# 17 Global Marx?

## Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

Since 1978, my teaching of Marx, and my awareness that the text was written in German, was short on secondary scholarship but interactive, attempting to move with a diversified and changing world. Brilliant projects like David Harvey's distance learning summary of Marx's writing (2016) became complicit with the technological will to power through knowledge. What is it to "know" what Marx wrote? "Knowing" Marx's writings preserves the old conviction that the idea of knowledge is knowledge about knowledge, halting Thesis 11 before its end: the supplementary task is to try to change the world. "Knowing" work must be supplemented by the double-bind of one-on-one teaching possibly producing collectivities: Thesis 3 (Marx 1947 [1888], 121-23). The supplement is dangerous, because it suggests that what is offered as a totality is incomplete and introduces the incalculable, since all must forever look beyond, to an undisclosable future of use-"poetry from the future" (Marx 1974 [1852], 149). My own work is so openly supplemental that I need fear no ancestor-worship. It is in that spirit that I have asked the question of global Marxism.

Attempting to move with a diverse and changing world and acknowledging Marx's own acknowledgment of the limit of his thinking in the differences among the many drafts for and the actual reply to Vera Zasulich in 1881 (Marx 1989 [1924], 346–71), I attempt to situate Marx's urbanist teleology, as others have before me (Baer 2006; Spivak 2012).

My argument circles around Antonio Gramsci's well-known remark, in *Prison Notebook 10*, in reference to Marx (1975 [1859]):

The proposition contained in the Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* to the effect that men [*sic*] acquire consciousness of structural conflicts on the level of ideologies should be considered as an affirmation of gnoseological [*gnoseologico*] and not simply psychological and moral value. From this, it follows that the theoretical-practical principle of hegemony has also gnoseological significance. . . . The realization of a hegemonic apparatus, in so far as it creates a new ideological terrain, determines a reform of consciousness and of methods of knowledge. . . . When one succeeds in

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introducing a new morality in conformity with a new conception of the world, one finishes by introducing the conception as well; in other words, one determines a reform of the whole of philosophy.

(2000, 19)

Our general idea about Marxism is usually a violent change in governance, dependent upon regime change, the will and wisdom of a leader, supported by a responsible government. What we have seen over the last hundred years is that the success of the system depends a great deal on the power of the people—either in education or resistance—in conjunction with the capacity of the head of state to protect his or her national economy over against the incursions of the global economy in the interest of redistribution.

This model could not be fully followed by the great revolutions of the twentieth century because the diversified populations of the Russian empire and China, the two mammoths of Eurasia, were not equally resistant or educated, largely rural rather than urban, too dependent upon charismatic leaders, as were the Balkans, and their idea of gender empowerment was too mechanical.

Today, the charismatic leader supported or challenged by a resistant or motivated population model is threatened by the impersonal antihumanist selective absolutism of global capitalism. The supposedly well-educated peoples of the European socialist or social-democratic sector are remodeling the resources of the welfare state either in reaction to what is elegantly called the "visible minorities," moving into those "developed" spaces by the vicious inequalities and violence/corruption attendant upon the abstract march of capital harnessed to unregulated greed, or against the miniature globality of the European "Union," a collection of debtor and creditor states. The postcolonial nations are neo-patrimonial, using the structures of democracy to preserve the status quo. Economic growth has no connection to social inclusion.

Marx knew the nature of capital, even if he did not know our worldly modernity. He said that capital, if it could, would want to move *mit Gedankenschnelle*, at the speed of thought (1973 [1939], 548 and 631). With the silicon chip, capital can move at an even greater speed. The neuro-ethicists can so far only describe how the brain behaves in the modes of right and wrong. They have not been able to upgrade the computer in the head, although silicon technologists affirm that the newest model robots can be programmed for empathy.

I attended many sessions at the May 2016 World Economic Forum on Africa in Kigali, Rwanda. "Africa's Fourth Industrial Revolution" was run in a brisk British way. Jon Ledgard, Director of "Afrotech and Future Africa" at the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne and founder of RedLine droneports and cargo drone network, spoke of the fact that roads and railways will not be constructed in Africa in the foreseeable future

and that the skies were under-used. (A previous session was devoted to liberalizing air travel.) Therefore, said Mr. Ledgard, transportation should take place via drone ports, which would house robots. Apparently, one was already under contract for such a thing, or perhaps I misunderstood and it was already open, in Rwanda.

The entire discourse at the Forum reminds one of Marx's remark in "The Trinity Formula," that those who promote the unlimited social productivity of capital alone can fortunately forget the theft of "surplus value" (1981 [1894], 953). Steve Resnick and Rick Wolff (1987) have taught us how to go back and back and back along the chain of these promises and once again arrive at the fact of the theft of surplus value that allows capitalism to flourish.

"Who will build the drones?" Another participant, Neil Gershenfeld from MIT, answered "fab-labs": working the digital to assure that you can yourself build anything you want to, changing 2D to 3D. In answer to a question from a young African about joblessness in Africa today, Gershenfeld told us that we should change the idea of how to get things, that getting a job and making money in order to get things was not the only way. You could make what you wanted.

"Launching a new fab lab requires assembling enough of the hardware and software inventory to be able to share people and projects with other fab labs," says part of the online promo. Apply here Resnick and Wolff's lesson of working back to the theft of surplus value.

You will remember the astonishment of folks like James Steuart and Adam Smith at facing the sudden invention of a way of working that is not to make things for yourself or for a person who wanted you to make a thing for him or her but rather to make objects in great quantities for selling and making money, over and over again. James Steuart gave the name "industry" to this way of working, unlike anything known before (Steuart 1966 [1767], 468). There are pages, particularly the first pages of the Wealth of Nations, full of exclamation points (Smith 1976 [1776])-the great surprise, having to change the idea of making. Now here, within that last framework, is being offered, at the tip of technology, ways of going back to the other way, except through a denial that that historical framework was still at work and would displace itself with this new bit of digital idealism. There is no room for discussing this here, especially since I myself am unprepared to do so. But I place this here as an extreme form of the promise of globalization with which distance learning is complicit. Just change the idea of the interaction of learning-its transference-and you can know what Marx really thought, while you are in a position to make your computer in a fab lab.

