

v1: 8 February 2023

Commentary

Some Face Posthumous Justice Too: Lefebvre, Marxism and a Debt to Nietzsche

Peer-approved: 8 February 2023

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Qeios, Vol. 5 (2023)
ISSN: 2632-3834

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Through his work on cities and the urban, as well as on the importance of everyday life, Henri Lefebvre (1901-1991) has enjoyed a posthumous renaissance, and is now one of the most influential of French Marxists. But was he one? He always claimed to be. Yet he took from Nietzsche crucial and lifelong components of his personal theoretical framework: personality, alienation, ethics, and even language. Commentators oscillate between accepting his claim to having successfully placed Marx and Nietzsche in separate silos on the one hand and asserting that he had done what he equally always insisted he had not – build his own system. Marxists themselves may not be satisfied with either formulation, even if the risk they run in separating Lefebvre from his Nietzschean heritage may be to extract a theory of the urban that is dead on arrival, or at least requiring resuscitation by Marxist means.

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Introduction

Henri Lefebvre (1901-1991) was at the same time a prolific writer, influential urban theorist, and prominent member of the Communist Party of France (CPF) for three decades until he left in 1958 after becoming increasingly disenchanted with Communist orthodoxy. Despite his break with the CPF, Lefebvre's claim was always that he continued to be a Marxist, although it must be conceded that his claim was often made in the context of wishing to escape pigeonholing as a philosopher, sociologist, historian or urban theorist (Elden & Lebas, 2003: xii). He is now most well-known in the Anglosphere for his development of a theory of space to complement and extend Marx's original historical materialism (Lefebvre, 1974 [1991]), work which has been widely incorporated into radical and Marxist geography in recent decades. Outside the academy, where his wider philosophical interests have also been recognised, his encapsulation of urban protest as 'The Right to the City' (Lefebvre, 1968) has

been adopted by radical urban groups worldwide. The phrase, if not the anti-capitalist message Lefebvre meant it to deliver, has found its way into the UN Habitat programme (Perera & Perrin, 2011). For both of these reasons, and as a result in significant measure of the eloquent and scholarly work of an increasing number of interpreters of his thought now over several decades (e.g. Hess, 1988, Kofman & Lebas, 1996 [2000] Shields, 1999; Elden, 2004, 2004a, 2004b, 2006; Schmid, 2005, 2012; Butler, 2005; Merrifield, 2006; Brenner & Elden, 2009; Goonewardena, 2011; Stanek, 2011; Kipfer et al., 2013; Biagi, 2020), Lefebvre therefore bids fair to be considered as now one of the most influential and prescient of Marxists. Any doubts raised over his Marxism are therefore of real significance.

One such doubt surrounds his long engagement with Nietzsche. From a first read at the age of fifteen, in his earliest philosophical contributions (Lefebvre, 1939 [2003]) to those of his mature years (Lefebvre, 1975 [2020], 1980) he persistently drew on Nietzsche for his inspiration and as part of his philosophy. His incorporation of elements from not only Nietzsche, but Heidegger, Schelling, and less controversially Hegel has resulted in his being described as a 'heterodox' (Alvarez,

2007:54) or ‘peculiar kind’ (Goonewardena, 2011:45–46) of Marxist. Should we just leave it that – not your regular Marxist? Or is there more that his extensive engagement with Nietzsche can enable us to understand about Lefebvre’s claim?

What did Lefebvre appropriate from Nietzsche?

What does it mean to appropriate? Is it that ‘Appropriation consists of trying to fit or reconstruct a work into an existing corpus which may have previously been in opposition or excluded’ (Kofman & Lebas, 1996 [2000:4])? Or is it more broadly, the absorption of ideas into either an existing corpus or one that is in the process of creation? The latter seems to fit better what Marx himself, and in turn Lefebvre, appropriate from Hegel and what Lefebvre then appropriates from Nietzsche during an engagement that stretched over more than five decades, from his original *Nietzsche* (1939 [2003]) and comments in *L’Existentialisme* (1946) through his philosophical work in succeeding decades, to observations in his final book, *Rhythmanalysis* (Lefebvre, 1992).

