

The Evolution of Ethical Economy from the Perspective of the Other

Lena Marinova¹, BSc. BA MA

Abstract

Economic systems and business decisions correlate with familiar ethical issues. Although we are far from reaching a solution, the concept of ethical economy offers an approach on how to connect economic interests with ethical ones. Levinas' approach to a just economy is presented, which is yet unrecognized in the analytical discourse on the ethical economy. In his reference to Marx's socio-economic critique, I posit the relationship between the worker and the capitalist to be significant for Levinas' understanding of the subject-other relationship. This argument shows how their models of intersubjectivity shape the notion of asymmetric responsibility and that the call for justice is supposed to be heard and responded to by changing the intentionality in economic relations from each-against-each to for-the-other.

Keywords: Levinas, Marx, ethics of the other, ethical economy, intersubjectivity, asymmetric responsibility

1. What is needed to conceive of an ethical economy?

In this article, I intend to give a better response to the yet vague concept of the ethical economy by discussing the junction between ethics and economy through the lens of the French ethicist and phenomenologist Emmanuel Levinas. I interpret the crucial notions of economy and justice in respect to Levinas' ethics of the encounter between the subject and the other. In his essay *The Ego and the Totality* (1987), Levinas understands the social relationship between the subject and the second person, the other, to be an economic one. This socio-economic relationship is bound through the claim that it is a just relationship. Hence, the limitations of the egocentrism of the subject leads to injustice in the relationship with the other, which is economic injustice by definition. The absolute power of the ego can capture the subject in one's self-centredness rather than being other-oriented. Levinas refers to this notion as the totality of the ego. He puts it the following: "The injustice by virtue of which the ego lives in a totality is always economic injustice." (Levinas 1987, 39) Later in the text, Levinas tells us that "[j]ustice can have no other object than economic equality." (Levinas 1987, 44) Elsewhere, he criticizes totality to be free of moral claims (Levinas 1969).

Since economic property exists as such, a number of scholars started discussions on how ethical issues challenge economic practice. Antonio Argandoña, for example, observes that within ethical companies managers are committed to create more humane working conditions and stakeholder relationships with space for personal development (Argandoña 2003, 16). An-other description of an ethical economy is that value is related to social impact, where consumers add value in this process also (Arvidsson 2008, 326). Ethical economy also includes the ethical trade market, addressing that farmers in developing countries are not visible in the profit distribution of big enterprises who supply cocoa beans for example. On a global scale supply chains come with diverse ethical problems that are far from being solved in order to establish justice within an ethical economy¹.

1 For more information on ethical trade see for example Mick Blowfiled's article *Ethical supply chains in the cocoa, coffee and the industries* (2003).

Looking at historical developments in the economy, "[...] moral ideals change in the course of history as an expression of the free will of men", while social and economic norms are established as policy guidelines to assist in the exercise of this will (Betz 1995, 82). The leader of the German historical school of economics Gustav von Schmoller predicted in 1877 that ethics would be the foundation of economic organizations: "The economic organization of a nation is [...] mainly a product of current ethical views about what is right and just in relation to different social classes.

¹ University of Vienna, Medical University of Vienna, E-Mail: lena_marinova@gmx.at
Telephone: +43 680 2125953

All progress in economic organization has been so far a triumph of ethical ideas and will continue to be so in future.” (Schmoller 1877, 55-56).

Indeed, the logic of capital is challenged when the totality of economic power is under ethical evaluation. The question remains: How can morality be integrated into pre-existent neo-liberal structures? In his recent work *Levinas and the Torah*, Richard I. Sugarman emphasizes Levinas’ distinctive position in funding ethical economy in a non-radical way by his ethical and phenomenological approach to the subject-other relationship. “Levinas is showing how the subject can move in a direction of the ‘each for each and all for all’. This is opposed to the model of political philosophy established at the beginning of modernity by Machiavelli and Hobbes where each against each and all against all appears as the first premise of all practical thinking.” (Sugarman 2019, xxii)

