

Abstract

The end of grand narratives was declared by Lyotard at the end of the 1970s. The timing was perfect. The disintegration of state socialism, the demise of Keynesianism, continued Anglo-American philosophical scepticism over speculative metaphysics, and the rise of an assertive postmodernism combined to cast doubt on ambitious philosophical traditions. The claims of reason were ripe for a head-on challenge. Lyotard talked of the ghostly character of grand theories. He focused upon the theories of Hegel and Marx as prime examples of theories whose time was at an end. Subsequently, the limits of reason continue to be proclaimed, and yet grand narratives and the theories of Hegel and Marx cannot be so easily dismissed. To understand a complex and problematic world, demands that we understand our place in history and society and see the connections between the present and past, and seemingly divergent social practices.

Introduction

The end of grand narratives was announced by Lyotard at the end of the 1970s. The timing was perfect. The disintegration of state socialism, the demise of Keynesianism, continued Anglo-American philosophical scepticism over speculative metaphysics, and the rise of an assertive postmodernism combined to cast doubt on ambitious philosophical traditions. The claims of reason faced a head-on collision

with a variety of forces, cultural, political and intellectual. In this paper I focus upon the critique of grand narratives that was conducted by Lyotard, and his relegation of Hegel and Marx to ghostly presences which have to be exorcised. Alongside Lyotard, I also revisit Derrida's revisiting of Marx in *Specters of Marx*, which reviews Marx's attraction to ghosts and Marx's continued use of spectral language, while summoning the spectre of Marx to haunt the contemporary assertion of Western liberal internationalism. The limits of reason continue to be proclaimed, and yet grand narratives and the theories of Hegel and Marx cannot be so easily dismissed. To understand a complex and problematic world demands that we understand our place in history and society, and see the connections between the present and past, and seemingly divergent social practices. It is the argument of this paper that the proclamation of the end of grand narratives did not serve to bury the theories of Hegel, Marx and related theorists, and suffers from its own internal weaknesses, while underrating the viability of grand theories. The end of grand narratives is a slogan, which is self-subverting, as it forms part of a large scale pattern of developing cultural and intellectual forms. In so far as Lyotard sought to explain how his enterprise responds to current sociological and historical currents, he undermines the meaning he assigns to the phrase, 'the end of grand narratives'. In so far as he fails to explain it, he points to the continued relevance of the historical and socially grounded theories of Hegel and Marx, the very theories upon which his critique focused.

The End of Grand Narratives?

In 1979 Lyotard published *The Postmodern Condition- A Report on Knowledge*. His text captured the contemporary philosophical and cultural imagination. It identifies modernity by its assumption that reason can comprehend our condition in a grand sweep of theory. This assumption is denied by postmodernism. The targets of Lyotard's critique are clear. Lyotard focuses on two ideal types of grand narrative, one of which, the philosophical paradigm, is associated most emphatically with Hegel. This narrative takes knowledge to form an inter-related set of connections, which are determined by an all-encompassing subject. Lyotard highlights Hegel's role in setting out this form of grand narrative, 'Hegel's *Encyclopaedia* attempts to realize this project of totalization. It is here in the mechanism of developing a Life that is simultaneously subject, that we see a return to narrative knowledge. The *encyclopaedia* of German idealism is the narration of the history of this life-subject...The narrative must be a metasubject.' (Lyotard 1984, 33-4) The other ideal type of grand narrative links events and activities to the progressive emancipation of the masses. Marx is taken as combining these styles of grand narrative. There are Marxist variations on a theme. The Moscow version sees Stalinism as incubating a Soviet state in which the masses are imprisoned within a state dedicated to their progressive development. The Frankfurt version riffs on critical theory whereby a proletarian form of self-consciousness is elevated in opposition to capital so as to furnish emancipatory self-knowledge.