It has been claimed that Lefebvre’s theory of alienation, and his romantic theory of domination (O’Kane, 2018:261), owe as much to Nietzsche as it does to Marx himself (Elden, 2004a). No longer a prisoner of theory, Nietzsche’s Dionysian side of human existence, excessive, superfluous (Lefebvre, 1974 [1991:177]) entwine themselves dialectically with a Socratic intellectual to generate ‘total man’. (Meyer, 1973:33). Nietzsche is therefore brought into play in order to counter rationalist aversions to lived experience, and the metaphilosophical critique of philosophy that this entailed (Elden, 2004a; Merrifield, 2006) in favour of ‘something extraordinary, the surreal, the supernatural, the superhuman’ (Lefebvre, 1975 [2020:2]). In pursuit of this goal, Lefebvre chooses Nietzsche’s poetical, creative theory of language (Lefebvre, 1975 [202:157]). Poetry, music and dance are suffused with energy that especially in performance, above all visual, lead beyond presentness, towards a mystic elsewhere (Lefebvre, 1974 [1991:135]), which encourages Lefebvre to draw from Nietzsche ‘the emphasis on the body, sexuality, violence and the tragic and the production of differential space and plural times’ (Kofman & Lebas 1996 [2000:5]).

It has also been contended that both Lefebvre’s conception of the dialectic itself as a three-way process, where the synthesis is able to react upon the first two terms (Elden, 2001:812), and his repeated use of triads (e.g., Lefebvre, 1975 [2020:28–31]), owes more to

Nietzsche than even to Marx (Lefebvre, 2004:11). Even his understanding of the qualities of space has been ascribed to Nietzsche’s own (Schmid, 2005:28). Spontaneity, poetry, sensuality, joy, the Lord of the Dance – the progenitor of the disruptive revolutionary spirit that dwells in Lefebvre’s ludic city, overcomes alienation, uses lived experience to emerge victorious over abstract knowledge, triumphantly rescuing European civilisation before it relapses into nihilism (Lefebvre, 1974 [1991:415]), is not hard to discern from Lefebvre’s appropriation of Nietzsche. All these are but elements of a larger drama, ‘the stubborn defence of civilisation against the pressures of society, state and morality’ (Lefebvre, 1975 [2020:3]), as what it seems Lefebvre really needs from Nietzsche is agency – or more bluntly even, power, ‘hardly broached by Marx’ (Lefebvre, 1975 [2020:193]). Lefebvre thought he had found the cosmic liberator in Nietzsche, who *in ein Augenblick* (Nietzsche, 1884 [2006:126]) ripped out the nails with which the Sun was nailed to the cross (Lefebvre, 1959:251; Meyer, 1973:36).

Having thus appropriated all he believed was needed from Nietzsche, Lefebvre could pick and choose from the remainder. Hence for example he was undoubtedly accurate in reminding us of Nietzsche’s critical evaluation of the contemporary German state (Lefebvre, 1975 [2020:151]), although so far as an actual critique of the capitalist State is concerned, he will proffer his own analysis rather than rely on Nietzsche, or even on Marx (e.g., Lefebvre, 1975a, 1978). It must also be recognised that Lefebvre is never in a state of uncritical adulation – he perceives in Nietzsche also the most profound conservatism, a hatred of revolution, and a glorification of tradition that placed the both the contradictions of the modern world and their resolution at a spiritual level (Meyer, 1973:36). That the different elements of Nietzsche’s work may be indissolubly connected Lefebvre neither admitted nor analysed.