In the sense of “each against each and all against all” (Sugarman 2019, xxii), neo-liberal structures are often suspected to encourage immoral behaviour. Karl Marx was the first to describe the class struggles. The founder of revolutionary socialism, as a route to communism during the 20th century (Gibson-Graham 2003, 129), analyzes the notions of asymmetry, alienation, and justice between social classes. Capital generates a collective subject that is represented by the singular worker. The latter, however, is exposed to exploitation in the capitalistic relationship. In favour of Gibson-Graham (2003), just relations are embedded in the deconstructed hegemony of capitalocentrism that affect both individuals and global structures. How do Levinas’ and Marx’s conceptualizations connect in a way that enables us to think of an ethical economy? Levinas’ ethical call for justice and Marx’s critique on unjust work conditions as well as their approach to responsibility and recognition open the analytical discourse. The presented discussion offers the reader a better picture of the nuances of ethical economy – the concept, which the authors Marx and Levinas most likely had in mind for the world.

2. On the class struggle

The appearance of money, as Marx almost mystically portrays it in his main work *Capital* (1952), does not give justice to his criticism of the omnipresent hegemony of capital in a capitalistic community, which is organized around surplus appropriation and wealth maximization for the few rather than the many. The ethics of this valorization, however, ask for the mechanisms of surplus distribution within societies. Robert Gibbs (1992, 244–5; see also Marx 1968, 63 and 81) highlights how the sales process reflects the predominant social structure. The driving force of this structure is the encounter of two people, the worker and the capitalist. This asymmetry is not unethical by nature. Unjust reciprocity is defined by the hegemony of capitalocentrism that forces Marx to call for a revolution of a new mode of production “within the old form”, which means “co-operative factories run by workers themselves” (Marx 1981, 571). Marx presents the capitalist’s encounter with the alterity of the other. He advocates for the abolition of the asymmetric relationship between the capitalist and the worker as the key for a just socio-economy. In a 21st century context, knowledge workers (Drucker 1959) build the new class who “have been taught to value self-realization as an intrinsic goal” (Arvidsson 2008, 328). However, in Levinas’ ethics of the encounter with the other the asymmetry must remain. In his ideal world, the motivation must be guided by the other’s interests and not by ego driven self-interests. Accordingly, Levinas’ understanding of the other is not complementary with homo economicus whose self-centeredness seeks him to maximise material wealth (Brennan & Lomasky 1993). Floriana Ferro takes Levinas’ phenomenology of the economy further and equates intentionality and freedom with private property and the free market (Ferro 2013, 11).

In the realm of the free market the egoistical subject instrumentalizes the other to gain economically. In contrast, ethics are based on responsibility that see the other as the main addressee of an action (Ferro 2013).

What Adam Arvidsson introduces with the notion of *philia*, however, is a directionality towards the other in the concept of the ethical encounter because “people take part in social production [...] they desire the expression of having meaningful social ties with others [...]” (Arvidsson 2008, 332) Accordingly, Arvidsson asks: What is the best tie one can have with the other? But in the Levinasian sense this question would be phrased differently: What is the best tie the other can have with someone? To create “ethical capital” Arvidsson argues (2008, 333) for “a radical defetishization of commodities and brands and a new visibility of their actual production processes and their real social impact.” (Arvidsson 2008, 336)

The question at the centre of the discussion at hand is: What is the ethical relevance of Levinas’ ethical call for justice in the interaction between the worker and the capitalist? In Levinas’ narrative both stand respectively for the subject (capitalist) and the other (worker). Marx refers to the level of the exploited worker in the “sphere of capital’s exploitation” (Marx 1952, 305), which defines and changes the formal transformation of commodities into capital.

[...] that two very different kinds of commodity possessors must come face to face and into contact; on the one hand, the owners of the money, means of production, [...] who are eager to increase the sum of values they possess by buying other people's labour power; on the other hand, free labourers, the sellers of their own labour power, and there-fore the sellers of labour. [...] With this polarization of the market of commodities, the fundamental conditions of capitalist production are given. (Marx 1952, 344)

