

**SCIENTIFIC FINAL REPORT**

Regnr Östersjöstiftelsen: 2013-0016

Project manager: Anders Burman

Project title: Hegelian Marxism

1. Purpose of the project

The main purpose of the project has been to investigate the role of Hegel's philosophy in the transformation of Marxist theories in Eastern and Central European countries from the Russian Revolution 1917 to our contemporary, post-Marxism situation. The two research questions that have been guiding the project are: How have Marxist theorists during the last century used the Hegelian philosophy with the ambition to better understand their own current society as well as situate themselves in relation to orthodox forms of Marxism? And in what ways has Hegel been essential to the development of Marxist philosophy, both in the short twentieth century and in the contemporary post-Marxist theory?

We have answered these questions in and through case studies of the writings of seven prominent Marxist thinkers in the Eastern and Central Europe: Georg Lukács (1885–1971), Karl Korsch (1886–1961), Herbert Marcuse (1898–1979), Theodor W. Adorno (1903–1969), Karel Kosík (1926–2003), Jürgen Habermas (b. 1929) and Slavoj Žižek (b. 1949). Lukács and Korsch wrote their most important books on Hegelian Marxism in the twenties while Habermas and Žižek are still active today, thus we have covered almost the whole last century. These thinkers were or are all active in Eastern or Central Europe, and they all read and use Hegel's philosophy to revise the Marxism tradition and to understand the contemporary society. The case studies have been placed into a larger narrative of the development of Marxist theory from the Russian Revolution to the present. In more general terms, we have also discussed the importance of the constellation of Hegel and Marxism in Eastern and Central Europe.



2. The three most important results of the project and what conclusions can be drawn from them

The project has resulted in several publications and events. The most important of the publications is the anthology *Hegelian Marxism: The Uses of Hegel's Philosophy in Marxist Theory from Georg Lukács to Slavoj Žižek* (2018), which contains eight contributions from both Swedish and international researchers: except the two us, Sergei Mareev (Russia), Elena Mareeva (Russia), David Payne (UK/Sweden) and Sven-Olov Wallenstein (Sweden). With its more than 5000 downloads it is one of the most widely circulated publications from Södertörn University.

Together with Victoria Fareld (Sweden) and Hannes Kuch (Germany) we arranged, in February 2016 at Goethe-Institut of Stockholm, an international conference on Hegel, Marx, Hegelian Marxism, and the tradition of critical thinking in the Eastern and Central Europe during the last century. The conference was called “From Marx to Hegel and Back to the Future” and among the participants were several leading scholars in the research area, among others Eva Bockenheimer (Germany), Rebecca Comay (Canada), Sven-Eric Liedman (Sweden), Frederick Neuhouser (US) and Hans-Christoph Schmidt am Busch (Germany).

In addition, we have attended several relevant international conferences, in Canada, Italy, Sweden and the US. In this way we have also disseminated the results of our research in oral form among other scholars.

One of the most interesting and original conclusions of the project, as we consider it, is the distinction we have proposed between, on the one hand, Eastern and Central European Hegelian Marxism that we focus on in our project and, on the other hand, the so-called Western Marxism that developed at the same time. We have thus suggested that the concept of Western Marxism mainly should be used for the French oriented tradition that goes back to Alexandre Kojève’s famous lectures on Hegel in Paris in the 1930s, in contrast to the Hegelian Marxism that emerged with Lukács and Korsch in the 1920s.



3. The project's contribution to the international research frontline

The project has contributed to our knowledge of Hegel's reception in the Marxism tradition and in which ways Hegel's philosophy has been used of some of the leading Marxism thinkers during the last century. Thereby, it has shown how Marxism was transformed by this interest in Hegel as well as how the understanding of Hegelian philosophy was modified and deepened through these readings. In that way the project has demonstrated how Marxist philosophy got new Hegelian injections and how the Hegelian side of Marx's philosophy was developed in a variety of ways.

