

Summaries

Jan Rehmann: Ideology Theory and the Renewal of a Marxist Critique of Religion

Contrary to a widespread interpretation, Marx developed a dialectical understanding of religion as a field of conflicting tendencies. The article relocates religion within the framework of a theory of ideology. Marxism should reformulate its critique as an analytical task of deciphering social antagonisms and struggles in the religious field and set free its emancipatory potential. A distinction between religion and faith could help progressive movements, both secular and religious, to identify common dimensions, build substantial alliances and develop a »spirituality of the commons«.

Dick Boer: The Criticism of Religion is the Prerequisite of All Criticism. Biblical-Theological Notes on the ›End of Religion‹

The article argues that Marx's critique of religion cannot be applied to the Grand Narrative of the Bible because this Narrative is itself a radical critique of religion. The ›ban on images‹ (*Bilderverbot*) produces a militant atheism, including a warning against a deification of human beings (as the ›highest essence of man‹). An important difference between Marx's critique of religion and that of the Bible is historical experience: While Marx discovered the proletariat as a revolutionary subject, the Bible knew about a catastrophic defeat of the liberation movement. Today, Marxism must also deal with the outcome of socialism itself: It again became utopian, meaning that it has no place. The Grand Narrative of the Bible refers to this ›lack of place‹ as the ›place‹ that keeps history open for the ›kairos‹.

Sabine Plonz: Labour, Creation, and Liberation. Karl Barth's and Dorothee Sölles »Theology with and after Marx«

The article presents left-Hegelian critique of religion through the example of two internationally-known theologians. On the one hand, it deals with the close relationship between critical theology and Marxist theory; and on the other with the central features of biblical, reformatory and modern conceptions of God, society, and a human subject aspiring towards liberation that operate in Marxism. A particular impetus for a critical-constructive dialogue since the 19th century has been framed by the concept of labour that is central to Marxism, and the related concept of human beings as creators.

Rolf Bossart: A ›Respectable‹ Critique of Religion

We are currently witnessing many discussions surrounding a so-called »return« of religion. Yet critical voices lack progressive concepts of religion. For them, »the beliefs of others« appear as if extraterrestrial, ignoring the dialectic between elements in faith that can be seen as reactionary and those that contain enlightenment

and foster criticism of religious practice. To understand both the power and the danger of religion, we must take seriously and accept the ambiguous nature of every type of religious expression.

Susanne Hennecke: Religion Shouldn't Just be Left Out. A Feminist Critique of Religion in the Work of Luce Irigaray

Luce Irigaray can be considered one of the few secular feminist philosophers also interested in religious, theological and biblical ideas in a positive sense. This contribution investigates Irigaray's constructive reception of Ludwig Feuerbach's critique of religion in the context of her project of sexual difference and as part of her theory of female subjectivity. Karl Marx's critique of Feuerbach raises further questions about the relationship between Marxist and feminist critiques of religion. The article argues that from the perspective of »women« religion should not be left out.

Jörg Rieger: Class Struggle and Religion: Karl Barth, Sabine Plonz, and Contemporary Alternatives to Bourgeois Theology

The article discusses the problems as well as the potential of contemporary Christianity in the context of capitalism. It investigates the work of Swiss theologian Karl Barth in light of proposals by Sabine Plonz and liberation theology, deepening Barth's critique of bourgeois religion. If the role of the middle class is reconceived as closer to the working class than to the ruling class, another form of solidarity emerges that finds expression in the contemporary Occupy Movement and other social movements of the twenty-first century. This phenomenon, which the article refers to as »deep solidarity«, helps reposition Christianity both politically and theologically.

Alexander-Kenneth Nagel: Divided and Conquered. Interreligious Governance of Religious Diversity

The article explores how modern nation states make use of interreligious activities for the governance of religious diversity. While interreligious activism has been a matter of civic engagement for decades, in recent years state actors have taken increased interest in it. This development is analyzed in light of debates surrounding the withdrawal of the nation state and the resurgence or de-privatization of religion. Departing from empirical illustrations of state participation in three different formats of interreligious works, the article elaborates on the challenges of the new public-private governance arrangement.

Kuno Füssel: Salvation from Slavery. On Dick Boers Biblical Theology

Dick Boer's Book is a theological and political call for societal change and of a change of heart, without which overcoming alienation will fail. Since Israel broke out of slavery in Egypt, known as Exodus, a longing for salvation and the fight against enslaving structures never disappeared. They failed to disappear within the labor movement and its organizations despite claims to the opposite from the ruling classes. This holds true even if the labour movement, whom Boer addresses directly,

has forgotten that the central impulses for liberation came from the tradition of Judaism. Let us put it clearly: We trust in three jews: Moses/Jesus, Marx and Freud. On the role of the powerful Churches, we do not comment here.

Wolfgang Fritz Haug: Eurogeddon? Philosophical Considerations on the Euro-Crisis

In his talk, given in June 2012 in Frankfurt's financial district, Haug deals with the point-of-no-return dynamic of the Euro crisis, which manifests itself in the ever-shorter half-lives of governmental decisions. Drawing on Georg Simmel's and Alfred Sohn-Rethel's theories about the equally destructive and productive relationship between money and mind, he examines the degree of reality contained in the common notion, that money in the age of financialization represents nothing but itself. Drawing on Marx, Haug shows that paper money, even in the era when it was backed by gold, was mainly based on bonds issued on tradable debt. In 1838, Sismondi argued that trade had cut the connection between the commodity and its shadow: money. Haug shows that a quite different disconnect underlies trade. He concludes: »The Eurozone allows us to study a variant of what happens when the society of money detaches itself from the society of labor. This one-sided unity of market and money takes from the weaker euro-economies their weapon against the stronger competitors. The latter, with the Federal Republic of Germany at the top, gain up to the point where the circumstances of their advantage wither away. The European Union is simply not going to find its equilibrium until it »revolves around the sun of labor« (Marx). To get there, however, it must find answers to the tectonic tensions rooted much deeper in the overaccumulation of capital. The Euro crisis is just one of the arenas of the Great Crisis of transnational high-tech capitalism, and the exit-strategies will have to be found in this context.«

Buchhandlungen, die das Argument-Verlagsprogramm führen

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Frauenbuchläden, die das Argument-Frauenprogramm führen

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