Others have discussed negotiations of power, coercion and consent. Claus Offe (2006), for example, understands Marx's terminology of the capital not as a mere static process, but rather as a "Verlaufsgesetz" ("law of process", Offe 2006, 59). As he puts it, there are uncon-trollable co-phenomena included in the growth process in capitalism, such as leadership, op-pression, alienation and deficiencies, which are not necessarily located in class theories of the economic growth in the capitalist system (Offe 2006, 59). Workers and employers are free to express their will into the types of relationships they involve themselves. Subsequently, they share the same political status as members of the capitalist relationship, since they have equal rights and duties as citizens (Fay 1979, 210). However, they are not free to escape from being a subject to fetishism and alienation as Stephen Shapiro notes:

[...] the problem of what seems to be self-expanding value (fetishism) and the loss of human control (alienation, objectification) to the inorganic system. These two effects con-verge to find a form of appearance in the new status of the commodity, which seems to create value by itself. (Shapiro 2008, 103–4)

The alienation process affects the worker and the capitalist equally. The fetish character of capital and the process of alienation and reification are interdependent and shape the rela-tionship between the worker and the capitalist. As these processes develop, the worker and the capitalist move away from their initial encounter. It is precisely this division that lets the rela-tionship mutate into a capitalist relationship with asymmetric reciprocity. Thus, the asymmetry – based on exploitative structures - that we find at the worker-capitalist encounter challenges ethical norms. That is what Marx's notion of justice asks for: a modification of the Hegelian dialectic. Here, we find another connection to Levinas who describes an asymmetric responsi-bility in the subject-other relationship. However, he does not aim to remove this asymmetry. Rather, it is obligatory for his call for justice and for the understanding of the ethical economy. It is also necessary that the ego can experience its subjectivity in the face of the other (Sirovatka 2013, 234–40). In this way, Levinas' asymmetric relationship prevents totalization while Marx criticises capitalist asymmetry to enable a totalitarian system of power. The need of the worker, as Marx would say, is the driving force. He wants to be heard and to be freed from his hunger, suffering and exploitative conditions. The capitalist is captivated by the face of the worker and thus immerses himself in the infinity of responsibility. Levinas and Marx view justice as real-ized by intersubjective relationships. As a consequence, justice between social classes can be translated into economic justice or just economy.

3. Levinas' notion of alienation

Levinas describes subjectivity in ethical terms (Levinas 1992, 72). Therefore, his ethical thinking about the subject-other relationship is intertwined with his understanding of being, exteriority², asymmetry, responsibility and recognition; all important components for develop-ing ethics and an agenda for an ethical economy. While Levinas in *Totality and Infinity* (1969)

2 According to Levinas, the actual being takes place in the exteriority (Levinas 1969). Hence, exteriority is the force which is outside of being and acts upon it. It defines as one, makes it appear and exercises power over it. Thus, the being can be dominated by exteriority, which stands for command, superiority and authority. The being as such is not falsified, but reaches its truth only through deformation. Levinas solves the problem of distance and separation, and the distance between being and exteriority in such a way that space is understood as curvature. This dynamic makes it possible to consider distance as an elevation between being and exteriority.

shows that it is a "privilege and an election" (Levinas 1969, 245) to be the subject, in *Jenseits des Seins* (Levinas 1998a, 336) he extends this determination to one's infinite responsibility, There is no legal regulation that limits the latter. Moreover, Levinas does not grant the subject any freedom to escape from one's responsibility. One is only free to decide how to express one's responsibility. In the tradition of Schmolter (1877), there cannot exist an unethical econ-omy. He concludes from there that economic behavior is embedded in a total relationality where each member of the economic society is in an inevitable relationship towards the other.

On the contrary, the worker and the capitalist encounter each other in a capitalistic envi-ronment, where monetary policy controls the frame of their relationship. The final and irreduc-ible ethical encounter is that of the face-to-face. At the moment of the encounter, the subject turns one's gaze towards the other, whereby the ethical claim of the other calls upon the subject to take responsibility for the other in his/her needs (Sirovatka 2013, 237).

The heterogeneity necessarily remains intact since the subject is capable to transcend and appropriate the other into oneself (Bedorf 2003, 30).

