

The Misreading on Norman Levine's Continuity of Marx and Hegel's Thinking

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Abstract

Norman Levin is an American Marxist expert who is famous for objecting to Engels, and he recently comes up with an idea related to the Marx and Engels' comment on continuity of ideology and method, especially, Hegel is the first Marxian judgment. However, Levine's statement and demonstration on that point where there is not only the confusion of the concept, the contradiction of the text and the confusion of the semantics, but also it fabricates information in the text, disserts the meaning of Marxian text to prove his false point. Levine's research method in the western Marxism studies is not the only case.

Keywords: Norman Levine, Marx, Hegel, continuity

1. Introduction

Western Marxism has long been concerned with the relationship between Marx and Hegel. According to the general view, although Marx was deeply influenced by Hegel, especially following the concept system of Hegel, Marx completely separated Hegel on ideology from the moment when the historical materialism was born. However, Norman Levin, the new leader of Anglo-American Marxism, is unique in his proposition: "Althusser claimed that 1844-1845 was the point at which Marx had escaped Hegel's epistemological break. In the book *Deutsche Ideology*, Marx breaks all the connections with Hegel and I advocate the continuity of Marx and Hegel's ideas. "At the same time, Levin asserted:" From an academic point of view, I advocate Marxism re-Hegelian's argument because I am convinced that Marx and historical facts need such an argument. My argument is that we must accept the re-Hegelianization, because it is in line with the facts. " So, Levin's assertion comes from what kind of textual fact and historical logic?

2. The Reflexive of Norman Levine's Continuity of Marx and Hegel's Thinking

Levin argues that "the continuity between Marx and Hegel includes the following: (1) historicity; (2) civil society; (3) mode of production; (4) method." Obviously, the continuity that Levin referred include both thinking and method. Levin explained the continuity of the two as follows: "The obvious evidence of the continuity between Marx and Hegel is the *Philosophical Declaration of the School of Historical Law* published by Marx in The Rhône in August 1842." Levin believes that Marx's *Philosophical Manifesto of the School of Historical Law* is nothing more than a repetition of Hegel's argument first proposed in *Principles of Legal Philosophy*. But where is point of the repetition? "The methodology is exactly Hegel's Form-Content model." It is not hard to see that the repetition mentioned by Levin is merely a method. Levin also made the following statement: "*The Critique of Hegel's Legal Philosophy* is not only a refutation of Hegel's theory of state and political science but also an imitation of Hegelian manuscript." Since Marx was refute to Hegel, what is the continuous? He goes on to write: "Apart from the fact that Marx has desalinated the important field of Hegelian materialism, we can say that Marx is always faithful to Hegel's methodology." Now he put the continuity between Marx and Hegel limited to the field of methodology: "I divided Hegel's tradition of ideology into two parts: system and method; when Marx rejected Hegel's system, he inherited the latter's tools of methodology. In my opinion, one of these methodology is Hegel's Anatomical Model." It is not hard to see that Levine began to think that Marx and Hegel are continuous in thought and method, but on concrete evidence it is not limited to methods, but also demonstrates the ideological confrontation and fragmentation between Marx and Hegel.

Levin pointed out the break between the Marx and Hegel's systems. However, he made the following surprising

discovery: "It is necessary to point out that Marx advocated the separation between the church and the state, the centralization of Germany under Prussia, the legalization of divorce, the hereditary Monarchy, the centralization of the German legal principle, and the greater freedom of the press. All of them are the political policies that Hegel himself supports." Levin seems to be expressing the fact that Marx and Hegel did more in common, indicating the ideological continuity between Marx and Hegel. However, Levin has fallen into two contradictions: one is that since there are so many similarities and connections between these ideas, why come the system's negation? One is that Levin has forgotten the era of Marx's life, does Marx still advocate the unity of politics and religion and return to the authoritarian era? Or, Would Marx advocate the law that is not allowed to divorce, return to ignorance? Can this basic knowledge also be called continuity? It is better to say that in Hegel's introduction of *Small Logic* said that human were different from beasts, and Marx also said that human are different from animals in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, which will be more continuous.

In fact, Levin is not so simple, he has a greater purpose. The reason that Levin enumerates such views on virtue is to sidestep the fundamental opposition between Marx and Hegel on the most important issue. *The German Ideology* states: "In the development of any one of trait, something is produced from something by something, not like what Hegel said in 'logic', is nothing to nothing." Why Levin not mention it completely?

