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A

JÜRGEN HABERMAS AND MARX: CRITIQUE OF AN INCIPIENT PUBLIC SPHERE

BY

RUSSELL L. ROCKWELL

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, the City University of New York

1999

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Abstract

JÜRGEN HABERMAS AND MARX:
CRITIQUE OF AN INCIPIENT PUBLIC SPHERE

by

Russell L. Rockwell

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This study examines the relationship of Jürgen Habermas's ideas to those of Marx. A close reading of Habermas's major works, in conjunction with a close reading as well of the Marx texts he analyzes, comprises the thematically first part. The Habermas texts include the following, with original German publication dates: "Between Philosophy and Science: Marxism as Critique" (1960); *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962); *Knowledge and Human Interests* (1968); *Legitimation Crisis* (1973); "Reconstruction of Historical Materialism" (1975); and, *The Theory of Communicative Action* (1981). These texts are shown to contain a two decade-long argument that, a) the relevance of Marx's theories is severely restricted to the period in which he lived; b) the original Frankfurt School Critical Theory (of

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Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse and others) tacitly retained a Marxist orthodoxy none the less; and, c) Habermas's theory of communicative action and reason first faces up to and successfully overcomes the problems associated with a) and b).

The thematically second part identifies, delineates and examines a public sphere--describing its motivation and content--concerning the practical implications of Habermas's critique of Marx, while arguing that it was deliberately shaped by Habermas, along with supporters. It is concluded that this public sphere, Habermas's mode of critique of Marx's theories and of the original Frankfurt School of Critical Theory, drew more attention and support before the collapse of Communism than that part of it which continued in its 1990s aftermath. This can be partly explained with close attention to yet a newer critique of Critical Theory, also from *within* that tradition--Moishe Postone's *Time, Labor and Social Domination: A Reinterpretation of Marx's Critical Theory* (1993). The latter both explains socially Habermas's theory, and offers a better critical approach to post-Communism on the basis of a reinterpretation of Marx's *Grundrisse* and *Capital.* However, important areas of agreement with Habermas's critique of Marx, especially an assessment of the lack of a contemporary relevance of Marx's 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts,* stands in the way of this new approach's break from Critical Theory and improved prospects for the practical potential of Marx's humanism.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BPSMC	"Between Philosphy and Science: Marxism as Critique"
CM	Communist Manifesto
KHI	Knowledge and Human Interests
LC	Legitimation Crisis
PDM	Philosophical Discourse of Modernity
STPS	Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere
TCA	The Theory of Communicative Action

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INTRODUCTION

How Jürgen Habermas's theory is related to that of Critical Theory's founders, particularly Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse (as well as others) has by now been widely discussed. In so far as a Critical Theory tradition retains *vitality* today, there is little question concerning Habermas's leading role during the last three decades at least. Beginning only slowly in the 1960s and 1970s, but accelerating in the 1980s, Habermas developed a sharp critique of his predecessors. He increasingly delineated (in respect to the founders) his own social theory. Preoccupation with the issue of the continuity or discontinuity of the Critical Theory tradition has perhaps been at the expense of critical attention to Habermas's direct confrontation with Marx's ideas, ostensibly the inspiration for what is afterall most often understood as a "neo-Marxist" strand of thought. However, "neo-Marxist" Critical Theory perhaps too much assumes, and attempts to ovecome deficiences of, the original. Considering the various types of studies on Habermas's theory during the last couple of decades (which include, besides comparison of the old and the newer Critical Theory, more specialized studies on communicative ethics, law, etc) an inference must be drawn that, in fact, there is a prevailing misperception which underestimates (or undervalues) the large amount of attention Habermas paid to Marx's theory proper, its still controversial conclusions, and the relative importance that his focus on Marx assumed in his own fully developed theory, all the way into the 1990s. But now a wide-ranging transformation has occurred in recent times. The collapse of Communist states, the legitimacy for which was argued in terms of Marxist ideology, is the type of epochal world transformation which can open

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up the potential for another look at ideas long thought to already be known, at least in their essential features. For example, many of the world economies' links to their respective states, and responsibility for social welfare on the part of the state, have approached a point of dissolution. A significant part of the attraction (and perhaps key presuppositions) of Habermas's theory followed from existence of a Communist status-quo, and an apparently long-term, if not permanent, "welfare state compromise" in the most capitalistically developed countries.

If in the late 1970s and 1980s, coinciding with Habermas's own attention to the issue, several important studies analyzed his criticism (implied or overt) of the older Critical Theory, much less attention has been paid to the *even more* recent critique, which also comes from *within* the Critical Theory tradition itself. This new level of critique, found in the Frankfurt-trained Sociologist Moishe Postone's *Time, Labor, and Social Domination* has by no means achieved the status of a tendency (as Habermas has purposely cultivated in respect to his own theory, and which I bring to the fore in the following chapters).

Postone's "remarkable study" (Jay 1993) builds a strong case for the idea that Marx's "mature critical theory" (primarily the *Grundrisse* and *Capital*), contain critical categories the development of which potentially explain today's powerful social forces, which are, "far removed from personal experience" (Postone 1993), and are more abstract than the traditional Marxist categories of the market, property relations and labor. Labor, especially, has been misunderstood as "transhistorical" (in both Habermas and the Critical Theory tradition generally), with important consequences for both theory and practice. Moreover, Postone argues convincingly that a reinterpretation of Marx's texts can explain socially the original Critical Theory (and its limitations), as well as

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Habermas's revised version, which attempted to escape its pessimism and lack of social relevance.

In light of Postone's radical suggestion (that the Critical Theory tendency over a long period of time, and in the face of major economic, political and social transformations has seriously misunderstood some of the concepts crucial to an understanding of Marx's theory), I closely examine Habermas's investigations of Marx's texts, with some unexpected results. For example, I argue that Habermas's second (though often thought of as his first) major work, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, initially published in German in 1962, issued the outline of a textually-based systematic critique of Marx's ideas, an assessment which clashes with the more typical view that it was a work written when Habermas was "still a Marxist", or with even Habermas's own view (Habermas 1990b), that "Between Philosophy and Science: Marxism as Critique", written in 1960 (Jay 1984, 469), represented this sort of approach. I argue that "Marxism as Critique" essentially suggested a "revision" of Marx's theory of value, while (perhaps more importantly) introducing (earlier than previously noted) the concept of the lifeworld. The concept of the lifeworld remained dormant in the several years following, yet it was already clear in 1960 that it would assume importance in any fundamental critique of Marx's theory, especially in metatheoretical terms, as it eventually did in the often-cited "paradigm shift" from a philosophy of consciousness to a theory informed by a social analysis of language. I point out as an important cue that already in the 1960 "Marxism as Critique" Habermas highlighted passages in the *Grundrisse* while sharply separating analysis of them from Marx's 1844 *Economic Manuscripts*. Habermas interpreted the *Grundrisse* passages (in a revelatory sense) as a possible basis of an immanent critique of Marx's theory. According to Habermas, these passages provide evidence (which Marx later submerged)

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that Marx himself questioned the centrality of labor for a description of modern society, and the possibility of its critique. Nearly a decade later, in the 1968 (German) publication of *Knowledge and Human Interests*, Habermas *returns* to the *same Grundrisse* passages, expanding and elaborating his prior argument, but this time (with the crucial difference) *on the basis of* an analysis (in his Chapter, "Marx's Metacritique of Hegel: Synthsis Through Social Labor") of the most important essay in the 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General". This then represents a second, though conceptually more sophisticated, attempt at a comprehensive critique of Marx, but still does not bring back in to focus a concept of the lifeworld for the potential of a critical social theory more adequate than Marx's (too dependent on labor) in view of modern society.

I attempt to demonstrate that Habermas's *Knowledge and Human Interests* implicitly conceded that earlier works ("Between Philosophy and Science: Marxism as Critique" and *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*), in underestimating the depth of Marx's concept of labor, compelled a return to analysis of Marx's theory, perhaps contrary to his initial expectations. Habermas's *continuous* returns to consideration of Marx's theories seemed to take on a life of their own, that is, despite what appeared to be Habermas's early intent to meet what he believed was the need for an alternative theory.

Due to this internal dynamic, my analyses necessarily proceeds along the route of closely following Habermas's attention (which gradually diminishes) to Marx's texts, as well as a comparison of these texts with Habermas's presentation and interpretation of them. This is especially warranted, and therefore is presented in greatest detail, in consideration of Habermas's two chapters on Marx in *Knowledge and Human Interests*, and in respect to Habermas's 1990 summary article on the status of Marx's theory in the midst of

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the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the Soviet Union itself.

Against the background of a close reading of a variety of Habermas's approaches to Marx's theory, including his systematic, textual critique, I analyze how Habermas, at the very time of the initial publication of his *Theory of Communicative Action* (1981) substantially contributed to the re-founding of the Marxist Humanist, semi-underground dissident journal, *Praxis*. The latter originated in the former Yugoslavia in the early 1960s, was eventually closed down by the Tito government in the 1970s, and finally re-surfaced in 1981 (with Habermas's active assistance) as *Praxis International*, published in London. On one level, I look at Habermas's relationship to this journal in order to explore the *practical* potential of Habermas's theory from the vantage point of the late 1980s and early 1990s collapse of Communism and its aftermath, as well as the disintegrating social welfare states, including in the United States, Europe and elsewhere. On another level, I view Habermas's role in *Praxis International* as constituting a critique of a certain sort of non-Communist, philosophically dissident Marxism, apparently unimplicated in the previously ruling statist forms. My intention is to bring into focus another type of Habermas's critique of Marx, that is adequate to the standard of rationality developed in Habermas's now mature theory, in a public sphere constituted on dialogical premises, open to thinkers composing a variety of theoretical and political backgrounds--including both "state socialist" and Western-style social welfare states. Examination of this historical moment is potentially productive in terms of analyzing the status of Habermas's mature theory including (but not limited to) his self-understanding.

Generally, I analyze the trajectory of Habermas's theory construction in respect to his critique of Marx, while simultaneously attempting to bring out the full significance of the critique of Habermas's theory from *within* the Critical

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Theory tradition (Postone). I argue that Postone's critique, in contrast to what he himself suggests, implies not simply a more critical Critical Theory, but a need for a *break* from the Critical Theory tradition, if the socially useful aspect of this type of theory is understood to be in its potential contribution to an overcoming of capitalism.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE SEARCH FOR HABERMAS'S MARXISM AND HABERMAS'S PURSUIT OF MARX

The first comprehensive study of Jürgen Habermas's thought to appear in English had as its implicit standard Marx's critique of capitalist society. Thomas McCarthy's, *The Critical Theory of Jürgen Habermas* (1978), concluded that Habermas's work assumed a Marxist form of critique. Yet, McCarthy's book contained only a sketchy and unsustained argument about the nature of Marx's theory.

