

Introduction

Hegel and Capitalism

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Hegel and the Contemporary Discourse on Capitalism

Capitalism, whose historical triumph was for many confirmed with the collapse of the Soviet Union, has in recent years become a topic of significant public consideration. The 2008 financial crisis, declining growth rates, economic stagnation, prolonged unemployment, mounting income inequality, decreasing social mobility, growing personal and public indebtedness, an ongoing housing crisis, the commercialization of more spheres of life, the increasing monetarization of social relations, environmental degradation stemming from industrial production, and a globalization process fueled by multinational corporations operating relatively free from public accountability, have all contributed to growing concerns about the nature, stability, and even legitimacy of Western market economies. In addition, economic globalization has triggered in advanced industrial societies a predilection for austerity measures that, coupled with persistent neoliberal challenges to welfare state policies, have called into question common assumptions about the shape and trajectory of capitalism in postwar societies.

Accompanying these developments has been the proliferation of academic studies devoted to capitalist economies. In recent years such writers as Luc Boltanski and Ève Chiapello, James Galbraith, David Harvey, Thomas Piketty, Debra Satz, Wolfgang Streeck, and Joseph Stiglitz, to name just a few, have authored works that in differing ways address the state of

contemporary market economies. In addition, historians in growing numbers have made capitalism a central category of disciplinary inquiry. And there has been a renewed interest in theorists historically associated with the analysis of market economies, including writers so diverse as Adam Smith, Karl Marx, and Friedrich Hayek.

So far, however, only a small effort has been made to mine the work of G.W.F. Hegel for understanding the current state of capitalism. This is perhaps not surprising, given that for many Hegel remains first and foremost a champion of the Prussian state and state power generally. Whatever one might say of this assessment, it is nonetheless a mistake to disregard his possible contribution to reflections of the nature and status of capitalist market societies. Even if Hegel rarely used the term *capitalism* itself, his thought—not only his social theory but his political philosophy and his practical philosophy generally—does represent a sustained and distinctive engagement with the prospects and problems of modern market societies. Indeed, given his contention that philosophy itself represents a response to the tensions and “bifurcations” (*Entzweiungen*) he associated with modern economic life, his general conceptual framework, expressed above all in its notion of dialectics, can itself be construed as a response to the phenomenon of modern capitalism.

The *locus classicus* for Hegel’s understanding of capitalism is the sphere of civil society (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*), the middle zone in the theory of ethical life or ethicality (*Sittlichkeit*) he elaborates in his 1821 *Philosophy of Right*. Here Hegel advances a nuanced and multifaceted analysis of modern market economies. On the one hand, he clearly highlights what he perceives as the strengths and achievements of market societies. He attributes to such societies realization of a defining feature of the modern age: the right of subjective freedom. He locates in modern economies conditions for realizing a principle whose first articulation he attributes to Protestantism: the right to subjective satisfaction. He discerns in the increasing mechanization of labor possibilities for greater human emancipation. He claims that modern market economies, committed in principle to the meritocratic evaluation of individual performance, condition realization of the idea of universal human rights. He calls attention to the cosmopolitan dimension of modern commerce, noting how trade fostered through civil society surpasses national borders in ways that contribute to worldwide adoption of uniform norms of person, property, and contract, while cultivating more developed forms of international cooperation. He also assigns normative status to the capitalist division of labor, which, in forging wide-ranging relations of interdependence between individual and community, underwrites modern accounts of constitutional law, republican politics, and forms of sociality based on mutuality and social cooperation.

On the other hand, Hegel was also an acute and highly prescient observer of the problems and pathologies of modern market economies. The account of “the system of needs” (*das System der Bedürfnisse*) he presents in the section on civil society describes the deadening effect mechanized labor has on the mental and physical well-being of human beings. There Hegel also details how this new social order promotes forms of gratuitous and conspicuous consumption that foster and perpetuate vast wealth disparities between rich and poor. He demonstrates how modern market economies, systemically gripped by boom-bust cycles, generate an impoverished underclass characterized not only by material but above all by psychological deprivations. He describes how such deprivations cultivate in the underclass, termed by him a “rabble” (*Pöbel*), a sense of indignation directed not only at the performance and achievement expectations of modern society but at the modern social order itself. He explains how civil society also promotes the emergence of a “wealthy rabble” typified not only by its material avarice but by an insouciant and disdainful attitude toward less fortunate members of society. He details as well how problems in the functioning of individual market economies trigger a colonizing search for new markets that not only replicates original pathologies but promotes worldwide conflict and bellicosity. In all these ways, Hegel maintains, modern market societies, their considerable resources notwithstanding, afford, as he famously notes in introducing his analysis of civil society, “a spectacle of extravagance and misery as well as of the physical and ethical corruption common to both.”

