

## International Conference

### MATERIALISTISCHE DIALEKTIK: MARX-LEKTÜREN IM DIALOG

October 30 & 31 2015, Freie Universität Berlin

A cooperative event of FU Berlin und Club de lecture Marx-Hegel de U de M

With the Support of the Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung

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Invited Speakers: Prof. **Frieder Otto Wolf** (FU Berlin); Prof. **Alex Demirović** (TU Berlin); Prof. **Daniel Goldstick** (University of Toronto); Prof. **Andreas Arndt** (HU Berlin).

<http://www.materialistischesdialektik.wordpress.com>

#### CALL FOR PAPERS

Deadline: **September 30, 2015**

What is materialist dialectic? And why should one be concerned about it in 2015? Isn't it related to an old, empty and, already outworn formula?

The debate over the relationship between Marxian and Hegelian dialectics tracks through three different centuries. The question of the meaning of materialist dialectic dates back to Marx's Afterword to the second edition of first volume of *Capital* (1873) and has since then made a preoccupation in Marxism, beginning with the elaborations of Engels. In the East, it was thematized, unter alia, by Plekhanov, Lenin, Mao, and as dialectical materialism characterized the official philosophical doctrine of the Soviet Union. In the West, this question stamped the works of Lukács, Adorno, Althusser, Luporioni, among others, and, particularly through the works of Backhaus and Reichelt, constituted the cornerstone of the development of the so-called "neue Marx-Lektüre".

In the meantime "neue Marx-Lektüre" itself became somehow old and in the contemporary German debates one hears of the "dritte Welle (third wave) of the reception of Marx (c.f. F.O.Wolf *Das Kapital neu lesen* and also *Kapital und Kritik* by Michael Heinrich and Werner Bonefeld). All this raises the question of whether the materialist dialectic would play once more an important role.

These debate developments are certainly neither unequivocal nor undisputed. Decisive questions in this regard related to what is to be overall understood by "materialist" and "dialectic", and also the relation between logical and historical development raise as ever and they are not fully dealt with.

Hence the last years have witnessed the proliferation of new investigations that concentrate on the differences and similarities between Marx's and Hegel's methods. Good examples in the regard are Fineschis's *Marx e Hegel* (2006), as well as Callinicos's *Deciphering Capital* (2014).

Our conference aims thereby at bringing the latest investigations and different existing perspectives into dialog. From the standpoint of the research on Marx it is important not to let decisive aspects of

the readings to remain unspoken of, and to provide the occasion of the constructive exchange of these readings.

Nonetheless it must be clarified that it is not just the Marxologists who are dealing with such apparently merely methodological questions that can be treated only by philosophers. What is understood by materialist dialectic does not only influence how Marx's Capital is read, but also has more immediate political impacts. For Example, when Marx rejected the political suggestions of the Proudhonists and the positions of such economists who denied the possibility of capitalist crises, he did it precisely in the name of dialectical interconnections between moments that were thought to be independent. In the course of the current worldwide crisis that brought along the renovation of the political critique of the capitalism, the question of the way such dialectical interconnections are to be read, gained once more the political meaning.

Therefore, not just philosophers are warmly invited to submit their contributions of 700 – 1000 words not later than **September 30, 2015** to **materialistische.dialektik@gmail.com**. Possible topics for the abstracts include (but are not necessarily limited to) the following questions:

- How a materialist dialectic distinguishes itself against an idealist dialectic?
- How is materialist dialectic related to dialectical materialism? Where does the dialectical characteristic of the latter lie? And generally: what makes an approach materialist? What makes it dialectical?
- Does an overall dialectical method exist?
- How should the relationship between Marx and Hegel as regards to dialectic to be understood? What does Marx's phrase mean when he says that Hegel's dialectic "must be inverted, in order to discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell"?
- What role does the notion of totality play in idealist and materialist dialectic?
- Where do the limits of the dialectical mode of presentation as referred by Marx lie?
- What is the connection between dialectical mode of presentation and capitalist mode of production?
- What is the relation between dialectic and the empirical? What is the relationship between the presentation and inquiry? What is the one between dialectical and historical development?
- Is "dialectic in its rational form.... in its very essence critical and revolutionary." (Marx)? Why so?
- What roles do conceptual contradictions and contrasts in Marx's dialectical presentation of the capitalist mode of production and in critique of capitalism in general play?
- How can anti-capitalist social movements take advantage of such very abstract formulized contradictions and contrasts?
- How are these questions answered during the twentieth century (e.g. Plechanov, Lenin, Lukács, Adorno, Althusser, etc.)?

– Does a common position within the so called “neue Marx-Lektüre”? If so, how can this be characterized? What further developments may be ascertained?

We welcome abstracts in German and English. For each talk **20 min. plus 15 min. for discussion** is envisaged. The acceptance or rejection of the abstracts will be communicated by October 7, 2015. The proceedings of the conference will be probably published.

Participation fee: **20 €**

Kaveh Boveiri (PhD Candidate in Philosophy, Université de Montréal)

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