Although it was not readily perceived, by the time of publication of McCarthy's book Habermas had finally rejected Marx's theory, or more precisely, what he had come to understand Marx's theory to be. With Habermas (more so than with the early Critical Theorists Horkheimer and Adorno) it is possible to draw out his analyses of specific texts and periods of Marx's theoretical position. These can serve as the starting point for conceptualizing the relationship between the two thinkers separated by an entire century.

McCarthy's book was published at a time when Habermas's theory was at best half-way elaborated and still undigested; still it achieved a wide impact in assigning a contemporary status to Habermas's (and indirectly) Marx's thought in the 1970s and 1980s. That status might be briefly described as reflecting Habermas's notion that Marx's work contains, in the classical sense, certain durable qualities capable of guiding critically oriented thought; but Marx's theories (it is generally assumed even by those sympathetic to them) are essentially so far removed from contemporary concerns and conditions that at

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best they are in need of, in addition to continued clarification, at the very least radical reorganization and/or supplementation (Lohmann 1986).

McCarthy, while not offering much in the way of presenting Marx's ideas, concluded his work by arguing that *Legitimation Crisis* (Habermas's work just translated by McCarthy at the time) assumed a "Marxist form of critique". A possible interpretation of this is that McCarthy believed that contemporary critical theory (Habermas its principal representative) had fulfilled an intention to update Marx's original theory, thus opening up new prospects for Critical Theory generally. Chapters Two, Three and Four of this dissertation take up Habermas's various approaches to Marx, inquiring whether any of them suceeded in grasping the fundamental concepts relevant for a contemporary critical theory of capitalism.

Martin Jay's *Marxism and Totality* (1984) placed Habermas squarely in the arena of Western Marxism; he argued that Habermas's theory, a potentially viable form of Marxism, might represent the only sustainable development from that tradition (Jay 1984). Still, the chapter on Habermas, concluding his volume, which takes up the whole range of Western Marxism in this century, offers limited explicit assessment of Marx's ideas as he developed them, compared with those who interpreted them. The remarkable point to note here is that as late as 1984 Jay's major work could still suggest that recreation of a "Marxist" critical theory of society was Habermas's intent, and that his actual attempt was more plausible than any other.

A major shift in perspective began in the mid-1980s--among Habermas's most active (or vocal) supporters. Seyla Benhabib's, *Norm, Critique and Utopia* (1986), again following Habermas's own thematization of the significance of his work *vis a vis* Marx, 1) examined specific texts and periods of Marx's theoretical development; 2) offered tightly argued perspectives on the origin and

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development of the modern concept of critique, in important ways shaped by Marx and; 3) recognized and addressed Habermas's own self-understanding that his theory, adequate to contemporary society in a way Marx's was not, should "replace" the latter. Benhabib's work was the first since the full scope of Habermas's writings became widely accessible in the United States to begin to fully come to terms with the idea that Habermas had begun to argue, if only implicitly, that a contemporary critical theory, without Marx, was possible and, in fact, that his own might be seen as just such a theory.

In this respect, her study represented a radical break with McCarthy's less than a decade earlier. But the similarity of the two consisted in their following Habermas's rapidly evolving self-understanding of his own theory. McCarthy's study was written in the wake of Habermas's presentation of himself as engaged in the perhaps still conceivable "reconstruction of historical materialism". Benhabib's book appeared at the moment Habermas was focused on counter-posing the recent results of his work to the ideas of Marx, as well as to contemporary Marxists (particularly the "praxis" philosophers with a history of philosophical dissidence inside the East European Communist countries). This effort to distinguish his ideas from Marx's "praxis philosophy" included both theoretical and practical dimensions. While, in respect to Habermas, no one would have difficulty recognizing the former dimension, the latter is more subtle, and its peculiarity not well understood. Due to the role a critique of Marxist Humanism (or "praxis philosophy") played in the crucial shift in Habermas's understanding of his own theory, I will take this up in some detail in Chapter Five where I analyze a year-long symposium in the journal *Praxis International.*

In fact, McCarthy, Jay, Benhabib, and Axel Honneth (who will be discussed shortly) were all key figures in exploring, along with Habermas, the

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prospects of a new Critical Theory minus a reliance upon Marx in the period leading up to the epochal series of events culminating in the collapse of Communism in East Europe and Russia. To be sure, such a radical transformation of the political landscape was not anticipated at the time when all of the above authors focused on clarifying Habermas's 1980s theory in the journal *Praxis International* (PI) (among others) which originated as a political-philosophical dissident Marxist humanist journal in Yugoslavia. The journal, closed down by the state in the late 1970s, re-emerged in 1981 as an international journal published in Britain. It did not survive long into the post-Communist period of the 1990s. (The new journal, *Constellations*, based at Harvard and the New School for Social Research, continues with many of the issues and concerns associated with the last several years of publication of PI).

Richard Bernstein's *Habermas and Modernity* (1985) documents the theoretical and practical intent of PI's focus on Habermas's social theory. However, Bernstein's own introduction to the collection, on the eve of Communism's *and* this Marxist Humanist tendency's collapse, failed to anticipate Habermas's decisive political/practical distancing himself from the Marxist Humanist tendency (only subsequently theoretically justified in *Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*). Bernstein, in fact, stressed Habermas's *affinity* with the "praxis philosophy" of the Marxist Humanists, which was far from non-controversial (Lichtheim 1971; Jay 1972; Dallmayr 1984; Wellmer, 1993).

Axel Honneth, one of Habermas's younger followers in Germany, contributed considerably to the dissemination of Habermas's ideas, including especially outside Germany. His participation was key in shaping the kind of forum for Habemas's ideas consonant with Habermas's implict notion of practical intervention in a world in which confidence in even "critical" Marxism was fading. For Habermas, the latter represented a new situation, uncharted,

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perhaps even dangerous. Honneth's *Critique of Power*, while published in the German in the mid-1980s, did not appear in English until 1991. By then his several articles in *Telos*, *New German Critique*, and PI had already raised the level of discussion of Habermas, particularly of Habermas's self-understanding of the status of his own theory in relationship to that of Marx's, and as differentiated from the older generation of Critical Theorists. In addition, *Critique of Power*, divided between discussion of Foucault and Habermas, helped respond to various calls, from the late 1970s onward, for Habermas to engage more directly in dialogue with post-structuralist and post-modern theories. The more than four hundred-page book has scarcely a reference to Marx (though there is one calling "crude" Marx's 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*) seeming to imply by omission agreement with Benhabib's conclusions, if not her method, following Habermas's own self-understanding, that Critical Theory now can, and should, develop without Marx. Honneth's *Struggle for Recognition* (1996) contains an essay which argues for the uselessness of Marx's theories for today.

To be sure, the more specific issue of whether Habermas's efforts could even be seen to have aimed at achieving a critical theory of modern society without Marx was by no means percieved to be a major one. There has been considerably more discussion on whether Habermas had succeeded in making a philosophic-historic break with the German idealist tradition (from which Marx himself did not break completely, according to Habermas), a tradition seen as integral to a discredited "philosophy of consciousness". Habermas characterizes the "overcoming" of the latter as an "achievement of the age" (Outhwaite 1994).

David Ingram's *Habermas and the Dialectic of Reason* (1987) even argued that *The Theory of Communicative Action* represented a "return" to

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Marx. He identifies this in terms of Habermas's rethinking of the concept of reification. In Ingram's reading, Habermas suggests the possibility of a "holistic" overcoming of disorienting social phenomenon. The way for this might be cleared through Habermas's concept of reification which was elaborated and expanded, and at the same time refined, allowing for a distinction between social shifts appearing in connection with an increasing rationalization of the lifeworld, and those which are pathological expressions of the the type of alienation described, but too narrowly, by Marx and some of his followers. Ingram sees this theoretical direction primarily in terms of Habermas's new reflections on "aesthetic reason".

The appendix to Fred Dallmayr's earlier *Polis and Praxis* (1984), which is one of the earlier reviews of the TCA (after the first volume's English translation) had argued that Habermas, despite his intentions, remained bound to the traditional oppositions endemic to Western metaphysics (Dallmayr 1984). Indeed, it is precisely that continued connection (which Dallmayr also associates with Habermas's current reflections on aesthetic reason), which has finally turned Habermas *away* from his earlier committment to politics, or political praxis, and toward a theory of the "social domain". (According to Dallmayr, politics in TCA is conceived as a subsystem submerged in bureaucratic controls, while having no clear place within the lifeworld either).

Yet, it is only from the late 1980s that at least two distinctive attitudes crystalize around the critical discussion of Habermas's theory. The two volumes, *Philosophical Interventions in the Unfinished Project of Enlightenment*, and *Cultural-Political Interventions in the Unfinished Project of Enlightenment* (1992), are edited by Honneth, McCarthy, Claus Offe and Albrecht Wellmer. These latter might be fairly described as a significant part of a tendency of critical support of Habermas's general direction, while

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disagreeing on particular issues. As is clear from the title to the two volumes (and their dedication to Habermas on his sixty-fifth birthday) a sort of loose Habermasian tendency had developed--apparently motivated by the idea that what was needed was an increasingly active relationship to Habermas's ideas (or at least those inspired by the latter).

Stanley Aronowitz's *Science as Power* (1988), Istvan Meszaros's *Power of Ideology* (1989), Tom Rockmore's, *Habermas and Historical Materialism* (1989) and Moishe Postone's, *Time, Labor and Social Domination: A Re-examination of Marx's Crtical Theory* (1993) represent later, more independent, works which make strong cases (though to some extent implicit) for the weaknesses of the first tendency's assumptions of a lack of contemporary import and relevance of at least some of Marx's ideas for the possibility of a genuine critical theory of society. *Upon this basis*, they tend to raise questions concerning the general social relevance, and therefore the solidity, not merely of Habermas's theory proper, but especially its "programmatic" quality.

Stanley Aronowitz's *Science as Power* (1988) is unlike McCarthy's and Jay's work in that it is not a systematic analysis of Habermas's theory. It contrasts with the earlier studies in that it combined an explicit reading of Marx's work (*German Ideology, Grundrise, Capital*) with discussion of Habermas's theory. The latter is found to be regressive in comparison. In the broader context of Aronowitz's study of science, in which Habermas's "post-Marxism" is found to be inadequate, the problem of Habermas and Marxism is not meant to be amplified, but rather dissipated. Still, the doubt cast on Habermas's understanding of Marx's major theoretical work must have given pause to many who might have too easily accepted the theoretical conclusions of McCarthy or Jay.

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One of the aims of this study is to highlight the "project" (or "programmatic") quality of Habermas's theory. Inseparable from evaluation of the content of varying theoretical positions in this, or at least one might deduce from Habermas's own views, is the working out of a concept of the public sphere and its relationship to Habermas's notion of a practical discourse.