3. Marx Self-certification of "Marx Hegel Thinking and Method Break"

Marx may predicted that someone would make a fuss about his relationship with Hegel, in particular, he expected that someone will break through from the text, which is the text research method that Levin is good at. So what the clear answer that Marx gave them from the perspective of text? As to the continuity of Marx and Hegel's thought, Marx said in the introduction of *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*: "The German national philosophy and jurisprudence has obtained the most systematic and righteous dissertation in Hegel's writings; the critique of this philosophy is both a critical analysis of the modern state and the reality which it is associated, as well as the firm rejection of the entire form of German political consciousness and legal consciousness. The most important and prevalent consciousness of the above that rises to science is exactly the speculative philosophy of law itself. " Such criticisms have been drew a clear line with Hegel's philosophy and it is needless to say the ideological continuity. As for the so-called methodological continuity, he summarizes the distinction between Marx and Hegel in the issue of dialectics in a very short expression. "Dialectics was mystified in Hegel's hands, however, this did not prevent him as the first generalizing the general form of movement of dialectics in a comprehensive and conscious manner in which the dialectics is upside down and must be reversed in order to find a reasonable kernel in a mysterious shell. "

Incredibly, this reversal is still continuous in Levin's view. "*The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* proved Marx's reversal strategy because these notes are devoted to building the power of human labor." If Levin think that Marx reversed Hegel was a continuation of Hegel, Professor Lavin should make it clear to us that continuity of Lavin is an inversion of continuity. Based on this understanding, the fracture theory of Marx and Hegel, held by Althusser, should also be referred to as fracture continuum under the definition of Levin. What is continuity? Although most of Levin's discourse substitutes for the continuity of thought in terms of the continuity of the method, what does it mean in its continuous conception of continuity as part of its connotation? Although Levin has never made a clear statement of his "continuity", according to what he claims to be himself opposed to Althusser's theory of rupture, it must mean that the main ideas of Marx and Hegel are intrinsically the same or not jumping, or the convergence of the two views or dissimilar weakness. This is the premise for exploring this issue.

It should be noted that this non-continuous continuum theory is not Levin pioneering, it first formulated by Hooke. In Hooke's *the Understanding of Karl Marx* in 1933, Hooke argues that the obvious fact that a philosophy of history must explain is the continuity between one culture and another, and "the obvious mysterious nature of Marxist dialectics, not for any other reason, but because of Marx's piety from Hegel's Holocaust, giving him the dialectic of Hegelian terminology, and also because of Marxist critics refuse to translate its meaning from philosophical terminology into an everlasting experience of change, growth and new life. Then, the question becomes clear: though there is an important continuity between Hegel and Marx's thinking, they are profoundly different. " Obviously, Marx's "profound continuity of continuity" theory inspired Levin's writing.

Perhaps, it is Lukacs words made Levin so embarrassed, so the emergence of the so-called "Marx refuted Hegel's theory of continuity." Lukacs said in his *History and Class Consciousness - A Study of Marxist Dialectics* that most of the philosophical efforts of young Marx were aimed at refuting all sorts of false ideologies (both Hegelian's idealism and Feuerbach's materialist' consciousness), as well as proposing a correct view of the role

of consciousness in history. " From this we can say that if Marx and Hegel, in their thinking or method is continuous, then Marx and Feuerbach must also be continuous, or with all former thinkers, including the future are continuous.

4. Fictional Continuation of "Marx Hegel's Method"

We need to go back to Levin's only position - the field of methodology: "The continuity between Hegel and Marx is most clearly manifested in the field of methodology. Although Hegel regarded real existence as a product of thinking, Marx adopted Hegel's methodological forms, and apply them to the socio-economic forms." What is Hegel's method for Marx to adopt? *Logic* and *Logic of the Book* all describe the Phylogenetics of ideas, which are the curriculum vitae of the idea and the schematics of the phases that must be bridged before the idea emerges. The motivation to Phylogenetics is the movement from the potential to the reality, because this force illustrates the generation from idea to reality. "Is it really as Levin said, Marx really adopted Hegel's" concept of learning "?

In his *Manuscripts of Economics of 1857-1858*, Marx pointed out: "Hegel fell into the illusion and perceived reality as the result of self-synthesis, self-deepening and self-movement. Actually, the method of moving from abstract to concrete is only thinking used to grasp the concrete and treat it as a spiritual concrete way of reproduction, but by no means the concrete process of its own. " Unfortunately, It is exactly what Marx must criticize is that Levin praised and imposed on Marx's "the Phylogenetics of ideas". Then will there be no unexpected situations? Just as Levin ever made "mistake", Marx will refute themselves, or, as Levin said in the field of economics, Marx applied Hegel's " the Phylogenetics of ideas ", and Hegel provided a great deal of methodology for *Capitalism*?

