

## Marx Update

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### Abstract + Outline

Marx is a moving target, but so are his readers. And so are his scholarly editors and translators. Regrettably, though, some of his recent biographers and commentators haven't moved on very much, partly from keeping him the same and playing safe, and partly from the genre-constraints of intellectual biography and textbook-mainstreaming. Moreover some of his ideas go unmarked and uncredited because they have merged with liberal-minded commonsense and taken-for-granted methodologies. In sum he is a complex cultural phenomenon, taking in visual, dramaturgical and cinematic representation.

But how to read Marx is changing, given his will to interpret the world and to change it. This is because our understanding of his reception through Engels and subsequent Marxisms has critically evolved; because our contextual understanding of what he thought his words were doing is improving; and because our literary and analytical skills have developed very considerably in a multi- and inter-disciplinary way. It's a fair question what Marx's words are doing for us, and why we don't want him to leave us alone.

### **Outline to get things going for the Q&A! Ask about anything ...**

**What is the on-going *Gesamtausgabe* project and what are the trade-offs?**

**How have the 'great works' become a 'canon' and how has this changed over time?**

**Different Marxes for different people in different times – why?**

**Suppose Marx does speak, more or less, to:**

**Indigeneity  
feminisms  
colonialism, imperialism, slavery  
race/ethnicity  
nationalism  
religion  
democracy/constitutionalism/rights/justice/morals  
terrorism/violence  
etc.**

**What do we do with that? (if anything)**

**What does anyone do with 'the Marx' they don't like?**

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