

Marx after Heidegger

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In the ten years between the publication of *The Savage Anomaly* (1981/1991b) and *Insurgencies* (1992/1999), the Italian political philosopher Antonio Negri substantially defined a contemporary theory of power and the State that presents the crisis of democracy as a crisis of the absolute subject in relation to constitutionalism, that which limits democracy and absolute government. From a Spinozist thinking of power as pure immanence, Negri, in *Insurgencies*, develops a political philosophy around two competing notions: constituent power and constituted power where the former is thought as an incessant transformative ontology of being and the latter as the relative stasis that structures threshold conditions for transformation. In discussing such transformative ontology, Negri emphasises the temporality of constituent power as an ontology of the event, and compares directly the ontological understandings of time of Marx and of Heidegger, assaying them as diametrically opposed. While this essay begins with a critical engagement with the “absolute” of Negri’s Spinoza in order to open a space of encounter for Negri, of Marx and Heidegger, its aim is not so much to articulate a philosophical understanding of time but rather to argue for a radical engagement with Heidegger within the legacies of Spinoza and Marx.

Introduction: The Clash of Marx and Heidegger

Antonio Negri, in his 1999 publication, *Insurgencies* opens us to a confrontation between Karl Marx and Martin Heidegger:

Marx’s metaphysics of time is much more radical than Heidegger’s. Time is for both a matter of beings. Social time is the apparatus through which the world is quantified and qualified. But here we are one again, always at the same point: Marx frees what Heidegger imprisons. Marx illuminates with praxis what Heidegger reduces to mysticism. Heideggerian time is the form of being, the indistinctness of an absolute foundation. Marxian time is the production of being and thus the form of an absolute procedure. Marxian temporality represents the means by which a subject formally predisposed to being adequate to an absolute procedure becomes a subject materially capable of becoming a part of this process, of being defined as constituent power (Negri, 1999: 30).

In case we might think this an arcane clash, a quibble between what might be considered incommensurable paradigms, Negri makes things clear. Referring to Benjamin and Arendt or Sartre as opposed to Foucault and Deleuze, he suggests: “Through the same clash, one might say, the whole political-constitutional debate of our time takes place as well” (1999: 30). But, in fact, Marx and Heidegger are themselves the backdrop for Negri’s articulation of what he suggests as the most viable understanding of the dynamics of contemporary democracy. His key terms are “constituent power” and “constituted power.”

Michael Hardt notes in his introductory remarks to Negri's text: "The first key to understanding constituent power is to contrast it to constituted power. Constituent power names the democratic forces of social transformation, the means by which humans make their own history" (Hardt, 1999: vii). Constituted power, understood in relation to sovereign power, references the apparatuses of power of a state, institutions and regulations for the more-or-less stable exercise of power. Traditional or orthodox theories of the political recognise both of these notions. Generally this recognition is in terms of the predominance of constituted power as the ongoing stability of a state, at times and for brief episodes thrown into upheaval, to be reconstituted with renewed institutions and legalities. Negri fundamentally differs here. He recognizes that constituent power is continuous and ongoing as the transformative life of political process, while constituted power is not a stable threshold but rather one that always already activates resistances, rebellions and innovations in the political. As Hardt notes: "Constituent power thus requires understanding *constitution* not as a noun but as a verb, not an immutable structure but an open procedure that is never brought to an end" (viii). The book *Insurgencies*, sub-titled, *Constituent Power and the Modern State*, details five revolutionary transformations of states in Western history: Machiavelli's Italy, England of the mid-seventeenth century, the American revolution, the French revolution and the Russian revolution. The chapter on Machiavelli draws out a notion of time crucial for Negri in siding with Marx over Heidegger. However, constituent power and constituted power are for Negri the putting into political philosophy what he had been developing for at least ten years, a contemporary theory of the republic based on his close reading of the philosophical system of Baruch Spinoza. Crucial for Negri are the innovation in the political philosophy of power identified in Spinoza's work, coupled with Spinoza's own understanding of republicanism.

Spinoza's Marx (after Deleuze)