4. New research questions that the project has led to

One important question which was developed further after this project by Bartonek, was the possibility and conditions for societal critique. How is fundamental critique of problematic forms of society possible and in what ways is society preventing and undermining such a critique?

In line with the project and in a context of a broader study of the history of democracy, Burman has examined how many left-wing theorists in recent decades have either tried to reclaim the idea of communism or abandoned Marxism in favor of parliamentary democracy, which former Marxism tended to have a problematic relationship with.

5. The contribution of the research to the knowledge of the Baltic Sea Region and Eastern Europe

In different ways, the project has contributed to the knowledge of the Eastern and Central European identity, in which both Marxism and Hegelianism have been of great importance. It also showed how the Hegelian versions of Marxism bridged the Marxist fields in Eastern, Central and Western Europe.

6. The contribution of research to multidisciplinary knowledge formation

In a certain respect it has been a multidisciplinary project – with focus on philosophy and intellectual history – that not only dealt with a chronological extensive material, but it has also addressed some of the most discussed questions in the Marxism



tradition, for instance the role of dialectics, the concept of totality, the relationship between Hegelian idealism and Marxian materialism, the relationship between radical politics and modernistic art, whether one should try to change the world or just understand and explain it, and so on and so forth. And although the project departed from philosophical and intellectual historian perspectives, the questions dealt with are of high importance for other disciplines, such as for example sociology, political science and economic history.

7. Dissemination of the results of the project within and outside the research community

See below for the publications which the project resulted in, organized conferences and impact on the participants' teaching.

Published works

Monographs:

Anders Burman, *Flykten från Hegel. Den postmoderna vänsterns genealogi* (Hägersten: Tankekraft, 2016).

Anthologies:

- Anders Bartonek & Anders Burman (eds.), *Hegelian Marxism: The Uses of Hegel's Philosophy in Marxist Theory from Georg Lukács to Slavoj Žižek* (Huddinge: Södertörn University, 2018). Open access: <http://sh.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1257334/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Anders Burman & Cecilia Sjöholm (eds.), *Slavoj Žižek som samtidsanalytiker* (Hägersten: Tankekraft, 2018).

Articles (peer reviewed):

- Anders Burman, “Back to Hegel! Georg Lukács, Dialectics, and Hegelian Marxism”, in Bartonek & Burman (eds.), *Hegelian Marxism*, pp. 17–34. Open access: : <http://sh.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1257334/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Anders Burman, “A Lacanian Hegelianism: Slavoj Žižek’s (Mis-)Reading of Hegel”, in Bartonek & Burman (eds.), *Hegelian Marxism*, pp. 185–198. Open access: <http://sh.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1257334/FULLTEXT01.pdf>



- Anders Bartonek, “Karl Korsch: To Make the Right Marx Visible through Hegel”, in Bartonek & Burman (eds.), *Hegelian Marxism*, pp. 35–60. Open access: : <http://sh.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1257334/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Anders Bartonek, “Herbert Marcuse: No dialectics, no critique”, in Bartonek & Burman (eds.), *Hegelian Marxism*, pp., s. 81–106. Open access: [:http://sh.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1257334/FULLTEXT01.pdf](http://sh.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1257334/FULLTEXT01.pdf)
- Anders Bartonek, “Theodor W. Adorno: With Hegel against Capitalism”, in Bartonek & Burman (eds.), *Hegelian Marxism*, pp. 127–150. Open access: <http://sh.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1257334/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Anders Burman, “Tillbaka till Hegel! Georg Lukács, dialektiken och den hegelianska marxismen”, *Lychnos. Årsbok för idé- och lärdomshistoria* 2015, pp. 91–113. Open access: <https://lychnosblog.files.wordpress.com/2016/09/burman-tillbaka-till-hegel.pdf>

Other articles:

