

Some critical comments are marked with incredulous '[sic]' (p. 20 n. 65). The saintly Highet would never denigrate a detractor (p. 54); on the other hand, his opposition (no doubt inspired by his mentor Bowra) to Dodds's lectures is not mentioned (see D.A. Russell, in: *Rediscovering E.R. Dodds*, p. 280). At pp. 21–3, W.M. Calder III's view that Highet was 'jealous of the greater scholar', namely Kurt von Fritz, is reviewed. The charges are (a) jealousy and (b) anti-German sentiment; they are rebuffed by assertions that Highet was never jealous of anybody, that his humane scholarship was something no German ever understood, and that, if he had anti-German sentiment, in spite of owning a Pauly-Wissowa (and, curiously, writing about a 'young classicist Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf' [p. 23] – surely an error for someone more than 50 years his senior), this was because of his war service and knowledge of Nazi atrocities (see also p. 10). This will not do: Highet can have had thoughts to which B. was not privy (even thoughts he regretted) – no biographer has perfect access; he can also have thought about 'Germans' as a group differently to individuals (or even been able to distinguish 'Germans' from 'Nazis'). The desire to exculpate Highet from anything close to a bad thought is not reasoned or balanced assessment.

Highet's work should not be forgotten. The problem is that works of adulation like this are likely to encourage the opposite response. A more balanced assessment of Highet's work would include situating books like *The Classical Tradition* (1949) amid contemporary debates about canonicity, 'the West' and whiteness; a history of (reactions to) biographical criticism; an account of 'popular Classics' in its various guises; the role of German and British émigrés in the American academy; Classic(ist)s and the Vietnam war, and a good deal besides. B.'s work will have pride of place in such a project for its rich documentary material, forming a link to Highet himself.

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## MARX AND CLASSICAL STUDIES

DEGLAU (C.), REINARD (P.) (edd.) *Aus dem Tempel und dem ewigen Genuß des Geistes verstoßen? Karl Marx und sein Einfluss auf die Altertums- und Geschichtswissenschaften*. (Philippika 126.) Pp. vi + 449, ills. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2020. Cased, €124. ISBN: 978-3-447-11098-3.

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After 1989 Marx's philosophy and social theory can again be critically re-appropriated without the need to fight battles on ideological and political fronts. The reviewed volume promises to contribute to these post-ideological reappropriations of the relation between Marx(ism) and Classics.

The book is divided into four parts, complemented by an appendix that consists of a new translation of a previously three-page published text that Marx wrote for his German university preparatory high school exam (*Abitur*) on Augustus in 1835. The first section of the book contains introductory comments by the editors as well as a

biographical overview of the young Marx by L. Haase, which focuses on social issues that he encountered in his hometown Trier. Unfortunately, it remains unclear how the early text on Augustus and the biographical overview are connected to the topic of the book, especially given that numerous new biographies of Marx have appeared during the last five years. The second section is by far the most interesting part, at least as seen from a contemporary and theoretical point of view, in so far as the contributors (H. Schneider, A. Eich, W. Nippel, Reinard) treat selected aspects of Marx's philosophy that are not simply of interest for philological reasons. Instead of exclusively focusing on the canonical texts that were appropriated for the 'official' ideologies in twentieth-century Marxism-Leninism, these authors also deal with later texts that are more important for Marx's philosophy and social theory, such as the *Grundrisse* in which, as Nippel underlines (p. 101) – in contrast to Reinard (p. 121) –, Marx moves away from a simple linear concept of historical development, presenting fairly complex methodological and theoretical considerations in its place. These considerations also include historical reflections on what he calls the 'Asiatic' mode of production which, according to Marx, is determined by collective property relations and 'collective relations of dependency' (p. 102). The third section deals with the intellectual history of the discipline of Classical Studies by offering contributions that consider the reception of German scholars of Classics that are connected in some way or another to Marxism in the twentieth century, including Arthur Rosenberg (M. Keßler), Robert von Pöhlmann (K. Ruffing) and Friedrich Vittinghoff (Deglau). Overall, though the literature cited in the book is impressively vast, most contributors only deal with the German tradition in Classical Studies and Marxism, which, given both the German background of the contributors as well as the central importance of Marxist philosophies in Germany's intellectual world before 1989, is perhaps unsurprising. The fourth and final section is somewhat difficult to summarise, since the contributions fail to show any relation to the main topic of the book, with the exception of E. Sonnenberg's overview of how the historical image of the slave leader Spartacus was interpreted by Classical Studies in the GDR. The discussion of research positions developed in the former GDR – even if largely dismissed – offers interesting historical reconstructions of a somewhat neglected past of German intellectual discourses during the second half of the last century. The other chapters in this section examine Walter Benjamin's Marxism (M. Nebelin) and Oswald Spengler's reception of Marx (D. Engels), and include a very short chapter on the influence of Western Classical Studies on Classics in China (S. Günther & X. Shi).

