁷⁸ To some extent the Prussian/Schelling programme of destroying Hegel had actually succeeded during the 19th century. German philosopher Dieter Henrich (1971:7), for example, begins his book on *Hegel in Context* [*Hegel im Kontext*] with the following: ‘For more than a century, those who wanted to understand Hegel were alone. They found no guiding analysis which would have helped in reading Hegel.’⁷⁹

The Prussian/Schelling programme was to annihilate Hegel’s philosophy of phenomenology as outlined in Hegel’s masterpiece: *The Phenomenology* (1807). It developed a philosophy in which the phenomenon examines the relationship between appearance and truth [*Schein und Wahrheit*] that seeks to look through an appearance to ascertain truth. In the functional world of pure positivism that has set up ideological belief-systems such as ‘facts speak for themselves’, pure science, objectivity, neutrality, and the like, any philosophical examination that carries one deeper into what is made-up and presents itself as pure appearance is not welcomed.⁸⁰ However, misleading and ideological claims such as the infamous self-speaking facts, for example, can be exposed as ideological through simple common sense:⁸¹ facts cannot speak for themselves for two reasons – they have no mouth to speak with and always depend on the human interpretation of these so-called objective facts to make sense of them. This always incurs a human factor in the form of a needed interpretation of the facts which is inextricably linked to subjectivity (Kant). Despite all this, positivism, pragmatism, functionalism, system theory, and most ideologies of management studies and Managerialism seek to convince us that the managerial interpretation of facts under the banner of value neutrality, for example, is not an ideology but the reality. And that this is TINA reality – there is no alternative. In reality, however, this represents no more than a managerially constructed view of a specific form of reality. In short, Hegelian philosophy drills through the appearance [*Schein*] of managerial ideologies to uncover the truth.⁸²

Hegel’s corporation and the modern corporation

Nevertheless, keeping up the appearance – commonly known as ‘Impression Management’ (Rosenfeld et al. 1995) – is a near perfect description of management studies. This has direct spillover effects from management studies into real academic fields and society. Under

Managerialism, the latter are increasingly forced to remain within the boundaries of positivism.⁸³ Management studies seek to pretend that management is a positive and neutral subject. While the ideology of neutrality stems from the engineering ideology, the positive carries two values: (i) positive as in positivism and (ii) positive as in good, that is, not negative. In line with this, management studies teach management as a global-managerial subject operating on valid laws. Academics within management studies often represent The Servants of Power.

One way of supporting management and the ideology of Managerialism is claiming that management is non-historical and universal. It is the claim that management has always existed. Supporting evidence for this ideology comes directly from the 'horse's mouth' so to speak when former *Harvard Business Review* editor Magretta (2012:4) wrote a surprisingly open book – her non-textbook work on *What Management is – How it Works and Why It's Everyone's Business* (2012) – that in a 'tell-it-all' mode is as close to a perfect description of management as one can find. She writes, for example, 'society has always had managers'. This is no more than an ideological attempt to make us believe that management is therefore neutral to historical processes. If management has always existed, one might wonder about the following:

- Were Egypt's pyramids built under the economic system of managerial capitalism?
- Were pharaohs shareholders?;
- Did they operate a corporation called 'Pyramid Construction Ltd.'?;
- Did their corporate management include financial controlling, marketing, and operations management techniques (e.g. worldwide sourcing, supply chain management, and global production networks)?;
- Did their corporation use ROI (return on investment)?;
- Did their corporation have a sophisticated corporate governance structure?;
- Was their strategic management more akin to Whittington's (2001) classical or systemic approach?;
- Did those who built the pyramids operate under cost-cutting, performance management systems, the infamous KPIs (key performance indicators), and performance-related pay systems?;
- Were those people called human resources governed by Human Resource Management?
- Were those people members of a trade union operating under the international labour standards as prescribed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO)?

It appears that this was not the case. Hence, The Servants of Power can never grow tired of pretending otherwise. They can also never stop claiming that corporate management operates on universally valid laws and is timeless. But corporate management is a 20th-century invention that was only made possible under capitalism 'after' ownership and administering corporations separated.⁸⁴ As such, management is quite a modern invention operating as a socially constructed and ideologically secured particularity.

In short, The Servants of Power need to secure management against a Hegelian demolition job that balances management studies' overt positivism with the other side of reality: Hegel's philosophy of dialectics that includes the negative side of things. To avoid this, management studies need to be one-sided (positive and positivism). By contrast, Hegel's two-sided approach (+/-) always includes negatives.⁸⁵ But excluding one over the other might also mean that management studies can never be a truly scientific enterprise but has to – almost by definition – remain ideological. To clarify the terminology of corporate management further, it needs to be distinguished from its three bedfellows: management studies, Managerialism, and managerial capitalism. This is necessary because originally management was simply an office (19th century) that turned into administration and bureaucracy (20th century) and has then mutated into corporate management. Later it added two ideological support mechanisms to its portfolio: management studies and Managerialism. In other words, when one uses 'corporate management' today, a raft of institutions, ideologies, images, and expressions can be conveyed (Morgan 1993).

Seen from this perspective, management takes on at least four subforms. These are managerial regimes, management studies, Managerialism, and managerial capitalism. To begin with the most immediate level, managerial regimes operate inside corporations. They are the clearest and most direct expression of corporate management and managerial rule-making. This is because of corporate management's task to oversee companies, corporations, and the like. This creates management's institutional setup commonly framed as 'organisation' by The Servants of Power to eclipse and ideologically neutralise the profit-making character of companies (Klikauer 2007:144). Management's most direct expression of managerial regimes is self-invented, authoritarian, and non-democratic (Soederberg 2010:74). Hence, it incurs the self-invented image of illegitimacy. And this not because of democratic illegitimacy but because of its self-invented status of being a depoliticised entity solely constructed out of engineering science, technical, neutral, and value-free elements.⁸⁶