Chapter 7, on Marx’s falling rate of profit, was one of my first essays after reading the *Grundrisse* and grasping the dialectics that had been hidden (at least from me) in *Capital*. That reading, too, led me immediately to Hegel (and that is responsible in particular for the understanding here of the concept of capital’s ‘barrier’). After all, if dialectics are important, we should make the attempt to understand where Marx learned this. How, indeed, can we understand the three volumes of *Capital* except dialectically? As the book’s essays (and opening quote in the chapter) stress, we cannot.

Linking all the essays in this Part is the rejection of what Paul Sweezy (cited in Chapter 8) called the ‘fetishisation’ of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall (FROP). Chapter 8 (‘The General and the Specific in Marx’s Theory of Crisis’) reinforces the argument in the previous chapter on the significance for FROP of a particular assumption about the bias of productivity increase and further proposes that the FROP emphasis has obscured what is specific and unique about capitalism. In a significant addition to this essay (drawing upon Marx’s 1861–3 *Economic Manuscripts* which were not earlier available), I have strengthened the demonstration that Marx recognised his own assumption about productivity changes. Why, then, the importance assigned by so many to FROP? One may suggest that anything that looks like it can be handled with a little bit of mathematics and made to look inevitable has great appeal to mathematical determinists.

Perhaps it was especially his rejection of FROP and his stress upon the importance of realisation problems (a true sign of ‘Keynesianism’ and ‘reformism’) that produced a tendency for self-proclaimed Marxist economists to sneer at Paul Sweezy’s work. Chapter 9 on Paul Sweezy was written originally for an edited collection on political economy in the twentieth century (accompanying essays on Maurice Dobb, Joseph Schumpeter and
Joseph Steindl, among others). The long-distance call that I received from him in Vancouver shortly after I sent it to him, saying that I got it ‘right’, remains one of my proudest memories. The Appendix, written after his death in 2004, draws upon some early letters from him and shows him to be more of a revolutionary than his Lilliputian critics.