Because of the transcendental character towards and beyond the other, the separation or asymmetry between the subject and the other appears neutralized. Levinas writes about separation that “[t]he unicity of the I conveys separation. Separation in the strictest sense is solitude, and enjoyment – happiness or unhappiness – is isolation itself.” (Levinas 1969, 117) Separation takes place as pleasure and thus is interiority. In the moment of enjoyment, the ego loses itself in itself and sinks into its interiority. The ego perceives this sinking as separation. Therefore, the greater the growth of egoism is, the stronger the separation is perceived. The other person or the other is forgotten or cannot be envisaged anymore after the encounter.

The face of the other is an ethical call for the one to look at, recognize and see the other. In enjoyment, however, this call is not heard, because the direction of reference turns from the other back to oneself. In the face of the other, the ethics of the other are revealed, which Levinas speaks of as the “epiphany of the other” (Levinas 1969, 76). Thus, the call for justice comes from the ungraspable infinity that appears “as a trace [...] on the face of the other person.” (Sugarman 2019, xxxii) By directing his intentional conscience towards the other, the subject listens into the infinity and makes the call of the vulnerable and marginalised heard. Levinas understands the transition of the ethical relation from oneself to the other as opposed to the subject’s self-relatedness: “A philosophy of power, ontology is, as first philosophy which does not call into question the same, a philosophy of injustice.” (Levinas 1969, 46) The argument derived above, where the ego and the subject initially overlap in the subject and move away from each other in the process of alienation, now proves to be not untrue due to the complex structure in the thinking of Hegel (1988), but further components must be taken into account. If the ego remains immanent to the subject, as long as the face of the other does not expose the subject to confrontation, the subject experiences a separation in the face of the other, since the self of the subject perceives oneself from the other as not the other, as radically separated from the other. Otherwise, the subject would merge with the other. Levinas confirms the immanence of the self with the following statement: “To have the idea of infinity it is necessary to exist as separated.” (Levinas 1969, 79–80) The separation of the ego from totality enables the distinction of the ethical relationship as a positive imbalance between the two, in contrast to the capitalist relationship with its negative asymmetry as presented above. The face of the other presents himself with his absoluteness to the subject without violence, without denying the subject. The face exists peacefully and terrestrially at the same time. The decisive point in this relationship is that the subject does not remove the other’s otherness. Levinas (1984) does not understand this possible dialectic in the Hegelian sense (1988), which identifies the ego to be different from the subject.

This presentation is preeminently nonviolence, for instead of offending my freedom it calls it to responsibility and founds it. As nonviolence it nonetheless maintains the plurality of the same and the other. It is peace. The relation with the other - the absolutely other - who has no frontier with the same is not exposed to the allergy that afflicts the same in a totality, upon which the Hegelian dialectic rests. (Levinas 1969, 203)

Levinas does not aim to reconcile contradictions in a synthesis, because only pluralism ensures transcendence that is substantial to a peaceful subject-other relationship. He puts it in this way: “The force of opposition and of dialectical evocation would, in integrating it into a synthesis, destroy transcendence.” (Levinas 1969, 151)

To Levinas, the ethical relationship is directed in a positive asymmetry from the subject to the other. The face of the other asks for justice (Levinas 1969, 215), while collective justice as an absolute entity is excluded by Levinas. Since the other is always the other for someone and bears an inevitable responsibility for the other, intersubjective justice has collective justice as a consequence. This development is crucial for social and capitalistic developments in societies.

Hegel’s master-slave dialectic (1988) is to be understood also with Levinas’s attitude on justice and asymmetry. The master and the slave have a relationship but no dialogue. Here, Levinas uses the role of language to expose oppression in interpersonal relationships. A dialogue requires looking at each other and not looking in the same direction where both share parallel orientations of their bodies and views. Even saying (*le Dire*) is not a possibility for a dialogue (Levinas 1998a), particularly if what is being said does not touch the saying because of the non-face-to-face state of both dialogue partners. Levinas does not concede that the two figures have an inherent miscommunication because there can be no other relation to freedom other than one of submission or enslavement (Levinas 1984, 58). In both cases, the freedom of one of them is destroyed. If the relationship between master and slave is understood as an oppositional relationship, it becomes reciprocal.

Thus, Hegel's reversal of the relationship also fits with Levinas' ethics of relationships, where the master becomes the slave of the slave and the slave the master of his erstwhile master.