What escapes the program (we have spoken of robots) is the contingent as such. The pursuit of the contingent is the edge of the technological will to power through knowledge. However, the power to be surprised by the contingent is now becoming less and less available because of the global

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disincentive for imaginative training. It is within this lack that I will locate the persistent necessity for something that can, somewhat unrecognizably, be called "global Marx." Is it the most accurate name for what I will describe? That question is contained in the question mark in my title: "Global Marx?"

Before I join the pursuit of the contingent, I want to go back to Antonio Gramsci's comment on the Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*: "Marx's proposition . . . should be considered as an affirmation of gnoseological value."

"Gnoseological": in the logic of gnosis, knowing; a word-fragment that is still in colloquial English use: diagnosis, prognosis, words related to healing or the impossibility of healing – the double bind of healing.

Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith translate Gramsci's *gnoseologico* as "epistemological" (Gramsci 1971). "Actually between 'gnoseologico' and 'epistemological' there is no difference," Italian political philosopher Michele Spanò writes. Yet they are two different words. Therefore, their so-called identity is a heterotautology. In this difference-as-identity of a smooth translation I will place the globalizability of Marx today.

"Gnoseological": learn to talk the talk well; "epistemological:" learn to re-imagine myself as knower and the object of knowing as knowable in order to try to walk the walk.

I have said above that "gnoseological" in diagnosis and prognosis carries the double bind of healing as the impossibility of healing, not only in individual but also social "abnormalities." For those unfamiliar with "double bind," let us call it living within equally insistent contradictory instructions. Gramsci recognizes that Marx wishes to introduce the worker into the double-bind of the contamination of manual labor by intellectual labor—not only the knowledge of the technology of capital, but its gnoseology—so that any worker could become a "dirigent." This is the task of the new intellectual in the party as well as in civil society. Leadership training for all.

Marx's "Preface" was written in 1859. The body of *A Contribution* was written between 1861 and 1863. This was as much a preparation for *Capital* volume 1 (1990 [1867]) as were the multilingual notebooks known as the *Grundrisse*, first published in 1939. As we know from Marx's letter to Engels of 1862, amidst all of this, he discovered the secret of surplus value, which he describes in *Capital* 1 as the "*Sprengpunkt*" or "pivot of his critique," and everything changed (1990 [1867], 132; translation modified). He discovered the secret of reproductive heteronormativity, that every excess in the human and upper primate emerges out of the differences between needing and making. Marx described it in human terms: the worker

advances the capitalist his labor and the capitalist repays less than he gets out of it since the worker needs less than s/he makes. He also describes it in rational terms: labor power is the only commodity which, when consumed, produces value.

The "Preface" to The Contribution to A Critique of Political Economy belongs to a period before Marx's preoccupation with the unique logic of surplus value. Here the emphasis is indeed on gnoseology, to *know* that ideology is a more conflictual text than the scientifically precise economic base and to tease out that relationship. However, this text already lays down the possibility of backtracking from gnoseology-knowing and laying down the right stuff, David Harvey-to epistemology-constructing civil society as the object of knowledge, because it does not preclude the inclusion of the writer's own ideological production and because it makes us move toward being folded together "within the framework of the old society," emphasizing the complicity with the prevailing relations of production (Marx 1975 [1859], 426). For the Preface is nothing if not an account of epistemological performance: how a student of philosophy with a minor in jurisprudence puts himself in school to become the writer of the text it would introduce. Our last step as teachers and students of Marx is to open this apparently end-stopped narrative into the persistence of the runon-a continuing commitment to the historic and generational.

Why, in a text about global Marxism, am I mentioning the World Economic Forum at all? It is to forge a practice that acknowledges complicity, not always with our consent, in every detail of the corporatist operation of the globe today. I cannot know what a cosmopolitical revolution would look like. But I do know that its principal agent can no longer be imagined as the internationally conscientized collective agent helping actively in a change in state-structure. In spite of Resnick and Wolff's already-mentioned demonstration of the continuing importance of the theft of surplus value upon which stands industrial capitalism, we have to admit that industrial capitalism is no longer produced by the definitive working class of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Facing global capitalism, the struggle for "another world" is staged in the discontinuous confrontation of the misnamed international civil society and the subalternized citizen, within which labor, with international solidarity undone by nationalism and the factory floor "pulverized" by electronic resources, has its own discontinuous place.<sup>1</sup> The WEF is also gnoseological, by way of the techniques of knowledge management. I want to conclude with the critique of knowledge management by way of opening Marx to globality, with a question mark. This is why I have here marked a complicity—a folded togetherness—of nineteenth century confidence in scientific socialism and twenty-first century confidence in the social productivity of globalized capital with the twentieth century disaster area of communo-capital complicity, as carefully studied in Resnick and Wolff's Marxist analysis of the former Soviet Union (2002).

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The World Economic Forum is basically engaged in "improving the state of the world" through Development, i.e., insertion into the circuit of capital with no critical subject-formation (Spivak 2017 forthcoming). The persistent epistemological transformation of the gnoseological—the all-knowing Research wing of Research and Development-is neglected by it, as it is neglected by cutting-edge work on techniques of interviewing (Lederman 2016). The goal is to enhance corporate social responsibility by folding it into the field of values such as "human dignity" and "common good." Assigning such values to one and all reflects the absolute failure of the epistemological effort toward grasping the heterogeneity of the developer and the developee-not to mention between the research methods of R & D on the one hand and, on the other, Policy. Any serious consideration of a just world has to consider the relationship between Policy and socialization, a very far epistemological cry from "the general will of the global." This is where a global Marx must allow its tight focus upon the proletarian to waver into the classed, gendered, raced (non)citizen.

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The first part, then, is about where we go, and how we intervene, in order to have any bit of impact in the global policy field: Research and Development, international civil society, World Economic Forum. What can become of Marx's vision in this sorry collection of underdevelopmentsustaining mechanisms supporting capitalist ambition and greed? The Trades Union Advisory Committee of the nation-state-oriented Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (currently focused on industrial nation-states)-a haven upon that hapless terrain-must still talk about establishing friendly relations with business and collective bargaining, job security rather than revolution.