Lyotard concludes that in either form grand narratives are dead. They lay buried underneath the ubiquitous performativity of contemporary society and are superseded by our recognition of multiple dissonant forms of experience which are not to be trammelled by the monotony of a one-dimensional grand narrative. Plurality and dissonant forms of experience, whether imagined as language games or genres

of discourse disrupt the epistemological and normative claims of grand narratives, while society operates by ignoring ideological distractions to concentrate on what will work to increase performativity of the system. Lyotard enjoins, 'Forget the dead you've left, they will not follow you.' (Dylan, 1965) The ghosts of grand narratives are of no consequence. In *The Differend*, a thoughtful work, Lyotard urges that there is no overall frame of language whereby general judgments ranging across particular forms of language can be maintained. He follows the logic of this thought to its conclusion. He takes it to mean that the truth of his own understanding of the redundancy of meta-language notions such as the *differend* cannot be explained as a general truth. As in Kant's *Third Critique*, the capacity of a differend to suggest the differences, which underpin our multiple genres of discourse, can be intimated but not demonstrated. Just as a beautiful scene or the immensity of a mountain might be intimated by aesthetic judgments of beauty and sublimity, so political disagreements are not to be resolved by demonstrable argumentation. (Lyotard, 1988, 101-5)

Conflicts between perspectives, for Lyotard, are irresolvable by meta-argumentation. It is this perspectival character, the incommensurability of perspectives, which renders conflicts chronic. It establishes them as political. The political is constituted by the incommensurability of the judgments informing its practice. Hence all engagements, which involve discordant elements are political. Notably, and in distinction from Marx, Lyotard maintains that the struggle between workers and management is a clash of perspectives that is not susceptible of resolution by an argument supervening upon incommensurable perspectives. Workers in an industrial dispute can combine and express solidarity in a struggle against management. They are liable to highlight exploitation and the injustice of practices that fail to meet their demands. Management and business owners will oppose them, appealing to

arguments relating to the need to maintain or increase profits and to achieve efficiency in the face of unreasonable demands by the workforce. For Lyotard, there is a stand-off in this conflict, which many involved in industrial disputes will recognise. There is no meta-language to determine the efficacy of what is being said and fought for. It is a political struggle without a pre-formulated script ensuring or presaging victory for the proletariat. Marxists might see the conflict as perhaps forming part of an overall set of historical developments signalling the demise of capital, or heightening the consciousness of workers in recognising their true interest. Hegel would see conflicts as indicating the inadequacy of particular perspectives and suggesting their supersession by a more inclusive standpoint. Lyotard, in contrast, sees irresolvable conflict and incommensurability.

In a series of late essays towards the end of his life in 1998, Lyotard referred to the end of grand narratives in more sorrowful elegiac terms, even if he continued to maintain their redundancy. His repudiation of the prospects for large-scale emancipation and in particular his notion of the redundancy of Marxism as a redemptive philosophy, are manifest in his late essay, 'the wall, the gulf and the sun: a fable.' (Lyotard 1993b). He remarks, 'What was ultimately at stake for Marxism was the transformation of the local working classes into the emancipated proletariat...capable of emancipating all humanity from the disastrous effects of the injury it had suffered... society was viewed as being possessed by the *mania*, haunted by a ghost, doomed to a tremendous *catharsis*... The rights of the workers were the rights of mankind to self-government, and they were to be fought for through class struggle. I mean class against class, with no reference to nation, sex, race or religion...The mere recall of these guidelines of Marxist criticism has something obsolete, even tedious about it. That is not my fault. It is also because the

ghost has now vanished dragging the last critical grand narrative with it if the historical stage.’ (Lyotard, 1993b)

The emotive force of Lyotard’s elegiac lament for the passing of grand narratives in this latter essay is given in its use of a language of ghosts or spectres in referring to a Marxist grand narrative. Lyotard’s characterisation of a Marxist narrative as ghost-like has two quite distinct rationales, thereby suggesting his own recognition of the significance of difference. On the one hand society, according to the Marxist narrative, was haunted by a ghost of exploitation and injustice presaging a grand transformation, and on the other hand in the face of its ignoring of sex, race, religion and nation, its maintenance of an essentialist grand theory is now redundant and ghostly, in the sense that it is no longer alive or relevant. Lyotard’s elliptical reference to categories of social life, which Marxism does not deal with, suggests ways in which Marxism is out of joint with recent and contemporary forms of identity politics, but also to historical changes that cannot be explained neatly by class conflict. However, there are questions to be asked of Lyotard’s lament. It is by no means clear that all forms of Marxism ignore these categories. Gramscian Marxism, for instance, sees the reproduction of society as involving a hegemony that operates in diverse ways, and Frankfurt School theorists are aware of the instrumentality that is evident in apparently diverse cultural practices in capitalist societies. To consider a variety of forms of Marxism gives cause for us to reflect upon and to doubt the clarity and decisiveness of Lyotard’s reading of Marxism as a grand narrative, Can Marxism be assimilated to a single line of thinking? There are analytic, Hegelian, Gramscian, Althusserian Marxists, who all offer different readings of past and present. . Derrida’s *Specters of Marx* gives us further cause to reflect about the nature of grand narratives and the spectral forms that they conjure.