According to Levinas, the relationship to the absolutely different other is based neither on shared boundaries with the subject nor on mutually repulsive energies that influence the subject in a totality (Levinas 1969, 203). Freedom is not opposed to justice. Subjectivity re-mains as a separate being in relation to the absolutely different other. (Levinas 1969, 45) If we break the logic of contradiction "where the other of A is the non-A, the negation of A, but also across dialectical logic, where the same dialectically participates in and is reconciled with the other in the Unity of the system." (Levinas 1969, 150) How is ethical economy conceptualised under these conditions? The idea of ethical economy presented in the Levinasian tradition in-vites us to re-join the dimension of ethics and economy as they are discussed since the inception of capitalist societies.

4. The evolution of the ethical economy: the struggle for justice

"We command each other to a work through which we recognize each other", Levinas tells us in *Entre Nous* (1998b, 36). While non-recognition dominates in relations of exchange, derived from exploitation and alienation, "a free being can take hold of another free being" (Levinas 1998b, 29). This possession of the very freedom of another free being attributes the "ontological alienation", as Levinas calls it (Levinas 1998b, 29). "In Levinas' model, this 'orig-inal injustice' is imposed not by one individual upon another, but reciprocally by all individuals upon each other. Society is thereby diverted from the clash of individual warring wills towards the economic struggle for the possession of the works of others in society [...]." (Holden 2020, 25)

As David Borman once put it, it is Marx who identifies the "injustices as failures of recog-nition" (Borman 2009, 948). "Marx views capitalism – that is, a single class's control of the means of production – as a social order that inevitably destroys the interpersonal relations of recognition mediated by labour." (Honneth 1995, 146) Levinas, however, explains injustice as the interplay of recognition and non-recognition whereas injustice correlates with economic injustice. Economic recognition struggles to "take the form of social groups, in response to the experience of disrespect for their actual achievements, attempting to throw the established evaluative models into question by fighting for greater esteem of their social contributions, and thereby for economic redistribution." (Honneth 2003, 154) Borman (2009, 945) highlights that a capitalist society focuses on profitable outcomes rather than the recognition of individual achievement. Also Ferro proposes the ideal of ethical capitalism in reference to Levinas' ethics of the other without giving more insights into her reasoning. The driving force is the shift of individual interest towards one's responsibility for the other. She summarizes her thoughts as follows:

One's freedom and property are not destroyed or 'limited' by the other's freedom and property. One's freedom and property is directed both to self-preservation and preserva-tion of the other that is the environment and its inhabitants. Ethical capitalism is not self-oriented, but other-oriented: it is directed both to the other and to the self as another. Responsibility is opposed to alienation, because it is bi-directional. This is why a respon-sible behavior, on large scale, could save capitalism from its gaps and from its ruin. (Ferro 2013, 14)

John Drabinski suggests a change of perspective towards Levinas' utopia instead of con-sidering political liberalism and peace as the ideal of a social form (Drabinski 2005, 195). Ac-cording to this, the legal framework and any institutions do not treat individuals as abstract, equal and singular units, but they have the utopian quality of recognizing the material differ-ences between members. From this level, justice is to be executed, with politics recognizing that individuals are unequal in terms of political and economic power. This recognition and the recognition of the imbalance can prevent tensions between social classes (Drabinski 2005, 193). So how does Drabinski propose to restore the balance of wealth? Levinas' perspective is to think of a redistribution of political power and economic resources, with the result of the dis-advantaged being given a higher status. He calls to individual and political decision-makers to be generous in their devotion to others, the excluded and the poor, without expecting anything in return. In order to break out of the monetary power, Levinas (2007, 205) observes the self-interest to be renounced in favor of the other. It is precisely in that sphere where he sees the possibility of transforming the negative connotation of money, namely its exploitative quality into a positive one, in the form of charity (Levinas 2007, 205).

In this context, economic responsibility for the other is limited to private charity with social and political dimensions being excluded from this responsibility. Ethics thus become a private matter, with the danger (Tahmasebi 2010, 532) of placing capital or the increase of capital in the hierarchy of social power structures upon ethical responsibility and the demand for justice towards others. Tahmasebi interprets in "Does Levinas justify or transcend liberal-ism?" Levinas' ethics' impact on overcoming their private containment in order to achieve lib-eration from economic exploitation (Tahmasebi 2010, 533).