Drawing conclusions

Lefebvre’s appropriation of Nietzsche can be considered from two different perspectives: did he build a system, or merely attempt to create silos? Lefebvre himself insisted that he no more than Marx or Nietzsche themselves ever intended to build a synthesis. Other philosophers more recently have similarly eschewed such a claim, seeking only to illuminate different perspectives and point the way towards possible conclusions, for example in relation to individuality and agency (Korsgaard, 2009). For Lefebvre, all system-building was indeed to be distrusted, he was a ‘meta-philosopher’ selecting ideas to illuminate the modern

world (Lefebvre, 1974 [1991:24]), including from 'the most powerful of syntheses, 'that of Hegel - and its radical critique; this critique is rooted on the one hand in social practice (Marx), and on the other hand in art, poetry, music and drama (Nietzsche)' (Lefebvre, 1974 [1991:406]). In this way, 'each can supplement and advance the thought of the other' (Elden, 2006), as each thinker grasped something of the modern world, something in the process of happening (Lefebvre, 1975 [2020:3] and shaped Lefebvre's thinking accordingly (Elden, 2020:x). Lefebvre even visualised his three chosen stars in one constellation, declaring that 'Hegel would be the Father, the law; Marx, the Son and faith; Nietzsche, the Spirit and joy' (Lefebvre, 1975 [2020:30]) Lefebvre then asserts that although we need to read each of their works to have a proper understanding of the contemporary world, Marx could not 'stand alone' (Elden, 2004: 86). So, on the one hand, Lefebvre sought to put Nietzsche 'right-side up', as Marx had done with Hegel, remaining too much the Marxist ever simply to rest content with the mere idea, or, it has even been suggested, to end by subjecting Marx to a Nietzschean critique (Smith, 1996:82): it will always be necessary to create praxis (Lefebvre, 1965 [2016:6]). But on the other, Nietzsche's concern with the spatial problematic is required to balance Marx's temporal focus (Lefebvre, 1974 [1991:22]). It is in the production of Space where at his own hands Marx and Nietzsche are united.

It is hardly surprising therefore that it has been suggested that his work was not 'merely a Marxist approach' (Elden, 2004b:8), that it had two 'sides', Marx and Nietzschean/Heidegger (Elden, 2004:xiv), 'integration' (Schmid, 2005:27), 'combination' (Elden, 2004a:90), 'enrichment' (Trebitsch, 2000:6), or even that it was a 'synthesis' (Shields, 1999:6), of Hegel, Marx and Nietzsche. One can almost sense that, for some at least, this comes as a relief, as it does at least enable Lefebvre's claim to be sidestepped, returning him, and especially his theory of space, to 'the mainstream of 20th Century European thought' (Elden, 2001:820), as if in some undefined sense to be a mere Marxist would place him outside it.

The second perspective is Lefebvre's own: that Nietzsche and Marx occupy different silos, akin to questions of science, or even religion. Marxism is no more than the hope and belief that capitalism is only a transient stage in the history of humanity, destined eventually to collapse through the weight of its own contradictions (Sève, 2004:8). To Marx is therefore assigned economics, social analysis and the collective responsibility for change. Compare this to an observation from one of Lefebvre's contemporary

critics: 'Marxism is not a voice, even the bass, in the speculative polyphony of an ecumenical humanism' (Sève, 1969 [1978:126]) – although it is worth noting that in his own later years, Sève himself enjoined us only to 'think with Marx' (Sève, 2004), and not any longer to *be* Marxists.

The same siloed approach that led the Dalai Lama to claim that so far as social and economic theories are concerned, he too was a Marxist (Dhar, 2016:586). For Lefebvre, although not for the Dalai Lama, this leaves individuality and ethics to Nietzsche. In this perspective, Lefebvre (1970) sought only to build a 'bridge' between silos (Kofman & Lebas, 1996 [2000:25]). Areas of potential conflict between them or the exact location of boundaries were minimised simply by ignoring them, but to mix metaphors, each silo does stand alone. Sympathetic interpreters have sought to shore up this perspective on Lefebvre, implying heavily that not all silos are created equal: 'Nietzsche and Heidegger featured provocatively in Lefebvre's work, yes, but largely to furnish a dimension of poesy in his critique of statist and capitalist rationality, as an occasional addition rather than an alternative to his Hegelian-Marxist humanism (Goonewardena, 2011:60).