But who is Negri? Antonio Negri is an Italian political philosopher who, perhaps, first came to international (European) notoriety in the 1970s in relation to the *Autonomia* movement in Italy, a broad platform of radical politics that collectively and loosely embraced dissident intellectuals, trade unionists, student movements and terrorist factions.¹ Negri was arrested and imprisoned on the basis of documents that supposedly linked him to groups such as the Red Brigades, responsible for the kidnapping and execution of the Italian Prime Minister, Aldo Moro. While in prison, Negri researched and wrote his first major work on Spinoza, *The Savage Anomaly: The power of Spinoza's metaphysics and politics* (1981/1991b). On publication, it was immediately translated into French with no less than three prefaces or introductions from key French Spinozan intellectuals: Pierre Macherey, Gilles Deleuze and Alexandre Matheron. The book was highly praised. But why Spinoza? Why this Cartesian rationalist philosopher of the seventeenth century? Even in his own time of rationalist systems-philosophy, Spinoza was eclipsed by Leibniz. Renewed, though somewhat misdirected, interest in Spinoza continued in the development of German Romantic Idealism, with Goethe, Schiller and Lessing, reaching its zenith in Schelling's focus on Spinoza in his *Philosophical Investigation into the Essence of Human Freedom* (1809/2006). At the turn of the nineteenth century, Hegel engaged closely with Spinoza in order to distance himself. Hegel's absolute in his dialectical method is a complete rejection of Spinoza's absolute. I want to emphasise that Hegel read Spinoza closely in drawing away from him, as it is pertinent to a discussion of Marx and Marx's relation to Hegel and Spinoza. While there is ample evidence of Marx's investment in Hegelian thinking with respect to the dialectical process, particularly in his formulation of the notion of class struggle, there is also evidence of Marx's reading of

Spinoza and the impact of Spinoza's understanding of force or power in Marx's very undialectical understanding of how forces of production and relations of production themselves relate.

The most recent text addressing Marx and Spinoza, and perhaps the most thorough, is *Marx Before Spinoza: Notes toward an investigation* (Casarino, 2006).² Casarino emphasises that although a Spinozan legacy is often mentioned with Marx, there is little sustained research on this. He provides a good summary of the extant scholarship on this relation, and proceeds in an extended essay to elaborate on his own understanding of the legacy. Certainly a question of temporality, of a time of what is 'given' and of what is "before" the given, is at stake:

This essay argues that it is impossible to make sense of Baruch Spinoza without making sense first of Marx. (As we shall see, the term *sense* has specific connotations and crucial import for the arguments of this essay). In particular, this essay argues that there are aspects of Spinoza's thought that become intelligible for the first time if and when read through the lens of Marx's thought: I argue that, for better or for worse, Marx has had an irreversible impact on how to read Spinoza (Casarino, 2011: 179-180).

We note in passing that Negri, who has collaborated with Casarino on a number of texts, will argue with the same understanding of a temporality of the "before" with respect to Heidegger and Spinoza, that we need to read Spinoza coming after Heidegger:

Spinoza reemerges in this articulation [time aspiring to be power] and forms a paradoxical relation with Heidegger. *Tempus potentiae*. The Spinozan insistence on presence fills out that which we inherit from Heidegger as mere possibility. ... Without having entered the modern, it is here that Spinoza suddenly exits from it. ... Spinoza systematically overturns Heidegger (Negri, 2011: 311).

We will address this Negri text in more detail later. Returning to Casarino, his text is a curious fold of legacies, debts and temporalities. Nowhere, for example, does he actually cite a passage where Marx mentions Spinoza. Rather: "My point is not that he had read Spinoza: we know that he had (as well as that he had done so largely through the tendentious lens of Hegel's interpretation)" (Casarino, 2011: 196). Now we have a doubling of "lens": the Marxian one through which we "irreversibly" read Spinoza, and this second "tendentious" Hegelian lens through which Marx himself read Spinoza. Bifocals? Binoculars? Spinoza the lens grinder? However, the "point" for Casarino is that both Marx and Spinoza "share and converge in a common philosophical discourse, namely, the Aristotelian tradition" (196). There is remarkable similarity in the language and logic whereby both Spinoza and Marx approach Aristotle *Politics* Book 1, in its discussion on the distinction between *oikonomia* and *chrematistike*, or money accumulated for the sake of the necessities of life and money accumulated for its own sake (196-197). Crucial for Casarino is the development of an isomorphism between Spinoza's *rerum concatenationem* and Marx's *nexus rerum*, and between the concatenation or linking of all things in Spinoza's absolute immanence and Marx's emphasis that "the tendency to create the world market is directly given in the concept of capital itself" (199-200).

