

political strivings, even though the French political situation grew ever darker up until the end of his life.

Tocqueville's theory of democracy and liberty is essentially a theory of human responsibility for directing our future to better ends. Having the insight and courage to face the difficulties with modern democracy is always a lesson to be learned from Tocqueville. Meticulously and concisely written by a top expert, Schleifer's *Tocqueville* will prove to be rewarding reading for the general audience and a useful reference for specialists.

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Antonio Negri: *Marx and Foucault: Essays*. (Cambridge: Polity, 2017. Pp. 200.)

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Antonio Negri's *Marx and Foucault* is not a unified work of political theory. Rather, it is a collection of essays and interviews dating back as far as 1977. Superficially, its three sections are somewhat disjointed in their focus, scope, and tone; a dense, academic reading of *Capital* is followed by historical ruminations on "Italian theory" and the persistent failures of the Left, before culminating in a reimagined Marx mediated by Foucault, Deleuze, and Guattari.

Nevertheless, when taken together, this collection lays bare the very foundation of Negri's broader project of responding to the "urgent demand for a radical shift in the epistemic paradigm, to match the new characteristics of the ontology of the present" (4).

Marx and Foucault, then, only fully makes sense to readers in the context of Negri's larger ambitions. He is an Italian Marxist of a particular stripe: his name is closely associated with what is broadly referred to as Autonomism, an offshoot of 1960s Italian Workerism. As its name might imply, this so-called bottom-up variant of Marxism privileges class struggle while at the same time looking to labor itself as a possible ground for new modes of being. This epistemic viewpoint has radical implications for Marxian praxis, chief among them that the working class itself could affect the modes of production. Nevertheless, this autonomy has been complicated by a particular antagonism within capitalism, which the entirety of the first section is dedicated to explicating.

Negri makes the case that “social life is gradually subsumed to capital, first in a ‘formal’ manner, and then in ‘real’ terms” (19). This process of “real subsumption” has the effect of transforming the social labor process into the social process of valorization (50), or in other words, “all social relations (obviously those of production, but also those of reproduction and circulation) are transposed onto the terrain of exploitation—in short, *life is subsumed to capital*” (45). Thus, it becomes clear that “real subsumption” is the process that demands the new “ontology of the present” to which Negri must formulate a new epistemological paradigm. Here, Foucault’s concept of the biopolitical enters the picture: “When we consider the productive nature of labour, we are moving increasingly in the same *biopolitical* dimension to which the analysis of the process of real subsumption had brought us. These ‘forces’ that work productively in the labour process, within the ‘socially combined’ reality of the production machine—are not ‘individual’ but ‘social’ forces” (50).

Having reframed late capitalism in terms of biopolitics and its attendant process of subjectivation, Negri hints at how “new forms of labour and struggle, produced by the transformation of material labour into immaterial labour, present themselves as producing subjectivity” (interview with Negri, <https://libcom.org/library/negri-on-foucault>). Because Negri sees money as having overtaken labor, and technology as having overtaken life, a working class attempting to break this cycle must redefine its collective subjectivation by “reappropriating not only technologies but also their command.” As Negri puts it succinctly, “since technologies are prostheses of the human, the problem is how to make technology a prosthesis of our resistance, of our revolt and our humanity” (67).

Section 2 of *Marx and Foucault* situates the ontological change in capitalism historically, finding an inability to adequately respond to the biopolitical nature of capital to be at fault for the breakdown of “Italian theory,” as well as the lackluster performance of the Left in past decades. Here, Negri’s conception of what collective subjectivation should resemble lurks in the background: the “common” refers to “places at the center of the biopolitical context ... neither the private nor public, nor the individual or the social, but what, all together, we construct to grant man the possibility of producing and reproducing himself” (interview with Negri). Thus, Negri locates the demise of Italian theory, the unresponsiveness of social democracies since the 70s, and the sluggishness of the Left more broadly precisely in an inability to formulate new epistemological resources to confront the ontological changes inherent in biopolitical capitalism.

The third and final section of *Marx and Foucault* illuminates the role of Foucault in Negri’s gradual recasting of Marx in terms of the biopolitical. The first chapter in this section is a 1978 essay critical of Foucault. Yet, demonstrating Negri’s changing view on Foucault, the following chapters, written significantly later, provide a more favorable take in which he looks to Deleuze and Guattari in order to recast Foucault’s concepts of biopower and

biopolitics in terms of Spinozan ones: potestas and potential. The final chapter, “Marx after Foucault,” is perhaps the clearest formulation of Negri’s transformation in this respect. He remarks: “if we study Foucault ... we shall be able to define a basis that goes beyond superficial convergences between the thinking of Marx and Foucault on governmentality, biopolitics and the subject and will enable us rather to identify in both writers a common that is grafted into an ontology of the present” (193).

In the final analysis, *Marx and Foucault* sheds considerable light on Negri’s broader project; readers will find Negri’s reasoning that a new Marx must be forged, his indebtedness to Foucault in doing so, and finally how the Autonomist-inflected concept of the “common” and its collective subjectivation flows from this reimagined Foucauldian Marxism. Nonetheless, readers will question (and, indeed, already have done so) the extent to which Negri’s Marx is still Marx in any meaningful way. As Alex Callinicos claims, Negri’s reading of Marx yields a reduction of Marxism from a theory of political economy into a theory of power (interview with Callinicos, <http://marxistupdate.blogspot.com/2011/09/negri-rewrites-marx-as-foucault.html>). In transposing the Marxian notion of liberation into the clearly Foucauldian notion of practicing freedom through collective subjectivation, Negri certainly looks to be guilty of this charge. Worse yet, Negri’s contention that technology be a “prosthesis of our resistance” may already favor the more economically powerful, undermining his project’s Marxian edge.

Nevertheless, Negri is forthcoming both about his indebtedness to and breaks with Marx.

Early on, in the chapter fittingly titled “Why Marx?,” Negri emphasizes that “a dialogue with Marx is essential for anyone developing the concept of class struggle at the centre and/or in the subaltern conditions of the capitalist empire and proposing a communist perspective today” (17). While detractors may fault him for championing a “heretical” Marx, Negri would likely respond to such charges that the “ontology of the present” *demands* a new Marx and its attendant epistemological paradigm, lest the Left continue to languish in defeat.

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