In practice, protagonists for Lefebvre implicitly recognise both perspectives, without explicitly addressing Lefebvre's claim. For example, the observation that it is necessary to understand the arguments of Nietzsche alongside those of Marx to 'make sense' of his work (Elden, 2001:820) or the contention that Nietzsche should be understood within an anti-humanist problematic, at odds with Lefebvre's own humanism, and that this places into doubt the coherence of his own 'selective appropriations' of Heidegger and Nietzsche (Goonewardena, 2011:46). There are two underlying premises of this and similar contentions. The first is simply that Lefebvre's claim cannot simply be taken at face value: there must exist a mechanism to interrogate it, in this case a potential conflict between humanist and anti-humanist perspectives. The second is that there is some aspect of Lefebvre's appropriation of Nietzsche (and Heidegger) that it at least merits such an interrogation. It is noteworthy however that the language here is qualitative, tentative: there is no suggestion that the appropriation generates an automatic incoherence.

Unless then we are to reject both premises and take Lefebvre at his word, we surely need an understanding of what that mechanism might be. It is evidently possible to claim to be a Marxist and many other things concurrently. It is also equally evident that it is possible

to *believe* other things – most obviously a raft of empirical observations about the world, but also scientific theories, although that there have been controversies over the extent to which Marxists should aver specific theories, two well-known examples being the Lysenko Affair in biology (Lecourt, 2018) and Pavlov’s psychological research (Kozulin, 1984). We can reach back to an analogous discussion for some illumination. In the past, whether it was possible for a Marxist to be concurrently a Christian was also the subject of intense debate. From that debate came alternative formulations of how to frame the question of compatibility, and in particular the distinction between ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ compatibility. The former requires only that there are *no formal inconsistencies* between two sets of beliefs, no propositions in either body of doctrines the assertion of which entails the denial of assertions held to be true in the other. The latter goes much further, *compelling* the acceptance of one set of beliefs if one holds to another (Turner, 1977).

The ontological objects of this distinction are however traditions as a whole, whereas Lefebvre is engaged in a cherry-picking exercise, in effect embracing the underlying concept of partial alignment deftly expressed by Alastair MacIntyre: ‘Then I aspired to be both a Christian and a Marxist, or at least as much of each as was compatible with allegiance to the other’ (MacIntyre, 1968:7). One may therefore add a second dimension to Turner’s distinction, that of *partial* compatibility, which again can be weak or strong. Weak partial compatibility is no formal inconsistency between *some* beliefs or propositions, and weak strong compatibility compels the acceptance of *some* beliefs or propositions, whilst in both cases necessarily rejecting the remainder. We might seem to have reached solid ground by suggesting that all Lefebvre is claiming is weak partial compatibility between Nietzsche and Marx.

Unfortunately, even partial compatibility is evidently complicated by the fact that those claiming to be Marxists have since the inception of the concept frequently entertained different, if not actually incompatible, views. There have been those who have even since Maxim Gorky, amongst others, made the attempt in pre-Bolshevik times (Murzin, 2019) have stood alongside Lefebvre in his long campaign to secure Nietzsche for the Left. Or at least to accept, as he himself argued (Lefebvre, 1946 [2001:124]) that he can be read positively by both Left and Right (e.g., Adorno, 2000; Deleuze, 1962 [1983]; Klossowski, 1973; Lyotard, 1974; Taylor, 1990; Badiou, 2005 [2007]; Payne & Roberts, 2019). If their goals were different, these

