

Is it possible to reverse Hegel's system using his method ? : Hegel, Marx and Kant

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1 Introduction

Marx had denounced Hegel's system as a great abortion but he also admired his huge sense of history or dialectic of history. It has been interpreted that Marx threw away Hegel's standpoint of view - absolute Idealism - and accepted only his (historical) method to construct historical materialism. In this respect, Lenin's famous announcement that Hegel's Logic should be read as epistemology could be understood as a series of reconstruction from idealism to materialism. But I wonder it could be scientific attitude if a author extract the convenient part from other thinker according to his aim, so much as the case that Marx himself had declared his own work as a aesthetic wholeness. Marx had thoroughly noticed that in Hegel method was tightly connected with his system. It has been well known that Hegel's basic stance lies in his next phrase a method is Geist of material . Could Marx have succeeded in to deconstruct the tie between his method and the system?

In this paper, therefore, I would summarize Hegel's method and system at first, then examine Marx's work whether or not it was really overturned up against Hegel's system as he declared. Still more, when I examine Marx's critique of Hegel, I shall refer to Kant, for by means of contrasting them to Kant, not distinction but similarity of the two thinkers would appear.

2 What is the materialistic conversion of Hegel's system

1) Hegel's method and system

When Marx stressed the difference with Hegel, He used to say that in his work a subject was always imagined in his head, that is, the subject was an independent entity of human consciousness, while an idea (Idee) stood in Hegel as a subject and consequently the all things in the world had been fallen into the alienated form of an idea. Then Marx declared that after upsetting Hegel's standpoint, One could utilize his (historical) dialectic for each object. The leader of Marxism movement after Marx's death, F. Engels also demonstrated that so far as the mystery in Hegel's system had been disclosed, the philosophy (Wissenschaft) reigning over science except formal logics and dialectic became useless. But if a method would be a spirit of materials, that is ,the method should have penetrated them, Marx's method so called materialistic dialectic could have no plead to be scientific while Hegel's are blamed to be false.

Here we let ourselves to consider the basic standpoint in Logics of Hegel referring to the logic in Das Kapital. The task in Hegelian system destined to prove that Idee or Begriff(concept) inherently subjective or spiritual should be also to be objective or realistic. That work could not be accomplished by our voluntary definition but done by only way of a long development of the concept itself. This is an intrinsic character of Hegel's philosophy distinguished from ordinary positive or experienced science. This basic standpoint would necessarily require not only the development of logic through self- contradiction of concept but also the triad system — Logics, natural philosophy and spiritual philosophy. Consequently, as above explained, we could here briefly summarize his wholeness as follows.

- (1) In Hegelian standpoint, the method and the system is entangled each other
- (2) The system itself contains or requires its method.

Hitherto, as an identity of Hegel, the method of dialectic have been addressed one-sided

Is it possible to reverse Hegel's system using his method?

but it would not mirror the true figure of Hegel.

By the way, what is energy for upwards long exhaustive journey in his system? That is a contradiction between the existence form of concept and the essence of it. So in his system, logical concept and natural (physical, chemical, organic) substance should have impetus to rudder its course up to the final goal -- the form of idea because all of them had been set as a potential Idee in themselves (an sich) .How about Marx in Das Kapital?

In a world of political economy of Marx, that is, in an analysis of capitalist society (buergerlicher Gesellschaft), the capital is set as an independent subject (entity) from our consciousness and that it is not put like Idee as in Hegel. That is right as Marx says. But this declaration could not be accepted literally, because it will not be secure at all that the difference at in a starting point could be held to the last. If the builder of his original system would endeavor to paint as he likes with great skill and revolutionary ambition, the picture completed might be metamorphosed to an exact opposite. One could not deny this metamorphose, because anyone who has engaged in research and analysis of the event in a world, not still a historian, has had a experience tempted to this feeling. Therefore researchers, in general, submit their works modestly as hypotheses by controlling their mind. This is also a standpoint of Kant who had admonished the reckless speculative power of idea. Then how is the case in Marx? Why he only himself could demonstrate his work as a sole scientific one and whence he got the qualification?