Hegel was not sanguine about the prospects for solving the maladies he associated with modern market societies. Indeed, he asserts that some presumed solutions—public assistance projects and public works programs—may only replicate the problems in question. One partial solution, however, lies with “corporations”—voluntary work-related cooperatives that hark back to the mediaeval and early modern guild systems and find attenuated reaffirmation today in labor unions, trade organizations, and professional associations. There are various respects in which such corporate bodies can counter the ill effects of market societies. They provide various forms of assistance to those adversely affected by market forces. They recognize members simply in virtue of their membership alone, thus counteracting both the dehumanizing humiliation experienced by the poor in market societies and the expectation on the part of the affluent that status is conferred through conspicuous consumption and ostentatious displays of wealth. Inasmuch, further, as corporate members themselves help to counteract the deleterious effects of market forces, their actions circumvent the externally imposed institutional solutions that often reinforce pathologies in question. And because corporate members participate

in efforts that foster cooperation, mutuality, and commitment to shared ends, their actions both contribute to and instantiate the ethicality that for Hegel is crucial to offsetting the atomistic, self-seeking individualism basic to the aporias of modern market societies.

Hegel is aware of the limitations of the corporatist solution to these aporias. Although the theory of corporations provides elements of a uniquely polyarchic form of civic republicanism, it also lends support to an interest group particularism that can contribute to the societal atomism in question. A more comprehensive solution is available only in a differentiated polity comprised of diverse individuals and groups committed to the ends of political community as such. Yet if in his scheme this mandates transition from civil society to the state and the domain of politics proper, Hegel does not thereby invoke external norms and criteria in confronting the problems of market economies. Against such “abstract” negation, he proffers a “determinate” negation, predicated on further developing and realizing resources implicit in market societies themselves. The principle of ethicality that Hegel contraposes to the pathologies of market economies itself derives from the wide-ranging interdependence of individual and community present, however inadequately, in the modern system of political economy. As with his dialectic generally, Hegel’s dialectic of civil society is informed by the view that the source of problems also contains tools for their correction.

One can question the plausibility and adequacy of such “immanent transcendence” of the challenges posed by capitalist economies. Yet such questions should not mute appreciation of the broader nature of Hegel’s reception of modern market societies. Basic to that reception is a philosophical holism that, on the model of a differentiated and reflexively constituted totality, delineates the possibilities and problems of modern market societies while considering how those societies can themselves address the challenges confronting them. At a time when those challenges seem especially daunting, an approach like Hegel’s, comprehensive in scope and eschewing conventional disciplinary divisions, still merits consideration.

Themes and Arguments

This volume examines the value of Hegel’s thought for understanding and assessing capitalism, both as encountered by Hegel himself and in the forms it takes today. It comprises contributions from an array of prominent and internationally diverse Hegel scholars who approach the theme “Hegel and Capitalism” from a wide range of perspectives and orientations. Their contributions also address a myriad of themes and topics. Some

authors explore specific issues, like Hegel's treatment of poverty, conspicuous consumption, mechanized labor, the bearing of market imperatives of the conditions for human subjectivity, and the relationship of religion and capitalism. Others examine Hegel's understanding of capitalism with regard to his general account of the project of modernity, while still others ask whether Hegel's critique of capitalism mandates the latter's reform and further realization or its rejection altogether. Those in the former camp examine Hegel's proposals for "taming" capitalism, differentiating between institutional and cultural, economic and sociological, or "top-down" and "bottom-up" approaches. Some contributors consider the compatibility of market mechanisms with broader accounts of ethical community, the role of recognitive relations in the assessment of capitalist social structures, the place of republican politics in response to the vicissitudes of market economies, and the moral obligations individual do and do not owe to capitalist institutions. Various authors examine Hegel's conception and evolving understanding of capitalism in specific texts, including the 1802/03 *System of Ethical Life*, the 1805/06 Jena *Realphilosophie*, 1806 *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 1812 *Science of Logic*, as well as the 1821 *Philosophy of Right*. Several authors compare Hegel's reflections on capitalism to those of other important thinkers, including Adam Smith, Immanuel Kant, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Karl Marx, Max Weber, Theodor Adorno, Václav Havel, Wilfred Cantwell Smith, as well as contemporary social theorists and theorists of economic ethics. Yet others relate Hegel to issues pertaining to capitalism today, such as economic globalization, the adequacy of models of utility maximization for comprehending contemporary market societies, the subordination of ever more spheres of human life to the logic of economic imperatives, and the responsibilities individuals must accept in light of the power of such imperatives.