Even if the demand for justice comes externally from economic relations, Levinas believes that only economic justice can be the object of justice (Tahmasebi 2010, 537–8). Or as Gibbs puts it: “Money is intrinsically social and is the key tool for instituting social justice.” (Gibbs 1992, 235)

Levinas advocates a justice that includes formal (economic justice) and ethical justice (Tahmasebi-Birgani 2006, 45–57). It also shows that humanity’s call for justice is born by the face of the poor, who, with their call to the subject, the latter is called to account (Tahmasebi-Birgani 2006, 154–5). The other, the worker or the pauper wants to win his freedom from op-pression and exploitation in the struggle for justice. Liberalism reduces the absolute alterity of the face to autonomy, whereby the autonomous subject is guaranteed his sovereign freedom of mind (Tahmasebi-Birgani 2006)3.

3 Victoria Tahmasebi-Birgani supports a multi-dimensionality of liberation in *The ethical work of liberation* (Tahmasebi-Birgani 2006, 38 and 169). She does not exclude the possibility of being able to free oneself from economic disadvantage, specifically through the original relationship between the subject and the other. The subject and the other face each other in separation and yet are connected through their ethical relationship. This is what Levinas means when he says that they are in “unrelated relations” (Levinas 1969, 295). Without this relationship, a call for justice is impossible in Levinas’ argumentation. A separation as distance in ethical intersubjectivity is a condition for social justice in his ethics of the encounter. His subject-other relationship is characterized by an unequally distributed responsibility, which, however, determines an ethical asymmetry.

Referring to Hegel’s dialectic, by keeping the parallel dialogue but not the confrontation of the subject with the other, the consequences are fatal: “In the horror of the radical unknown to which death leads is evinced the limit of negativity.” (Levinas 1969, 41) Morality begins to move into the field of vision and thought at the point where freedom turns out to be arbitrary and violent instead of justifying itself by itself. As Robert Gibbs claims in *Correlations in Rosenzweig and Levinas* (1992, 229–30) that Levinas’ ethics make a material demand on economic justice that goes beyond a just exchange. Accordingly, economic justice in society is only possible through an asymmetrical relationship between the subject and the other. In contrast to Victoria Tahmasebi-Birgani (2006), Gibbs (1992, 252) argues that the dissolution of Hegel’s dialectic is neither necessary nor even possible. The asymmetric interlocutors should enter into dialogue, so that the excluded and disadvantaged lose this role. A reversal of master and slave, the abolition of the original dialectic, only leads to a further reversal. A reversal of the reversal does not make the original reversal right, nor does the second reversal correct the first.

Levinas separates theory and morality, or his concepts of totality and infinity, and offers arguments that are too weak to connect again. For him, only the answer to the call of the other and his compliance with it seems to meet ethical demands. The subject recognizes the moral demands in the face of the other and submits to them. In other words, when the capitalist submits to the demands of the worker, he experiences a moral reversal in his awareness of injustice. With the call of the other, the struggle for justice becomes present in case of imbalanced inter-subjectivity; an assumption I intend to support. Radical passivity is necessary to realise this struggle for justice. In the classical sense, passivity is defined through the so-called passive-active dichotomy, in which the ability to act is denied or paralysed. In contrast, radical passivity opens up a practice “that is accomplished in responsibility for the alterity of the other’s face—her or his justice” (Tahmasabi 2010, 528). Levinas’ socio-political orientation towards remaining social asymmetry is absolutely against oppression (Levinas 1998a). To Tahmasebi (2010, 532), “liberal formal equality (equal rights and freedoms) and Marxian formal justice (economic equality)” are maintained, but at the same time, their boundaries are disrupted. Recalling the notion of responsibility laid out before, this asymmetry is also subject to imbalance as soon as justice operates in an asymmetrical system because each individual is responsible to a different degree depending on one’s action of justice.