2) The structure of Marx's political economy

The value term of goods or commodity is a most fundamental concept in Marx's political economy. This term is familiar and that not mysterious as far as this is explained connected with labor in such a way that Marx illustrated that if a nation's labor had been stopped, a nation could not be survive any more. But Marx's terminology is, as well known, different at one point with that of predecessors, such as

Locke, Petty and Smith. Marx himself stressed this point in a way that labor itself was not entitled as value and that when labor embodied in goods it could be qualified as value.

Then, by adding this character, what did he ever acquired one that other economist could not conceive? The true answer would be this Marx acquired the concept of value, that is, the entity of value. .

He used to say that the classics had obscurely grasped the notion of value, the substance of value but because of the lack of analysis as to twofold character of labor, they failed to extract the concept of value. This critique of classics concerns itself with the "accurate" concept of value in terms of embodied form in goods. In this context, it is sufficient for him that the reader would convince by themselves that the concept found by the great Classics had been drawing on not superficial defect. In fact, he was ready to commence second attack on the classic camp. In this respect, Hegel's magical power of method would be fully utilized. Since Engels had also acquainted with this point, he could have reviewed triumphantly Marx's first publication about Political Economy, *Kritik Der Politischen Oekonomy*(1859) as follows. — For the publication of this book, there had to be resolved one problem that was by any means unrelated economics. That was a problem of method of political economy. Marx absolutely was such qualified. Then, what is the method?

3) Marx's descriptive method — magic of the upwards method

Marx's proposition, as above seen, had a profound intention to draw on the character of non-hypothesis and that could be claimed directly to hold true without any verification. To accommodate with this requisite, he introduced Hegelian method in his system. Let's follow up his claim about value concept. This claim is summarized in a proposition as follows. The value concept or value form is explained as an "essence of price form of goods. And next, it is expressed that goods are ideal(potential) money or money is a crystal(spirit) of value and at last it is pronounced that goods become

Is it possible to reverse Hegel's system using his method?

(metamorphose) money. This expression or explanation has been a most controversial and difficult part to understand in Kapital. Then, I will access to these explanations from the standpoint whatever role these are loaded in his system.

It appears righteous that so long as the value-term holds substance, the value concept has right for reality in market economy, for substance is in use as a representing category of entity. But since the value-existence has just been acknowledged or demonstrated by analyzer- Marx himself, in this context the value-itself has not shown its value character yet. Marx had fully conscious of this aporia. Consequently if value-concept is to be approved as a real concept, it will have to go on a long journey like Idee in Hegelian system. The strength realizing, in other word, formalizing herself Hegel named as METHOD. The self-formalizing should be amount to the realization or emergence from potential form of the concept. By virtue of this metaphysical power of magic, couldn't have Hegel used the phrase "A method is spirit of materials"? In the case of Marx, the classics was not only accused of their shortage in analysis — including Ricard - the best classic praised by him — but also blamed, because he hadn't noticed that value form was an embryo of price form. In this point, he declared confidently that the role of science was to testify how commodity became money. This task, as Engels said, could only be fulfilled conducted by a Deutsch who had fully acquainted with Hegel.

After having the concept of value and money, Marx could easily proceed to define the concept of capital via so called "transformation from money to capital". Capital now defined as "self -multiplying value". By that procedure he could have gained the key term understanding capitalist society. But we must address naive question here. Even if all his procedure, for instance, could be accepted, why could he have, on earth, license to pronounce his work scientific (creditable) not hypothesis that should be doomed to dedicate itself to verification for any other scientist?

If he claims on such a ground that he had adopted other method than positive or empirical science, in other words, the method which anybody else could not have ability to use, what then could we response? And yet, this claim is done in the name of

materialistic-dialectic not by Absolute Idealism. I can not refrain from feeling that I was encountered with ghost of metaphysics or "ontological testimony".

By the way, needless to say, his work is also reviewed from that of ordinary science, from the view-point how far it could explain phenomena or laws of motion. Commonsense is used to not stick to difference of methods and seeks to judge by the outcome. But it is not denied that Marx's descriptive style have captured many people, especially intellectual. If Kant or Hegel were alive, what do they have in their mind? The capitalist world painted in terms of Hegelian method has scattered various poisonous byproduct that was not contained in original Hegelian system — absolute idealism — at all. Here the irrationality that was caused by borrowing only the method to set up the capitalist society should intensively explode. A typical danger caused straightly from his method is as follows.