This second part, by contrast, is about an academic debate. This is one of two broad academic debates regarding Marx:

- Can Marx be followed today? 1
- 2 Should Marx be considered a humanist or materialist?

My position on Balibar's *Philosophy of Marxism* is just a taste of the first debate (Balibar 2014). Etienne Balibar is the felicitous heir of Marx within the Marxist tradition in its proper place of origin and development-a French philosopher deeply trained in German classical philosophy. I am fortunate enough to be able to call him my friend. At his suggestion, I have consulted his brilliant book, The Philosophy of Marx (2014).

I write as a woman with no institutional training in philosophy, with thirty years of work in a backward district of West Bengal, where the general social oppression of the landless illiterate outcasts and aboriginals

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was certainly ameliorated by the Communist-Party-Marxist, the party in power that also engaged in goon politics in certain rural sectors and lost the elections after thirty-four years. My involvement with western Marxism is through the soft margins of the U.S. Left, a rather different story. I owe a great deal to Resnick and Wolff for achieving that entry.<sup>2</sup> Before I put together my response to Balibar's challenge in his magisterial and wise slim book, I should perhaps put this section in contact with the previous one and repeat that my discussion of the Global Future Council on Ethics and Values at the World Economic Forum is an indication of the politically incorrect effort required to rectify (*pace* Balibar) persistently the digital idealism of Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt's massive volumes that posit a "multitude" automatically produced, advanced now into a consideration of social media as agent of change.<sup>3</sup> The World Economic Forum shares this view.

My ignorant alliance with my learned friend is by way of his conviction that one must "argue" with Marx. I also do agree with him that "Marxism is an improbable philosophy today" (Balibar 2014, 118), and so make peculiar contacts. Even if improbable, Marxism is not more impossible than anything else.

Rather than follow Marx to the letter, I harness my Marxist engagements to the tendency to go as far as possible:

De Man goes on to say that the shift from history to reading typical of his generation "could, in principle, lead to a rhetoric of reading reaching beyond the canonical principles of literary history which still serve, in this book, as the starting point of their own displacement." "Reaching beyond" can mean displaced to another place. How far beyond? As far as I pull, in these times? Altogether elsewhere? At least into an understanding, as the best universities counsel students to cut their dissertations to market demands, that an aesthetic education inevitably has a meta-vocational function?

(Spivak 2012)

Comparably, as our best philosophers call Marxism improbable, pulling Marx into the global economic, the belly of the beast, to suggest that repeatedly rectified ingredients for a doctrine, recognized as such, may be what we need to make Marxism work in a globalized situation where the first wave of Marxist experiments are coming undone?

Like Balibar, I do not think Marx "postmodern." In the spirit of Thesis 3, I think the changeful task is "persistent," adding to the thought of Marx, Gramsci, Balibar, and all my brothers, the dimension of generational turnover, a gendered concern of a teacher of other people's children. Interpretation is originary, each a halfway house with the "walk the walk"—the point is to change the world—imperative included and leading beyond by way of the dangerous supplement.

Balibar perceives the ambiguities, contradictions, and amphibologies in Marx. He makes the important suggestion that "no theorist, when he has effectively found something new, can *re-cast* his own thinking. . . . Others will do that" (Balibar 2014, 112; other perceptions on 21, 27, 33, 92, 102 and *passim*). For me, this double bind is the very defining character of life, action, thought—the condition of impossibility as the only available condition of possibility, a persistent rewriting of improbability.

Before I learned the lesson of the double bind in the late seventies, I taught and wrote in another way, what in Balibar becomes dismissive:

Revolution and science (revolution in science, science of revolution): ... [this] alternative was never resolved by Marx. This also means that he never accepted sacrificing the one to the other, which is a mark of his intransigence.

(Balibar 2014, 115)

I taught it as "the heterogeneous dialectic of knowing and doing" (1987, 50),<sup>4</sup> an asymmetry that opens to action.

Marx thought Hegel calculated everything for the mind. Therefore, for the heterogeneous dialectic of knowing and doing, we go not to *The Science of Logic* (Hegel 2010 [1812]), as Lenin had suggested (Lenin 1960 [1914]) but to "The Beautiful Soul" in *The Phenomenology of the Spirit* (Hegel 1977 [1807]) that Lacan describes as metonymic of psychoanalysis (Lacan 2006 [1948], 242).<sup>5</sup>

Marx was haunted by Hegel, not by a question of his being a Hegelian or not. Ever since finishing his doctorate, he was interested in finding out the economic reality of life under capitalism. Taken by the brilliance of Hegel's method, he attempted to work out the phenomenology of capital (not onto-phenomenology). The lesson we learn is that capitalism is for capital's sake and therefore unreal. Hence, the socialist use of capital cannot be just for capital's sake alone.<sup>6</sup>

As soon as he understood that capitalism is based on the theft of surplus value, Marx also understood that the play of capital and labor was in terms of contentless value, and that the contents that appear along the line of play as moments of real-ization, were always traces or forms of appearance—*Erscheinungsformen*. There are some who think of land in this land-grabbing phenomenology of primitive accumulation as completely real. Marx quotes Ovid in heavy mockery: "and now in addition the ground, inorganic nature as such, *rudis indigestaque moles* 'a rough unordered mass' in its full sylvan primordiality. Value is labor. So surplusvalue cannot be earth" (Marx 1981 [1894], 954; translation modified).

Yet, in "The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" Marx distinguishes the revolution of the nineteenth century as content rather than phrase: "Previously the phrase went beyond the content; [in the social revolution of the nineteenth century] the content goes beyond the phrase" (Marx 1974

[1852], 149). This is close to a passage in "Beautiful Soul," where Hegel is writing about "the moral intuition of the world [*Weltanschauung*]": "[T]he antinomy. . .that there is a moral consciousness, and that there is none, or that the validation of duty [for Marx socially just action] lies beyond consciousness, and conversely, takes place *in* it" (Hegel 1977 [1807]).