From the perspective of the evolving status of Marx's ideas in Habermas's theory construction, and the divergent opinions on this question, the concepts of the public sphere and practical discourse begin to appear in a new light. Consideration of the belated translation into English of the *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1989), nearly three decades after its German publication is relevant here. It was followed five years later by *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (1992), a published symposium, edited by Craig Calhoun.

In the long run, Habermas's approach to Marx's theory is related to the concepts of the public sphere and practical discourse which, in turn, are related to the methodological questions of immanent and transcendent critique. The public sphere and practical discourse, when Habermas links them to the developing concepts of lifeworld and system, represent the diagnosis of contemporary society, its increasing "rationalization." Hence, applying Habermas's diagnosis of the times to his own theory formation, the changing nature of society, and its conceptualization, might be illustrated by comparison of what the "public sphere" represented in *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*--historically, a spontaneous cultural phenomenon with strong political implications--to what it reflectively refers to by the 1990s: highly specialized discussion of the concept itself, theoretical self-reflection seen as essential for a ressurection of the distinguishing (progressive) feature of modernity, though now on a higher level of abstraction.

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McCarthy's work focused on Habermas's own confrontations with competing methodologies, and diverse disciplines, on his way to a distinguishable theory in its own right. McCarthy (though clearly aware of its significance) scarcely elaborated Habermas's concept of a public sphere. Even with the widely-recognized complexities of Habermas's theories, that concept is still usually understood to be the animating one of his entire body of work. Yet, Habermas recently remarked that--in respect to his early study of the public sphere--he had "turned to other concerns" (Habermas 1992b, 421). McCarthy did not particularly focus on the concept of the public sphere perhaps because Habermas had not yet done so either. When Habermas returned to it (first in a practical, then in a theoretical, sense) an important effect (if not intent) was to mold the reception (including in the U.S) of his proposed replacement of Marx's theory with his own.

One interesting perspective on this process can be developed through examination of originally Marxist-oriented journals with a substantial following among critical-theory oriented intellectuals. (I examine one of them in Chapter Five). Through these journals Habermas and various supporters initiated a process leading to a dissolution of a notion of the practical potential of Marx's theory, the notable feature being the presentation as well of something to put in its "place"--Habermas's by now mature critical social theory

It is important to see that this was not yet the situation when McCarthy wrote and published his book. Moreover, it was probably the case that it was McCarthy's (and other's) sort of mistaken conflation of Habermas's theory with Marx's which probably spurred Habermas, over the course of the following decade, in order to counter the impression that his theory was simply a variant of Marxism, to focus on intervention in these "neo-Marxist" journals.

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The point of this intervention then was certainly not to argue for the continuity of Habermasian Critical Theory with Marx's theory of capitalism. Quite the opposite, the intervention was gauged to emphatically contrast Habermas's theory with both "traditional" and (later) "critical" Marxism; Habermas (with both philosophic and political intent) applied the concepts (and distinction) of theoretical and practical discourse as a means of differentiating his own theory.

Yet, as Moishe Postone (who will be discussed below) has recently shown, Habermas himself retained basic assumptions of "traditional Marxism" and thereby helped perpetuate them by failing to distinguish them (which would have required a fundamental re-interpretation) from Marx's actual theory; due to this, Habermas's work contains one of today's most relied upon articulations of these traditional Marxist views.

In retrospect, McCarthy's questionable interpretation of the "Marxism" of *Legitimation Crisis* generally miscalculated the book's long-term significance when he seemed to argue that it represented an adequate justification of Habermas's supplementation or "updating" of Marx's social analysis. It was not easy in the mid-to-late 1970s to anticipate the scope of Habermas's intentions in respect to Marx and Marxism. At the time, *Legitimation Crisis* seemed to represent a credible political diagnosis demanded by Habermas's long trek through theoretical confrontation with competing methodologies. *LC* is indeed a link in Habermas's diagnosis of contemporary society. It did not, it turns out, encompass the full intent of the concept of practical discourse, a concept of Habermas's that McCarthy, it should be noted must be credited with having ushered into wider discussion (Held 1980).

What is not fully appreciated among most commentators, an essential element of Habermas's theory development was his direct participation in

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molding the reception of his thought, including outside Germany. From the moment (beginning in the mid-1970s) he began to assert and defend his own (post- Marx) theory, a theory which he began to suggest was in need of development as a contemporary (and vital) form of practice, Habermas, to a far greater extent than his predecessors in the Critical Theory tradition, assumed an active role in the debate about how his own ideas should be understood and practically employed. This process peaked by the mid-1980s while important theses in *Legitimation Crisis* seemed to become obsolete (White 1988).

Perhaps the most striking contrast in the literature is found in works separated precisely by the decade of the 1980s. While McCarthy did little to discourage the idea of some level of compatibility of Habermas's theory with that of Marx's, Tom Rockmore convincingly demonstrated Habermas's explicit, systematic, even even step-by-step, "replacement" of Marx's theory. He does this with a close reading of Habermas's major theoretical works, excavating those portions which refer directly to Habermas's method and decisions on the way to "replacement" of Marx's "historical materialism (Rockmore 1989, 169).

Rockmore did not, however, notice a striking illustration of Habermas's assessment of his fully developed theory's relationship to Marx's; Habermas singles out a passage in the *Grundrisse* where Marx speculates on a maturing capitalism (Habermas 1987, 402). Marx has already substantially worked out his value theory and a concept of labor's specificity in capitalist society. He has broken in two the classical political economic concept of labor. Marx now views labor dialectically, a relation of abstract and concrete. Focusing on the labor process itself, Marx describes capitalist labor and production of the value form of wealth. In the capitalist production process labor in molded into an increasingly standardized and relatively undifferentiated series of motions dictated by the socially necessary labor time for the production of commodities.

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Marx notices that the United States exemplifies this stage of capitalism. Due to the value integument of the capitalist mode of production, labor has, "become a matter of chance and hence of indifference". As Habermas describes the passage, Marx conceived this to be a "problem" for the workers. With this perception, Marx constructed a theory adequate to the society he lived in, and of the possibility of social transformation, because the crisis potential specific to it, becoming problematic, could then be thematized.

The implication, following from the prior analyses in TCA , is that (more than a century later) "interaction", or communicative action oriented to understanding, faces a threat similar to what Marx identified in regard to labor (seen as the relation of man to nature) and social meaning in the nineteenth century. Habermas characterizes the contemporary problem, more abstract than Marx's diagnosis, specific to contemporaneity, as a "colonization of the lifeworld" (Habermas 1987, 355). He in fact argues that Marx had subsumed the general (social life) under the specific (labor) (Habermas 1987, 342). Turning to systems theory, Habermas analyzes this as an intrusion of systemic imperatives, the strategic logic of the "steering" mechanisms represented through the medias of money and power, into social, or necessarily symbolically constituted, domains.

An implication of this is that Habermas's social theory (if not Critical Theory generally) is oriented toward and, in fact, follows social practice (perhaps in contrast to dogmatic Marxism). The colonization of the lifeworld--analogous to what he takes to be the systematization of labor in Marx's day--affords philosophy (re-worked in his version of Critical Theory) access to previously unconceptualized phenomenon in the social world; a diagnosis of the times discloses a cultural process of increasing abstraction. This is seen in terms of an evolution of forms of human activity which achieved centrality in the

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developmental stages of modernization. The movement is from industrial labor in incipient capitalism to communicative action in late capitalism.

Habermas traced an implication of this problematic to its incipient stage in the writings of the early Hegel (Habermas 1973), who perceived the bifurcation of labor and interaction, which he held distinguished the modern world. An original unity thus broken apart could only be restored on the basis of an intersubjectively achieved consensus. But Hegel then abandoned this insight when he turned to a "monologic" conception, culminating in a philosophy of history unfolding from Absolute Spirit. Marx, without awareness of this early Hegel, independently recovered the dualism inherent in the specific way of life defined as modernity, but in the end failed to separate himself from Hegel's (later) logic, instead recasting the latter as a "synthesis through social labor" (Habermas 1972).

Labor, progressively (and permanently) shorn of its variety of socially integrating features--contrary to Marx's "romantic" notion of a future de-differentiation of society based on class consciousness--is instead pared down into a solely instrumental activity. Labor's social prominence is dissolved, or is now seen as a special case of a more general process. Modernity is characterized by a decentered form of life in which the problem of meaning shifts from the social repercussions of a new world, arising out of the metabolic relation between the species and nature, to the more abstract processes associated with the differentiation of the spheres of culture, society and personality constitutive of a complex lifeworld which uncouples from the subsystems of economy and state. "Labor", in short, is hardly a theoretical or a practical problem in contemporary society. It has fallen in a process of increasing "real" abstraction (Habermas 1987, 402).

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Just as Marx arrived (in a theoretical sense) at the United States when he saw it as the harbinger of a new level of "real abstraction", Habermas, around the time of the completion of TCA, turned considerable attention (including outside Germany and perhaps especially to the U.S.) to molding a public sphere in which the relation of philosophy and social theory was prominently thematized. This process can be viewed as an attempt to apply the concepts of theoretical and practical discourse to Marxism itself. This is rooted in Habermas's diagnosis of the objectivity of interaction as the principal and necessary (though endangered) ingredient for the continuation of "modern" life. Modern society, while due to its complexity was not threatened by political or social revolution (Habermas 1992a, 469), was vulnerable to collapse, an alternative which Habermas left notoriously under-specified.

Moishe Postone's, *Time, Labor and Social Domination: A Reinterpretation of Marx's Critical Theory* (1993) identifies a Marxism sharing certain traditional misunderstandings of some of Marx's basic categories, spanning practically the entire twentieth century. In one chapter, Critical Theory is examined in the 1930s and 1940s work of Horkheimer and Pollock. Later, the analysis is carried through by inclusion of a chapter devoted to Habermas, the only contemporary theorist whose work he takes up extensively.

Postone writes on Habermas's critique of Marx, constitutive of Habermas's effort to revitalize Critical Theory while uncoupling it from the pervasive pessimism of the founders of the Frankfurt School. While a large number of Marxist theorists in this century are critically cited in the footnotes, the fuller attention to Habermas's critique of Marx is due to the fact that Postone shares a grounding in the Critical Theory tradition, and to his judgement that Habermas's theory depends in the most crucial respects on a critique of traditional Marxism, thus amounting to a strawman argument, and shields from

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deeper probing the issue of the relevance of Marx's theory for a new, contemporary stage of capitalism.

Furthermore, Habermas's reading of Marx is constitutive of his own theory. An inadequate interpretation of Marx shapes the theory which is intended to replace it. In comparison, the reinterpretation of Marx Postone proposes, specifically Marx's "mature critical theory", might, in its own right, be shown to be more adequate to late twentieth century capitalism than Habermas's theory. The latter both retains, intrinsic to it, questionable positive features meant to negate elements falsely attributed to Marx's theory, and lacks crucial conceptual insights found in Marx's theory.

