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Review of: "The Dialectical Self: Kierkegaard, Marx, and the Making of the Modern Subject." By Jamie Aroosi. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018.

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Social Philosophy and Policy 35(2), 2018). Sparling juxtaposes office and duties without apparently spotting the connection (p. 187), and his Weberian dichotomy between "officeholders and the public" (p. 189) sidesteps the fact that historically the latter were often included among the former, because citizens had public duties.

The second definitional issue involves the public/private dichotomy. I am unsure whether Sparling overinterprets Machiavelli here. Like most scholars, Sparling reads Machiavellian corruption as involving "the subordination of the public good to private interests" (p. 45). How does this reading relate to factions, which Machiavelli saw as corrupt? According to Sparling, what is corrupt here is that citizens become dependent on the leader of the faction (p. 56). I like this reading, but it does not explain why, as Machiavelli surely knew, most people maintained their allegiance to a faction (like the Guelfs or Ghibellines) even when its leader changed. I suspect that Machiavelli's real concern is simply that cities are corrupted when people pursue nonpublic goods; that is, goods below the level of the city, including themselves, friends, families, and factions. This is why corruption should arguably be defined not in terms of *private* gain but of *nonpublic* gain (Blau, "Cognitive Corruption," pp. 206, 216).

These too are minor criticisms, however, and in general the historical focus of Sparling's book is a great success. There are insights on most pages, including a powerful critique of Quentin Skinner's genealogy of the state (pp. 6–8).

I turn finally to the *contemporary* insights of Sparling's historical analysis. Drawing contemporary insights is often difficult, and many attempts fail. Yet Sparling scores numerous successes. Chapter 1 is particularly strong and should be required reading for all corruption scholars, empirical or theoretical. Empirical corruption scholars will learn much from this discussion. Consider Sparling's criticism of Robert Klitgaard's famous formula: Corruption = Monopoly + Discretion – Accountability. By ignoring virtue, this formula suggests that, without surveillance and threat, corruption will be rampant (pp. 21–22). Yet people often act uncorruptly when there are no incentives to do so. I have read Klitgaard's formula many times but never spotted this error. Sparling could go for the jugular here, giving examples of empirical studies that overlook this point. That said, some empirical studies do not (e.g., Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, "Seven Steps to Control of Corruption: The Road Map," *Daedalus* 147(3), 2018).

Indeed, fleshing out such references would strengthen Sparling's contemporary insights by showing which scholars do or do not make the mistakes he criticizes. Consider the fascinating chapter on Erasmus, where Sparling emphasizes a key idea: "soulcraft"—shaping political virtue (pp. 20–43). Sparling notes Erasmus's pessimism about whether an uncorrupt prince could remove corruption, because "the very system that he is attempting to purify is inherently corrupting." For Erasmus, power corrupts "not primarily because the unaccountable take advantage of their situation, but because radical political inequality raises rulers too high for their own moral cultivation" (pp. 40–41). This is true, as also discussed by Ricardo Blaug (*How Power Corrupts: Cognition and Democracy in Organisations*, 2010), but when Sparling criticizes anticorruption policies that only address leadership (p. 42), his claim would benefit from examples of policies that make this error; presumably some do not.

Likewise, La Boétie's insights about material inequality fostering corruption lead Sparling to conclude that this topic needs more attention (p. 97). Examples would help here, not least because some studies include inequality as a cause of corruption (e.g., Eric Uslaner, *Corruption, Inequality, and the Rule of Law*, 2008). Meanwhile, when Sparling infers that people who say "sunlight is the best disinfectant" mean that "corruption can be *cured* by exposing it" (p. 72; emphasis added), I wonder if any empirical scholars or policy makers are this naive.

Ultimately, drawing contemporary insights is partly about showing for whom insights are relevant. Sparling's valuable book would benefit from more detail here, whether by giving references at key points, expanding each chapter's short concluding section, adding a longer final chapter, or writing a separate article building on the book in the future.

Each chapter is a good length— mostly 20–25 pages. There are some fine jokes (especially about how civil servants, to paraphrase Diderot, can separate themselves from themselves, on p. 172). Sparling's incisive and insightful tone made the book a pleasure to read. The book deserves to be studied widely, and I hope a future article by the author expanding on the contemporary importance of his historical analysis will further highlight its value.