This was seen by Hegel to be "a contradiction. . . by content." And when this thinking "in which the non-moral consciousness counts for moral, and its accidental knowing and willing is taken as fully potent, felicity granted to it by way of grace [perhaps a reference to Kant's metaleptic invocation of 'effect of grace' in the Appendix to the *Critique of Pure Reason*]"—it is seen as a contradiction "by form" (Hegel 1977 [1807], 383; translation modified).<sup>7</sup>

Marx, for whom phenomenological definition has become part of mental furniture, is here choosing the double bind of the antinomy of ideology: we can/we cannot—for the social revolution of the nineteenth century as "content"—over the "formal" reconciliation of the antinomy in the mere "phrase" of the revolutions of the past: we can do good. This is also an indication that socialism is not just the use of abstract average labor power to build a just society, for the abstract by definition has no content. There would be content in the nineteenth century revolution—the poetry of the future—not just abstract planning, a point to which we return below.

Everybody knows that Geist is hard to translate. It is clear, however, that it is not consciousness-das Bewusstsein-and not reason-die Vernunft. Like capital, Geist by itself cannot "do." Hegel charts the course of its estrangements in Part C.BB of Phenomenology. However, when it is contaminated by Gewissen-psychologistically (and unfortunately) only translatable into English as "conscience"-it can only stage the "doing." Marx finds in this predicament of self-consciousness, instantiated in this constellation, the fact of human beings making their own history but not able to choose their roles. Geist shot through with Gewissen can hold Wissen and Wollen-knowing and willing-but not actually know and will. This counter-intuitive way of a spatializing structure is hard for Marx's English translators to grasp. But let us continue: Bewusstsein or consciousness cannot really think good and bad, although programmed to think it can and must. On the other hand, it must have the conviction, and it must talk about this conviction collectively, and thus it can bring about abstract collective consciousness. Of course Marx, not a Hegelian, did not act this out in such detail, but all the generalizing convictions - all the writing, the talks, the meetings-use this in action, even as they emphasize the separation of individual subjectivity-in the vanguard or the masses-from its ideological production. Since Marx is not obliged to show that he is a correct or incorrect Hegelian, this rough ironic parallel between Gewissen (conscience) and ideology cannot easily be discarded.

Hegel uses the words Tat, Tätigkeit, Tun, handeln, Handlung—German words for doing or action—to show whether duty was being done. Of

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course, the word *Arbeit* (work/labor) is never used. This is where Marx staged the phantasmagoria of the action of labor power, and in his work, unlike in Hegel, the dialectic becomes heterogeneous, in contrast to Hegel, for whom the separation between knowing and doing is kept brilliantly and counter-intuitively intact.

From time to time Hegel warns that the staging of the phenomenology of *Geist* into human psychological types short-circuits the account of the march of philosophy. But the text often seems to ask for this transgression. Marx, as Fanon later more vividly, steps into this transgression and attempts to move the system away from "the mind alone."

Balibar charts Marx's lifetime move from an evolutionist history toward its undoing—by way of the experience and study of failed revolutions (1848, 1871), the tendency of left movements to move away from Marx's methods, and, finally, the out-of-system (or anti-systemic) potentialities of the agricultural communes in Russia. The consequence of this chain of displacements is described this way by Balibar: "I am tempted, rather, to believe that Marx never, in fact, had the time to construct a doctrine because *the process of rectification went faster*" (2014, 117). I see this as Marx's great gift, autodidact as he was, acquiring knowledge as new needs opened up, not only to be constrained to but creatively to be able to learn from his mistakes—again a chain into which we can, transindividually and responsibly, insert ourselves (Balibar 2014, 30). A persistent set of epistemological performative instructions kept overtaking the stern requirements of a gnoseology. Given the *Aufhebung* into globalization, this persistence is our difficult guide.

The thinking of globality requires thinking the contemporary. "In globalization every site is contemporary," I have written elsewhere, "and yet also unique. We therefore call it a double bind" (2010, 510). Balibar is able to grasp this intuition of globality in Marx: "communal form was *contemporary*" (a term to which Marx insistently returned) with the most developed forms of capitalist production, the technique of which it would be able to borrow from the surrounding 'milieu'" (Balibar 2014, 108). Expanding our field of activity beyond the "pulverized" factory floor is part of such borrowing.

For Christine Buci-Glucksmann, this particular thought of globality is still in the future. However, her reading of Gramsci reading Marx "beyond the letter" and her rendering of gnoseology as epistemology ("they are the same thing," says Michele Spanò) through Gramsci's idea of the "critic-practical act," are deeply resonant with my own (Buci-Glucksmann 1980, 348 and 351).

In *The 18<sup>th</sup> Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1974 [1852]), Marx suggests that the real long-term result of the French Revolution was, paradoxically, to strengthen the power of the executive. Some of us have felt the long-term result of the great revolutions in China and Russia was to bring about a globalizable world. Following in the same great narrative mode, it can

be said that, just as the Industrial Revolution made capitalist colonialism necessary, so does the technological revolution make global governance necessary. And just as monopoly capitalist colonialism did not represent mercantile capitalist colonialism, so does this haphazard global governance not resemble a magnified world state, on the model of nation-state governance. The world's charter is written by finance capital. World trade is financialized. The anthropocene flourishes through greed. Climate is changed drastically.<sup>8</sup> Victims of inequality suffer natural and social disasters more drastically than those not. Class apartheid in education produces rape-culture and bribe-culture above. Stoppage of imaginative training produces rape-culture and bribe-culture below. Democracy is exported on the spear-point of trade blackmail and war. In spite of the abstractions of finance, the bull market is driven by affect: investor confidence. And the subprime crisis is driven by family values.

Behavioral economics, attempting to thicken rational choice, is no match for this ethical catastrophe. If international socialism died of an ethics-shaped hole, global capitalism, although it is not as embarrassed to talk the ethical talk, will continue to live with the same terminal disease an ethics-shaped hole. Into this void steps the World Economic Forum, wanting to turn capitalism toward social justice with inadequate imaginative resources but an acknowledgment of complicity in the narrow sense ("we alone have done this"). Its strongest tradition of amelioration is sustainable underdevelopment, a phrase I have already used.