In introducing this point, Casarino mentions what he terms (after Gilles Deleuze) a sense-event: “Yet Spinoza’s *rerum concatenationem* is not exactly one and the same with Marx’s *nexus rerum*. Whereas the former constitutes the sense-event that, on the one hand, corresponds explicitly to the concept of absolute immanence and, on the other hand, corresponds implicitly to the state of affairs of emergent capitalist globalization, the latter constitutes the sense-event corresponding explicitly to both” (199). To give emphasis to this notion of sense-event, the second half of Casarino’s text is in fact an exposition on Spinoza via a close reading of two of Deleuze’s books that engage Spinoza, *Expressionism in Philosophy* (1968/1990a) and *The Logic of Sense* (1969/1990b). Crucial for Casarino is developing Spinoza’s understanding of “intuition” as the third and highest kind of knowledge, more vital than “representation” as a first kind and “reason as conceptual” as a second. This is developed in conjunction with Deleuze’s notion of “expression,” developing a relation between *intuition* and *expression*: “The concatenation of all things can neither be denoted or manifested as actual representations by the first kind of knowledge nor signified or demonstrated as actual concept by the second kind of knowledge and that, rather, it can be only expressed as virtual sense-event by the third kind of knowledge, by intuitive knowledge. The concatenation of all things constitutes the *raison d’être* of intuitive knowledge” (Casarino, 2011: 212). One might say, with respect to making “sense” of Spinoza’s Marx, we need to recognize how Deleuze comes before either. It seems that a reading of Deleuze delivers an irreversible direction to any reading of Marx, as the Marx of intuition and expression.

Power and Potential

We might still ask what a rationalist systems-builder of the seventeenth century has to offer Marx and why, at the end of the 1960s, with his publication of *Expressionism* (1968/1990a), followed by his second book on Spinoza, *Spinoza: Practical philosophy* (1970/1988), Gilles Deleuze suggests Spinoza is the greatest of all philosophers. All others come after him. What, then, makes Spinoza special? Two aspects need emphasising. There is an intrinsic emphasis on the philosophical system he develops that is, against the grain of the Western tradition in general, an immanent materialism, hence Negri’s reference to the “savage anomaly.” The second emphasis, and one particularly drawn out by Negri, is the extrinsic one of Spinoza’s engagements with Dutch capitalism of the seventeenth century and the necessity to understand Spinoza’s philosophy from the inseparability of its composition and its milieu, its intrinsic and extrinsic constituents. Negri focuses on the development of Spinoza’s thinking through three of Spinoza’s texts, the *Ethics*, itself interrupted for a number of years before completion by Spinoza writing the *Theologico-Political Treatise*, and then the *Political Treatise*, only just begun when Spinoza died. The radicality of Spinoza lies in the notion of power he develops throughout his writing. The Western tradition of philosophy has thought of the supreme being, the Being of beings in whatever epoch as transcendence, which means as a supersensible entity as first principle or *arche*, as what is unconditioned or without cause for a world conditioned and as effect (“God made the world” as the fundamental onto-theology of Christian metaphysics). As first principle, Being, or the Supreme Being is omnipotent in as much as it is a principle that accounts for whatever is in its being. It is within this understanding that the Christian God was thought and, in turn, how sovereign power has been thought in a broadly Christian European tradition to the present, with the requirement to account for the mediations between the *sumum ens*, the supreme being and beings.

Power is here thought principally as that which authorises and controls, which bestows and distributes according to some form of juridical contract, whether that contract be theocratic, aristocratic or democratic. European thought reached a culminating threshold in this regard

with Rousseau, though contractualist theory had predominated in European understanding of governmental power since the sixteenth century (Negri, 1991b: 70). Spinoza's philosophical understanding of power is antithetical to this. Moreover, his notion of power and his philosophical system are at once practical and political. Hence he writes an *Ethics*. His *Theologico-Political Treatise* that interrupts the *Ethics* is a requirement for Spinoza to work through the separation of Church dogma from his system. Though God seems to be at the centre of his philosophical universe, Spinoza was accused of being an atheist and pantheist. He was excommunicated from the Jewish community. Had he lived a little earlier, he may have suffered Giordano Bruno's fate, killed for his heretical pantheism. Spinoza's books were banned, though fortunately for him at the time the Dutch were the most liberal of European cultures.

As with Descartes, almost his contemporary, Spinoza's starting point is to establish a philosophical system that breaks from Scholasticism's theology. Descartes posits a radical doubter who nevertheless reasons that doubting everything is yet a thinking of doubting. I am, not because God made me, but because I think. Though Descartes hardly does away with God as the *summum ens*, the "I think," the *Cogito* is, from the viewpoint of the beings that are, their openness to being. The "I think" becomes the ground, the subject of certainty. Descartes, famously, posits two Substances with respect to the beings that are: *res cogitans* and *res extensa*. As differing in Substance, which is to say in what fundamentally grounds them as beings, they are transcendent to one another, just as his third substance, God, is equally transcendent. While *res extensa*, bodies-in-the-world are material, without will and work like machines, *res cogitans*, mind, is immaterial and has will. This small detour through Descartes is useful, firstly, because it reminds us of the ground for Modern philosophy as a philosophy of the subject-who-wills in a world of objects transcendent to this willing-knowing while a *summum ens*, a highest Being, omnipotent creator of all, bestows and preserves. Secondly, it permits us to present the sheer radicality of Spinoza's system in relation to Cartesian rationalism. Firstly, there is no transcendence in Spinoza's system, none whatsoever.