Derrida's Specters of Marx

Derrida calls up Marx as a contrary spirit to serve as a ghostly reminder of an alternative to the course of politics in the late twentieth century, following the fall of communism in Eastern Europe. Marx operates as a spectre that can play on the prejudices of the present like Banquo's ghost. Marx is not to be denied. The ghosts with which his work is populated cannot be repressed. Derrida observes, 'At a time when a new world disorder is attempting to install its neo-capitalism and neo-liberalism, no disavowal has managed to rid itself of all of Marx's ghosts.' (Derrida, 1994, 46) Marx, for Derrida, offers an alternative reading of global development and global politics, which challenges what is on the neo-liberal agenda. Derrida uses Marx to interrogate the contemporary new internationalism by which Western powers assert a global political agenda that privileges human rights and economic freedom. This neo-liberal agenda is partial. A partisan position masquerading as truth. Its closure of debate and its construction of a definitive normative route to the future persuades Derrida to deploy a contrary spirit, a spectre that can play upon the prejudices of the present, like Banquo's ghost.

The ideological identification of freedom with acquisitiveness, commodification and human rights as individual possessions constitute a form of injustice to which Marx's focus upon production and the exploitation of labour provides a timely reminder. Derrida observes, 'At a time when a new world disorder is attempting to install its neo-capitalism and neo-liberalism, no disavowal has managed to rid itself of all Marx's ghosts.' (Derrida, 1994, 46). Marx's internationalism, for Derrida, renders his thought strikingly apposite to the contemporary admission of a global perspective. He notes, 'And communism was essentially distinguished from other labour movements by its *international* character. No organised political movement in the

history of humanity had ever yet presented itself as *geo-political*, thereby inaugurating the space that is now ours and that today is reaching its limits, the limits of the earth and the limits of the political.’ (Derrida, 1994, 47)

Derrida works with an irregular Marx in countering the contemporary international hegemony of international rights. It is a Marx released from the legacy of Marxism as an ontology, a philosophical doctrine a theory of history or a metaphysical system. Marx is released from an essentialised Marxism as instituted in the apparatus of the party, state or workers’ international. Derrida invokes a Marx severed from Marx as an essentialist, grand theoretician, who is the target of Lyotard’s critique. Derrida’s Marx opens up a non-doctrinaire Marx, whose commitment to an alternative democracy future casts doubt on prevalent liberal limitations. It is a Marx, who has nothing to do with the continued *aufheben* of what Derrida takes to be ‘a dialectics of the Hegelian type.’(Derrida, 1972, 40). It is a Marx, who is different from the object of Lyotard’s critique. Marx is invoked by Derrida to signal the contestability of a universalization of liberal democracy that ignores socio-economic injustice. For Derrida, Marx offers the promise of a messianic democracy to come which can function as a spectre that is haunting Europe, just as Marx depicted communism as such as spectre. Marx, for Derrida is seen as being absorbed by the spectral. The ghostly imagination of Marx is traced throughout his work, but in particular haunts *The German Ideology*, which was jointly written by Marx and Engels.

Derrida follows Marx in following Stirner, whose fascination with the ghostly haunts his *The Ego and Its Own*. In writing *The German Ideology*, Marx and Engels attended to the ideology of post-Hegelianism in Germany, and critiqued the work of the Young Hegelians, Bruno Bauer, Ludwig Feuerbach and Max Stirner, as well as the True Socialists, who were influenced by Feuerbach. The Young Hegelians

critiqued Hegel because they took him to be postulating an essence of mankind external to experience, just as Hegel had critiqued a series of philosophical and cultural predecessors for doing likewise. Each of the Young Hegelians then set about establishing their own credentials for freeing thought from religious and philosophical manoeuvres that denied freedom by transferring it to an alien entity. Feuerbach identified humanity as the ultimate subject of experience, criticising Hegel's notion of Geist as an encompassing subject. Yet Stirner identified Feuerbach's essence of mankind as in turn representing an alienating ghostly entity, a spectre of reason, just like Hegel's *Geist* is a spectral subject. . Marx was impressed by Stirner's critique of Hegel and other Young Hegelians, even if he did not acknowledge its influence and when, in the following year, he and Engels in *The German Ideology* attended to the ideology of Hegel and the Young Hegelians, they in turn critiqued them on lines similar to that of Stirner.(See Browning, 1993) The fiercest critique within *The German Ideology* however, was reserved for Stirner, whose notion of the ego was stigmatized as representing a grotesque and ghostly teleology of the essential development of egoism.