Just as Levinas does not call responsibility for the subject a matter of choice, the capitalist principle is not based on freedom of choice. In capitalist society, as Ferro puts it, financial status determines the degree of responsibility (Ferro 2013, 6). Within this paradoxical phenomenon, the rich have more power and responsibility regardless of their own electoral desires. Ethically speaking, responsibility is the element of movement, while freedom concretizes this movement.

5. Conclusion

Economic relationships are intertwined and are not innately isolated from the local or global environment. Political, legal and social changes shaped economic structures and models that seem to be beneficial to this day. However, the question about who enjoys the benefits of the global trade market calls for justice within neo-liberal relationships. The well-being of humans in developing countries is still an ideal goal on the horizon. The article has shown that the call for justice can be addressed with the nuance of a yet less considered ethicality.

It has been presented how Levinas' ethics of the other helps us to discuss the idea of an ethical economy on an analytical level. The ethical call of the other forces the subject to take responsibility.

At the same time, Levinas refers to Marx when he claims for economic justice. Therefore, Marx's socio-critical analysis of the worker's conditions and his exploitative and oppressive relationship to the capitalist were discussed. Although Levinas' relationality is an ethical call for economic relationships and Marx's narrative is a distinctive socio-economic claim, I aimed to highlight their common approach to an ethical economy. This forces us to think other-centred and to leave the subject-centred path, which is the common capitalocentric decision process. Accordingly, Levinas' model of the subject-other relationship was compared to that of Marx's worker-capitalist relationship.

Eventually, the hope remains to have contributed new aspects to the concept of ethical economy. Intersubjectivity shapes its evolution when the ethical call for justice is posed in the tradition of Levinas' ethics. In consideration that "there are two poles of humanity for Levinas" the for-the-other or each-for-each is opposed to each-against-each or all-against-all (Sugarman 2019, xlv). Ethical economy as a concept integrates his idea of "covenantal relation" that "moves in the direction, by no means without detours, to a world where the future can be better for the others and for me." (Sugarman 2019, xlv)

References

- Argandona, A. (2003). The new economy: Ethical issues. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 44, 3–22.
- Arvidsson, A. (2008). The Ethical Economy of Customer Coproduction. *Journal of Macromarketing*, 28(4), 326–338.
- Bedorf, T. (2003). Dimensionen des Dritten. Sozialphilosophische Modelle zwischen Ethischem und Politischem. In B. Waldenfels (Ed.) *Phänomenologische Untersuchungen (Band 16)*. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag.
- Betz, H. K. (1995). The Role of Ethics as Part of the Historical Method of Schmoller and the Older Historical School. In P. Koslowski (Ed.), *The Theory of Ethical Economy in the Historical School* (pp. 81–103). Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag Berlin.
- Borman, D. A. (2009). Labour, exchange and recognition: Marx contra Honneth. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 35(8), 935–959.
- Brennan, G., & Lomasky, L. (1993). *Democracy and decision; the pure theory of electoral preference*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Blowfield, M. (2003). Ethical supply chains in the cocoa, coffee and the industries. *Greener management international*, 43, 15–24.
- Drabinski, J. E. (2005). Wealth and Justice in a Utopian Context. In E. S. Nelson, A. S. Kapust, & K. Evanston (Eds.), *Addressing Levinas* (pp. 185–198). Illinois: Northwestern University Press.
- Drucker, P. (1959). *Landmark of Tomorrow*. Canada: Heineman.
- Fehr, E., & Gächter, S. (2000). Fairness and retaliation: The economics of reciprocity. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 14(3), 158–181.
- Ferro, F. (2013). Responsibility and Capitalism. A Phenomenological Way to Approach the Economic Crisis. *Nordicum-Mediterraneum*, 8(1), B2, 1–17.
- Gibbs, R. (1992). *Correlations in Rosenzweig and Levinas*. Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Hegel, G.W. F. (1988). *Phänomenologie des Geistes*. HF Wessels & H Clairmont (Eds.). Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag [(1807). Hamburg and Würzburg: Joseph Anton Goebhardt].
- Holden, T. (2020). Levinas between recognition and heterology. *Critical Horizons*, 21(1), 17–33.
- Honneth, A. (1995). *The Struggle for Recognition. The Moral Grammar of Social Conflict*, (Trans. Joel Anderson). Massachusetts: MIT Press [(1992). *Kampf um Anerkennung. Zur moralischen Grammatik sozialer Konflikte*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp].
- & Nancy, F. (2003). *Redistribution as Recognition: a Response to Nancy Fraser. Redistribution or Recognition: A Political-Philosophical Profile* (pp. 110–197). (Trans. J. Golb & J. Ingram). New York: Verso.
- Levinas, E. (1969). *Totality and Infinity. An Essay on Exteriority*. Trans. A. Lingis. Pittsburgh (Pennsylvania): Duquene University Press [(1961). *Totalité et Infini. Essai sur l'extériorité*. (Ed. M. Nijhoff). Netherlands: The Hague].
- (1984). *Die Zeit und der Andere*. (Trans. Ludwig Wenzler). Hamburg: Meiner [(1979). *Le Temps et l'Autre*. Montpellier: fata morgana].
- (1987). *The Ego and the Totality. Collected Philosophical Papers* (pp. 25–45). (Trans. A. Lingis). Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff. [(1954). *Le moi et la totalité*. In *Revue de Métaphysique et de Moral*, 59, 353–373].
- (1992). *Ethik und Unendliches. Gespräche mit Philippe Nemo*. (Ed. P. Engelmann.). Wien: Passagen.