There are not three Substances, as with Descartes, but one Substance: God=Nature=Thing. As Substance there is no differentiation between God, Nature or any being in the world. What this means is that everything that is needs to be thought, from the viewpoint of Substance, as unconditional, without cause. All beings, as effects, are the infinite multiplicity of their immanent cause or Substance. Unity as cause can only be encountered in the differentiations of beings in their infinite modifications. God is everything that is. Hence, on the one hand, accusations of pantheism, that the supreme being is all, everything and not the *creator* of everything, power as first principle. Hence also the accusation of atheism: he effectively eliminates God from the equation of a universe that no longer requires a transcendent first principle. However, for Spinoza, there is no all-powerful God in this sense. God is not *potestas* but *potentia* in Latin, or *Potenza* not *potere* in Italian, or *pouvoir/puissance* in French, *Macht/Vermögen* in German. In English we are not so lucky to have two distinct words that so readily differentiate power as authority, might, force and power as capacity, potentiality, open possibility. We need to keep this differentiation in mind in developing an understanding of Spinoza's account of the power of God/Nature, or power in general as capacity to be or the maximizing of one's or a thing's capability to be, which for Spinoza was expressed in terms of affecting and being affected.

Constituent Powers

If there is a single Substance, there is no verticality with respect to the traditional hierarchy God/Man/World. There is a single plane of Being with an infinite number of modalities of being, where each thing in its modality expresses an attribute of God as potential for being. Each mode has an *essence* and an *existence*, which is, in some ways, how Spinoza engages the kind of distinction Descartes has made between *res cogitans* and *res extensa*. But crucially, there is no real distinction between essence and existence in the sense that they could be two transcendent Substances. Existing modes are material singularities, hence a fundamental materialism in the immanence of Spinoza's system. But an existing mode is its own essence in that the essence possesses an infinity of extensive parts (Deleuze, 1990a: 212).³ Essences express attributes of God as degrees of *power*. They are what Deleuze suggests as intensive realities, complicated in their attributes, expressing the essence of God each according to its degree of power. *Existing* modes are the actualization of the degree of power of a mode's essence in acquiring extensive parts such as size or duration. In this respect, they are no longer a measure of the attributes as degrees of power of modal essences but rather may be thought of as the essence of a thing outside of the attributes of God. Deleuze thinks this in terms of the modal distinctions of intrinsic and extrinsic where, however, modes are all contained in the attributes they modify. He expresses this further in terms of a double movement by which we understand the immanent materialism in Spinoza's system, a double movement of complication with respect to intrinsic modal essences and explication with respect to existing modes extrinsically distinct.

We understand Deleuze's differentiation of virtuality and actuality as derived from this Spinozan distinction. The material thing is thus the unfolding, in its singularity, of its own degrees of power within an infinite number of degrees as attributes of God/Nature as Substance. Crucially, in this sense, the thing is unconditioned or cause is understood as *potentia*. It is for this reason that Deleuze emphasizes the most significant implication for Spinoza's system: "Necessity everywhere appears as the only modality of being" (1990a: 212). And it is in this sense that we understand the Spinozan absolute. All modal being is absolute from the perspective of the degrees of power of the attributes of Substance. While this universe is absolute, it is absolutely incomplete inasmuch as it is the expression of the potential for an infinity of modifications. Spinoza has no need for the determination of free will or even freedom, as there is nothing in his system that establishes negation, the negative or coercion as that which would require a determination of freedom. He has no need to place the human as a being set above other beings or derive freedom from something intrinsic to human will. In his system even God is necessary. Hence we see simultaneously accusations that pantheism and atheism are to be found in Spinoza's work, his excommunication from the Jewish community and the banning of his books. With respect to temporality, Spinoza suggests that Substance is eternal while modal existence is singular presence. One imagines Nietzsche's Zarathustra taking notes here. We earlier mentioned Spinoza's intuition as a kind of knowledge. Casarino suggests: "In short, it is at one stroke that intuitive knowledge understands modal essence and links it to the essence of substance—and hence that understanding and that linking may no longer be distinguished from one another" (Casarino, 2011: 213). Hence the temporality in Spinoza that Negri will emphasize as "presence," (Negri, 2011: 311) that Casarino characterizes as the singular presence or singularity of a sense-event inextricably linked to the eternity of Substance. We radically need to read the temporality of capital-money in Marx in these terms of an absolute immanence of the *nexus rerum*.