Overall, at least from a contemporary perspective of critical social theory, Marx's *Critique of Political Economy* and (Post)Marxism, the book remains disappointing, mainly because the authors primarily focus on two issues that no longer play a major role in contemporary (Post)Marxist social theory, namely, the broad view of historical developments within what has been falsely ascribed to Marx as 'Historical Materialism' and the question of slavery and revolution in Greek and Roman antiquity. The political aspects of Marx's class theory are discussed by several contributions in regard to the question of slave uprisings and revolutions.

Marx's philosophy and social theory have been among the most discussed topics during the last few decades in many fields, including philosophy, critical geography, political science, cultural studies and political economy. Unfortunately, most contributors in the book remain fairly narrow in their considerations, in so far as Marxian concepts related to the relation between economy and culture, ideology and power, time and space, and in-depth reflections on the role of property and money remain largely absent from the book. Notable exceptions to this viewpoint are the contributions by Eich, Nippel, Reinard and Schneider, as these authors take on a theoretical perspective through which

concepts and categories of Marx's *Critique of Political Economy* are used for accessing questions related to ancient social formation and social organisation, thereby going beyond the paradigm of looking at the ancient world through the concepts of war and politics (p. 141).

Whereas most contributions remain fairly historicist, Schneider's, Nippel's and Eich's chapters are the most insightful and reflective contributions because these authors develop their theses on par with contemporary theorising and use Marx's theory for making sense of the social structure of ancient society, slave labour and their overall relations of production, including monetary relations, as Schneider underlines (pp. 48–52). In his contribution Eich uses the theoretical tools offered by Marx for a coherent analysis of ancient class relations in a way that focuses not only on the difference between 'class in itself' and 'class for itself', but also on the difference between a use value-oriented economy (such as the Greek economy) and a wage-based and universally commodified economy (such as the modern capitalist society). His contribution is based on Marx's thesis that productivity and growth are limited as long as the economy remains determined by the demand for use values (p. 68) and slave labour (p. 69). Eich argues that the main reason for Marx's assumption that slave labour remains unproductive is empirical, inasmuch as it stems from his observations of the developments in the USA (p. 69). However, Marx also presents systematic arguments for why slave labour remains historically limited. For example, in terms of productivity he argues that slave labour remains fixed to the exploitation of the physical limits of the labour process alone; whereas the productivity of capitalist wage labour can be increased because it is based on the exploitation of labour *power* (which is not identical with labour) through the developments of the means of production (technologies) and knowledge (science and education). Productivity in capitalism is defined in terms of abstract time. Accordingly, an economy that is supposed to develop beyond slave labour needs to move beyond pre-capitalist conceptions of freedom, property and knowledge that would, once realised, contradict the social relations contained in slavery. Eich, in contrast to other authors in the book, also points out both that the concept of class must more properly be grasped as a social relation (p. 77) and that money is included as the main factor of socialisation (p. 81). Finally, Eich argues that for a long time 'Western' research about issues related to class were blocked because of its ideological and political hostility to developments in the GDR, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