writers would at least recognise that Marx and Nietzsche share a materialist philosophical tradition that emphasises practice and the affirmation of joy (Roberts, 1995:110). But equally, there have been many alternative critiques of Nietzsche from a left standpoint, if not always a Marxist one (Lukács, 1954 [2021]; Appel, 1999; Bull, 2000; Fontana, 2019; Milne, 2021). Their shared perception of Nietzsche as ‘a quintessentially conservative thinker’ (Landa, 2019:258), may lead us for example to doubt that in Lefebvre’s rejection of the Hegelian ‘*Aufhebung*’ in favour of Nietzsche’s *Überwinden* (Lefebvre, 1975 [2020:26]), we need not look beyond Lefebvre’s adoption of a nonlinear take on progress (Elden, 2001: 812) to Nietzsche’s own concept of eternal recurrence (Nietzsche, 1887: §341). All we can be sure of in this prolonged series of encounters is that the terrain remains contested, and any attempt to integrate Marx and Nietzsche remains ‘fraught with deep problems’ (Kipfer et al, 2012:117).

Partial compatibility is also complicated by the way in which Marxist humanists in particular understand Marx’s theory: never as system or dogma, but enjoying only a more modest role as a ‘nucleus, an effervescent seed’ (Lefebvre, 1988:76) that is ‘indispensable for understanding the present-day world’ (Lefebvre, 1968a:77), albeit only ‘a staging post for going further’ (Lefebvre, 1975 [2020:10]), so that Marx would continually need to be updated and articulated with other modes of critical thought ‘like those of Freud and Nietzsche’ (Lefebvre, 1988:76) if it were to retain its freshness and relevance (Alvarez, 2007:55). Marxism itself indeed is ‘only a word, a political label, a polemical amalgam’ (Lefebvre, 1975 [2020:10]), and a plurality of Marxist ‘tendencies, schools, trends and research projects’ (Lefebvre, 1988:75). This conveniently allows Lefebvre to assert that the basic concepts of Marxism, whether class struggle, the dialectic, or alienation, have to be elaborated, refined, and complemented by other concepts where necessary, including those drawn from Nietzsche, but as noted above also ultimately his own, especially regarding everyday life and the urban (Lefebvre, 1988:77).

What can we conclude from these debates? If the question of whether Nietzsche can successfully be appropriated for the Left cannot ever be successfully resolved, whilst it is now equally ‘quite impossible to believe that there could be only one authentic Marxist voice’ (Parker, 2009:72), efforts to determine compatibility inevitably founder. We are left with no criteria with which to evaluate Lefebvre’s claim – and perhaps more worryingly, anyone else’s claim to be a Marxist. Even allegations of peculiarity or heterodoxy

may themselves eventually seem unduly cautious, themselves the lingering disparagement of an evaporating orthodoxy. Lefebvre is a Marxist because he says he is a Marxist, he is at liberty also to appropriate whosoever he pleases, and there the matter must rest. Yet something still does not feel right. What is it?

Marxist alternatives

There is another way in which to approach the problem. It could be that our unease as Marxists remains for a different reason, that irrespective of the merits of his argument, Lefebvre ignored what might be described as ‘reputational risk’, but which more accurately could be expressed as something which is, or at least ought to be always prized by Marxists, an acute sensitivity to the political consequences of their actions. The assertion that it is useful to separate Nietzsche’s politics from his epistemology, for example, runs counter to this approach (Roberts, 1995:106fn). Unfortunately, to use another even more contemporary expression, Lefebvre was ‘tone deaf’ to the political implications of the failure of his original attempt to rescue Nietzsche from the Right, which itself has been suggested possesses ‘an extraordinary critical timidity’ (Quiniou, 2004: 203). He never appeared to realise, as others certainly did, or was perhaps simply willing to admit, that postwar his attempt has at the very least significant ideological implications that were certainly not necessarily favourable to his project, for Marxist humanism more widely, or ultimately for Marxism itself. But if Lefebvre ought to have calculated that the political risk in this appropriation was too high, what were the alternatives available to him close by, in the Western Marxist tradition of which he has been said to be the most prolific author?