As a whole, the chapters in this book reflect the breadth and depth of Hegel's analysis of capitalism as well as the holistic character of his thought generally. They also articulate anew what in the Preface to the *Philosophy of Right* Hegel proffers as the defining feature of philosophy itself: "its own time apprehended in thought." In what remains I provide a brief summary of the main argument of each chapter, noting as well connections among the various discussions and the contribution those discussions make to the discourse on capitalism.

In the opening chapter, Michalis Skomvoulis details Hegel's very "discovery" of capitalism. According to Skomvoulis, this discovery occurred in the early 1800s when Hegel first encountered the theories of modern political economy associated with thinkers like Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson, and James Steuart. This encounter had important consequences as much for Hegel's logical and metaphysical theory as for his social and political

thought. In both cases, appreciation of the modalities of modern economic life—for example, self-seeking individualism, market competition, the division of labor, and the centrality of labor itself—led Hegel to integrate principles of “negativity” and “finitude” into his account of absolute philosophy. In the logico-metaphysical writings, this entailed acknowledging “bifurcation” as the motivating force for philosophy itself. It also entailed formulating a conception of dialectics, where—through such principles as “determinate negation” and “the labor of the negative”—one position’s negation could be deemed a preservation resulting in a higher and more encompassing conceptual form. Similar features are evident, according to Skomvoulis, in Hegel’s social and political writings. If prior to 1800 Hegel championed a notion of political life based on an organic, unmediated, and even religiously based union of individual and community, now he asserts that a proper account of political community must integrate elements associated with negativity and finitude. On this view, Hegel advances a differentiated and highly mediated account of community, one in which a political order predicated on a system of interdependencies goes hand in hand with the economic individualism central to a view of social relations oriented to principles of labor and material well-being.

Hegel thus advances, for Skomvoulis, a nuanced view of the role of political economy in modern social life. On the one hand, the realities of modern economic life lead to a new account of sociality, one in which social relations are elevated beyond the domain of nature and fashioned as the conscious product of human will. Via the dialectical “cunning” underwriting modern market life, competitive struggles reflective of an economic state of nature lead to a system of social-juridical relations based on law and the mutual recognition of individual rights. On the other hand, the modes of mediation fueling modern economic exchange also serve to mechanize labor and monetarize social relations in ways that undermine the forms of human autonomy that the structures of modern economic life empower. Modern economic structures thereby serve to renaturalize society, subjecting it to reified, impersonal laws operating independently of autonomous subjects and in reference to ends removed from human control. Hegel thus presents as structural features of capitalism phenomena he considers more fully in his later writings: the alienating character of the division of labor, the growing polarization of rich and poor, and the regularity of economic crises. This analysis also leads Hegel to posit the need for an intervening state that stabilizes market relations while affirming conscious attention to the ends of the social whole.

In “Beyond Recognition in Capitalism: From Violence and Caprice to Recognition and Solidarity,” Kohei Saito also considers Hegel’s early treatment of capitalism, comparing it to the position advanced by Johann Fichte

in the latter's 1800 *Closed Commercial State*. The comparison is instructive as both thinkers sought to rearticulate the conditions for human freedom and equality in the face of challenges posed by emergent capitalism and the new system of political economy. In the *Closed Commercial State* Fichte presents an especially damning indictment of capitalism, asserting not only that it distorts human needs and desires but occasions European subjugation of the rest of the world. In response, Fichte proposes a system of state control directed to the coercive regulation of European individuals and states. Hegel shares Fichte's concerns regarding the pathological dimensions of modern capitalism, even if he does not connect them so emphatically to European imperialism. He, too, sees modern capitalism as gripped by arbitrary cycles of overproduction and unemployment, with vast disparities in wealth and corresponding forms of domination. Yet, as is clear from his 1802/3 *System of Ethical Life*, Hegel differs in his response. Against Fichte's advocacy of an external system of market regulation administered by an interventionist state, Hegel, attentive to the freedoms also part of modern economic life, champions instead an "internal regulative practice" rooted in the system of economic life itself. Focusing on relations of commodity exchange central to the "system of needs," modern market societies generate modes of mutual dependence able to counteract the forms of inequality and subordination occasioned by the market. As Hegel also argues in his later writings, such modes are manifest in work-related corporations and the other occupational cooperatives. These corporate bodies are important, however, not just because they address the ills experienced by those directly affected by the caprice of the market. Hegel contends as well that they empower worker-based forms of collective agency able to challenge market pathologies, and in ways that supplant a system of social antagonism with one committed to greater societal cohesion.