The Dialectical Self: Kierkegaard, Marx, and the Making of the Modern Subject. By Jamie Aroosi. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018. 248p. $59.95 cloth.
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Jamie Aroosi's new book is an original and refreshing contribution to the study of Søren Kierkegaard and Karl Marx. The starting point is their shared interest in Hegelian philosophy, which provides the prism for a comparative study of how both thinkers envision modern subjectivity, especially with regard to freedom and its many obstacles. Aroosi shows how Kierkegaard's interest in individual self-transformation complements Marx's analysis of collective class struggle and how this in turn provides a fuller picture of the challenges facing emancipatory politics. The book develops these challenges

in terms of what the author calls "the dialectical self," a term that in and of itself helps pinpoint the ruptures and tensions that continue to haunt the quest for self-government. Rather than aiming for complete reconciliation, the book shows how self-government emerges when the individual's search for ethical authenticity runs up against the more collective concern for justice and recognition for all. The care with which the book develops this insight makes it a unique contribution to debates in contemporary political theory, especially about left Hegelianism and its usefulness for modern emancipatory politics.

The book's overall form mirrors the dialectical structure underpinning its argument. Part 1 (chaps. 1 and 2) develops the analysis of "bondage" that we find in Kierkegaard and Marx, respectively. Part 2 (chaps. 3–5) turns to the conditions of "emancipation" that will allow modern subjects to escape their enslavement, highlighting the discourses and legal forms needed to disclose injustices in the present without falling back into nostalgia for the past. Part 3 (chaps. 6–8) uses these insights to develop a new synthesis, which in turn provides a fuller account of how Kierkegaard and Marx envision "freedom" as a combination of individual and collective self-transformation. This account is then followed by a discussion in Part 4 (chaps. 9 and 10) of the actual "praxis" that can make freedom real for those embodying it.

Throughout, Aroosi stages carefully crafted encounters between Kierkegaard and Marx, which enable the reader to appreciate their shared critique of modernity's penchant for inauthenticity and exploitation. The kernel for this aspect of the book is the relationship between "love" (Kierkegaard) and "revolution" (Marx), which never become the same but nonetheless feed into each other. How this might be the case is the subject of the conclusion, in which Aroosi provides his final statement on the dialectical relationship between Kierkegaard and Marx: "Love is not enough—it also requires thought and action. This is the story of Søren Kierkegaard and Karl Marx" (p. 192).

Although the general reader will find much to appreciate in every chapter, the real strength of the book lies in how it uses Marxist concepts to shed light on Kierkegaard's significant but strangely understudied contribution to modern political thought. The first interesting move in this regard is the discussion of Kierkegaard's concept of despair, which Aroosi links to Marx's concept of alienation. As Aroosi sees it, despair for Kierkegaard is a specific experience in which the individual self turns against her own actions, seeking to "will itself away" (p. 33). Although Kierkegaard was fond of equating this experience with religious sin, Aroosi shows how it in fact is a much more general concept that applies to many more aspects of modern life, including the ones Marx analyzed under the heading of alienation. What despair and alienation have in common is thus the tendency to accept, more or less willingly, a situation or a set of circumstances that are not of one's own choosing (p. 34). For Kierkegaard, this tendency was particularly present among members of the Danish bourgeoisie during the 1849 transition to constitutional monarchy, but as Aroosi's Marx reminds us, it is something much more prevalent. Despair (or alienation) is not only experienced by religious believers but also appears within most modern forms of life in which structures of domination and exploitation prevent individuals from taking responsibility for their own lives. For this reason, we might also say that despair is another way of characterizing the basic challenge to modern emancipation.

The main advantage of formulating the issue in this manner is that it places Kierkegaard at the very heart of debates in contemporary political theory. As Aroosi rightly notes, there has been an unfortunate tendency to treat Kierkegaard as a strictly ethical thinker for whom the realm of politics is either uninteresting or a sign of corruption (p. 7). Aroosi counters this tendency by linking Kierkegaard's discussion of freedom to the analysis of "true democracy" that Marx develops in his *Contributions to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (p. 144). What Marx points out—and what Kierkegaard helps us see even clearer—is that democracy is the most fundamental mode of political organization, because it follows directly from the experience of self-determination that both Marx and Kierkegaard posit as fundamental to the human condition (p. 147). For Kierkegaard scholarship, this insight is interesting because it also provides a new perspective on his hesitations about Denmark's transition to constitutional monarchy in 1849. Following Aroosi's analysis, we might say that Kierkegaard critiqued this transition not because he preferred a more authoritarian regime, but rather because he thought the alternative was externally imposed rather than actively willed. The transition, in other words, was not radical enough to undo the state of despair that Kierkegaard saw as the main obstacle to true emancipation.