Kurt Meyer (1973) suggested that if we focus on just one aspect of Lefebvre’s appropriation, it should be the question of the subject, the personality. Yet even if Lefebvre did not wish to turn to Feuerbach, as he recognised Marx himself did for what he characterised as his anthropological sieve (Lefebvre, 1975 [2020:12]), he did not need to turn to Nietzsche for a model of individuality. Grant that although Marxist psychological research was not being actively pursued, notably by Vygotsky (1934 [2003]), this work took many more decades to emerge in the West, and there is nothing moreover to suggest that Lefebvre would have found it congenial. Grant too that although Lefebvre was familiar with those whose later work was critical of Nietzsche, such as Ernest Bloch (Gedö, 1998:335; Lefebvre, 1980:242), he would alongside most Marxists

have been hostile to any attempt to introduce a spiritual dimension into Marxism as a way to replace collective with individual agency (e.g., Bloch, 1959; Gardavsky, 1967 [1973]). However, there were, even confining oneself to work available in the French language, at least two further alternatives for a Marxist theory of the individual provided by Lefebvre’s own contemporaries, both of which were tied more closely than Nietzsche could ever be to the Marxist tradition (Schaff, 1965; Sève, 1969 [1978]). Schaff and other Marxist humanists sought to promote the role of the individual within Marxism as part of the recognition of multiple reciprocal relationships between individuals and their environment. They made precisely the point that Lefebvre believed he needed Nietzsche to make (Lefebvre, 1959), that political revolution would not solve problems of individual life. For Sève, there was no contradiction between the formulation of the personality predominantly as a result of labour on the one hand, and the existence of individual agency on the other (Burkitt, 2008:146). Debate between them was fierce, but both sides were united in their opposition to structural Marxism, and both sides visualised Marxism as already providing ample agency to individuals (Forbes, 2015), without any need to appropriate Nietzsche. But instead of contributing to this debate over ‘social individuality’ within Marxism (Landa, 2019:254), Lefebvre himself is cautious about discovering individual agency in Marx, recognising only conformity and rebellion, fragmentation, and the many faces of the bourgeois individual (Lefebvre, 1980:171), whilst there is no trace of a Nietzschean individual to counterbalance the caution. It is as if despite the sacrifice of Marxist credibility that it entailed, the collective Nietzsche that is appropriated still does not light the fire, which may go some way to explaining Lefebvre’s progressive disenchantment with Marxism itself towards the end of his life in favour of a social contract discourse (Lefebvre, 1990) and a ‘revolutionary concept of citizenship’ (Lefebvre, 2014:205).

Nor did Lefebvre need Nietzsche for an ethic based on a Marxist theory of alienation, when Marx himself provided the kernel of an alternative theory that was already under discussion (Kamenka, 1969) and which has been enormously expanded since (Blackledge, 2012; Thompson, 2015). Especially noteworthy is that even at the time Lefebvre himself wrote, there was ample literature and debate generated within the Western Marxist tradition that helped to ‘explain the modern world’ (Lefebvre, 1975:11) in terms of the alienation it engendered, the distinction between alienation and self-alienation, the degree to which it may persist in a

socialist economy, and human capacity to overcome it (e.g. Goldman, 1970; Schaff, 1967; Schaff et al., 1976; Sève, 1969 [1978]). But although some of this literature did surface in Lefebvre's work, it was perfunctory and largely critical, for example the suggestion that Axelos (1961) reduced Marx's work merely to the generation of alienation through technology (Lefebvre, 1980:55-59). None of this Western Marxism appeared even to interest Lefebvre by comparison to what Nietzsche had on offer.