Derrida is right to draw attention to Marx's preoccupation with ghosts. Ghosts inhabit many of his texts, notably *The Communist Manifesto* and *The German Ideology*. An irony is that subsequent scholars, notably Carver and Blank, have called into question the integrity of *The German Ideology*. They urge it was not conceived as a book, but rather consists of series of notes which were by subsequent editors. (Carver and Blank, 2014)) If the ghostly constitutes a world between the living and the dead, then it is fitting that a book about ghosts is itself ghostly, which was not planned as a text by its authors and has only existed in its entirety due to the influence of posthumous editors. The comments of *The German Ideology* on Stirner

and its notes on Feuerbach, though, remain of importance because they show Marx's sensitivity to the spectral status of essences. Subsequent to *The German Ideology*, Marx played down the language of alienation and of a human essence even if his conceptual scheme for *Capital*, as revealed in *The Grundrisse*, continued to rely on these notions. Indeed, Derrida in *Specters of Marx* identifies Marx's notion of the fetishism of commodities as implying the unreality of the way the capitalist system of commodification appears to operate. He notes, 'In other words as soon as there is production, there is fetishism: idealization, autonomization, and automization, dematerialization and spectral incorporation, mourning work coextensive with all work and so forth.' (Derrida, 1993, 204). Marx's preoccupation with the ghosts of Stirner shows his own sensitivity to ghosts and the spectral and the sharpness of his critique. Stirner's critique of Hegel is excessive in its reliance on a ghostly teleological form of history that exceeds Hegel, who was careful to circumscribe the claims of his own teleological reading of history. On the one hand, Marx is determined to rid his own theory of the ghost-like quality of a teleological reading of history, and on the other hand he sees ghosts in the operations of modern society. The sensitivity of Marx to the ghostly, and his awareness of the dangers of an excessive ghostly teleology is ignored in Lyotard's critique of Marx.

Hegel and Marx Revisited

Lyotard's critique of grand narratives remains powerful. It raises a question. Are we to accept or reject the grand theories of those, like Hegel and Marx, who developed wide-ranging theories explaining the development of the social world? For Lyotard, grand narratives are redundant, because they ignore or underplay the prevalent

cultural plurality. Differences are ubiquitous; normative judgments differ from descriptive terms, jokes from exhortations, political economy from aesthetic experimentation and sexual behaviour and orientation from business partnerships and work practices. By the end of his life Lyotard was reflecting wearily and elegiacally upon grand narratives, which appeared as ghost-like apparitions, belonging to a bygone era, while current economies of time and practical demands of performativity impose constraints upon the social scene. Marx himself was aware of the problems posed by overly ambitious theoretical schemes. Yet we should pause before dispensing with grand narratives, and adopt a critical but positive sense of what they offer. One reason to retain grand narratives is that they orient us to our world. Large scale theories bring together aspects of the world, which are connected. Lyotard's assumption that phrases and genres of discourse are radically discrete and separate from one another is an exaggeration. There are differences but also connections. Political economy does not operate outside a cultural frame, aesthetics is not divorced from the realities of everyday life. Art can imagine the exigencies of practical life and contributes to the economy. Without provision for social needs, and without responding to normative demands, a market cannot function effectively. There are connections between forms of experience. Sometimes they are in apposition, and at other times they are in opposition. Hegel and Marx respond to connections between forms of experience.

The present is not divorced from the past. To imagine a present without a past is impossible. To establish pertinent connections between present and past is to understand the situation. Our hold on the past is framed by the present, and the past bears upon the present. The past is a construction from present experience.