On the basis of this analysis, Saito presents a distinctive account of Hegel's famous struggle for recognition. This struggle is not to be understood in the way already articulated by Fichte, as an effort to secure recognition for the rights and liberties formally held by autonomous individuals or "persons." Instead, it takes the form of individuals contesting the modes of dependence and inequality associated with market societies, those that a purely formal account of recognition can actually promote. In addition, this approach does not gainsay the antagonisms associated with modern market societies, but construes them in a manner contributive to their resolution, that is, as elements in a social practice of contestation meant to adjust social norms and structures so as to foster relations of mutuality and cooperation in the economy and society generally. Both reflect Hegel's broader effort to respond to market tensions, not through the exogenously imposed solutions proposed by Fichte, but by cultivating resources present

in market relations themselves. Saito leaves open the question of which solution may be more compelling in light of growing economic inequalities today.

In “Anonymity, Responsibility, and the Many Faces of Capitalism: Hegel and the Crisis of the Modern Self,” Ardis Collins explores how the 1806 *Phenomenology of Spirit* sheds light on Hegel’s understanding of capitalism. Collins’ central concern is the opposition between the imperatives of impersonal economic systems—she includes here not only versions of capitalism but forms of socialism as well—and the conditions for the autonomous subjectivity of persons. Following Václav Havel and Wilfred Cantwell Smith, she claims that the autonomization of the economic domain results in the latter’s loss of orientating relation to the human self, a state of affairs that deprives the economic order of unifying purpose while fostering in individuals an economic narcissism devoid of attention to higher ends and obligations. In appealing to the *Phenomenology*, Collins focuses on its general account of the developmental formation of consciousness. This process details how seeming opposites are gradually surmounted in a reciprocally transformative dynamic whereby each side acknowledges its limitations while integrating the partial truth of the other. After analyzing various stages in this self-formative process, Collins attends to the reconciliation represented by revealed religion, whose notion of “self-sharing spirit” both binds objective economic exigencies to the requirements of subjective autonomy and inculcates in individuals a sense of objective responsibility transcending their private concerns.

For Collins, self-sharing spirit can be construed in terms of a transcendent God or as the highest aspiration of the human spirit. In either case, it has a threefold significance with regard to the goal of addressing the conflict, central to capitalism, between objective economic imperatives and autonomous subjectivity. First, the objective science of economics would be affirmed, yet in a way acknowledging that its proper use depends on norms forged in appreciation of humankind’s higher purposes. Second, participants in economic relations would have the right to recognize themselves in the way each is represented in the words and actions of other participants. Third, different interests, subject to norms of mutuality, would learn to forgive the way each becomes subordinated to others, as such shift in dominance belongs to the necessary conditions for genuine action.

In “The Purest Inequality: Hegel’s Critique of the Labor Contract and Capitalism,” Nicholas Mowad also considers the account of capitalism advanced in the *Phenomenology*, focusing on its relation to the more explicit treatment detailed in the 1821 *Philosophy of Right*. In both works, Hegel, according to Mowad, shows how in capitalist societies, understood as complex and wide-ranging systems of mutual interdependency, individual value

and merit are linked to societal norms and expectations regarding performance and achievement. Both works also make clear that, uniquely under capitalism, value and merit are understood in monetary terms, a point Hegel makes in identifying the word “valuation” (*gelten*) with “money” (*Geld*) and by suggesting that people have worth to the degree that they “count” (*gillt*). Both works also reveal how this monetarization of human value entails a host of social pathologies that devalue individuals, and not just the underemployed poor but also the wealthy, who increasingly must demonstrate worth through conspicuous consumption. This phenomenon is captured by what Hegel in the *Phenomenology* terms the “purest inequality,” whereby the worth and identity of individuals are construed wholly in terms of their opposite—objectively calculable cash value. The works differ, however, in two respects. The first concerns the nature of Hegel’s depiction of the monetarization of human value. In the *Philosophy of Right* Hegel focuses directly on modern industrial society and in particular the labor contract, the practice specific to capitalism in which money is exchanged not for a commodity of a fixed value but for the power to create value. In the *Phenomenology*, by contrast, the issue is addressed through changes in culture, especially with regard to nobility and the “noble-minded consciousness,” where public service comes to be valued monetarily rather than, as had traditionally been the case, in terms of honor. The second difference concerns Hegel’s assessment of the phenomenon of monetarization. In the *Philosophy of Right* Hegel advanced only a partial critique of capitalism, asserting that the labor contract is problematic not per se, but only inasmuch as the alienation it entails becomes a general phenomenon rather than one restricted to a limited period of time. By contrast, human devalorization as presented in the *Phenomenology* results in a more global indictment, including one of capitalism itself. For Mowad, the differing assessments raise questions about Hegel’s real view of the nature of capitalism. They also raise questions about the internal consistency of the *Philosophy of Right*, as even a qualified acceptance of the devalorization Hegel associates with the labor contract would seem to conflict with a central principle of civil society: that individuals are to receive “satisfaction” via general societal mediation.

