



# Less Than Nothing: Hegel And The Shadow Of Dialectical Materialism

By Slavoj Zizek



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For the last two centuries, Western philosophy has developed in the shadow of Hegel, an influence each new thinker struggles to escape. As a consequence, Hegel's absolute idealism has become the bogeyman of philosophy, obscuring the fact that he is the defining philosopher of the historical transition to modernity, a period with which our own times share startling similarities.

Today, as global capitalism comes apart at the seams, we are entering a new period of transition. In *Less Than Nothing*, the product of a career-long focus on the part of its author, Slavoj Žižek argues it is imperative we not simply return to Hegel but that we repeat and exceed his triumphs, overcoming his limitations by being even more Hegelian than the master himself. Such an approach not only enables Žižek to diagnose our present condition, but also to engage in a critical dialogue with key strands of contemporary thought—Heidegger, Badiou, speculative realism, quantum physics, and cognitive sciences. Modernity will begin and end with Hegel.

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#### Review

"Few thinkers illustrate the contradictions of contemporary capitalism better than Slavoj Žižek ... one of the world's best-known public intellectuals."—John Gray, *New York Review of Books*

"A serious attempt to reanimate or re-actualize Hegel."—Robert Pippin, author of *Hegel's Idealism*

"A gifted speaker—tumultuous, emphatic, direct—and he writes as he speaks." —Jonathan Ree, *Guardian*

"The Hegel that Žižek loves is much like Žižek himself: a relentless iconoclast, a restless wordsmith, an inventive thinker with a hatred of received wisdom, an underminer of conventionally acknowledged truths. Žižek's Hegel is a kind of cosmic prankster."—*Bookforum*

"A lucid rendering of modern society's debt to Hegel."—*Publisher's Weekly*

"The publication of *Less Than Nothing* is a major event in contemporary philosophy."—*Hey, Small Press*

#### About the Author

**Slavoj Žižek** is a Slovenian philosopher and cultural critic. He is a professor at the European Graduate School, International Director of the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities, Birkbeck College, University of London, and a senior researcher at the Institute of Sociology, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. His books include *Living in the End Times; First as Tragedy, Then as Farce; In Defense of Lost Causes*; four volumes of the Essential Žižek; and many more.

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