Habermas defended his theory against theoretical positions he attributed at various times to Marx (Habermas 1975), at others to "Marxists" (Habermas 1979), and still others to Marx and the Marxists (Habermas 1992a), fundamental distinctions between the two at times implied (Habermas 1972), and at other times apparently judged not to have major significance (Habermas 1973). As Rockmore had noted, however, Habermas's later work tended to categorize Marx's theory alone as representing a materialist theory in need of replacement (Rockmore 1989).

The tension in this is exemplified in Habermas's later works which, though quite different in form, single out for special attention a certain tendency of Marxism, ie; "praxis philosophy", or what Rockmore (for example) deduces as referring especially to the Marxist Humanism represented by "a group of Yugoslav thinkers clustered around the journal *Praxis*" (Rockmore 1989, 107), which drew inspiration from the 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts.* (This is especially interesting in light of a "post-Communist" dialogue between Habermas and Adam Michnik in *New Left Review,* where the latter suggests Habermas's history of a lack of critical attention to Communist regimes, and lack

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of support for the Solidarity movement in the early 1980s) (Michnik and Habermas 1994, 29). I will develop this further in Chapter Six, the concluding chapter.

There are critical references to Habermas's theory scattered throughout Postone's work, but here (in concluding this introduction) I will briefly review the chapter devoted entirely to him. The fact that his critical approach to Habermas's understanding of Marx's theory comes from within the Critical Theory tradition at a time when the latter is dominated by Habermas's work makes Postone's work especially important in the following chapters.

Postone's *Time, Labor, and Social Domination* is not a detailed, systematic appraisal of Habermas's theories. Yet, the critique achieves a certain comprehensiveness. There is an astute selection of both Habermas's texts and Marx's critical concepts traditionally misunderstood by even his ostensibly most sympathetic readers. The concepts in question, already discussed in Postone's earlier chapters, are then unfolded. A misunderstanding of them is shown to be the principal influence in the trajectory of both Critical Theory in general and, in specified ways, Habermas's theory--a theory which attempted to encompass social developments in the post-World War II period. Postone begins with "Marx's Metacritique of Hegel: Synthesis Through Social Labor" (Habermas 1972, 25-42), one of Habermas's most difficult texts. In that work, Postone traces Habermas's understanding of the concept of labor.

Habermas's first several pages ostensibly consist of a close reading of the third and final part of Marx's 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, which has the title, "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General" (Marx 1967b, 314-337). Marx's essay, in turn, represents his most explicit and extensive attention to Hegel, primarily the latters's *Phenomenology of Mind*, but

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including as well the *Science of Logic*, and the *Encyclopedia of the Philosopical Sciences* generally. At this stage Habermas believes Marx's theory is an advance, in one sense at least, over Hegel's: Marx's rejection of a "philosophy of identity" (Habermas 1972, 25). Marx assumed the externality of nature. In doing so, Marx was in a position to develop a radical critique of knowledge which could have prevented the atrophy of epistemology, and the subsequent predominance of Positivism. Habermas holds that Marx viewed labor as regulating the material exchange with nature, *and* as constituting a world around us--an objective nature for us. Thus, Marx viewed labor as synthesis. In doing so, however, the "substratum" in which synthesis (of objectivity and subjectivity) is expressed is a system of social labor, and not a connection of symbols (Habermas 1972, 31). Symbolic interaction, in Marx's theory, is ultimately subsumed, in a positive sense, in a system of labor.

Postone's critique of Habermas centers around an unfoldment of Marx's analysis of concrete and abstract labor. Habermas, to begin with, fails to distinguish these concepts. Habermas shares with traditional Marxism an understanding of labor which is transhistorical (the metabolical relationship between people and nature) rather than catching the crucial dual nature it assumes specifically in capitalism. Habermas fails to grasp the way in which abstract labor molds interaction within capitalism--the way labor, in mediating itself, constitutes a quasi-independent set of structures which exert an abstract form of social compulsion (Postone 1993, 240). Marx, far from claiming a stake in the instrumental type of action signified by a technical relation to nature as Habermas appears to assume, instead demonstrates how this relationship is connected to labor's peculiar form of mediation of social interaction as well, specifically in capitalism.

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Habermas holds that due to Marx's commitment to the idea of labor as synthesis--which took the place of a logic in Hegel--the distinction he recognized in his material investigations (between the forces and relations of production, for example) was not secured at the categorical level. Marx's collapse of interaction into labor resulted in his theory lacking a sufficiently self-reflexive dimension, opening the way for further development of Positivism. (The 'self-reflexive dimension" in question here refers to the problem of the role of theory in social constitution. Habermas's much later critique of the Frankfurt School (Habermas 1983; 1987) also identified aporias and the lack of a standard by which to criticize a percieved gap between the ideal and the real.)

His placement of this presentation of Habermas's most philosophically explicit consideration of Marx's "metacritique" of Hegel is crucial to the argument of Postone's entire study. It serves to reinforce the cogency of Part Two of Postone's work. This Part reconstructs Marx's critique of the commodity form of production. The unfoldment of this analysis in Marx's *Capital* is the basis upon which to understand the specificity of labor (opposite of any synthesis whether technical or dialogic) in this social formation--the function it performs in mediating both itself and--as a "quasi-independent" set of structures--social relations generally. Marx's concept of labor--the social mediation specific to capitalism--discloses a specific kind of abstract social domination which does not appear social at all.

Postone notes that Habermas takes over from Pollock and Horkheimer the idea of labor as instrumental activity. Habermas focuses on a consequent need to supplement this dimension with an understanding of interaction, which escapes the technical (though synthetic) role of labor; this approach stems from Habermas's failure to grasp the double nature of labor in capitalism as expressed in the commodity--the value form of production and wealth.

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Value understood as the specific form of wealth intrinsic to capitalism is the second concept--following labor--Postone shows the early Habermas failed to comprehend. Rather than perceiving the internal opposition between value and wealth increasingly manifested in technologically advanced capitalism, Habermas equates value and wealth. Postone demonstrates Habermas's misunderstanding of this relation specific to capitalism most clearly by reference to the latter's early article, "Between Philosophy and Science: Marxism as Critique" (Habermas 1973, 195-252). Here Postone shows that Habermas misinterprets the *Grundrisse* in a way consequential (in a negative sense) for the development of his own theory proper. (It is interesting to note here that, despite the order of Postone's presentation, Habermas's misunderstanding of Marx's concept of labor *follows* his failure to grasp the distinction between the material and value forms of wealth).

The value-form of wealth Marx develops in the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* is a function of direct labor time, as wealth in general was for classical political economy. Marx, however, already suggested in the *Grundrisse* that the rapidly expanding productivity in industrial capitalism increasingly becomes a function instead of science and its application to production, rather than the labor time and, hence, direct human labor employed. The *material* wealth-creating *potential* of industrial capitalism enters into a deepening contradiction with the value form of wealth. The value-form, dependent on the amount of labor time and hence the expenditure of direct human labor, is socially determinant in capitalism; however it becomes increasingly anachronistic when it does not lead to a reduction of labor time, or a positive transformation of fragmented, alienated labor.

Postone, after reviewing this contradiction of the value form and material wealth Marx had uncovered in the *Grundrisse*, quotes a relevant passage from

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that work, a passage upon which Habermas based his criticism of Marx's value theory:

> But to the degree that large industry develops, the creation of real wealth comes to depend less on labor time and on the amount of labor employed than on the power of agencies set in motion during labor time (Postone 1993, 233).

In Habermas's treatment of this passage Marx early on achieved this insight, which logically demanded a reformulation of the labor theory of value. The advance in technical knowledge needed to be incorporated into the concept of constant capital. The implication of this is that theoretical knowledge already available to Marx negated his notion of a salient contradiction between "dead" labor and "living" labor; constant capital might now be seen as "socialized"--or actualized, as stored up technical knowledge, dependent upon a type of social interaction, and accessible to "social planning" of a rational distribution of surplus value.

According to Habermas, Marx did not incorporate this early insight into his final theory (Habermas 1973, 227). The assumption upon which Habermas's criticism of Marx rests is that science and technology represent a new basis of value (Habermas 1973, 226). Postone demonstrates that the implication of this assumption is that Habermas conflates what Marx was distinguishing--that in capitalism, a specific form of society, the potential of material wealth creation is locked within the specific value form of wealth, a function of direct labor time.

Postone acknowledges that Habermas's intention was to overcome the limitations of traditional Marxism which tended to consider labor a "transhistorical" source of wealth. Yet, in place of labor as the transhistorical source of wealth, Habermas substitutes an evolutionary transformation of the

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basis of value itself. This indicates a failure to grasp the specific concept of the centrality of the dual nature of labor, the basis for the commodity-form of value production in capitalism. The value form of wealth develops in opposition to a material form of wealth. Neither forms of wealth are "transhistorical". The increasing tension between the two forms *within* capitalism characterize the latter's historical specificity, serving as the basis for its immanent critique at Marx's categorical level.

According to Postone, the basis of Habermas's mistaken interpretation of the law of value is related to his having incorporated important assumptions from traditional political economy, mistakenly atrtibuting them to Marx as well. Marx was *critical* of labor; he develops a *critical* concept of it as the social mediation specific to captialism. Crucially, Marx took great pains to *criticize* an idea of "labor" as a *transhistorical*, a) source of wealth; and, b) relation of man to nature. In capitalism (where things are reversed compared to previous history), it was primarily neither.

Moreover, Habermas implies that Marx "witheld" evidence that would have called into question elements of his final theory. Habermas suggests that insights developed in the *Grundrisse* (which was not published in his lifetime) most relevant for developed capitalism have gone largely unrecognized, partly because Marx was aware that they were at variance with his own historically-determined theoretical and political agenda.

Yet, even within the valid (but covered up) theoretical insights he detects in the *Grundrisse* (which Marx is said not to have incorporated into *Capital*) Habermas levels what he regards as a salient critique: together with what Habermas understands to be Marx's notion of the decreasing relevance of direct labor in production, Habermas suggests that Marx "unofficially" (a term I will explain later) believed that the transformation of science into machinery

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must lead to the liberation of a self-conscious general Subject. This interpretation imputes to Marx an idea of emancipation as the result of a linear, automatic development of material production, a materialist version of the notion of the realization of *Geist* in Hegel's *Phenomenology*. Within the *Grundrisse*, according to Habermas, Marx can be seen to have recoiled from this conclusion; he then expressed another position, which recognized the difference between the self-conscious control of social life and the, "automatic regulation of the process of production that has become independent of the producers" (Habermas 1972). Here, according to Habermas, is hardly disputable evidence that Marx himself already questioned the analytic centrality (for a social theory) he had accorded to labor. Postone, in response to this, writes,

> social constitution by labor in Marx's analysis...is not transhistorical but, rather, a historically specific mode that underlies the automatic regulation of social life in capitalism. This form of social constitution is the object, not the standpoint, of his critique...(Postone 1993, 236).