In “Hegel’s Notion of Abstract Labor in the *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*,” Giorgio Cesarale continues the exploration of Hegel’s account of labor under capitalism pursued by Mowad and others. His specific concern is the division of labor, and how it entails a process of abstraction—understood as the reduction of quality to quantity—that leads both to the increasing mechanization of labor and an increased reliance on machines. For Cesarale, this development reflects ambivalence in Hegel’s thinking regarding abstract labor. On the one hand, Hegel espoused the

view, both in his Heidelberg and Berlin periods, that machines can have an emancipatory function, liberating human beings from the drudgery of labor, thereby furnishing conditions for a freer and more dignified life. Yet he also maintains that the capitalist mode of production, as evident especially in England, engendered a physically and mentally debilitating form of mechanization that undermined its emancipatory potential. Indeed, the increasing reliance of humans on machines led, for Hegel, to the emergence of a new and potentially fatal form of human subjectivity—a mechanistic sort, where subjectivity is little more than the composite of diverse and unrelated elements. Lost thereby is the more genuine sort based on the organic-teleological model of a self-conscious unity expressed and sustained in its objective differentiations. The process of abstract labor under capitalism thus proceeds isomorphically with the reification of subjectivity and the increasing transformation of the self into a thing.

Cesarale's analysis entails a revision of some conventional readings of Hegel's thought, including those involving the relationship of spirit and nature. According to the standard view—represented here by Theodor Adorno, Hegel is said to nullify nature as he charts the evolving formation of spirit. By contrast, Cesarale shows that the forms of reification accompanying capitalist-based mechanization entail an increasing naturalization of spirit. In social labor spirit may overcome nature but only by becoming more like nature itself. This also explains why abstract labor is so problematic for Hegel: the structures of spirit that might free human beings from the yoke of reification themselves contribute to that very reification.

In "Hegel's Torment: Poverty and the Rationality of the Modern State," C. J. Pereira Di Salvo considers another problem Hegel identifies with modern market societies: poverty. He does so by comparing the position Hegel elaborates in the *Philosophy of Right* with the distinctive view on the same topic advanced by Kant in his 1797 *Metaphysical First Principles of the Doctrine of Right*. For Kant, poverty, unlike mere physical deprivation, denotes a relationship of individuals. An impoverished person is one who lacks the means to meet basic needs in a social order where those means are owned by other people. Poverty on this account is a problem specifically for a political community that affirms a right of private property and allows for the rightful ownership of all things. In such a community, consistent with Kant's view of a legitimate polity, an impoverished person can survive only by depending on the generosity of others. Yet because such dependence is inconsistent with a right of freedom (independence of all constraint by others in conjunction with the right of all) that supposedly is secured in a society that guarantees the right of private property, poverty for Kant is a wrong, understood as the illicit dependence of one person on another. It is, moreover, a wrong that can be rectified only by securing

the freedom and independence of the impoverished individual, achievable through redistribution measures based on direct transfers rather than through more conditional measures (e.g., poor houses and work requirements) that can undermine independence.

For Pereira Di Salvo, Hegel also posits a connection among personhood, property, and poverty in modern societies. Yet for Hegel that connection is more fundamental than in Kant. At stake here is how poverty undermines autonomous personality itself. Proceeding from the view that individuals are persons not as such but only as they attain concrete embodiment for their will, Hegel claims that personhood minimally depends on owning property, that is, entities enabling the external expression of will. Yet what characterizes the poor is precisely that they do not own property. Indeed, Hegel contends that the nature of modern society—reflected in structural unemployment and the growing replacement of workers by machines—is such that the poor increasingly lack even the opportunity to acquire property through their labor. Poverty is thus problematic, for Hegel, for reasons more profound than for Kant. Whereas for Kant poverty is problematic because it places persons in a wrongful relation of dependence on others, poverty is problematic for Hegel because it prevents human beings from realizing the capacity for personhood itself. Pereira Di Salvo notes that Hegel is not fully clear on the policy measures needed to address modern poverty. Yet his analysis does make clear that for Hegel poverty, conducive to the condition of the “socially frustrated personality,” undermines the conditions for autonomous personality. Since fostering such conditions is, for Hegel, a central function of the modern state, addressing the problem of poverty must be deemed a central task not just of the *Philosophy of Right* but of modernity itself.