Finally, the choice of Nietzsche as the source of a theory of language was also unnecessary. Grant that Lefebvre had no wish to engage with the French structuralists in this regard – but by the 1970s at least, and again confined to French language publications, the work of Bakhtin had permeated through into the intellectual life of France (Bakhtin & Voloshinov, 1928 [1979]), whilst others from the Marxist humanist tradition had for example already studied the relationship between language and knowledge (Schaff & Brendel, 1974).

Taken together, these avenues of research were far from the 'second rank' to which Lefebvre assigned even his contemporaries such as Jean-Paul Sartre (Elden, 2016:xvi), could certainly have fortified Lefebvre's Marxism, arguably even preven the need for him to appropriate Nietzsche. Why, then, did Lefebvre look so narrowly elsewhere when he diverted his gaze from Marx (Elden, 2004b: 65), rather than seeking to take advantage of any of these alternatives? The interplay between history and Lefebvre's own trajectory may provide us with clues. Although none of these three avenues of Marxist theory was available to him at the time when he originally engaged with Nietzsche (Lefebvre, 1939 [2003]) in order to 'enlarge' Marxism (Lefebvre, 1936), thereafter, however, once Lefebvre left the PCF, he had his own political reasons for not engaging with any theory of individuality, or ethics, that laid a trail back there, or to any other established Marxism, even the tradition of Western Marxism itself. He had burned his bridges with the PCF, distancing himself from Marxism in the process. So, although subsequently he enjoyed a rapprochement with the PCF, with Sève in particular, by that time he had developed his own synthesis, or at least created silos, in which he staked out his appropriation of Nietzsche, leaving no space for a Marxist theory of the individual, of alienation, or ethics, or even language.

Confronted by this refusal to engage with what Marxism had on offer, for those themselves encountering Lefebvre, rather than accepting an uneasy truce between Marx and Nietzsche overseen by Lefebvre himself, and certainly rather than any form of

enduring alliance, even humanist Marxists (Fuchs, 2019) have followed radical geographers (Coleman, 2014) in successfully raiding Lefebvre's theoretical locker for their own purposes, without finding the need to engage with Nietzsche themselves.

Conclusion

Lefebvre's attempt to appropriate Nietzsche forces us to challenge his claim, whether we believe that it amounts to a personal synthesis or merely a silo aside from Marx. If the former, of which he has been accused, then only if the new Lefebvrian synthesis revolving around the production of Space and the importance of the everyday is to be rebadged 'Marxism' can we now accept it. Otherwise, unless we wish to become 'Lefebvrians' rather than Marxists, we shall be compelled to reject it. If the latter, Marxists may struggle to find criteria by which to assert or deny even the most partial of compatibility. Whichever perspective we choose, what emerges from the shadows so far as Marx and Nietzsche are concerned is that for Lefebvre, Marx was simply insufficient.

Lefebvre's attempt at integration has been however far from decisive, attested to by the fact that this component of his vast oeuvre has been largely neglected by comparison to his work on space and the urban, notwithstanding his own claim that this work too owed much to Nietzsche as well as to Marx. Lefebvre's failure should perhaps have been an early warning of the likely outcome to an attempt to bring harmony where there is discord. Marxists may recognise that whilst there is no monopoly on definitions of Marxism nor any methodology for denying Lefebvre's claim, they may feel that appropriation of Nietzsche is an identifiable step away from Marxism. They may even feel more comfortable lamenting a dearth of agency altogether than receiving it as a poisoned chalice from Nietzsche's hands. In that case, they face the challenge of reconstructing Lefebvre for Marxism beyond his appropriation of Nietzsche, perhaps employing some of the avenues adverted to above. It might therefore appear that Lefebvre has not only been born posthumously, as Stuart Elden so memorably adapted Nietzsche (Elden, 2004b:6), he may now face posthumous justice as well, at least to the extent that what he did unto others is now eventually in the process of being done unto him.

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Declarations

Funding: No specific funding was received for this work.

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.