Possible future directions shape how we conduct ourselves in the present. Grand narratives link aspects of our present experience to one another and the present to the past and future. They are vital in enabling our understanding of our situation. Jay Bernstein commented perceptively on how the self of self-consciousness is constituted by the practices and frameworks in which it is situated and hence a grand narrative is the appropriate form of self-knowledge. In 'Grand narratives, he observes, 'Self-consciousness in its full sense, which of course can never be complete, requires the self to traverse the conditions of its own comportment in and towards the world, which is just as Heidegger, Hegel and others have argued, to recollect and appropriate the traditions to which the self in question belongs... narrative repetition, grand narration, just is the collective form of human self-consciousness.' (Bernstein, 1991)

If there are positive reasons to endorse grand narratives, their critique also suffers from internal weaknesses. Lyotard's Hegel, for instance, is precisely that, a merely particular version of Hegel, whose thought is taken to be absolutist in imagining a subject, *Geist*, larger than and distinct from empirical individuals exerting imperial control over the world and the course of history. Lyotard's Marx is also a highly particular reading, which highlights the demise of Soviet communism as depriving Marx's thought of legitimacy. It does not allow sufficiently for the varieties of Marxism and the ambiguities in Marx's work, and his determination not to dictate the script of world history. Moreover, Lyotard's own postmodernism is decidedly questionable. His thought does not stand outside history, as the renunciation of grand narratives suggests. In fact Lyotard imagines history as taking shape according to a large scale pattern of constructing and then deconstructing comprehensive systems of

knowledge. The end of grand narratives is itself a sort of narrative, which is neither local nor minor. Perhaps it is a variant of critical theory or Marxism, in that Lyotard in his reading of the present emphasises the overweening role of the economic in exerting pressure on all areas of life to save time or to enhance performativity. (Lyotard 1988 and 1984) These formulations can be seen to be either variants of Marxist critical theory or venturing into new territory but with the proviso that grand claims are being made. Moreover, the assumption that language games in *The Postmodern Condition* or phrases and genres of discourse of *The Differend* are to be understood as discrete non-communicating forms of activity is questionable.

As postmodernism was being announced to the world in the late twentieth century, other currents of theoretical and real-world activity were happening, which raise questions over its assumptions. Globalisation and global theory were large scale developments that were celebrated or critiqued in various styles. (See Browning 2011) Global theorists from Giddens to Hardt and Negri, continue to be engaged in large scale theorising that presume a development in history that resembles the narratives outlined by Hegel and Marx. Indeed, Hegel and Marx can be seen as notable precursors of contemporary global theory. Likewise the development of neo-liberalism in Western economies and in the Global South continue to impact upon economies and social activities across the globe. The tendency of neo-liberal economic management and development has led to a minimisation of regulations and a heightening of the precarity of work. These large-scale real world developments demand a response from social theorists that is general rather than piecemeal and episodic.

Of course, reflection on the continued value of grand narratives and the shortcomings of their critique does not entail that they are immune from criticism.

Grand narratives must operate at a high degree of abstraction if they are to offer large-scale forms of explanation of developments in theory and practice. However, the price of abstraction can be a diminution in the capacity of theory to engage meaningfully with concrete particular empirical developments. A general theory can be helpful in suggesting lines of interpretation in a variety of areas. Hegel, for instance, makes sense of the modern world by tracing patterns of individualism and subjectivity in art, economics, religion and the provision of legal rights. Likewise, Marx is insightful in remarking upon the alienation consequent upon the intensification and extension of commodity production under conditions of competition in a capitalist economy. Neither Marx nor Hegel, however can offer either failsafe predictions on particular empirical developments or uncontroversial readings of the world. Critique of grand theory also promotes a critical attitude to questions over how we might establish and corroborate the frameworks of explanation that are enabled by means of grand narratives. Teleological commitments to a future, which holds past and present tightly to a speculative overview, are also to be avoided. Marx and Hegel do not maintain unassailable theories. After all Marx was a trenchant critic of Hegel, and Hegel's insights into the normative force of individualism can be turned against Marx and Hegel are critical theorists, whose theories are framed via critique of prior and rival theories and aspects of reality where inner and external tensions preclude their ongoing maintenance. Critique of Hegel and Marx and their grand theories is a reminder that their dialectical arguments demand their tracing a thoroughly immanent style of critical development, which is open to experience and precludes dogmatism. Their theories operate at various degrees of abstraction that allows for unpredictable concrete empirical developments. The internal dynamic of their arguments depend

upon their identification of internal tensions within the conceptual worlds they articulate. For instance, Hegel recognises the significance of rights, contracts, the rule of law and markets, and yet he sees all of these valuable components of modern social and political experience as unsustainable without their intricate and careful incorporation within an ethical community, in which representative forms of corporate life are maintained.