- (1998a). *Jenseits des Seins oder anders als Sein geschieht*. (Trans. Wiemer, T.). Freiburg: Alber [(1974). *Autrement qu'être ou au-delà de l'essence*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff].
- (1998b). *Entre-nous: On thinking of the other*. (Trans. B. Harshav & M. Smith). London: Athlone Press.
- (2007). *Sociality and money*. (Trans. F. Bouchetoux & C. Jones). *Business Ethics: A European Review*, 16(3), 203–217.
- Marx, K. (1952). *Capital*, by Karl Marx. Edited by Friedrich Engels. The University of Chicago, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. [(1883). *Das Kapital* (3rd German ed. Transl. S. Moore & E. Aveling). (1890). *Das Kapital* (4th German ed. Transl. M. Sachey & H. Lamm.)]
- (1962). *Das Kapital. Kritik der politischen Oekonomie*. In *Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels Werke 1867, Band 23 (MEW23)*. Berlin: Dietz Verlag [(1867). *Das Kapital*. Hamburg: Verlag von Otto Meissner. New York: I. W. Schmidt].
- (1981). *Capital (Volume 3)*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Marx, K. & Friedrich, E. (1968). *Deutsche Ideologie*. In *Marx und Engels Werke (3rd ed.)*. Berlin: Dietz Verlag [Transl. C. J. Arthur. (1970). *German Ideology*. New York: International Publishers].
- Offe, C. (2006). *Strukturprobleme des kapitalistischen Staates. Aufsätze zur Politischen Soziologie*. Frankfurt, New York: Camus Verlag.
- Schmoller, G. v. (1890). *Die soziale Frage und der preussische Staat (1877). Zur Social- und Gewerbepolitik der Gegenwart*. Leipzig: Duncker & Humbolt. English translation of part of the article (cited in the text) by Y. Shionoya in P. Koslowski (ed.), *The Theory of Ethical Economy in the Historical School* (p. 73). (1995). Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag Berlin.
- Sirovatka, J. (2013). *Die Asymmetrie im Bezug zum Anderen und zu Gott. Ethische Ungleichheit und Illeite*. In N. Fischer & K. Sorovatka (Eds.), *Die Gottesfrage in der Philosophie von Emmanuel Levinas* (pp. 231–254). Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag.
- Shapiro, S. (2008). *How to Read Marx's Capital*. London: Pluto Press.
- Sugarman, R. I. (2019). *Levinas and the Torah. A Phenomenological Approach*. USA: State University of New York.
- Tahmasebi-Birgani, V. (2006). *The ethical work of liberation: Levinas, Gandhi and political praxis*. Toronto (Ontario): York University.
- Tahmasebi, V. (2010). *Does Levinas justify or transcend liberalism? Levinas on human liberation? Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 35(5), 523–544.