One way to elaborate on this insight, taking the dialectical structure one step further than developed in this book, is to focus more directly on the narratological structure of the transition from inauthentic to authentic (or "true") modes of democracy. Aroosi suggests that we approach the transition in existential, if not tragic, terms, pointing to literary examples such as Ibsen's Nora, Job's Abraham, and Homer's Agamemnon (pp. 54–60). All of these examples resonate with Kierkegaard's own thinking, and yet he also experiments with other tropes and genres, including irony and the comic more generally. Kierkegaard does so in an attempt to empower a higher degree of reflexivity about the struggle—and also limits—involved in becoming self-constituting. "Power in the comic," Kierkegaard says in *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* (1846), is the highest mode of existence available

for finite beings. Aroosi's book does not consider this possibility, which eventually may limit its ability to trace the emergence out of despair and into something like a true democracy. Kierkegaard's turn to the comic suggests that this transition not only entails a certain distance from the process itself but also requires an affirmation of the inevitable twists and turns undermining the very idea of a clear goal. How to embody this experience remains a challenge for any account of "true" democracy.

These comments should not distract us from the many achievements of Aroosi's book. Carefully argued—and skillfully written—it provides a much-needed boost to contemporary scholarship, showing how and why we must read Kierkegaard and Marx as part of the modern quest for democracy and self-determination.

AMERICAN POLITICS

All Roads Lead to Power: The Appointed and Elected Paths to Public Office for US Women. By Kaitlin N. Sidorsky. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2019. 248p. $34.95 cloth.
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Although countries that adopted quotas have had massive success in increasing women's representation in politics, in the United States today, social movements, the popular press, and feminist scholars decry the continued underrepresentation of women in political life. These disparities are particularly acute at the highest levels: there are far fewer women in executive positions like governorships and mayoralties than in lower-level positions like city council and school board members. Although there are debates about why there are fewer women at the top, a prevailing explanation is that women tend to be less "ambitious" for political power than men—perhaps because they prefer not to compete for office (with all the gendered connotations that competition implies) and perhaps because they perceive that they are less qualified to hold office. In other words, women are less overconfident than men.

But as Kaitlin Sidorsky argues in her new book *All Roads Lead to Power: The Appointed and Elected Paths to Public Office for US Women,* previous studies of political ambition have failed us in two ways. First, by being overly fixated on ambition for elective political office, studies of political ambition have neglected the many ways that citizens might ardently seek to serve the public, albeit in positions that do not require competing in an election. Second, Sidorsky argues that studies of political ambition have been too focused on "progressive ambition": a person's desire to be elected to higher political office. Women appointed to state-level positions are particularly insistent that their roles are not political. Instead, they interpret their work as necessary public service and comment on how the public role they occupy is an important springboard for work in the private sector or nongovernmental entities. These insights lead Sidorsky to argue that the women who hold appointed political positions have plenty of ambition, just not ambition for politics *per se*.

To craft this argument, Sidorsky studied both elected and appointed officials at the state level. She sent online surveys to a large set of officials in these groups and conducted interviews with some of the women respondents. Overall, 407 state legislators (14.4% of those contacted) and 1,129 political appointees (31.5% of those contacted) responded to questions about their prior political history, current positions, future political ambitions, and demographic backgrounds. From the respondent pool, Sidorsky interviewed 21 women, 17 who were political appointees and 4 who were elected officials (pp. 25–26). Segments from these interviews and from long-form survey answers are helpfully peppered throughout the text, providing a holistic sense of the commitments and justifications of public servants.

For those who are interested in gendered pathways to political office, a strength of the study is the careful comparison that Sidorsky makes with the work of Susan Carroll and Kira Sanbonmatsu (*More Women Can Run: Gender and Pathways to the State Legislatures*, 2013). Those authors conducted nationwide surveys of state legislators in 1981 and 2008, providing an extensive overview of the differences in pathways taken by men and women to reach their positions. Sidorsky's survey asks a similar set of questions, but with an additional focus on state-level appointees, enhancing our knowledge of gendered pathways to office in a new domain.

Like Carroll and Sanbonmatsu's findings for state legislators, Sidorsky's respondents who were women appointees are older, on average, than their male counterparts. Similarly, in Sidorsky's sample the women were less likely to be married than the men, and, among appointees they were less likely to have children (chap. 2). Women respondents were also much less likely to be recruited for their offices than men, especially among appointees. And consistent with other studies of women's political ambition, women appointees were more likely to seek or accept their positions because they were interested in the specific policy or issue area (table 4.2, p. 89). As in some of the studies that consider confidence and perceptions about political office, Sidorsky finds that, even among those who hold low-level appointments, women evince less confidence that they are qualified to hold their positions than do men (p. 104).

Yet in contrast to other studies, Sidorsky finds that the drivers of progressive ambition may be distinct for