For Michael Thompson, the pathologies associated by Hegel with capitalist economies lead to a view of his political philosophy as essentially “anti-capitalist.” In “Capitalism as Deficient Modernity: Hegel against the Modern Economy,” Thompson elaborates this view by proceeding from a conception of capitalism that expands upon and updates Hegel’s own understanding. Whereas Hegel understood capitalism more narrowly as an autonomous system of market exchange coordinated by economic self-interest, Thompson, consonant with theories of late capitalism, construes it as the dominant logic of social institutions and social relations generally, one in which exchange relations infuse all spheres of life. Contemporary state interventionist capitalism, fueled by forces of globalization, has reshaped market relations so that not only work but culture and indeed all aspects of everyday life—schooling and family life included—are organized around the economic imperatives of efficiency, productivity, and consumption.

On this basis, Thompson asserts that Hegel construes capitalism as a “deficient modernity.” For Hegel, modernity is predicated on commitment to the freedom and rationality of the individual. Proper to this view is a republican account of societal life, where relations of communality and mutuality are conditions for individual freedom, agency, and self-determination. Yet capitalism, with its systematic and wide-ranging promotion of, *inter alia*, atomistic individualism, hedonic self-interest, particularist class interest, commodification, and hierarchical power structures, distorts republican sociality, rendering impossible the individual freedom it could facilitate. Such distortion is reflected, for Thompson, in a range of societal pathologies illustrative of the general loss of ethical life Hegel discerns in modern civil society. These are the pathologies of: *socialization*, caused by deficient forms of social structure and social integration; *recognition*, where individuals become unable to perceive in others the commonality needed for greater social interdependence; and *rationality*, where individuals become unable to grasp the principle of freedom that should inform their will and the social institutions constituting their lives.

According to Thompson, Hegel does not dispute the legitimacy of modernity itself. The basic institutions of the modern world—family, civil society, and the state—are, for Hegel, intrinsically rational and worthy of assent. This is so, however, only as they promote the free individuality and rationality of agents. Inasmuch as capitalism does not do so, it cannot, Thompson argues, command the assent of modern individuals, who in turn have no obligation to support its institutions.

An alternate account of Hegel’s assessment of capitalism is offered by Richard Winfield in “Economy and Ethical Community.” No less than Thompson and others in this volume, Winfield is mindful of the pathologies that Hegel associated with modern market economies. Yet for him their appreciation does not entail a wholesale indictment of such economies or, for that matter, capitalism itself. Such indictment might be warranted if Hegel’s civil society were understood, as it often is, simply in terms of the self-seeking individualism common to the liberal-contractarian tradition. Yet for Winfield this understanding fails to capture Hegel’s general account of civil society. Distinctively reflected in the logic of commodity exchange central to “the systems of needs,” this account denotes a wide-ranging system of interdependence in which the freedom of one is inextricably tied to the freedom of others. On this view, civil society represents an ethical community predicated on norms of reciprocity, mutual respect, and communal well-being—norms that can be invoked to challenge pathologies associated with unbridled market mechanisms. This normative commitment is facilitated, according to Winfield, through a system of justice supportive of rights meant to ensure that everyone can participate in the

economic life of the community. Included here are not only property and contract rights, but also employment rights (supported, as needed, by public works projects) and rights to participate in the political regulation of the economy.

Winfield does challenge features of Hegel's position. He is critical, for instance, of Hegel's appeal to particular social interest groups (corporations) to counteract market pathologies. On his view, an account of economic community predicated on a system of interdependence requires a more comprehensively political mode of economic regulation. Yet acknowledging such limitations should not hinder appreciation of Hegel's account of civil society as an ethical community or its capacity to promote what Winfield calls "capitalism with a human face."