While pointing to some shifts in emphasis in TCA, Postone regards the work as basically continuous with themes and concerns evident in Habermas's earlier work. Habermas's reading of Marx, as in those earlier works, is constitutive of his approach. While TCA, then, is importantly shaped by Habermas's understanding of Marx, Postone recognizes a two-pronged critical thrust, one aimed at social scientific theory, the other at Marx and Marxism. In fact, Marx is hardly taken up directly in TCA; rather, as Habermas states clearly in the beginning of the work, his is a "second attempt" from within the Western Marxist tradition to appropriate Max Weber's theory of societal rationalization, which Weber viewed as flowing from a world historical cultural shift. The first attempt was Lukács's *History and Class Consciousness*, basic insights from

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which the Critical Theory of Horkheimer and Adorno developed. Postone's book is structured around an immanent critique of Western Marxism. He had already provided concise criticisms of Horkheimer, Lukács and, to a lessor extent, Adorno. These criticisms are grounded in a close reading and re-interpretation of what he calls Marx's mature critical theory, principally the *Grundrisse* and *Capital*. None of the three men, he holds, completely escaped what they thought was Marx's concept of labor. This they understood as the relationship between man and nature, while it was actually the case, according to Postone, that Marx's mature critical theory developed the concept of labor as the general form of social mediation specific to capitalism. In place of a transhistorical view of labor as productive activity, Marx over time sharpened a two-fold concept of labor, concrete and abstract, which captured the ground of the commodity--the basic element of the social life of capitalism.

The key point Postone notes here has to do with Habermas's approach to Lukács's reformulation of the conceptual relationship of Marx and Weber. While in Weber the modern world view results in the instrumentalization of reason and the concurrent loss of freedom and meaning, Lukács grounds this process in the historical, and hence transitory, form of the commodity when, in becoming the characteristic feature of the economic life of society, it structures a totality. Significantly, Postone points out that Habermas doesn"t attempt to refute Lukács's argument against Weber. Rather, Habermas takes strong exception to Lukács's solution to the problem. The early Lukács, as is well known, posits the proletariat as the identical subject-object of the historical process. By virtue of the proletariat's position in society, a standpoint exists from which to criticize reification, a type of social domination which, while abstract, can be overcome. The coming into its own of a specific, but

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intrinsically universal, class re-integrates a totality, bringing it back within the horizon of social action.

Lukács's approach was overly "romantic" and relied on a concretist class standpoint, leading to a Hegelian 'solution" to a problem Habermas says was equally recognized by Marx and Weber. The respective critical theories of Adorno and Horkheimer, who both explicitly rejected the Lukácsian Hegelian logic of identity, focused on culture and supplementation of Marxism's orthodox attention to the "economic base". Habermas attempted to shift social theory from exclusive attention to instrumental reason, its causes and consequences, to his notions of communicative action and reason.

According to Habermas (Habermas 1984, 180), Weber's concept of rationalization, underlying modern society, was selective. It isolated instrumental reason when the resources for another type of rationalization also existed, based in social interaction. The symbolic reproduction of the latter type of rationalization was not only necessary for modern society, but in fact provided the basis for the rationalization Weber described. Habermas grounds communicative reason (or rationality) in the movement from tradtional society to modern society, from social integration based on normatively ascribed agreement, to that based on communicatively acheived agreement (Habermas 1984, 70). This shift is based on the position that previous attempts--from within Western Marxism--to conceptualize modern society were based on a philosophy of consciousness (Habermas 1987, 390) which must fail to grasp two levels of society--system and lifeworld--and their interaction.

In the context of the literature on Habermas as a whole, Postone manages a rare breakthrough in respect to this issue. First, he demonstrates that his own position shares certain ground with Habermas, mainly concerning

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a critique of the philosophy of consciousness, which Postone holds is related to the *traditional* concept of labor (Postone 1993, 247).

Second, and most impressively, he begins to offer his own alternative, based on a different reading of the late Marx. Postone identifies weaknesses in Habermas's theory. But--against the backdrop of the relationship of Habermas's theory and the traditional Marxism it assumes--Postone explains both with reference to the contradictory nature of capitalism itself.

Habermas is critical of a philosophy of consciousness which Postone then ties to the traditional concept of labor, that is, conceived as the relationship between man and nature. Habermas holds that this philosophy, which he rejects as exhausted, is retained in the older Critical Theory. Yet, Postone maintains, Habermas himself fails to escape the old Frankfurt School thesis of the one-dimensionality attributed to late capitalism. Habermas is obliged to turn to a "quasi-ontological" separation of communicative action and labor, the former a domain of social reality outside capitalism (Postone 1993, 252). Habermas centers his theoretical attention here. Traditional Marxism tended to rely on a future development of labor, or the coming into its own of the proletariat based in modern industry. Habermas, in turn, trusted in a sphere of interaction which would come into its own or "realize" itself.

Postone writes that *Marx's* "historically determinate approach", which is found *neither* in the older Frankfurt School, *nor* Habermas nor, for that matter, in any of the myriad strands of Marxism Postone includes under the category of "traditional Marxism",

> provides a framework within which the underspecified notions of system and lifeworld can also be analyzed...Marx argues that capitalism's social relations are unique in that they do not appear social at all. The structure of relations constituted by commodity-determined labor undermines earlier systems of overt social ties without, however, replacing them with a similar system. Instead, what emerges is a social universe that Marx

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describes as one of personal independence in a context of objective dependence. Both the abstract, quasi-objective structure of necessity and, on the immediate level, the much greater latitude of interaction in capitalist society than in a traditional society, are moments of the form of mediation that characterizes capitalism. In a sense, the opposition of system and lifeworld--like the earlier one of labor and interaction--expresses a hypostatization of these two moments in a way that dissolves capitalist relations into "material" and "symbolic" spheres. The characteristics of the value dimension of the alienated social relations are attributed to the systemic dimension. This conceptual objectification leaves an apparently indeterminate sphere of communication which no longer is seen as structured by a form of social mediation (inasmuch as that form is not overtly social); rather, it is seen as self-structuring and "naturally social." Within the framework of this approach, then, the underspecification of lifeworld as well as system expresses a theoretical point of departure that has retained the notion of "labor" (Postone 1993, 259-260).

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CHAPTER TWO

MARX AS INSIDER? "BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE: MARXISM AS CRITIQUE" AND *STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE*

What is at Stake in the Habermas/Marx Relationship

Often the discussions of Habermas's theory formation, in so far as they concern his assimilation of Marx and Marxism, begin from the premises that Habermas conserved about all that was possible to conserve in what was traditionally understood as Marx's thought; and that he, moreover, creatively infused the tradition by supplementing it with recent achievements in the human or social sciences (McCarthy 1979; Held 1980; Bernstein 1985). Some, but less, attention is directed to his specific revisions of Marx's concepts in the light of his interpretation of historical or empirical evidence, with the aim of of suggesting new syntheses (Rockmore 1989; Ingram 1990).

While both of the above premises are to some extent sound, they do not exhaust the possible approaches to the problem of Habermas, Marx and contemporaneity. And, in so far as Habermas developed a theory distinct from Marx's, an obvious question is whether his theory is compatible with Marx's (Rockmore 1989). Postone (1993), for example, has shown how a

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"reinterpretation of Marx's critical theory", rather than following from Habermas's theory situated later in time, can account for many of the latter's original features by demonstrating their dependence upon Habermas's inadequate presentation of some of Marx's basic concepts. Such a reinterpretation points to a possible revitalization of Marx's theory in the sense of its adequacy for a critical approach to contemporary society. Postone's retinterpretation of Marx's "mature critical theory" includes, but is not limited to, a discovery of the means to uncover abstract forms of social domination which explain phenomenon of late capitalism at a level deeper than that of the market and property ownership. Thus, Postone opens to question Habermas's sense of modernity's configuration of labor, economy, lifeworld, the (social welfare) state, and critical social theory itself.

Within Habermas's writings there is a pattern of attempts to both revise and re-interpret various concepts, sometimes offering a description of how they were developed in Marx's own texts (Habermas 1972), but more often as they had become conventionally understood (Habermas 1975; Habermas 1990b). What has become increasingly clear is that, in trying to understand Habermas's thought, distinctions should be drawn between his proposals for revisions of Marxism (that is, the convential understanding of Marx's theory) and his own attempts at re-interpretation, properly speaking. These distinctions are useful for describing and assessing the meaning of Habermas's series of varied approaches to Marx's theory, ranging through the decades of the 1960s-1990s.

An immanent critique of Habermas's theory demands focused analysis of his confrontation with Marx constitutive of his own theory. The superiority of Postone's approach implicitly relies on a distinction between the given interpretation for which revision is proposed and re-interpretation. Postone's mode of critique of competing interpretations (such as Habermas's) is an

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approach to Marx which seeks to demonstrate the intrinsic weaknesses of these interpretations while convincingly explaining their social currency, even among those wishing to develop a thorough-going critique of contemporary capitalism. He thus incorporates into his own analysis an explanation for the plausibility of what he nonetheless goes beyond. This is not a matter of "exposing" as mere ideology those ideas which depart from what is held to be original, unique, and true in Marx. To the contrary, the two-fold nature of Postone's type of critique conserves the integrity, and individual quality, of a competing idea or theory and, by also explaining it socially, grasps another dimension indispensible for a conceptual advance pregnant with practical implications.

In the case of his treatment of Habermas, this other dimension is arrived at with Postone's identification of the particular nature and import of *abstraction* in our time. Theory as itself a form of abstraction is related to the latter's quality involved in social mediation. In a word, one might argue that Habermas's interpretation of Marx fails. Postone's critical breakthrough, however, consists in a creative re-conceptualization of the incompatibility between the force of abstraction immanent in labor as social mediation within capitalism and Habermas's transhistorical theory of social evolution (or any theory in which the role of abstraction itself remains underspecified). Postone clarifies an abstract domination characteristic of capitalist society, specifically how it was conceived by Marx, but never really digested by post-Marx Marxists. Postone's re-interpretation--in identiying a basic misconception common to a large part of the tradition--points to the possibility of a revitalization of Marx's theory.

Postone restricts his study to several of Marx's basic concepts. These concepts are shown not to have been fully grasped even within the tradition which developed, if not always in Marx's name, at least in his spirit. Such a situation leads to the question whether there remain yet other concepts, themes,

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or features of Marx's thought which might prove fruitful through reinterpretation along the lines opened by Postone. Postone's placement of Habermas's theory so centrally in his discernment and demonstration of the continuing cogency of *Marx's* theory, warrants a close examination of Habermas's various approaches to Marx (Chapters Two-Four), for it might disclose other concepts within Marx's thought (other than those elaborated in detail by Postone) which remain undigested but potentially fruitful for working out today's social problems and concerns. Among these, at least touched upon at various stages in Habermas's work, are the relationships of, a) normative and revolutionary concepts of social organization; b) philosophy to social theory, and c) critical thought and social change.