The World Economic Forum is a large, non-profit, private-sector organization, admonishing civil society, examining the decimation of the constitutional state, and considering redress to corporate, military, and extra-state violence, the consequences of inequality, and climate change, to name a few. It attempts to re-think technology by making it sit down with Amnesty International and Africa. It moves from local and national to regional, perhaps to access the global. Access to global, in spite of digital idealists, is not a certainty here. It is not prepared to be taught what it cannot know—how not to control top-down.

The distance in kind between the top (WEF and Columbia University), bottom (the largest sectors of the electorate—"citizens!"—in Africa and Asia), and hapless middle (undocumented immigrants) makes the task of the teacher complex. The international civil society—confusing equality with sameness and thus denying history or teaching incomeproduction and thus serving capital, is useless. Here one invokes the complicity—folded-togetherness—of fund-raising radicals and the corporate world. Of Research and Development, I have written above. It is upon this rough terrain that Gramsci's "new intellectual" must push the question mark in "global Marx?" into a possibility, supplement the question mark as copula—gnoseology into epistemology over and over again, working by the surreptitious light of the hidden declarative: "This is happening." (We remind ourselves that the supplement fills a need but also shows the incompleteness of what it supplements. Here the intellectual's tendency is to remain, as a "beautiful soul," in the question mark forever.)

Before I had participated in Abu Dhabi, and in response to the Occupiers of Wall Street as well as W.E.B Du Bois, Gandhi, and others on the General Strike, I wrote in *Rethinking Marxism*:

Like Rosa Luxemburg, we can perhaps claim that the citizens' strike is no longer a step back toward the bourgeois revolution. Our example is not just Occupy Wall Street, a citizen's strike which started in 2007 as no more than a first move, but also the Eurozone, the "broad Left" in Greece, shoring up after financial disaster as a result of the capitalist policies of the creditor state/debtor state policies of the European Union. If, at the inauguration of the International Working Men's Association [at a meeting of the Chartists where Marx introduced the word International into the Workingmen's Association], Marx had felt that workers should keep abreast of international politics and diplomacy, enough to intervene at this moment of capitalism's negation, the citizen, the agent of the general strike redefined, must keep abreast of the laws regulating capital.

(2014b, 10-11)

Now, the citizen and the corporatist acknowledge complicity in seemingly turning capital to social, the baseline of socialism. (Gender is still caught in family values—read sanctioned rape and reproduction—in most of the world. That is future work.) Let us stop for a moment on the "seemingly," the semblance of an unmediated interest in social justice. As I have urged before, the corporatist actually works to preserve the interest of capital. The epistemological undertaking is therefore for the 99%, the citizens.

The 99%'s rearrangeable desire, then, should be in the embrace of the teacher's agential slot for the electorate—often from within a liberation theology (more future work here to gender theology into the intuition of the transcendental, "belief" to imagination). There is a deep interest in inequality and the "slaves" involved in the commodities we enjoy, on all impressionistic sides, opening to Marx's insight of the fetish-character of the commodity, with a rough and ready idea of the social relations of production and no understanding of surplus value.<sup>9</sup> However, the point now is to see the subaltern as subject ungeneralizable by the Forum, their numbers replenished as capital marches on, not just proletarian as universal subject.

As Marx counseled a homeopathy of reification—appropriate the quantification of labor to turn capital into the service of the social—so does my wary move toward the nature of corporate benevolence acknowledge a homeopathy: the undoing of the distinction between public and private

about which we at U.S. universities worry endlessly. As Crystal Bartolovich comments:

Subjected to tutelage of breakfast cereal icons and branded peer pressure throughout their lives, students are rarely going to be transformed into revolutionaries in fifteen weeks, no matter how "radical" their English or sociology professors may be [Bartolovich does not mention that their radicalism does not shun the complicity of corporate fundraising for project support]. Nevertheless, coming out of a generally conservative climate into the liberal university, bright students can develop their "critical-thinking" skills in ways useful to business and government so long as they don't think too critically for too long – something that corporate elites do not appear to be concerned will happen. They know their professors are small fish in a very big pond. (2013, 44)

Ours is an invitation to get out of this acceptance of powerlessness as normal, to stop us-and-them-ing, to acknowledge complicity and act the conjuncture.

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In closing, I will emphasize that the agent of production of the social today is the citizen rather than the wage worker as such. The subaltern voter and the subalternized citizen need to be welcomed into the Marxist struggle of moving capital into the social incessantly. The fact that the subaltern can vote and be "developed" (not just robbed of indigenous knowledge and DNA) has made a huge conjunctural change that is usually ignored. The internationally divided, often adversely gendered, hopelessly exploited proletariat is of course also a member of this lowest stream of citizenship. To produce in this large, ungeneralizable global subaltern group a rearrangement of the petty bourgeois "desire to get rich" (Marx 1964 [1932], 286) to a socialist desire to build a just world is the (im)possible task. "Socialism is about justice, not development," I can hear Teodor Shanin declaim.<sup>10</sup> In 1844, the Hegelian statement that conviction spoken and discussed (in Sprache and Rede) creates a general consciousness was noted as ignoring class divisions and conflicts by the young Marx. As Marx kept "rectifying," the result of this possible general consciousness is presumed to undo the proper names of modes of production. This intuition remains in the very late Marx: "if both wages and surplus-value are stripped of their specifically capitalist character-then nothing of them remains, but simply those foundations of the forms that are common to all social modes of production." We will come back to this passage.

The epistemological cut between the early humanist and the later materialist Marx (Althusser 1969 [1965]) is too tight. The materialist Marx

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discovers the importance of the use of the abstract average as the "social" of socialism. Describing the centrifugality or Zwieschlächtigkeit of the commodity, his own specific discovery, will allow the worker/citizen to restrain her/himself to contain the march of capital. Simply having the abstract tool (gnoseology) is not enough. While "normality" works by greed, or at least self-interest, even if enlightened, the socialized worker/ citizen must want this self-restraint in the interest of social collectivity. Here Marx's unexamined humanism, sustained throughout the abstract materialist work (canny enough to know practically that the workers have petty bourgeois ideologies) sustains his conviction that once fully aware of this by way of the ownership of the means of production, its agents, the workers, will exercise the freedom to subsume self under collectivity for a bigger project. It goes without saying that Human Rights intervention, although necessary in the short run, generally working toward restoration of often-unknown rights by shaming states through public interest litigation does not enter the epistemological task required by Marx's hope and plan, as Gramsci understood.