In "Two Ways of 'Taming' the Market: Why Hegel Needs the Police and the Corporations," Lisa Herzog also considers Hegel's proposals to "tame" the effects of untrammelled market mechanisms. In her view, Hegel presents two distinct options for achieving this end: an "economic" and a "sociological." The economic, identified with the institution of the public authority or the police (*Polizei*), presumes that individuals, on the *homo oeconomicus* model of rational choice theory, are utility maximizers whose preferences and even identities are fixed. On this view, market maladies are to be addressed in the manner also proposed by Adam Smith: with institutional measures that, through the availability of more or less costly options, incentivize profit-oriented individuals to make some choices rather than others. By contrast, the sociological model is identified with the corporations discussed by Winfield and others in this volume. On Herzog's reading, corporations represent the site where preferences and identities are not simply fixed or given but shaped in processes of social interaction. As such, corporate existence serves to cultivate a "republican" ethos of shared interest and citizenship, and not only at the occupational level but at the political level as well.

Herzog concludes by considering the continuing relevance of the market-taming proposals proffered by Hegel, focusing especially on recent discussions in business and economic ethics. On the one hand, she invokes the work of Karl Homann who, influenced by James Buchanan, champions the "economic" approach, one that through institutional incentives aims to redirect fixed preferences and given strivings for wealth maximization. On the other hand, she references the sociological approach promoted by Peter Ulrich, who, influenced by Jürgen Habermas, seeks to transform preferences in a way contributive to an ethos of responsible citizenship. Herzog allows that any current taming of the market must draw on both approaches. But she also asserts, especially given the academic predominance of approaches oriented to utility maximization,

that greater attention must be accorded the sociological approach, and those that seek to transform preferences in ways that might foster more republican responses to market maladies. This is particularly the case, she contends, given that forces of economic globalization have undermined the state-centric institutional structures that traditionally have sustained incentive based approaches.

In “Hegel’s Logical Critique of Capitalism: The Paradox of Dependence and the Model of Reciprocal Mediation,” Nathan Ross explores a topic also addressed by Michalis Skomvoulis: the connection between Hegel’s logico-metaphysical and social-political writings. In particular, Ross draws on the *Science of Logic* to shed light on Hegel’s “determinate negation” of capitalism, one that advances a trenchant critique of the latter even while engaging the resources of capitalism itself. Ross begins by appealing to the logic of mechanism to elucidate Hegel’s view of the contradictory nature of capitalist economic life. For Hegel, the logic of mechanism details the dependence of self-sufficiently isolated objects on external forces and aggregated coordinating relations that are not a feature of their own nature. In like manner, capitalist market societies, reflected above all in Hegel’s account of the system of needs, depict a social order in which the seemingly autonomous pursuit of individual self-interest entails dependence on broader coordinating structures that not only escape the control of individuals but result in pathologies—for example, increasingly dehumanized labor and an impoverished underclass—that undermine autonomy itself.

Against the “ethical untenability” of the form of capitalism thus illuminated, Hegel seeks to fashion, according to Ross, a more ethical mode of social being. Yet he does so neither by jettisoning capitalism itself nor by appealing to outside political institutions meant to regulate its excesses. Instead, his determinate negation of capitalism consists in a highly mediated account of political and economic structures, one that Ross details by appealing to the logic of reciprocal mediation contained in the *Logic’s* treatment of absolute mechanism. Drawing on the concept of the “syllogism of syllogisms” there elaborated, Ross presents Hegel as advancing a view of modern social life understood as a concrete and differentiated totality, whose component parts reciprocally entail and presuppose one another. Thus, although the contradictions of modern economic life do require the political intervention of a regulatory state, the latter in turn depends for its legitimacy on modes of representation best expressed through work-related interest groups (corporations, again), which in turn depend on individuals who appreciate how their needs and labor are intertwined with the needs and labor of others.

For Ross, this reading of Hegel’s assessment of capitalism demonstrates how modern economic life, however much it may contribute to

alienation and forms of social antagonism, contains resources for modes of civic engagement that can also challenge modern social pathologies. It eschews the abstract separation of political and economic concerns found as much in liberal as in Marxist understandings of modern society. It also sheds light on how the economic forms of social organization associated with capitalism can be seen, consonant with the goals of Hegel's political philosophy, as part of a broader account of ethical life, where the social whole, in line with an animating notion of freedom understood as *bei-sich-Selbst-sein*, is created and sustained in the complex interpenetration of its component parts.