Levin emphasizes: "Marx's definition of social form can prove the materialization of Hegel's methodology, that is, it starts from the concept field and then into the economic field." How did Marx define the social form? Marx pointed out in the first volume of *Capital* that capitalists as a fanatical pursuit of value proliferation, wantonly force human beings to produce for production and thereby develop social productive forces and create material conditions for production; and only such conditions can establish a realistic basis for a more advanced social form based on the comprehensive and free development of everyone. Can we prove the materialism of Hegel's methodology from idea to material basis? Materialization does not mean materialism. Where did the concept of value added by capitalists come from? In doing so, Marx shows that "capitalists, only as personalized capital, have historical value and have the historical right of 'no date', as clever Lichlinovsky called them. Only in this way can his own temporary inevitability be contained in the temporary inevitability of the capitalist mode of production. "That is, the notion of the capitalist temporarily came from the temporary nature of the mode of production and the materiality of the mode of production is the starting point of the idea. In fact, Levin's so-called "materialism" is exactly what Marx criticized from idealism to materialism.

In terms of specific methodology that Levin's "subject-object, form-content, and theory of the organism" that Marx inheriting Hegel's is the main method. But Levin himself acknowledged that Marx has made a new contribution to the "imitation" of this method strategy. "Marx's critique of Hegel's methodology stems from an upside-down strategy, or Marx reversed the role of subject-object." As for the thinking of "formal-content" form, Levin himself also acknowledged that "Marx draws form-content from Hegel and has undergone a process of substitution, where Marx takes social form instead." This substitution has actually caused a qualitative change in morphology. In organism, Levine notes that "in Marx, social forms always emerge as a totality that determines particularity. That is, in Levin's opinion, Marx borrows Hegel's whole-part organism model. However, Marx's wholeness is not Hegel's wholeness. "The whole, when it appears in the mind as a thinking, is thinking the mind's own mind, which holds the world in its own right, in a way that is different from the artistic, religious, and practical-spiritual mastery of the world. " Marx regards holism as a holistic thinking as a concrete and factual product of thinking and understanding. However, it is by no means a product of the self-generated concept that is beyond the imagination or driving beyond it, but is the product of the process of visualizing and visualizing it into concepts.

In fact, Hooker had put forward that Marx inherited a large number of logical categories in Hegel's methodology in an early time, such as wholeness and part, universality and specialness, form and content, essence and denial, etc. But these have long been understood by Marx as a "reasonable core". Although Marx once said "in some chapters on the theory of value, I even played Hegel's own expressions in some places." However, these methods have been fundamentally transformed by Marx. Moreover, Levin emphasis on the subject - the object form is not Hegel pioneered.

5. Western Marxist Commonality of "Hegel's Replacement of Marxism"

Engels said: "Where the history begins, where the thinking process should begin, and the further development of the thinking process is merely an abstract, theoretically consistent and formal reflection of the historical process." History is the basis of logic and the reproduction of history in thinking. Therefore, the critical principle of historical activity lies in the unification of the process of thinking with the activity. Levin is not so much a defense of Marx, as it is the confrontation with Engels, is the history of the ideological thinking to resist the view. Levin wrote in *Sad Contention: Marx Against Engels*: "To Engels, spirit is only a mirror image of the dialectical process of the outside world, and spirit is a passive force." Levin tampered with Engels's point of view. In Engels's view, it is also Marx's point of view. Spirit must be the product of matter, but the spirit is not without doing anything in front of the material. However, Levin adopts a one-sided approach to dissolve the complete thought of Engels and Marx and to justify his own point of view.

Levin's research means and methods profoundly illustrate the plight of western Marxist research methods. It is not hard to find that the so-called continuous of Marx and Hegel ideas just are the replacement of Marx or Engels by Hegel, that is, to use Hegel's philosophy to replace Marxist dialectical materialism, to replace Hegel's liberal spirit or Marx's early humanitarianism with historical materialism, to replace what was conceived by international communism with the mistakes made in the application of socialism and communism exercise theory to prove the correct theoretical principles and lessons learned.

At the same time when Levin compared Marx and Hegel's the continuous of thought and methodology, he also created a general sense of Marx's textual deduction methodology. Why has such a study method ignoring basic facts so prevalent in the field of Western Marxist studies that it even has a widespread impact on the domestic academic community? This shows that the contemporary Western ideology reflects in academia and the weakness and loss of domestic Marxist studies. It is not Levin's invention to contradict, complicate, and abstract Marxism, but shares the same characteristics with historical non-Marxist pioneers in using mutilated, unknowable Marxism or Hegel instead of the whole, dialectical, historical, materialist Marxism.