Conclusion

Revisiting the so-called end of grand narratives can be instructive. Are they ghosts of an outmoded epoch? Do they represent bloated theories that should be deflated so that dead social forms can be abandoned? Are they insidious and critical reminders of deeper truths, as is intimated by the appearance of Banquo's ghost? Should we examine beneath the surface of apparent living realities and admit readings of history and the social layers of the present, which appear to the unguarded as spectral? Answers to these questions are worth pursuing. To respect the quick and the dead, we must attend to the spectral, even if we do not accept all that is bequeathed by grand narratives. A critical but open approach to grand narratives is what is required.

Iris Murdoch, as a philosopher embraced Continental and Anglo-American analytic styles of philosophy. She was preoccupied with the realities of modern life, the loss of former styles of thought and practice, and observed how myths in all cultural fields had been steadily eroding. Contemporary life, for Murdoch, in the latter part of the twentieth century, was subject to intensive processes of demythologisation.

(Murdoch, 1992) God was dead, ethics was missing its metaphysical heartbeat, art was no longer aspiring to be truthful, ideologies were disappearing with the collapse

of communism and fascism, and bureaucratic forms of welfare and intensive commodification were rendering political life grey and unchallenging. (See Murdoch, 1992) By the end of her own life, having lived through the horrors of twentieth century warfare and the Holocaust, she herself was prepared to settle for a political regime that offered protection for basic liberties. (Browning, 2018) She looked to maintain the prospect for metaphysics by preparing a post-metaphysical work of metaphysics, admitting the influence of Heidegger, but given the difficulties of producing such a text in an unpropitious context, she left the text unpublished. Yet even when her ambitions for philosophy and the political world were narrowing, she urged the need for grand narratives. In her brilliant late novel, *The Book and the Brotherhood*, a number of Oxford graduates establish a *Gesellschaft*, a society which is dedicated to producing a grand book about politics. (Murdoch, 1987) They entrust one of the characters, David Crimond, a Marxist firebrand, with the task of writing a wide ranging speculative book on the political. Time goes by. The book does not get written, the characters, who have moved to the right politically, have also moved on from any impetus to develop a wholesale critical reading of the present. Meanwhile they have bankrolled Crimond, whose behaviour is wild and morally dubious. What should they do in a world that has turned against grand theory, and in a world in which leftist views are no longer fashionable? Should they call time on the enterprise? The leader of the group of friends, Gerard Renshaw, reluctantly, continues to finance Crimond's projected great text. To the surprise of Gerard and the reader, the book turns out to be excellent. Gerard finds it invigorating because it makes him think. The ghost of his youth returns to haunt him, but it is not an unfriendly or hostile ghost. It is a ghost that is challenging, and provokes him to rethink his ideas and to engage in a dialogue with the grand narrative he has

enabled to be produced. Gerard seems to infer that we should accept challenging narratives, even if they do not convey the whole truth, or even a significant part of the truth. We need to think with and against them to sharpen our thinking. The publication of a grand narrative appears credible for the novel's plot development, and it also makes sense in the wider scheme of things.

Towards the end of the twentieth century, and now indeed in the twenty first century, it remains important to think through our situation from a number of vantage points. We live in a world of interconnected activities, where the present emerges from past developments. To understand our situation requires framing wide-ranging ideas about politics, embracing past and present and the different sides of social life, to allow for a critical reading of our identity and possibilities. Lyotard is sceptical over the possibilities either of finding agreement between distinct perspectives or of uniting them within a wider one. This scepticism is neither wild nor unconsidered, but divergences presupposes a measure of common ground, and politics is about working with what is shared to develop perspectives that can accommodate differences. Hegel's struggle for recognition is an absolute conflict to the death between different individuals, but ultimately Hegel takes the conflict to highlight how differently situated individuals need to achieve a common recognition of their identities. (See Hegel, 1971) *The Philosophy of Right* is an elaborated review of the public conditions that are necessary to achieve equilibrated social recognition between modern individuals conscious of their differences. (Hegel, 1967) Marx's critique of Hegel is a challenge but ultimately rests upon a shared Hegelian sense of a common identity between social individuals struggling to overcome alienating social formations (Browning, 2016)

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