- Anders Burman, “Att inte bara förstå utan också förändra. Žižeks Hegel”, in Anders Burman & Cecilia Sjöholm (eds.), *Slavoj Žižek som samtidsanalytiker* (Hägersten: Tankekraft, 2018), pp. 101–116.
- Anders Burman, “Vart tog marxismen vägen? Slavoj Žižek och de nya kommunisterna”, in Anders Burman & Lena Lennerhed (eds.), *Samtider. Perspektiv på 2000-talets idéhistoria* (Göteborg: Daidalos, 2017), pp. 239–259.
- Anders Burman, “Hegel, Marx, and the Political”, in Kaveh Boveiri, Emmanuel Chaput & Arnaud Theurillat-Cloutier (eds.), *Hegel, Marx and the Contemporary World* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016), pp. 34–50.
- Anders Burman, “Marx, fetischismen och det estetiska”, *Tidskrift för litteraturvetenskap* no 3-4 2014, pp. 110–114. Open access: <file:///C:/Users/sh99asbn/Downloads/3225-7816-1-SM.pdf>
- Anders Bartonek, “Den pseudokonkreta världen och vägen ut ur den hos Karel Kosík” (un-published article).

Conferences

Organization



- Burman and Bartonek co-organized the international conference Marx, Hegel and Back to the Future, Goethe-Institut of Stockholm, 25–27 February 2016.
- Burman co-organized the symposium I verklighetens öken: Slavoj Žižek som samtidsanalytiker, Södertörn University, April 7, 2017.

Participation

- Bartonek, “The Future of Saying No. Adorno's Critical Theory between Non-identity and Incompatibility”, paper presented at the 10th International Critical Theory Conference in Rome, May 2018, at the John Felice Rome Center of Loyola University Chicago.
- Bartonek, “The Future of Saying No”, paper presented at the conference “The Future of Critical Theory” at the Goethe Institute in autumn 2017 in Stockholm.
- Burman, “I verklighetens öken: Slavoj Žižek som samtidsanalytiker, Södertörn University, April 7, 2017.
- Burman, “Back to Hegel! Lukács, Dialectics and Hegelian Marxism”, at the conference Marx, Hegel and Back to the Future, Goethe-Institut of Stockholm, 25–27 February 2016.
- Bartonek, “Marcuse’s Hegelian Marxism and the Question of Dialectics”, paper presented at the conference Marx, Hegel and Back to the Future, Goethe-Institut of Stockholm, 25–27 February 2016.
- Bartonek, “Marcuse and the Defense of Dialectics,” paper presented at the 8th International Critical Theory conference in Rome, May 2015, at the John Felice Rome Center of Loyola University Chicago.
- Burman, “Hegel, Marx and the Political,” paper presented at the Hegel Conference, Marx and the Contemporary World, University of Montreal, April 3–4, 2014.

Open lectures, debates etc.

- Bartonek, participated in Bildningspodden on the Frankfurt School, section # 65, 2017
- Burman, lecture on the idea of communism, Socialist Forum, ABF Stockholm, November 26, 2016.
- Burman, lecture on Hegel’s reception history, the Swedish Ernst Cassirer Society, Gothenburg 25 November 2016.



- Burman, lecture on Hegelian Marxism and postmodernist genealogy, Book Café Projektil, Uppsala, October 20, 2016.
- Burman, conversation with Victoria Fareld about Hegel, Aspuddens bokhandel, September 20, 2016.
- Burman, “Political Art, Strange Politics”, lecture and panel discussion, Marabouparkens Konsthall 27 April 2016.
- Burman, “Minervas ugglas flyger först i skymningen”, *Norrköpings Tidningar* 18 October 2016 (Burman interviewed by Pauli Olavi Kuivanen).
- Burman, conversation with Sven-Eric Liedman about Karl Marx, Aspuddens bokhandel, November 24, 2015.

Courses

Burman has held thematic courses about Hegel, Karl Marx and Slavoj Žižek in connection with the project, as well as a lecture on “Marx and Marxism”, Masters of Urban Planning and Development, KTH.

Bartonek has used material from this project in connection with courses on political philosophy (Philosophy A).