In his painting, as every man knows, a subject - leading agent - is designated to capital. Wage-laborer, of course, plays slaved part but it has no relations with a theme discussed from now on. The dimension (to be discussed) of subject-subordinate relations lies between not in capital-labor but in thing (Sache) and person. Citing a famous Marx's phrase, it pleads that capitalist also alienated and that capitalist is no more than a personal agent of capital. If what Marx says were right, mankind even not Marx should have overthrow the inhumane society. It would help understanding Marx's true intension if it were permitted to use a profane analogy: Christ is not God itself to the extent that he is delegated to this world to exhibit God's itself existence. In this sense, Christ is not a subject but an agent or son of God. Thorgh Unitarian neglects the dirinity of Christ, it would be ridiclous it anyone rejects God in order to rescue Christ. This metaphor might be irrelevant to the Trinity analogy but I would dare to use this, for many Marxian have still now been supporting this rhetoric as their last resort). Let leave alone the dispute as to Personal-God in Christianity, I will review briefly about his rhetoric.

However the part of primadonna in his canvas is allocated to the object, — money or capital not to a person, why could he conclude that it should be so in reality or the

Is it possible to reverse Hegel's system using his method?

status of human being is deteriorated in the position of subordinate, not free? His performance could be compared to a person who is fascinated by the magic he himself had laid. (In this context, personal dependence on employer in the case of employee as Kant stressed is neglected.) Aren't we discussing seriously in the realm of science (he stresses) not in fictional roman? While great Shakespeare had painted in his drama as if money has almighty power and that it might have always controlled human mind, it does never mean his rhetoric to be scientific.

From the viewpoint of Marx, tools and institutions that mankind have invented not intentionally or produced in their historical process such as money, capital, and religion so on, should be condemned for its depriving nature of human freedom or dignity. This is a conclusion far beyond what Kant, Smith and Hegel had in mind. And yet, for Marx the causes of evils lie not in human mind but in social relations, so he asserts that such system based on private property (because of the genesis of money and capital) should be destroyed. Thus, practical and revolutionary standpoint is necessarily pulled out from his speculative Painting. (Hitherto, though I have explained Marx' thought mainly relying on thought of *Versachlichung* fetishism, not referring to that of class struggle which is another main stream of Marxism, I conceive myself that in his spectrum the movement for emancipation freeing from hunger is not built without grand design above explained.)

By the way, in spite of adopting same method with Hegel, What is the reason Marx had reached completely adverse conclusion? In usual, this difference naturally has been discussed as resulting from that of view-point, that is, materialistic dialectics and absolute idealism. Is it really true? Has Marx resolved at last the enigma of human being and history by borrowing Hegel's power? Then hadn't Hegel fully acquainted with genuine power of method he made up? Or did Marx, misusing it as Hegel's devil son, pull out dangerous manifesto on the illusion of speculation that Kant had admonished. It is the place to change paragraph.

3 Hegel's co-relations between the system and the method- represented

In Hegel's system — Encyclopedia, it is constituted from Logik to begin with, although the analysis in natural and spiritual philosophy allocated in the latter part are in fact presupposed. And it also well known that it starts from category "Sein" (being) and yet it is set as elementary (potential) form of Idee (idea). This way could not be conceivable from standpoint of usual formal logics including Kant and Mill. A mission of Idee is to recognize that all the things and event in this world would not be stranger for her and this is a reason the truth couldn't be given by definition but in process, being different from pantheism that intend to grasp God intuitively in the phenomena of the world.

By the way, it is sufficient for me to confirm at this point that Hegel could upload toward spiritual world (family, civil society and commonwealth) via natural philosophy by virtue of the original setting and after a long journey he could be satisfied to confirm that the Idee has become Absolute Spirit (philosophy), though realized in his contemporary kingdom insufficiently. In his cyclical structure, the beginning is to be the final and vice versa.

From this summary, we could know that political conservatism of him arises not from his political stance but from his system.

Now, as to his method, it has been called as that of apprehension (Begrreifen), which means the object could be grasped in its concept (kern or essence). It is apparent that this method stands against the cognitive way which use category (or concept), subjective per se like Kant, to apprehend (begrreifen) objects. Hegel stressed repeatedly in such a way that the truth is not put as coincidence of object with its representation and Marx had also appraised this view-point as a "scientific method". Once being this method employed, Marx would be satisfied when he had finished his upload journey from money to capital. Certainly this satisfaction would be a prerogative which could be afforded to the thinker like Hegel and Marx, for the result could be there destined as

Is it possible to reverse Hegel's system using his method?

the truth.