The Multitude

We have approached one half of our Spinozian exposition. As I mentioned earlier, this is a practical philosophy, an ethics, and Spinoza engaged at length with the political milieu of republicanism and Dutch capitalism of the seventeenth century. How does Spinoza's system get applied? And what made it interesting for Marx? Is application even the right word here? Does one *apply* Spinoza? I will restrict my comments to his understanding of political process. We mentioned earlier the widespread acceptance of contractualism or social-contract theory in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, culminating, in a way, with Rousseau in its legitimisation. Fundamentally, the contract is the mechanism that transfers natural right to juridical right, providing the basis for the juridical concept of the state (Negri, 1991: 221). Power is here understood as authority, institutionally codified and coercive, power that implicitly signifies alienation of freedom in the exercise of right. In the seventeenth century those who sought alternatives to social contract theory were looking to alternatives to the absolutist state, generally through republicanism and Protestant democratic radicalism. In Negri's terms, they sought to subordinate the contractual transfer of power (as juridical) to material determinations of the social, multiplying the specificities of power: absolutism no longer of the state but of the social. In both scenarios, right and politics immediately participate in the power of the absolute (223-224). The fundamental question for practical philosophy became: in the absence of the intervention of contractual theory as a formal system of distribution with respect to the absolute, how does one reconcile the absolute with freedom? How can an absolute form of power be compatible with freedom? As Kant was later to emphasize in his practical philosophy, absolute freedom is chaos and war. The efficacy of Spinoza's system is that he tackles this head on from the beginning. His system is developed to precisely eliminate the tautology of absolute and power. Power is an open determination whose absolute is existence. The existent is the realisation of power as its essence. Power's degrees of capability are a measure of the attributes of Substance. Power and freedom are in this sense not opposed but rather are expressions each of the other from the viewpoints of modalities of being.

Hence the question of power's tenure and exercise, the stuff of juridical codes, is always already implicit in the intrinsic and extrinsic relations of an existent to its capacity to be. Power is not a Substance to be transferred, but an intensive multiplication of potentials. It is in these terms that Spinoza proposes a "democratic absoluteness" as the highest form (which means the most capable, open and potential form) of natural society as political society (229). The political absolute is what Spinoza names as the *multitudo*, the multitude, the mass. Though commentators have collapsed this to what Rousseau will come to define as the general will, Negri emphasizes this radically diminishes Spinoza's thought as to the agency of the political. The general will cannot be thought outside the transcendental juridical nature of the social contract. The multitude is not a transcendent unity of the many, but the immanent collectivity of singularities. It is an elusive juridical subject, creating civil right and constitution as an unsolvable and un-resolvable relationship. The instability of power as potential, the radical incompleteness of the actuality of existents, makes the *multitudo* the very material necessity of what is (232). This is notwithstanding the multitude's recognition as the absolute of power. This absolute "is" its actuality as continuous movement in its power, which is to say in its essence as degrees of power, capabilities as attributes of Nature. There is no transcendent principle to right. It is fundamentally a subversion of the social. One can see how Marx, in thinking an understanding of forces of production to relations of production might be drawn to a philosophy of force as open potential, living labour as constituent power. Relations of production, themselves, while the constitution of existents in their civil right, are essentially incomplete and in constant motility, perpetual revolution. Though we

might speculate on Marx's reading of Spinoza, perhaps the greater effect has been contemporary theory construing Spinoza as Marxian *avant la lettre*, in a reading of Marx in the milieu of a Spinozan critique of Hegel as well as critique of Marx's dialectic and teleology.

Power, Time and Capital

It is the context of this milieu just mentioned that construes Negri's approach to the question of revolutionary politics in Europe, Britain and America from the sixteenth century to the twentieth. He aims to draw out a fundamental understanding of the radicality of power as constituting force, incessant as potential opening for renovation of constituted institutions and juridical forms. He emphasises the two forms by which constituent power has been thought: in a lineage from Hobbes to Rousseau to Hegel with a juridical understanding of constituted power (*potestas*) in the more-or-less stable forms of constitution; and a lineage from Machiavelli to Spinoza to Marx that emphasises an immanent materialism of a constituent power (*potentia*) as permanent revolution. Negri notes:

The concept of constituent power is the core of political ontology. Thus, it is evident that the conclusion of the journey that we are now beginning will involve confronting the contemporary crisis of constitutionalism and asking our selves what subject today is adequate to sustain the absolute constitutional procedure capable of opposing the concept of sovereignty. At the same time we will attempt to determine where the living labor of strength [*potentia*] resides, how it is represented, how it operates today (Negri, 1999: 35).

If this contemporary crisis is gauged by a question of temporality with respect to Marx and Heidegger, how is the question of "time" implicated? Negri suggests we may approach this question either from the ideality of a formal understanding of temporality or a materiality of a lived understanding of temporality, somewhat as bourgeois conceptions of labour emphasise the constituted stability of dead labour (Capital) while Marx emphasises constitutive living labour (Proletariat) as force of production:

Our subject is, and cannot but be, a temporal subject, a temporal constitutive strength. That said, once again two paths open in front of us. On the one hand, temporality is brought back to and confused in being, emptied of the elements that constitute it and therefore reduced to mysticism—in short, necessarily rooted in a firm principle that is the relation of being with itself. On the other hand, temporality can be grounded in human productive capacity, in the ontology of its becoming—an open, absolutely constitutive temporality that does not disclose Being but instead produces beings (1999: 29).