In "Hegel and Capitalism: Marxian Perspectives," Tony Smith also considers how the categories of Hegel's logic might be used to comprehend modern capitalist economies. Yet his focus is on how this application was performed, not by Hegel himself, but by Marx, well-known for his assertion that Hegel's logic was "of great use" in the formulation of a critique of political economy. Smith begins by noting the distinctive features of Hegel's analysis of modern political economy, calling attention to its account of generalized commodity production and exchange. According to Smith, Marx accepts much of Hegel's analysis. He differs most decisively, however, in his comprehension of the nature of generalized commodity exchange, and in particular the role occupied by money. As with other political economists, Hegel claims that money here is simply a means enabling human beings to further chosen ends. By contrast, Marx discerns the distinctiveness of modern political economy to lie in a state of affairs where money, in the form of capital, becomes an end in itself, while human ends now become mere tools for its accumulation. In clarifying this point, Marx appeals to Hegel's logico-metaphysical writings and in particular the concept of Absolute Spirit. However much it may mystify the real relation of thought and being, Absolute Spirit does represent an accurate depiction of the perverted logic of a social order where human ends are subordinated to the exigencies of capital accumulation. Like Absolute Spirit, capital assumes the form of a self-moving substance for which all forms of human agency are simply expressions and manifestations.

While allowing that the tools of Hegel's logic were of unquestioned value in Marx's own analysis of capitalism, Smith disputes their particular deployment by Marx. A central issue is the "homology thesis" itself, the claim that the concept of Absolute Spirit is directly identifiable with the logic of capital. For Smith, this thesis fails to recognize—here he invokes the system of syllogisms discussed as well by Ross—how Hegel's logic also contains tools to mount a normative challenge to a social order that subordinates human freedom to the dominion of reified forces. Thus, instead of invoking the homology thesis to explain the value of Hegel's logic for

Marx's account of capitalism, Smith appeals to the logic of essence, for which things depend for their reality on reflection in entities other than themselves. On this reading, Marx can be said to appeal to *two* distinct forms of a logic of essence in explicating the nature of modern societies. On the one hand, he indicates how the process of commodity production and exchange is to be understood in the context of a generalized system of social reproduction, one that, based strictly on mechanisms of monetary valuation, liberates individuals from the forms of personal domination characteristic of premodern societies. On the other hand, this system under capitalism is to be understood via a notion of *dissociated* sociality, where all activity and value is subordinated to the dominion of capital. In this way, Hegel's logic is employed both to demonstrate how capitalism can in fact be deemed a system that subordinates individuals to alien ends *and* to assert that that system represents a historically particular manifestation that can be challenged from the perspective of an account of social reproduction free from such subordination.

In "Hegel's Ethic of *Beruf* and the Spirit of Capitalism," Louis Carré compares Hegel's account of capitalism to that of another important successor, Max Weber. In particular, he details affinities between Hegel's practical philosophy and Max Weber's thesis on the Protestant origins of capitalism in order to grasp the distinctive "spirit" that informs modern capitalism as an economic system. Carré is especially interested in the concept of the human subject that both thinkers assert is demanded by modern capitalism, something decisively shaped by their respective receptions of Protestantism. In the case of Weber, Protestant notions of asceticism and divinely ordained "calling" (*Beruf*) cultivated in individuals dispositions uniquely supportive of modern capitalism, those that construe work and the legitimate pursuit of economic gain, not just as means to satisfy material needs, but as components in a methodically directed mundane life-practice understood as an end in itself. In Hegel's case, Protestantism's understanding of the relationship of the human and the divine not only fortified human subjectivity, but did so in a way that saw work and other worldly activities, in contradistinction to the conventional Catholic separation of spiritual and worldly concerns, as realizations of spirit itself. In addition, Hegel also characterized the cultivation of human subjectivity as a "calling," but one understood in wholly secular terms—not as fulfillment of a divine task, but through successful integration into the vocational requirements of modern civil society.

Carré further considers the distinctive response each thinker provides to confront the "fate" of capitalism. These responses reflect divergent assessments of the project of modernity. For Weber, modernity is a process of disenchantment that, in gradually depriving occupational existence

of religious foundation, renders work in capitalist societies increasingly devoid of meaning. This is a state of affairs that for Weber could be countered only through the emergence of an aesthetic elite that, on the model of fellow *fin de siècle* thinker Friedrich Nietzsche, confronts an alienating capitalism with the values of authentic individualism. Hegel, by contrast, understands modernity as the progressive realization of spirit in the world and, in particular, the further actualization of human autonomy. Thus, though no less mindful of the alienating features of modern capitalism, Hegel advances a solution that consists, not in a new existential aesthetic, but in forms of intersubjective sociality that better realize the conditions for autonomous subjectivity.