4 Sharp difference in the conclusion between Hegel and Marx

Marx should be admittedly satisfied with his concept of capital drawn up by himself but an anxiety would wait for him after this fulfillment. For the final concept-capital - in Marx's system, at one point, contrasts to that of Hegel. It is still left in objective form, so that it couldn't return to Idee which is set as a concept or spirit recognizing itself as concept, infinite or free entity under Hegel. In the case of Marx, acquiring a reality or existence of concept was the first hurdle. It seems he could have overcome this hard test but at the very moment he was obliged to notice another aporia that his concept -capital - as was destined to be completely different from reality (Wirklichkeit) in terms of Hegel, for existence lacking free -spirit is not named true entity. Capital is an entity, as being in eternal alienated form, dropped in Hell painted by Dante.

I could conclude here again that Hegel's system is constructed as a total unity, so if anyone who want to extract its part for his own, its attempt should be doomed to fail. Hegel's system, however mysterious in its form, was designed to prove human spirit is to be free based on pious belief. Using another words, his system was to prove that human spirit could understand and that explain the motion of secular world because the world is potentially logos (idea). This is the spirit of Absolute Idealism — the heart of God. It should not be the work being applied to secular aim. Starting from radical young Hegelian, Marx challenged to de-construct the wall of it. What was the result? If he had been obliged to destruct secular world because of the picture which he himself painted using Hegel's method, we have nothing to say. A famous aphorism by Marx — All philosophers hitherto have been merely engaged in to interpret the world in each way but the crucial is to change — should be reviewed in this context, because Marx appealed to setup not only bourgeois regime but also capitalist society as "

spontaneous order"(Hayek). Kant has left the remark that mankind could destruct or reconstruct the constitution that he made up (cf. law) but how could we destroy the spontaneous order ?

Hegel's conceptual method or method of apprehension holds to find out the self(an sich) of concept in the things and events, so he used to call this method as a way to see through the essence breaking through the wall of material. Hegel's character stands, of course, on not the application which was presented by Plato with intuition but on having developed systematically to the final. And yet, he claimed speculative, metaphysical way was solely deserved to be thoughtful and condemned usual empirical method as superficial, that is, non-thoughtful, non-conceptual. It has been well known that Marx, using same method, showered nasty terms on classics as vulgar. But Hegel was a man of Absolute Idealism whereas was Marx an anti- idealist. On what a ground he could accuse of them? Allegedly, does he proclaim it was done from the stand of Materialism?

Since Hegel's standpoint of view rides on a pious intuition or sincere desire that the world is alienated form (Anderes- Sein) of spirit, so long as this respect concerned, it is not denied he is as much mysterious as former theologian however hard he would regarded himself to be more profound thinker. How about Marx?

As far as same method applied, the picture drawn by materialism couldn't differentiate itself from that of absolute(objective) idealism. Although it might seem to be ironical that materialism stressing the independence of things from human consciousness would drop in the opposite in their works, these phenomena shouldn't be peculiar, for to gain super power beyond human being might always be a dream for great and ambitious thinkers.

Then, how we should think about Engels' proposition that proclaimed the end of Metaphysics. We must refer to Kant now.

Is it possible to reverse Hegel's system using his method?

5 Kant versus Hegel and Marx

Kant highly evaluates a speculative character of reason (Vernunft) in a different sense of Hegel, exactly saying, using in an opposite term. Reason, as it were, draws on almighty power in Hegel while it is set by the former as indispensable and useful for human being but severely restricted. Being distinct from understanding (Verstand), it could not be applied to recognize the event in this world because the idea or desire acquired by using reason, for example, God, immortality or possibility of another reasonable Being, could not be verified by intelligence. It belongs to a famous case that he had exhausted and achieved triad Critic to prove this. In that process, the function and scope between understanding and reason in intelligence clearly classified. In some sense, we could say that Kant set meta-function of reason to control human understanding and itself. From his epistemology, the following crucial propositions were pulled out.

1) Understanding or apprehension of the object equals with ordering the image based intuition by applying subjective categories so that epistemology could refer only with the image(phenomena) and that the universe itself(Noumenon ,Ding an sich) might be left something which by definition could be eternally unknown for a reasoned human being.