Needless to say, Heidegger is the former and Marx the latter. Negri puts into this difference all of the differences he draws out between a political ontology that is fundamentally idealist and obfuscating and one that is materialist and revolutionary. One shores up the juridical paradox of sovereignty's auto-conception in the absolute that construes every subject in the stability of constitutional laws, that mystery of sovereignty's omnipotence explored by Carl Schmitt and Giorgio Agamben as the "nothing" that can suspend its own constitution.⁴ The other invokes a mass or multitude as intensity of an infinity of possible existents, as productive force, not of stable forms in the accumulation of wealth, but of a perpetual revolution of material modalities of becoming: producing beings. Between the two, living labour is alienated in the construal of production as appropriated capital, or living labour is

liberated as power to differentiate. The permanent revolution of constituting power, Spinozan in essence, needs to be read closely in relation to Marx's understanding of capital, temporality and living labour.

Negri (1997/1991a) addresses this directly, suggesting: "Living labor is subsumed and posed as a condition for the perpetuation of the social value of capital" (Negri, 1991a: 86). [In this text](#) [Negri](#) cites Marx from the *Grundrisse*: "This preservation takes place simply by the addition of new labor, which adds higher value ... Labor is the living, form-giving fire; it is the transitoriness of things, their temporality, as their formation by living time" (86-87). Let's go a bit further here. There is an extended discussion by Negri, over at least one hundred pages of *Marx Beyond Marx*, concerning the separated forms of value in the figure of money, in which the commodity exists. They are, firstly, money as exchange relation, as an immediate, instantaneous possibility of the product as pure exchange value. Secondly, exchange as mediate relation, [in Negri's terms](#), as a "power external to and independent of the producers" ([Negri, 1991a](#): 30). Marx emphasizes that the gap between product as product and as exchange value widens. This is constituted essentially in social relations as the actuality of crisis. The existence of capital and wage labour equally exists on a separation and capital, [for Negri](#), "does not pay for the suspension of this separation which proceeds in the real production process ... *Social surplus value* is surplus value from social capital and capitalist domination over social labor, present and future" (87). Negri then provides an essential citation from Marx on temporality:

Money, then, in so far as it now already in itself exists as capital, is therefore simply a claim on future (new) labour. It exists, objectively, merely as money. Surplus value, the new growth of objectified labour, to the extent that it exists for itself, is money; but now, it is money which in itself is already capital; and, as such, it is a claim on new labour. Here capital no longer enters into relation with ongoing labour, but with future labour. And it no longer appears dissolved into its simple elements in the production process, but as money; no longer, however, as money which is merely the abstract form of general wealth, but as a claim on the real possibility of general wealth—labour capacity in the process of becoming ([Marx, 1976](#): 367, cited in Negri, 1991a: 87).

We recognize in the very notion of "future" labour, an extreme emphasis on constitutive power as potential, necessarily engaged neither as representation nor as concept of what is actual, but rather as a sense-event of the virtual force of labour power. But how does Negri bring the "concatenation" of all things into play here? He does so precisely where he locates capital's permanent revolution in the throes of Marx's "circulation time," and its necessity to nullify spatial relations as time: "Time and space, after constituting the fabric of capital's expansion in circulation, appear now as barriers, as obstacles. As obstacles to be eliminated, destroyed—*by reducing space to time*, by imparting to time the quickness of transfers and transformations. But that's not all. We have already seen how circulation is tendentially the entire society" (115). Notwithstanding Negri's recourse to Marx's dialectical thinking on this, we recognize at the same time a Spinozan engagement with the multitude. Indeed, as Negri argues, Marx demonstrated how capital's fundamental contradiction, constituted on the circulation barriers imposed in its processes of expansion, is "in the most immanent moment of the relations of production" understood at the level of separation between surplus labour and necessary labour: labour capacity in the process of becoming (117). As Negri sums up: "The real obstacle to capitalist production is the relation of force that constitutes the concept of capital, it is the separation that constitutes its development" (118). As "permanent

revolution” its strategy is the building of world markets, the *nexus rerum*. Profit and world market are the time and space of capital, time constituted in the surplus value of labour, space in the *nexus rerum*. Both are understood from the vantage point of sense-event. To understand this last point, we need to look more closely at Negri’s most sustained engagement with Heidegger, his essay “Ontology and Power” (2011) which construes Spinoza as future labour power, as surplus potential with respect to Heidegger.