Such an examination will inform my study of an incipient public sphere in which Habermas played an important role. Chapter Five, which seeks to show the action dimension of Habermas's theory, will round-out my presentation of Haberma's theory as the intended replacement for Marxist (or Marx's) theory. The final Chapter Six will examine Habermas's own retrospective look at the development of his theory, and its present and future relationship to Marx's ideas in the context of a "post-Communist" world.

Habermas's periodic "returns" to Marx were essentially driven by the inadequacy of his comprehension of Marx's basic concepts on the one hand and, on the other hand, a rapidly changing world which none the less consistently drew new attention to various facets of Marx's thought. Whether or not these returns have now come to an end, the question remains, in one form or another, what relationship of social practice to theory has structured (or now structures) Habermas's thought. On one level, while Habermas understood that it was not impossible that "new" concepts, needed to develop a more adequate relationship of theory to practice, might be found among the "forgotten"

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elements of Marx's thought (as well as in the thought of other classical thinkers), his various approaches to Marx, through the 1960s-90s, contributed at least as much to obscuring or confusing those elements as to providing access to them.

Moreover, one of Habermas's central concerns, even as he approached in various instances an immanent critique of Marx's theory, was to inquire at the same time whether immanent critique of either contemporary society, or of Marx's theory, was possible or potentially of much value. Thus, in so far as the present chapter seeks to proceed through immanent critique of Habermas's approaches to Marx, it would have to demonstrate not only Habermas's misconceptions of Marx's ideas, but that those particular misconceptions played an important, if not central, role in the constitution of his theory and its practical implications, primarily as he understood them, but including as well his attempt to draw others into his project. It is Habermas's belief that only his theory remedied deficiencies in Marx, and was alone really capable of uncovering them.

As Postone as shown, from a standpoint *within* the Critical Theory tradition, Habermas's theory has reached a level of sophistication, and gained a sufficient amount of credibility, such that development of a re-interpretation of Marx's theory must have intrinsic to it the capability of explaining (socially) the plausibility of Habermas's theory, while demonstrating that it is not adequate to its object. While this chapter, then, remains for the most part at the level of immanent critique of Habermas's theory, it also begins to suggest relationships between contemporary developments and Marx's concepts which escape the bounds of Habermas's positions. Among these are the disintegration of social welfare states, the eclipse of Communism, the turn to unfettered market

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economies, and even the re-emergence of the question not only of global capitalism, but of its potential collapse.

As his own theory developed, Habermas increasingly reacted against "monologic" approaches to theory formation (Habermas 1989b). "Monologic" refers back to a "philosophy of consciousness", as well as to the positivistic or deterministic substance of various theories; on another level, it also points to the limitations of social theory when it is not worked out and clarified through a deliberately stylized mode of interaction, that is, dialogically. Far more than any of the older generation of the Frankfurt School, Habermas actively sought out, actively participated in, and actually attempted to shape discussions, or dialogues, with the aim of clarifying not only the nature and role of social theory generally, but his own theory particularly. Crucially, he saw this very process as constitutive of an important part of the originality of his social theoretic contribution, and perhaps even necessary for the type of social integration demanded by the particular requirements of modern society.

A second important difference, connected to the latter, is Habermas's very apparent concern with the reception of his theory (as a "critical theory") particularly in the U.S., or the English-speaking world generally. This will be examined in detail in Chapter Five, where I describe Habermas's intervention in the journal *Praxis International*, published in English and drawing an international readership. In order to explore the significance of this intervention, it will be helpful to begin the examination of the variety of Habermas's approaches to Marx and Marxism, what compelled them, and what resulted from them, by comparing and contrasting two early theoretical pieces.

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The Relationship of "Between Philosophy and Science: Marxism as Critique" and Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere

At first glance, it might appear peculiar that by now, with the considerable body of work accumulated on Habermas's thought, that the relationship between two early works--"Between Philosophy and Science: Marxism as Critique" (BPSMC) and *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (STPS) --has been so little analyzed. Neither Rockmore nor Postone--two writers with different sorts of comprehensive critiques of Habermas--took up STPS at all. Postone (who strongly criticizes Habermas's interpretation of Marx's theory) participated in a symposium on STPS soon after it was published in English in 1989; yet, his comments, rather than focusing directly on early Habermas's view of Marx's concepts, are aimed at defense of the intention of the study, which Habermas later concluded was, "still at the level of ideology critique" (Calhoun 1992), and concludes with a somewhat oblique challenge to Habermas's apparent long-standing assumption that the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe represented some type of socialism connected to the inherent limitations of Marx's ideas. Furthermore, he takes sharp issue with any suggestion that Marx's critique of capitalism had lost relevance in regard to the most technologically developed Western societies.

While I believe Postone makes a convincing case, in that he implicitly rejects any notion that STPS has suddenly become more "relevant" *because of* the way it counter-poses an idea of radical democracy against Marx's concepts, my task here is more basic. In analyzing the works from a contemporary perspective, one can see clearly the initial dualism, or contradictoriness, which became endemic to Habermas's continuous returns to Marx. On more than one occasion, Habermas seemed to indicate that he was finished with Marx, only to

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return again in response to new theoretical or practical issues. STPS attempted to view Marx's ideas from within the perspective of radical democratic theory. BPSMC (first written two years earlier), had sought to view democratic theory (or a theory of democracy) from within the Marxist perspective. (Habermas's notions of "reciprocity" and dialogue can be developed in this context.)

However, the dualism at issue here is not ultimately at the level of Habermas's early "critical theoretic" approach to Marx and contemporary society. More importantly, this dualism can be shown to be rooted in the problems identified by Postone related to the social constitution of capitalist society itself. Postone develops a concept of social mediation peculiar to capitalist society, no easier to identify today than it was when Marx wrote. The effects of this peculiar type of social mediation have not only become increasingly problematic in a practical sense under the rapidly expanding technological changes of recent decades. A conceptual grasp of this social mediation tends to undermine interpretations of Marx's theory which concern themselves primarily with the market and property relations. The "concreteness" of Marx's theory lies in its identification of forms of social constraint which are even more abstract than those typically traced to the market or property relations. Viewing as economic opposites existing Communism and advanced capitalist welfare states (as Habermas tended to) discloses a conceptual inadequacy in the reliance on these terms.

Habermas's early approach to Marx in BPSMC followed by STPS can be seen as preparatory for replacement of Marx's theory (heretofore the presumed foundation of contemporary critical theory) by another theory. STPS confirms an interpretation of Marx's political theory, or better, Marx's theory of the political, as exclusively merely a different (or more radical) theory of political

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economy. At the same time, it argues that certain debilitating limitations of Marx's theory are related to the horizon of theoretic critique. BPSMC, through a proposed revision of a deterministic economic theory attributed to Marx, had first attempted to expand conceptually the spheres of society (especially distribution and consumption of commodities) amendable to public deliberation. Following from this, on the one hand Marxism might be retained as a radicalization of, though in essential continuity with, political economy; on the other hand, such an approach also left open the option of rejecting both political economy and its critique as insufficient or inadequate in respect to a social formation grown increasingly complex.

In fact, the starting point of Habermas's argument, initially developed explicitly in BPSMC, is that Marxists--no matter how "humanist", "dissident" or "Western"--cannot escape the fundamentally materialist nature of Marx's theory (Habermas 1973). At the same time, he suggests in his opening paragraphs in connection with this, that if both world power blocs have not completely overcome strictly economic problems (or material scarcity) such an eventuality is certainly not out of the question in the forseeable future. In this way he seems to want to move the critical impulse--in so far as he believes it persists more or less openly in "late capitalism", and perhaps underground in the Soviet bloc--away from existing forms of Marxism and toward a different theory which, however, he has yet to articulate.

His later analysis of Marx in STPS amplified Habermas's earlier intimation that Marx understood his own theory nearly exclusively as an economic theory with clear deterministic features. In the earlier BPSMC Habermas describes how a variety of intellectual responses to history, and empirical observation, included attempts to retain Marx under different but untenable guises (Habermas 1973, 203). However, now was time, with the aid

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of modern social scientific concepts, to confront head-on the materialistic core of Marx's theory, not in order to totally obliterate the latter, but to salvage its rational element for a different, perhaps even more critical, theory of a society seen as grown far more "complex" than when Marx described it.

A key feature of BPSMC is that Marx's labor theory of value--in its original conception--is ultimately not viable. Both empirical reality, and perhaps equally convincingly (and more tellingly) Marx's own, albeit unpublished, research support this position (Habermas 1973, 229). Habermas also indicates that such a sober look at the facts alone leaves, irresponsibly, a yawning critical-theoretical void. Marx's theory, while not tenable in its classical form, did problematize aspects of social life unseen by theorists he successfully discredited. Critical examination of Marx's labor theory of value, rather than just concerning itself with his critique of political economy generally, leads to the question of how to extend democracy to all areas of social life.

Habermas proposes that Marx's critique was basically an attempt to resolve crisis. Against the background of the competition between two nuclearly-armed superpowers, where the "class-struggle" is said to have been displaced (Habermas 1973, 197), social democracy, the welfare state, should be seen as the locus for attempts to bring under social control those aspects of social life, especially the economy, theorized by conventional Marxism to operate on the basis of a natural law conceived within a philosophy of history.

In the section titled, "Critique of Ideology and the Critical Appropriation of Traditional Ideas", which directly follows Habermas's suggested revision of a labor theory of value he criticized and attributed to Marx, Habermas describes a general conception of Marx's theory:

> the prejudgement of Historical Materialism, which grants priority to the base over the superstructure..., Private property is considered to be the

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> dark focal point at which the eclipsing of the world is concentrated, the knots in which all the threads of compulsive social relationships are drawn together and fastened (Habermas 1973, 236).

This depicts a theory of the transhistorical determination of society's laws and its ideological superstructure, attributable to Marx. Such a theory is rooted in Marx's misunderstanding of his own thought as a "positive science". This conception is clearly articulated by Engels without correction by a more sophisticated Marx, who failed to reflect on "critique as such" (Habermas 1973, 238). The outcome was that all "spirit", including socialism, came to be considered to be ideology, the correct distinguished from the false, "soley according to the criteria of a realistic theory of knowledge" (Habermas 1973, 238).

Habermas continues his discussion with the claim that, with this, Marx moved outside the object of his critique (society itself), issuing a standard external to society. With this, theory lost its practical thrust. Habermas then quotes the fourth of Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach*:

> Feuerbach proceeds from the fact of religious self-alienation, the duplication of the world in a religious and a worldly one. His work consists in resolving the religious world back into its worldly basis. But that this worldly basis elevates itself above itself and establishes itself as an independent realm in the clouds can be explained only as a result of the internal rupture and self-contradiction of this worldly basis. The latter must thus be both understood in its contradictions and revolutionized practically (Habermas 1973, 239).