In fact, Marxism is not complicated, and Mao Zedong's remark is very alarming. "It is no mystery to treat Marxism as a tool because it is used in combination with other tools." In fact, Levin also noticed that Mao Zedong's contribution to Marx. "I read his *Marxists* and *White Collar: the Middle Class in the United States*," Levin said in response to a conversation with the American Marxist scholar C.W. Mills. In the *Marxists*, Mills criticizes both Stalin and Mao for distorting Marx's thinking as a totalitarian. He wanted to create a Marxism that was both democratic and humanitarian, and one of the first to call 'Western Marxism'. "Levin spoke his true mind to Mills, and the Marxism he advocated was humanitarian. Because Mao Zedong was not humanitarian, he asserted that Mao was neither a Marxist nor a Marxist. Levin not only revealed the common features of Western Marxism, but also unmasked the Western Marxists why opposed Mao Zedong. His criticism of Mao Zedong did not stop there. He criticized in *Dialectic Internal Dialogue*: "At the philosophical level, Mao Zedong did not show any originality." Unfortunately, the great success of Chinese revolutionary practice, it is impossible to turn a blind eye to these thoughts. In response, Levin went on to say that Mao Zedong's ingenious insights on practice were not so much philosophical speculation as a practical necessity of political expediency. This contradictory explanation profoundly reveals the frustration with the loss of western civilization and the world's changing situation. As the philosophical speculation of the ideology of Western thinkers, it is impossible to save the declining Western imperial civilization and sacred spirit, nor can it attain the true Marxist identity. Attempting to find the basis for opposing Marx or Engels in the Marxist text can only be farther and farther away from Marxism.

However, the problem itself may be more important to us. When Althusser replied to someone who accused him of underestimating Marx's inheritance of Hegel's legacy, which led to the failure to fully understand Marx's and Engels's writings including *Capitalism*, he said: "These criticisms involve two issues. The first question is about Hegelian dialectics: what exactly is Marx's recognition of Hegel's "rationality"? The second is about Marx's dialectics: What is the particularity of the distinction between Marx's dialectics and Hegel's dialectic? "The two questions are actually just one question: How to discern the true characteristics of Marx's dialectics? This question is actually already solved by Marx. "Rationality" is what Marx pointed out in *Capitalism*. In the affirmative understanding of existing things, dialectics also contains the understanding of the negation of existing things, that is, the understanding of the inevitable demise of existing things." The "particularity" of Marxist dialectics, however, lies in the fact that "Hegelian dialectics is inverted "as already mentioned above.

Despite this, the postmodernist thinker Foucault not only echoed British and American Marxism reversal of historical materialism but also lost the profoundness of his thinking on the issue of the relationship between

Marx and Hegel. In March 1968, Foucault did a report on *Linguistics and Social Sciences* at the University of Tunisia. In his report, he stated: "Althusser party's return to the Marxism from positivism, old liberated causality diagram, is want to see that indeterminism and Hegel, the theoretical analysis, such as the reality of things, things like that." Foucault misread Althusser 's thought, and also shows his antagonism to Marx. It is also a difficult choice for modern western philosophers to avoid Marx. "To invoke Marx's words to restore the theory of humanism or humanitarianism, any attempt to do so would in theory be futile," he said. In practice, it can only establish the former ideological buildings of Marx, hinder the development of real history, and may lead to end of history. Although Althusser also misunderstood the concept of "theoretical practice", this passage profoundly expounded the history route of approaching Marx or returning to Marx.

6. Conclusion

As an important representative of current living Marxism in Britain and the United States, Levin has always been active in international academic circles, especially keeps close contact with Chinese Marxist scholars. As a result, his viewpoints have a direct and immediate impact on the study of Marxism in China. Levin through "Hegel is the first Marxist" "Marx is neither a dialectical materialist nor a historical materialist" "Marx and Engels created two conflicting schools of thought, the first known as Marx, the second is called Engelsism." "The outlet of Marxism lies in the re-Hegelization," and other disruptive views show that some foreign Marxist scholars have never given up their intention to dismember Marx. Contemporary China is in the process of "Four Confidence." "Four Confidences" are basically confidence in insisting on the guidance of Marxism. However, how to avoid the misleading of all kinds of non-Marxism and truly return to Marxism has always been to explore the path of China Major issue.

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