Heidegger’s Spinoza

“Ontology and Power” presents Negri’s further discussion of Heidegger, assists in amplifying those curt remarks he made in *Insurgencies* concerning the antagonism of Marx and Heidegger. Though his most sustained engagement with Heidegger, this short essay is yet fairly sparse, delivered in 2006 at a conference on Spinoza in Berlin. Without footnotes, it is polemical and loose in the details of its deliberation. By polemical I mean what appears in its last paragraph, the difficult and prejudicial: “The time has come to denounce Heidegger’s thought as reactionary, not only because it is probably tied to the vicissitudes of the Nazi movement and fascist politics but also because his conception of being is one that posits destiny as the drowning of life—it is a black snake. Heidegger chokes us” (Negri, 2011: 317-318). Yes, perhaps it is as Negri says. Then, with that “probably” of Negri’s, perhaps it is not. Negri does begin “Ontology and Power” with some provocative suggestions of a proximity and alignment of Spinoza and Heidegger:

Heidegger is not merely the prophet of the destiny of the modern; just as he divides, Heidegger is also a window that can open onto antimodernity. Heidegger, in other words, points to a conception of time as ontologically constitutive, which radically breaks the hegemony of substance and the transcendental and opens it onto a certain kind of power. ... Time aspires to be power, it alludes to its productivity, it brushes up against its energy. And when it falls back on the nothing, time does not in any way forget this power. Spinoza reemerges in this articulation and forms a paradoxical relation with Heidegger (310-311).

In the concluding chapter to *Empire* (2000), co-authored with Hardt, Negri discusses directly two breaks that are necessary from Aristotle’s understanding of time. One of the breaks is from transcendence, reducing to a measure of the same the collectivity of the multitude, measure as transcendent order.⁵ He suggests Kant and Heidegger are located in that Aristotelian legacy. However, we see from the quote above that, perhaps, by 2006 Negri now recognizes Heidegger’s break with transcendence as a standard of measure. The second break is coterminous with this. The collective, or multitude, for Negri ontologically, the bio-political, is thought as an immanent process of constitution. Negri (2011) discusses this in terms of what Heidegger calls being-with, *mit-Sein*. The strongest correlation Negri finds with Heidegger and Spinoza is precisely the emphasis each gives ontologically to the constitutive power of “the people.” This correlation between them is a being-in-common that does not work from the viewpoint of transcendence or a transcendental principle: “Mind you, this *mit-Sein* should not be banalized: it towers over every contingent relation as well as over various figures of linguistic circulation” (313). Negri reads this as multitude, and as the bio-political. It seems as if there is a fruitful Heideggerian path that could fold with Spinoza. Yet, Heidegger and Spinoza seem to be antithetical: “Heidegger goes toward the nothing; Spinoza goes toward fullness” (313). For Negri, both are concerned with “presence” but with Spinoza it is presence as excess, for Heidegger, presence as void. Again, we see the separation:

Spinoza, on the side of “life” and Heidegger on the side of being-for-death. Moreover, “the qualification of being in Heidegger is as scandalous and perverse as it is radically powerful and hopeful in Spinoza. In the latter, being is qualified as ontological capacity for production” (314).

That concluding chapter to *Empire* (2000) concerning the Multitude, is followed up by Negri and Hardt’s second volume, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (Hardt & Negri, 2004). *Multitude* concludes with a curious reference to time, to a “before” and an “after” of Aristotelian time, rather than (say) to an ecstatic temporality we more readily associate with Heidegger or the complexity of a Spinozan sense-event, or even Marx’s capital-time as we earlier discussed: “We can already recognize that today time is split between a present that is already dead and a future that is already living—and the yawning abyss between them is becoming enormous. In time, an event will thrust us like an arrow into that living future. This will be the real political act of love” (Hardt & Negri, 2004: 358).⁵ We would need to understand “love” in the significance given it in Spinoza’s God, as emanating powers of the attributes of Substance as modal powers of an existent, capabilities of being. We can read this Spinozan love in Schelling’s *Treatise on human freedom*, in Schelling’s absolute as love, where Hegel made knowledge absolute. And we may read Heidegger’s affirmation of Schelling surpassing Hegel in this regard, in his 1936 lecture course on the treatise (Heidegger, 1985).