Let me add the aporia between liberty (autonomy, self-interest) and equality (alterity, unconditional hospitality), bringing forward some points I have made above. The democratic structure, body count, one equals one, is arithmetical and impoverished. It does not produce a democratic society. The democratic structure presupposes a democratic society—a performative contradiction. This is why most post-colonial nations are neo-patrimonial: using the structures of democracy to preserve structures of patronage, bribe-culture, sustained by rape-culture; and preserving class-apartheid in education, so that votes as body count can be counted on indefinitely. This performative contradiction, therefore, invites us to make mind-sets change, an epistemological performance—a call to teachers.

We interrogate the absurdity of arithmetic equality, one person one vote, given the race-class-gendered unevenness of subject-production. Indeed, even if we achieved the impossibility of an absolutely egalitarian race-class-gender situation, 1=1 would remain an underived disability count of the "normal" human body, "able" always approximate and depreciating (like capital) within this inflexible arithmetic as the "majority" moves from birth to unevenly spaced death, other "majorities" shoving the sociograph at the same time. This does not disqualify democratic principles, but rather points at the difficulty of any claim to an affective collective solidarity in the name of political agency within the constraints of democratic principles. It is an insoluble problem. The solution is not to ignore it; however, you want to understand the declarative. To remind the world of such inconveniences is the task of the humanities.

The irreducible conditionality of the human animal sits uneasily and irresolvably within the abstractions of democratic rationalist unconditionality. The two cross unevenly as life-expectancy is marked by class,

gender, and race. It certainly cannot be solved by informal markets or voting blocs. The paragraphs above suggest that the arithmetic structure of democracy requires for democratic functioning not only an informed electorate, but also a basic imaginative flexibility, allowing for an epistemological performance where the least "disabled" subject knows that the world is not intended primarily for it, and that its way of knowing is contingent. The relationship between Marx*ism* as we know it and this post-anthropocentric epistemological perception—rather different from the easily declared post-humansim of the sustainable underdevelopers of environmentalism—is too massive to be launched here. I will content myself with another word on the formation of democratic judgment.

One-on-one and collective; a more careful alternative to consciousnessraising of various sorts: vanguardism to promote class-consciousness; organizing for collective bargaining and job security; legal awareness seminars; citizenship training; identitarian voting-bloc pre-party formation; gender-babble encompassing all. One-on-one pedagogy for collectivity, millennially tested within race-class-gender parameters, is the equivalent of what classroom teaching could be today: the careful work of learning and rearranging desires to contain the march of capitalism and to respect the rights of others who do not resemble me. Yet the politically correct formulas that circulate within our crowd are extended only to our self-consolidating other, not further. I give you an example from my limited but deep and intimate study: the six rural elementary schools that I have been teaching and training at for decades now.

The social groups there, including my teachers and co-workers, are fully aware of millennial caste-oppression, but know nothing about colonialism, which departed seventy years ago. They have never seen white people. The schoolbooks are not written for them, so the gender and multicultural (religion) banalities have to be taught straight. Gender and religious common ground must be dealt with outside of the classroom, and Europe cannot be ignored.

I try to make the groups friendly with the wretched map of the world on the back cover of the old geography book. There is no map of the world in the new government textbooks. I point at the northwestern corner of the huge Eurasian continent and tell them that that is Europe and that though it is so small, it won. I discuss with them how it won and even use such mid-Victorian examples as James Watt watching the lid dance on the pot of boiling water: the emergence of the rationality of capital—the beginning of industrial capitalism—accessible apparently to a high school student. I can then begin to introduce into the style of pedagogy the lesson of using capital for socialism. For, although until five years ago, the party in power was Communist-Party-Marxist, the secret of the theft of surplus value was not taught in school or in the party office.<sup>11</sup> There is no factory floor, and yet they vote.

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I remind myself not to be an "improver" (hard for a teacher) and discuss with my increasingly more aware co-workers (male and female teachers and supervisors) from these social groups the fact that I am not drawing profits from the work for and with them. Although they are not well acquainted with the world map, know nothing about colonialism, and have not seen any factories of any significant size, they do understand what profit or *munafa* is. They are subaltern, they have no special psychological essence, they are not "the East," "the Non-West," or to use the awful phrase, "the global South"; they are examples of a general argument that notices that they vote in a postcolonial nation that they do not know as such.

The argument from Eurocentrism now belongs to another class that must also deal with a limiting concept of "Europe" in global capitalism, that Europe is a part of a much larger world now. Europe's moment was historically important but not all-consumingly determining. Not everyone has to have a correct interpretation of the English and French revolutions. It is enough to think of the relationship between the Chartists and the Reform Bills, even Labour and New Labour; of the 18th Brumaire, even Aimé Césaire and Frantz Fanon versus Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. The sun rises at different times upon the globe today. When the stock exchange closes in London, it must wait for Tokyo and then Mumbai, and in-between opens the turbulent and unstable speculative "marriage of socialism and capitalism," where the "turnover rates are ten times higher," altogether different from the sober decision for a mixed economy taken in the New Economic Program in 1921. The beginning of the end: without the epistemological support imagined by Du Bois, Gramsci, and Fanon, this leads to a wild eruption of the uniformization/universalization of capital rearing to break through, like the steam in the steam engines that we traveled by in my childhood and adolescence: Shanghai and Shenzen (Spivak 2014a).<sup>12</sup>

These are examples where our politically correct formulas might not work. Yet even here, one can teach epistemological performance through a rearrangement of the desire for an impossible self-enrichment, which only gels into petty bourgeois ideology in the most cunning fashion. Marx-via-Gramsci-limited by Zasulich must be extended here, and it must be remembered that the subaltern is by definition not generalizable. My example will not travel to details of socio-cultural life in other parts of India, as it will not in the large and diversified sectors of the subaltern in Africa, in Latin America. This is the one-on-one. The collectivity is the entry into citizenship, which will destroy subalternity. The citizen as such is generalizable, as is the proletarian as such. That is the displaced global Marx. For the diversified ungeneralizable unverifiable singular aesthetic, we do not look to Marx.

