



**Surplus: Spinoza, Lacan (SUNY series,
Insinuations: Philosophy, Psychoanalysis,
Literature)**

A. Kiarina Kordela

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Maintains that Lacanian psychoanalysis is the proper continuation of the line of thought from Spinoza to Marx.

Opposing both popular “neo-Spinozisms” (Deleuze, Negri, Hardt, Israel) and their Lacanian critiques (Žižek and Badiou), *Surplus* maintains that Lacanian psychoanalysis is the proper continuation of the Spinozian-Marxian line of thought. Author A. Kiarina Kordela argues that both sides ignore the inherent contradictions in Spinoza’s work, and that Lacan’s reading of Spinoza—as well as of Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Freud, and Wittgenstein—offers a much subtler balance of knowing when to take the philosopher at face value and when to read him against himself. Moving between abstract theory and tangible political, ethical, and literary examples, Kordela traces the emergence of “enjoyment” and “the gaze” out of Spinoza’s theories of God, truth, and causality, Kant’s critique of pure reason, and Marx’s pathbreaking application of set theory to economy. Kordela’s thought unfolds an epistemology and an ontology proper to secular capitalist modernity that call for a revision of the Spinoza-Marx-Lacan line as the sole alternative to the (anti-)Platonist tradition.

“Kordela masterfully shows how Spinoza’s thought jibes with the insights of psychoanalysis, especially concerning the original cause and the final cause. This book has actually forced me to reevaluate my own thinking about Spinoza and to realize that I have wrongly been associating Spinoza with the misguided neo-Spinozist reading of him.” — Todd McGowan, author of *The Real Gaze: Film Theory after Lacan*

“From the very beginning, this book is of such intellectual power that it is capable of severe criticism of some of the most potent thinkers in the field—Žižek and Badiou, for example—while at the same time showing what is productive in them. Kordela has learned from them; they too have much to learn from her.” — Thomas Pepper, author of *Singularities: Extremes of Theory in the Twentieth Century*

A. Kiarina Kordela is Associate Professor of German Studies at Macalester College.

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