There is an important task in redressing Negri’s limited engagement whenever he polemically reads Heidegger with respect to Spinoza and Marx. That task is important not to rescue Heidegger, nor to use Heidegger in order to overcome something essential to Negri’s understanding of constituent power, his own powerful readings of Spinoza, Marx and the bio-political. The task is important because there is a trajectory in Heidegger’s work, from the beginning, that aligns with everything Casarino conjectures as to the Deleuzian sense-event as essential opening to Marx and Spinoza. In Negri’s explication of Marx’s futurity of surplus labour time as the essential temporality of capital we come close to an insistence in Heidegger’s reading of *Aristotle’s metaphysics, book nine, 1-3: On the essence and actuality of force*, on the significance of Aristotle’s own sustained argument with the Megarians on the actuality of force not only in the products of labour but in the potentiality of labour power as such (Heidegger, 1995). From his inaugural 1919 lecture course, *Towards the definition of philosophy*, we already have introduced to us Heidegger’s rejection of philosophy as a “theoretical” project that “devivifies” the situated enactment of intuited life (Heidegger, 2000).⁶ From the beginning his concern was with the “pre-theoretical” as that which opens what Deleuze will come to name the plane of immanence. His 1920 lecture course, titled *Phenomenology of Intuition and Expression*, could well have formed a reference compendium for Casarino’s engagement between Deleuze’s expressionism and Spinoza’s intuition.

Heidegger’s 1921-22 lecture course *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle* had not yet adopted the “turn of speech” *Dasein*.⁷ Rather Heidegger continually refers to “life,” living experience:

In the first place, one’s own world must not be identified with the “Ego.” The “Ego” is a category with a complex form, and I do not at all need to encounter it as such in my care over my own world, over “myself” in the factual, concrete sense. In one’s own world, the “myself,” for which I care, is experienced in determinate kinds of meaningfulness, which emerge in the full life world, where, along with one’s own

world, the shared world and the surrounding world are always present. The life-world is in each case experienced in one of these prominences, explicitly or not. Prominence is a mode of facticity (Heidegger, 2001: 71).

We can assay those precise moments when Heidegger addresses Spinoza and Marx directly. Spinoza is especially referred to in his 1933 lecture course *Fundamental questions of philosophy* (Heidegger, 2010), and in his 1936 lecture course *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom* (Heidegger, 1985). Marx is engaged in his Letter on Humanism (Heidegger, 1993) and especially in his late *Four Seminars* (Heidegger, 2003) delivered from the mid-1960s to the early 70s. However, these are not necessarily the most productive ways to think Heidegger before Spinoza and Marx, of inventing with Heidegger according to the plane of immanence of the *nexus rerum* or the *rerum concatenationem*. Heidegger is not the black snake who chokes us. Negri here is the worst of Nietzsche's Christians: anguished resentment. We do not have the space in this paper to adequately, carefully and slowly address the enormous possibility of reading Spinoza's Marx along with Heidegger, a potential we particularly recognise when we receive the gestures in thinking by Casarino and Negri who themselves so carefully rethink Marx along with Deleuze and Spinoza. We would point to Agamben's recognition of Heidegger in the early twentieth century as a philosopher of the legacies of transcendence and of immanence, as a moment of crossover that enables a thinking across those two legacies earlier mentioned by Negri: Hobbes/Rousseau/Hegel and Machiavelli/Spinoza/Marx.⁸ Perhaps, after all, it may yet be Heidegger who opens a potential or power to what is still not read in Spinoza's *rerum concatenationem* and Marx's *nexus rerum*.

Notes

1. One of the best accounts of this era of radical Italian politics can be found in Lotringer and Marazzi (1980). See also the Editor's Preface to Negri (1991a). This provides an excellent encapsulated biography up to the late 1980s.
2. See for an excellent survey of this literature, Montag and Stolze (1997). See also on Spinoza, Marx and Heidegger, Dumain, (2010); Eldred, (2000); Holland, (1998); and Macherey (2011).
3. We turn to Deleuze here in this brief engagement with Spinoza's system. Though Deleuze does not ostensibly differ from Negri in his reading, the two are not identical. Deleuze's engagement is less concerned with a political ontology opening to Marx.
4. I am referring to the paradox of sovereignty first analyzed by Carl Schmitt (Schmitt, 1985) that became something of a kernel for Giorgio Agamben's *Homo Sacer* (1998).
5. One of the most important books to engage Aristotle, temporality, ontology of capital in an inflection to Deleuze is Alliez (1996). It is surprising that neither Casarino nor Negri reference Alliez, particularly given his approach to time, ontology and capital.
6. See, for example, §17: The primacy of the theoretical. Thing-experience (objectification) as de-vivifying, in Heidegger (2000: 71-79).
7. On the significance of "turn of speech" for the situated encounter or sense-event of the concept, see Preconception from a turn of speech, in Heidegger (2001: 33-39)
8. Agamben provides a simple diagram in his essay Absolute immanence (Agamben, 1999: 220-239). He providing two lineages: one line of transcendence extends from Kant to Husserl to Derrida and Levinas; the other, immanence, extends from Spinoza to Nietzsche to Deleuze and Foucault. Poised between these two lines, as a switching point or crossover is Heidegger.

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