#### And yet.

Many committed readers of Marx feel that *Capital* volume 3 is both continuous with and transgressive from volumes 1 and 2. One of the most

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famous "transgressive" passages is the invocation of "the realm of freedom." In closing, we will read it together to suggest that Marx's robust unexamined humanism, developed from the early task of correcting Hegel ("[t]he only labour Hegel knows and recognizes is *abstract mental* [*geistig*] labour"), so far felt as the *Zwieschlächtigkeit* or centrifugality in the word "social"—the abstract average and yet the place of human development here gives us an empty space—"the realm of freedom" (Marx 1981 [1894], 958–59)—which we can occupy to introduce the incalculable, the supplement always considered dangerous by mechanical Marxists—imaginative training for the ungeneralizable singular aesthetic—persistent preparation for the ethical reflex—the absence of which in general education brought the first set of revolutions to heel (Marx 1964 [1932], 386).<sup>13</sup>

The passage invites careful reading.

In *Capital* I, Marx proposes counter-intuitively that exchangeability is already present in nature ("[i]n considering the labour process, we began by treating it in the abstract, independently of its historical forms, as a process between man and nature" (Marx 1990 [1867], 643). This presupposition, never relinquished, supplies the basis for the broader proposition, that labor is a human fact – the argument that can be broadened to the proposition that we can make more than we need in *every* act of life and thought. Marx, interested only in the economic sphere, compliments capital:

It is one of the civilizing aspects of capital that it extorts this surplus labour in a manner and in conditions that are more advantageous to the development of laborpowers, to social relations and to the creation of elements for a renewal on a higher plane than under the earlier forms of slavery, serfdom, etc.

(1981 [1894], 958; translation modified)

It is important that he is not speaking of capital*ism* here. In this passage, Marx is looking forward to the socialist use of capital. I am thinking especially of phrases such as *"gesellschaftliche Verhältnisse,"* where the adjective could almost be *"socialist"* and the noun is the more philosophical *Verhältniss*—suggesting a philosophically correct structural position rather than the more colloquial *Beziehung* (relationship)—and of *höhere Neubildung*, which is almost *Aufhebung* or sublation. This is what capital does. The problem, once again, is that the capital*ist* use simply *"*disappears." This is where our globally diversified effort can teach and practice Marxism by persistently *de*-humanizing greed as the *primum mobile*—the dangerous supplement, one-on-one yet collective.

In the next movement of this rich paragraph, Marx once again generalizes, bringing all modes of production together, bringing *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* together. Here is the loss of the proper names of modes of production as a subjunctive goal, a blow to gnoseology. Marx brings up once again that exchangeability begins in nature. Before capital, nature

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ruled the human like a blind power. In socialized capital, "associated producers govern" this originary exchangeability, "human exchange of material [*Stoffwechsel*, usually 'metabolism,' translates literally into 'exchange of material'] with nature in a rational way" (translation modified). The entire world, all modes of production together, is the realm of necessity that supports human development for its own sake. This is the site of the epistemological struggle, where the question mark becomes the copula that opens the supplement that displaces itself and continues questioning, again and again. If in the globalized practice of marxism (small m), the agent for turning capital to socialist uses must be the citizen, for Marx s/ he remains the worker. Therefore, our passage ends with the effort to provide more time for the realm of freedom that will no doubt be released if the realm of necessity is socialized.

No doubt. Marx's description of such a prepared realm of necessity is without reference to the epistemological—one-on-one yet collective struggle required to produce a general will for social justice.

Here is the passage. First Marx takes the small peasant (the least likely candidate) as proof of the illusion that capitalism is the norm. Then he shows us how easy it is to disprove this illusion by painting that effortless picture of a socialist state.

Because a form of production that does not correspond to the capitalist mode of production [the self-employed small peasant] can be subsumed under its forms of revenue (and up to a certain point this is not incorrect), the illusion that capitalist [structural] relationships are the natural [structural] relationships of any mode of production is further reinforced. If however one reduces wages to their general basis, i.e. that portion of the product of his labour which goes into the worker's own individual consumption; if one frees this share from its capitalist limit and expands it to the scale of consumption that is allowed on the one hand by the existing social productivity (i.e., the social productive power of his own labour as effectively social) and on the other hand required for the full development of individuality; if one further reduces surplus labour and surplus product, to the degree needed under the given conditions of production, on the one hand to form an insurance and reserve fund, on the other hand for the constant expansion of reproduction in the degree determined by social need; if, finally, if one includes in both (1) the necessary labour and (2) the surplus labour . . . that those capable of work must always perform for those members of society not yet capable, or no longer capable of working - i.e. if one strips both wages and surplus-value of their specifically capitalist character – then nothing of these forms remains, but simply those foundations of the forms that are common [gemeinschaftlich] to all social [gesellschaftlich] modes of production. (1981 [1894])

EBSCO Publishing : eBook Collection (EBSCOhost) - printed on 5/11/2020 2:48 PM via COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY -MAIN AN: 1616780 ; Burczak, Theodore A., Garnett, Robert F., McIntyre, Richard P..; Knowledge, Class, and Today, efforts at imagining social justice are seldom more than top-down efforts at preserving the movement of global capital: Development as "insertion into the circuit of capital without subject-formation." To imagine the Gramscian lesson in this globalized conjuncture, the "leftist" polarization of subject-formation and the collective abstraction of capital/social must be persistently undone by the new intellectual in a class-, gender-, and race-sensitive way. The move to socialize capital cannot be assured by "a shorter working day." The forming of the subject for the ethical reflex housed in the responsible outlines of a general will for socialization in the fullest sense, on the broad relief map of the globe, sometimes undone by centuries of extrinsic and intrinsic violence, inhabited by many first languages, obliged to recognize, if necessary in the idiom of the subaltern, that, as I have insisted above, the contingent, beyond programming, rises in the difference between need and capacity to make and cannot be caught by knowledge management. Today's methodology of choice can be fearlessly confronted only if it becomes the deep background of a classroom teaching to rearrange desires, teaching also the risks of walking the walk that would then begin to be desired.