In quoting this thesis, Habermas's purpose is two-fold: to illustrate Marx's "ideology critique", and to subsequently propose, against this, a more effective practical force of ideas.

In presenting Marx's fourth thesis on Feuerbach, Habermas suggests the view that it is more (but not much more) than Feuerbach's own understanding of

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Hegel's "negation of the negative", or religious consciousness (which, Habermas adds, as though arguing with Marx) is "not nothing" (Habermas 1973, 239). The implication (following from the earlier references to Marx's economic theory) is that theoretically Marx (even as late as *Capital*) did not move significantly from Feuerbachian materialism, especially in a practical sense. (I will return to this issue when I take up the chapter in *Knowledge and Human Interests* which deals most extensively with Marx's 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*).

Here Habermas tries to show through a partly appreciative, partly critical reading of Ernst Bloch, how the "false consciousness of a false world includes utopian elements which contain energies that at the same time, once instructed about themselves, become critical impulses" (Habermas 1973, 239). Habermas is trying to delineate a social sphere outside the instrumentalized social relations he believes Marx captured but did not successfully point beyond.

In Bloch, Habermas finds a remarkable attempt to, "preserve within the critique of ideology the tradition that is criticized" (Habermas 1973, 240). Ideas, with a utopian excess that go beyond ideology, are said to, "lose their power of transcendence to their degree of their instrumentalization" (Habermas 1973, 240). The only "utopian excess" remaining after the maturing of the bourgeois form of society is that expressed in the "false consciousness of absoluteness, of a divorce from practice" (Habermas 1973, 240), an apparent reference to Hegel, as well as Marx's critique of the latter. Habermas writes,

> On the lowest rungs of the ideological ladder, as in the case of the fetishism of commodities, the estrangement of the theoretical elements from the practical marks...only the "estrangement" of praxis from itself...here ideology itself becomes practical, while its ideal claims, contained in the idea of an exchange of equivalents, have departed almost entirely (Habermas 1973, 240).

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Hence Bloch confined himself to the cultural tradition--myth, religion, literature and music--with the understanding the more indirect the mediation that relates them to social conflict the more readily ideas will reveal their "utopian excess" (Habermas 1973, 240).

Habermas's discussion of Bloch repesents an introduction to a concept of lifeworld, referring to social relations he conceives to be outside the "false consciousness of absoluteness", theory's divorce from practice, thought's instrumentalization. According to Habermas, Bloc's insight is derived from Marx's concept of the "fetishism of the commodity", but takes it further. Habermas elaborates this idea with an interpretation placing Marx's "fetishism of the commodity" on "the lowest rung of the ideological ladder", because it is said to merely describe how, "ideology itself becomes practical", but the idealism previously intrinsic to it fades.

Habermas's brief discussion of Bloch (as well as a critical allusion to Adorno's placing of art on a par with with Critical Theory) serve to suggest the possibility of a Critical Theory (with incorporation of an understanding of the lifeworld) making a new beginning from Hegel's Absolute Spirit. The latter, conceived as the subsumption of practice by theory--or what is seen in Marx's "translation" of Hegel--labor by capital. Habermas argues that a new beginning was necessary for Critical Theory because though Marx's critique of political economy amounted to a successful immanent critique of early bourgeois society, crucial theoretical and practical changes, related to science and technology, define modern society in contrast to the historical period with which Marx's theory was intertwined.

Marx's critique is said to have demonstrated the separation of practical life from the ideals constitutive of the theoretical sphere. The implication is that theory (even if now reduced to "ideology"), is already literally "productive" of

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practical life, can be conceived as a "force of production", might contain resources potentially constitutive of fundamental social change as well.

Habermas suggests (with some irony) that this potential might be conceived as a realization of the Hegelian Absolute, or the unfolding of nature from spirit. (In the next section, I will show that in constrast in the later STPSHabermas conceives Marx's original theory as suggesting a nearly "automatic", materialistic realization of freedom with the abolition of private property relations and planning of the economy according to the, "laws discovered once and for all of political economy without extended controversies" (Habermas 1989a, 140).

Marx's concept of "fetishism of commodities" (according to Habermas representing the "lowest rung on the ideological ladder") makes implausible Habermas's notion that Marx's critique of capitalism was ultimately "positive", and that the commodity form of production, as it unfolded, brought along with it, but outside it, a non-instrumentalized sphere, potentially infused with the type of social interaction constitutive of freedom. Marx did not take as his own an analysis of the laws of political economy which put forward as the ground for resolution of crisis recognition of a universal potential inherent in them in dialectical opposition to the particularism of class interest. Neither did the "fetishism" of the commodity signal a critique of the alienation of bourgeois idealism in materialist interest. Marx's critique, did not simply counter-pose an idea ("bourgeois" or "socialist") to a reality (an unequal distribution of social wealth.)

Political economy itself, Marx concluded, was "true", not false. The "material relations between persons, and social relations between things" (Marx 1977, 166) both constituted political economy and were constituted by it. Marx's analysis of the "fetishism of the commodity", in Habermas's description, "the

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lowest rung on the ideological ladder", represents the "secret" of the capitalist form not in terms of an opposite existent outside it, but a potential transcendence dependent on a different relation of theory to practice *within* it. Marx writes that only "freely associated" human relations, conceivable exclusively on the basis of a new relationship of theory to practice, strips the fetish from the commodity (Marx 1977, 173).

In this sense, there *is* an affinity with Hegel's Absolute in that, for example, in Marx's most detailed treatment of Hegel--the 1844 "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic"--Marx identified not only Hegel's conceptualization of the movements of an alienated totality, but as well the "other moment" (Marx 1967b, 323). This "other moment" involved the "inwardization" of these externalized, alienated forms, what the young Marx believed to be most important in Hegel's dialectical philosophy--transcendence as objective (Marx 1967b, 321). Hence, Volume I of *Capital*, in showing the non-viability of a form of social relations constituted as a dehumanized totality, presents the "Absolute" as a "collapse" as well as prospective new beginning (Marx 1977, 929). *Capital* re-creates humanist concepts introduced in 1844, especially "negation of negation", Hegel's concept which had a potential greater than that understood in, eg; Feuerbach's type of critique. (I will develop this further in Chapter Three).

Of fundamental concern here is what Habermas's remarks on the "fetishism of commodities" can already indicate about his interpretation of Marx's theory generally. Since, overall, Habermas attributes about equal stature to the *Grundrisse*, and to *Critique of Political Economy*, compared to Marx's fully worked-out *Capital*, it is noteworthy that the "fetishism of commodity" had not been presented in the former works. The concept was fully developed only after all the volumes (including Volume One, which was actually written last) known as *Capital* were already written.

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In the section on Habermas's *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, I will analyze how he--in a clear departure from most of the Critical Theory of the older generation--referred to Marx's texts directly and extensively. All periods of Marx's intellectual legacy were represented, at least in outline. I will argue that STPS, then, first suggested a detailed thesis concerning a theoretical unity implicit in Marx's work viewed in its entirety. Yet, Habermas's tendency was to merge, rather than distinguish, the ideas of Marx, unarguably a highly original and creative thinker, with those of Engels. This alone might have alerted readers, especially those who would have been aware of the paucity of systematic interpretations of Marx's writings among Critical Theorists, to the possibility that Habermas was as much concerned with identifying and integrating within his own theory a "sealed" intellectual tradition than in re-interpreting, in Postone's sense, Marx's theory.

I will also consider the striking omission--the *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*--within Habermas's presentation in STPS of an essential continuity in Marx's thought. One could approach an analysis of this omission by inquiring into the nature of his subject matter, what about it justified precluding discussion of an element of Marx's work already recognized for several decades in Europe, importantly through the work of Marcuse, as central to his early thought, if not his entire corpus.

In the opening pages of "Marxism as Critique" (Habermas 1973, 200-202), written two years prior the publication of *STPS*, Habermas presents several interpretations of the 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, rejecting each one in turn, before proceeding to a direct approach to Marx's economic theory via an examination of the latter's "labor theory of value." Already the implication might be seen to have been that while there might be elements in Marx's theory still relevant to consider for the construction of a contemporary

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theory of society, Marx's "humanism" was not among them. In addition, Marx's 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, not published in Marx's lifetime, might have seemed to Habermas to be expendable for the task of situating Marx's ideas so that they were conceivable as constitutive of modern society despite Marx's intentions.

But, whatever the possible reasons, the early Marx, and in fact the whole of Marx's work, as presented in BPSMC, and more so later in STPS, appear (from Habermas's contemporary perspective) as strikingly "non", if not "anti" philosophical, non-revolutionary and, perhaps even in principle, unconcerned about problems of *social* organization.

Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere

Turning to STPS, the most striking features in Habermas's approach to Marx are his range of citation of the original texts, and the implicit case he makes for the stature of Friedrich Engels in relationship to Marx.

In regard to the first, Habermas cites the 1843 texts, "On the Jewish Question", and "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right"; the *Communist Manifesto* (CM) (1848); *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852); *Capital*, Volume Three (1894); *The Civil War in France* (1872); and *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (1875). Here, then, is the primary text in Habermas's attempt to formulate a systematic critique and/or appropriation of Marx's theory. This early, Habermas appears not to have finally decided whether Marx is "inside" or "outside" an adequate contemporary critical theory of society. Except for perhaps Herbert Marcuse, in *Reason and Revolution* (Marcuse 1960) none among the original Frankfurt School had supported his arguments so directly or extensively with such systematic citation of Marx's texts. Habermas's originality

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in this is clear. Yet, given the range of citations, again it is important to notice that he excludes any references at all to the 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*. (I will return to this issue after describing, in regard to STPS, the relationship between Habermas's approach to Marx, and the presentation of his own argument).

Habermas's analysis of Marx's earlier texts proceeds from 1843 directly to 1852 (though he later moves back to the 1848 *Communist Manifesto*). Overall, Habermas attempts to periodize Marx as a means of explicating his own concept of a public sphere; but, his range of selection of Marx's texts can also create the impression of an exhaustive inventory of Marx's concepts, shown as bound to an early stage of free market capitalism.