This aspect is further discussed in Deglau's contribution about Friedrich Vittinghoff and the 11<sup>th</sup> International Congress for Ancient Historians in Stockholm in 1960. The chapter demonstrates clearly how historical research was contextually influenced by the confrontation between East and West during the Cold War, in particular by how the hostile political positions of West versus East German historians influenced their view of the ancient world. Unfortunately, Deglau only reports on the different viewpoints and blockages that existed on each side, without offering larger methodological and theoretical reflections on how cultural backgrounds might *still* frame scholarly positions.

In the last section M. Nebel offers a contribution on Walter Benjamin that presents a well-researched overview of Benjamin's appropriation of Marxism, informed by his messianic theology. Unfortunately, it remains unclear how this contribution differs from the vast amount of existing literature on this topic. Disappointingly, the text reads more like a literature review within which no significant connections are made either to Classical Studies or to the main topic of the book.

The most disturbing contribution comes from Engels, who presents Oswald Spengler's treatment of Marx and socialism. At least half of this chapter consists of lengthy quotations from Spengler that appear without any comment or further reflection. This is problematic

since some of Spengler's claims are not only highly dubious and tendentiously anti-Semitic, but are also based on pseudo-psychological typifications that are historically outdated and no longer make any argumentative or theoretical sense, at least not without carefully embedding them within the context of right-wing and conservative discourses during pre-fascist Weimar Germany. Oversimplifications tend to be left uncommented, and even Spengler's usage of 'blood and race' (p. 389) in relation to the force of historical development is repeated without at least offering a contextualisation of Spengler's position. Sometimes Engels even seems to follow in the footsteps of Spengler's irrationalism, whose organicist views of cultural 'souls' and whose broad world-historical analogies are based on the assumption that the historian's knowledge is not generated by reason and rationality, but, instead, by 'intuition' [*Schauen*] of 'life'. For example, Engels celebrates the 'contemporary relevance' (p. 392) of Spengler with his 'prophetic' [*seherisch*] (p. 392) anticipation of our contemporary situation, including the disappearance of Marxism in politics, the exhaustion of the Western liberal system, Trump's populism, and the 'billionaire socialism' (pp. 392–3) of Google and Facebook.

In sum, the book is a mixed bag, in so far as it contains both highly researched and intellectually significant contributions to the question of how far Marx and Marxism are related to Classical Studies as well as highly obscure chapters that should have been subjected to a more rigorous editorial review.

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## THE INFLUENCE OF ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY

PIOVAN (D.), GIORGINI (G.) (edd.) *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Athenian Democracy. From the Late Middle Ages to the Contemporary Era.* (Brill's Companions to Philosophy 7.) Pp. xviii + 536, ills. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2021. Cased, €165, US\$198. ISBN: 978-90-04-27651-2.

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Athenian democracy has been an omnipresent topic in western intellectual history. Depending on the time period and the thinker, it has served as a counter model, as a source of inspiration or as a historical record for drawing lessons. Today, Athenian democracy is present in conversations on issues ranging from deliberative democracy, over the desirability of referenda, to gender and slavery.

This Companion focuses on modern receptions of Athenian democracy, from the late Middle Ages to the contemporary period. It does not cover ancient reception, although some account of it appears in the introduction. It brings together authors representing a range of disciplines, namely intellectual history (Giorgini), philosophy (O. Guaraldo, G. Leghissa), Ancient History (L. Iori, C. Marcaccini, W. Nippel), Classics (P. Payen, J. Kierstead), Political Science (J. Ober, Y. Sintomer), Italian literature (G. Pedullà), and of countries, including the United States, Germany, Italy and France. This gives the book a richness and multi-disciplinary dimension that is very refreshing. It is dense,