The invaluable work toward a will to justice is destroyed by a confidence in so-called toolkits and templates. The desire for such speedy solutions must be rearranged with the training of the imagination, to understand that to change gnoseology to epistemology today we must first understand that the toolkit closes off the contingent. If the toolkit is telling the top how to help the bottom, the bottom is thought as needing no more than material aid for income production and the reduction of poverty. Movements that are advertised as "from below" need to have their leadership/vanguard structure carefully read. This remote, infinitely complicated struggle cannot be assigned to knowledge management.

The new intellectual must teach how to make toolkits—even on the subaltern level—as halfway houses to be undone by the contingent rather than offer toolkits as a solution to the problem of action. Some of us have been criticizing the UN, for example, on the use of platforms of action to diffuse and manage violence against women. Some of us have been criticizing the mere statisticalization of such things as development and progress. All of this has to be integrated into a persistent critique of knowl-edge management so that meetings to achieve solutions do not work as if for children, with leaders who divide collectivities into groups, with instructions to produce lists of items that are collected as the groups are put back together. This is not the way that the imagination will be trained for epistemological performance so that unconditional ethics can be introduced to move capital into social justice. This is the work that we must continue to do persistently in order to make "Marxism" global.

I want to close with a word on gender. Within scientific socialism, the empowerment of gender was stiffly rational. One can find proof of this in the writings of Alexandra Kollontai (1980) and latter-day writers such

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as the Chinese feminist Dai Jinhua (2002). Today gender empowerment through micro-credits and financial independence—taking employability as the bottom line of human dignity-follows the same sort of autonormative agenda. Here gendering as the type case of reproductivity must be acknowledged. Just as in the epistemological project of Capital 1, the worker was invited to rethink himself epistemologically as an agent of production rather than victim of capitalism, so also, and on a broader base, women must understand that men take more and give less and that women are not themselves the victims of phallocentrism but the agents of production. The need for legitimate passage of property must not be the excuse for keeping them in confinement. Integrating this to capitalism takes us from Engels through Thomas Picketty (2014) into listening to the gendered subaltern subject. If you think this is bio-politics, try to imagine more flexibly.

And an envoi: globality is my brief, and I have tried to attend to it, with a question marking the need for a persistent and effortful move from gnoseology to epistemology, from knowledge management to intellectual labor, from rational choice to imagination, moving poison to medicine, capital to social, rearranging desires as the generations pass. I have referred to a contemporary vanguard, the Global Futures Council of the World Economic Forum. The subtext: work must be supplemented by the production of the subaltern intellectual: focused, local, intense work, attempting to produce in the largest sectors of the global electorate an understanding of the importance of the right to intellectual labor-a labor that is almost impossible to teach in the face of millennial cognitive damage, in the face of the imperative to obedience. At the World Economic Forum, Klaus Schwab, the Founder and Executive Chairman, spoke of moving from and between the local and national into the regional, in preparation for the global. The subaltern are people who have not been welcomed into all the nationalisms of the previous centuries and yet, in some sectors, have become multinational now as labor export, often undocumented. There one does not practice or teach leadership, but learns to follow how to teach. But that is another talk, another walk, another theater. For now, think that limit as center, not margin, as we part company.

#### Notes

- 1 Word used in unpublished 2001 conversation with the editor of Asia Labor Monitor.
- 2 Resnick and Wolff were the first and perhaps the only economists to see any value in my work, as reflected in my class-notes-based essay "Scattered Speculations on the Question of Value" (Spivak 1985).
- 3 Most expansively developed in Hardt and Negri (2004).
- 4 In a bolder formulation, Jean-Luc Nancy declares: "'To speak of freedom' is accordingly to suspend philosophy's work. And this is in fact the very possibility of a 'philosophizing' " (1993, 3).

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- 5 Lenin writes: "It is impossible completely to understand Marx's *Capital*, and especially its first chapter, without having thoroughly studied and understood the *whole* of Hegel's *Logic*. Consequently, half a century later, none of the Marx-ists understood Marx!" (1960 [1914], 180).
- 6 I cite here Amina Mohamed, currently running for the position of Chairperson of the African Union Commission, and Alicia Bárcena, the Executive Secretary of the U.N.'s Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, neither noticeably Marxist, yet both pushing for sustainable development driving the market rather than vice versa, as is the case now.
- 7 Already in 1844, Marx alluded to this section of the *Phenomenology: "*[t]he 'unhappy consciousness,' the 'honest consciousness' the struggle of the 'noble and base consciousness,' etc. etc., these separate sections contain the *critical* elements" (Marx 1964 [1932], 385). Our (Marx's) task is to supplement intellectual with manual labor.
- 8 Dipesh Chakrabarty's brilliant work (2016) points the way to acknowledging the subject/agent bind into planetarity. However, given his theoretical base, he is obliged to ignore the challenges of the heterogeneity of knowing and doing.
- 9 A moving example of this interest is "Are My Hands Clean?" (Reagon 1985, performed by Sweet Honey in the Rock, 1988, Flying Fish Records).
- 10 Unpublished conversation with the author.
- 11 Theft of surplus value is not mentioned in Mao's groundbreaking essay on the peasant revolution in Hunan province (Zedong 1971 [1927]). Early Bolsheviks often made the point that the Russian revolution was better than the German because it involved both workers and peasants. For Gramsci's "subalterns" too, there was no factory floor.
- 12 My description of Shanghai and Shenzen is taken from Wong (2006).
- 13 Even here, Marx notices the usefulness of the method: "Hegel adopts the standpoint of modern national economy" (translation modified). Marx himself proceeds from "national" to "political" economy in subsequent writings.

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