2) The concept of teleology or purposiveness is used in terms of analogy as a expediency to help human understanding towards natural wonder and human history of progress. Because reason should be eager to get an answer that requires a power beyond a scientific explanations. Since it is an unavoidable desire for reason, we must always be acquainted with its restriction, however frequently man tempted to rely on it.

3) Human being is destined to be free so long as they be moral subject. Thus his maxim that is known as famous "Categorical Imperative" accompanies with restricted duty so that the effort to be moral amounts to become more religious for God. In Kant, these terms — free, moral and religious — are truly another expression of a same

identity, so that the proposition, "Freedom is ascribed to cognition of Necessity" — core in both Hegel and Marx — for him is absolutely not but paradoxical.

In these respect, Kant stands opposite site of Hegel and Marx. With reverse expression, we could say Hegel and Marx stand on a same ground against Kant in spite of allegedly their confrontational position. Whence does it emerge?

1) Kant stands, like common episteme, on dual view-point, that is, in a picture where the subjective and the objective are faced upon fundamentally. For him, therefore, Hegel's claim and verification that the world be nothing but spirit is so ambitious but ever impossible attempt. Kant is a man who wants to know how and how much a reasoned entity could understand the universe (including himself) with concept, whereas in Hegel truth ought to be in a harmony of concept with existence.

2) So long as the concept of freedom in mankind is ascribed to the idea that spirit recognize universe as his own, Hegel's freedom of concept is put equivalent with the infinite. And yet, since the final end is accomplished necessarily through the resolution of contradiction between concept and its existence (appearance), the relation between freedom and necessity becomes not so much antagonistic as undistinguished nexus. Here his famous proverb such as "freedom is an insight of necessity" appears. As far as in this respect, if we put the concept "relations in production" by Marx in place of "world spirit" or "time spirit" by Hegel and then introduce propositions such as "mankind could not tell what is the essence of the time from the concerned consciousness" or "man could present a question which history has already known the answer" and so on, few reader could reject the sameness between Hegel and Marx. To the extent that the formal system is concerned, historical materialism could not prove any difference with objective idealism.

3) If Kant could have a chance to read the thought introduced above, he would probably regret himself that his works had been ignored by them, especially by Marx. I would conclude here that so long as historical materialism based Das Kapital is no more than the proposition based on metaphysics, Engels's proclamation at the review of Kritik der Politischen Oekonomie(1859) — metaphysics standing over positive

Is it possible to reverse Hegel's system using his method?

sciences has no longer a room except the formal logics and dialectic.—should be accused of its arrogance and falseness. Since Marx's true color being uncovered, the pronouncement by Engels is no more than logical-contradiction, that is, the declaration of the end of metaphysics by metaphysics.

I think the life of metaphysics is to be eternal because of the finite nature of human being. We could summarize the attitude of three great thinkers about metaphysics as follows.

Hegel had an ambition to access God not by way of religious revelation but by reasonable recognition. In the result, with the completion of his system human being also metamorphosed to the free entity, that is, eternal God. This position could be a product of profound thought as he himself stressed but I would dare to say that against his sincere religious intention, his works resulted in disgracing the authority of metaphysics. In fact, at the top of accomplishment his concept of freedom was attacked from young radicals because of its secular conservative character.

Marx challenged to destruct Hegel's system for the fulfillment of his own thought but he conceived, at this enterprise, to utilize the contradiction in Hegel's system. He would have convinced he had succeeded in and raised new principle with which a puzzle in history would be resolved for the first time. But it was a fanatic conviction. Marx's system emerged in place of Hegel drew on more fanatic prophecy in terms of "historical necessity". Here History was lifted up to the top substituting for God. In this case, speculation was excessively misused and that its fanatic radicalism led the people more dangerous course. Metaphysics was shamed again to the extent that its role was over. But when young Marx described as this, had he known the fate of his venture? -- communism is not the aim acquired but action itself.

I could see in Kant a reasonable and moral attitude as human being. Mankind is incomplete being, so he is always destined to effort and for that reason desire God. Summing up; There is no way to resolve the puzzle in history. Not only Marx but Hegel himself enterprised to resolve the mystery of human bling.Both modern thinkers convinced the answer was nidden. And Hegel became God. What Marx? Kant stands

beyond Modern.

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