This can be seen in the opening paragraphs of his discussion of Marx in STPS. First he presents an argument that Marx retained a crucial element in Hegel's political philosophy. Hegel had already criticized the notion of public opinion. For Hegel, public opinion represented only an appearance of knowledge. Therefore, public opinion stood opposed to science (Habermas 1989a, 118). Marx, with Hegel, was critical of public opinion. Yet, he developed a different sort of critique, which turned against Hegel's solution to the tension inherent in the difference between public opinion and science. According to Marx, Hegel advocated the politically forced integration of civil society and the state. Pre-bourgeois estates would function as the link between them. Young Marx "saw through this". Political estates of pre-revolutionary society had "dissloived into merely social classes" (Habermas 1989a, 122). Thus Hegel's solution amounted to an attempt at recision by "reminiscence" (Habermas 1989a, 123) of the already factual separation of state and society. (In Chapter Six, I will show that Habermas in a later critique tries to turn this against Marx--Marx's 1844 writings were "romantic" because they looked

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backward to restoration of a lost totality; yet, according to Habermas, Marx's critique, even in his own understanding, was specific to free market, private capitalism).

At this earlier stage, Habermas quotes a long passage from Marx's, "On the Jewish Question" (Habermas 1989a, 123). The passage contains a description of a "political revolution" in which the "directly political" character of civil life in feudalism was transformed by the separation of state and society. The "general concern" of the people became, "in principle independent from...particular elements of civil life" (Habermas 1989a, 123). Next, Habermas focuses on the phrase, "in principle". He does so in order to identify Marx's "ironic" intention. Marx's point, according to Habermas, was that the "political revolution" which "shattered everything" (Habermas 1989a, 123), abolished the political character of civil society, and replaced forms of direct social domination with a more indirect, or abstract, form. Marx's "solution" to this development was to confront the incipient form as in a mirror with the, "social conditions for the possibility of its utterly unbourgeois realization" (Habermas 1989a, 124). This implied a movement of the formal to the substantive, or the abstract to the concrete. Further, in context, Habermas can be read to mean that Marx's entire program, from the 1843 "On the Jewish Question" through *Capital*, had as a presupposition about which Marx was not fully aware, abstraction's inadmissibility in the socialism that would follow capitalism, as well as its only self-dissolving role on a theoretical level. Finally, the implication is that Marx saw in the movement of modern society a universal (in a transhistorical sense) potential, only presently distorted by particularistic interests.

In its emergence from feudalism, the self-understanding of bourgeois society included a notion of its own basis being rational-critical debate, with the result a society based upon reason, not power. However, this was actually

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among "property-owning" private people who viewed themselves, and others like themselves, as nothing but autonomous human beings, the basis for a "false consciousness" Habermas believes was Marx's primary object of criticism all the way through to his completion of *Capital.*

Here, Habermas's presentation of Marx relies upon, on the one hand, his view that Marx, with his critical attitude toward public opinion, was in accord with Hegel and, on the other hand, radically departed from Hegel's position that ideals of the "bourgeois" constitutional state were immanently realizable within the existing "republic". This implies an essentially "political" difference--one that might be explained in the movement from the monarchy to parliamentary democracy in the eighteenth and ninteenth centuries.

In a shift with an important nuance which he does not explicitly note, Habermas further characterizes Marx's attitude toward public opinion, drawing a sharper distinction with Hegel, here not alone in connection with the latter's solution to the perceived "separation" of civil society and the state, but in regard to the phenomenon of public opinion itself. Habermas writes that Marx "denounced" public opinion, terming it "false consciousness" (Habermas 1989a, 124).

Hegel's view of civil society and the state is grounded in his analysis of 'science" and "public opinion." In these, Hegel analyzed a concrete universal, the historical realization of a unity of the particular and the universal. Public opinion was adequate to the practical idea, science to the theoretical idea. Habermas does not see that in Marx's view, these very types of oppositions (whose tendency was toward increasing antagonism despite Hegel's forced integration of them) were historically specific; eventually, Marx showed, they *drove* the *capitalist* form of social development. Hegel believed historical contradictions might be resolved within the modern form of society. With Marx,

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science and public opinion were each necessary moments in the social mediation of capitalism--a situation of "personal independence in a context of objective dependence" (Marx 1973, 158). Thus Hegel's dialectic--historical as was Marx's--did not successfully specify the particular and universal and, in fact, could not, absent an understanding of the peculiar role of labor in capitalism.

After his reference to, "On the Jewish Question", and a paragraph explaining its implications for the overall theme of his study, Habermas moves quickly to a discussion of "critique of political economy" in Marx's *Capital*. This initial discussion of Marx's critique of political economy proceeds with no textual references. One reason for this is that it is inserted into Habermas's broader discussion of Marx's early ideas relevant to understanding the bourgeios public sphere in the context of Kant and Hegel. The long paragraph characterizing Marx's "critique of political economy", with no textual references to it, is in fact bounded by three references to, "On the Jewish Question" (Habermas 1989a, 123-125).

Before I analyze in more detail Habermas's procedure here, I shall first present, and criticize, the substance of his remarks. As noted, he begins by holding that Marx "denounced public opinion as false consciousness". Public opinion "hid before itself" that it masked bourgeois class interests. Habermas believes that this initial self-deception had far-ranging consequences because the main thrust of the critique of political economy aimed to show that the bourgeois society could not without crises reproduce itself as a "natural order" (Habermas 1989a, 124). In short, the ideas of private property and the free market (natural rights of "man") masked a class-divided society dependent on the exploitation of the many, whose only commodity was their labor power. An intrusion of political power--possible on the basis of this class-divided society--led to development of oligopoly, vitiating a supposed situation of an

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independent formation of prices based on civil freedom of contract (Habermas 1989a, 124). Habermas summarizes, "This critique demolished all fictions to which the idea of the public sphere of civil society appealed" (Habermas 1989a, 124). The fictions to which Habermas refers are "equality of opportunity", individual freedom, and reason (Habermas 1989a, 124-125). He roots Marx's "demolition" of these bourgeois "fictions" in Marx's criticism of private property and analysis of social class conflict, that is, the domination one class achieved and maintained over others.

Following this, Habermas focuses attention on the historical struggle, "for the realization of the bourgeois constitutional state", with an idea of the public sphere--private individuals engaged in a public use of reason--as the central principle of its organization. The public sphere is twice characterized with the term dialectic; in the one case, the latter is "inherent" (Habermas 1989a, 127), and in the other it is "immanent" (Habermas 1989a, 128).

Habermas refers to historical markers--electoral reform movements of the 1830s, and the 1848, "June uprising of the Paris workers". In juxtaposing these historical phenomenon, Habermas makes a case for the continuity of Marx's early thought. Electoral reform, as a step in the bourgeois constitutional state's struggle for realization, is related to a quotation taken from Marx's, "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right":

> By really establishing its *political* existence as its authentic existence, civil society ensures that its civil existence, in so far as it is distinct from its political existence, is *inessential*. And with the demise of the one, the other, its opposite, collapses also. Therefore, *electoral reform* in the *abstract political state* is equivalent to a demand for its *dissolution* and this in turn implies the *dissolution of civil society* (Habermas 1989a, 126).

The sense of Habermas's placement of the quotation involves a suggestion that Marx saw electoral reform to be essentially a natural movement

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toward the re-integration of sundered, original totality. The demand for expansion of the franchise, an apparent movement of "real" civil society into the "fictitious" civil society of the legislature, was at bottom simply the striving of civil society to "create a political existence for itself", a qualitative feature of social existence which had been lost in what Marx at this time called the "in principle independent" status of the state. (Alternatively, negation of negation is the movement of transcendence of a mediation constitutive of an antagonistic totality, which results in a new beginning, not a search backwards for a lost, original wholeness). Habermas then writes,

> Before 1848 the young Marx gave a radical-democratic interpretation to the tendency toward the expansion of the franchise; he anticipated a shift in the function of the bourgeois public sphere which, after the June uprising of the Paris workers, he would diagnose far more clearly... (Habermas 1989a, 126).

According to Habermas, then, both the electoral reform movements of the 1830s and the 1848 "June uprising of the Paris workers", while arguably very different types of social movements, served Marx mainly to progressively confirm certain of his already held theoretical assumptions. (In Chapter Three, I will argue that 1844 represented Marx's "break" with "bourgeois" society. This makes unlikely that, if even "far more clearly", Marx saw the 1848 revolutions in essential continuity with his pre-1844 view of the 1830 events).

The bourgeois constitutional state, with its underlying principle of a public sphere (which actually consisted of autonomous private property-holding individuals) was a self-contradictory, unsustainable historical "moment". Out of this, Marx saw a possibility for an emergence of a social formation qualitatively differering from feudalism or the capitalism of an incipient bourgeois society. Habermas, however, suggests something quite different when he writes, in the

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sentences quoted above, that Marx's theory relied upon and, "anticipated a shift in the *function* of the bourgeois public sphere." In Habermas's view, the main critical thrust underlying Marx's attitude to these different political phenomenon was that the distinction between civil society and the state existing in the form of of a depoliticized and concrete civil society of particulars and an abstract universal represented by the state, was not a "natural" form.

What then would the "shift in the function" of the bourgeois public sphere which Marx anticipated in 1843, and "diagnosed far more clearly" in 1852, entail? If before the 1848 "June Uprising" an idea of the bourgeois public sphere functioned as the, "central principle of the bourgeois constitutional state's organization", after that event it was clear that the pressure of external contingencies (the exploitation of it by non-bourgeois strata) could result in it's self-abolition. The abstraction which became internal to realization of the bourgeois constitutional state could be made to function as a weapon against the latter. Habermas's essential critical point is that Marx's basically misguided theoretical presuppositions (which retained a kind of naturalism) led him to view favorably a prospect of constitutional democracy functioning as a weapon against itself.

Habermas follows out Marx's thought in "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right". Marx interprets the repoliticalization of civil society as disclosing the inessentiality of its "civil" existence. With the demise of an inessential civil existence, a particular kind of political existence (the state) which had depended on it, also collapses. The "abstract political state" is founded on the contradiction between the private and the public constituting capitalist society; the internal transformation of the one side (civil society's demand for electoral reform) suggests the transcendence of the internal tension constitutive of the

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whole. With the dissolution of the one side, its opposite dependent upon it, also collapses.

It seems that two theoretical questions arise concerning this transformaton: where to locate its origin and principle, in so far as it is other than arbitrary and contingent; and, what then follows, what comes after, this kind of dissolution? After the break-down of the constitutive forces of the market and privatate property relations, theory itself must penetrate deeper. Habermas approaches these questions solely through the application of the concept he is in the midst of developing. The "public sphere" (where public opinion developed), not a *central* theme in the young Marx's writings Habermas considers, is made to appear from Habermas's later theoretical perspective to be the underlying crucial one--even if not understood as such by Marx himself. This can be clearly seen in the analysis Habermas proposes after he quotes Marx on the "dissolution" of the "abstract political state", which implies the simultaneous collapse of civil society. There appears to be nothing remaining. Habermas does not argue that Marx put forth something positive in connection with this. Instead, Habermas proposes, "the democratically revolutionized public sphere" (Habermas 1989a, 127) as the actual force which, in the words of Marx he now quotes for the second time, "wishes to substitute" the real civil society for "the fictitious civil society of the legislature".

But, Marx posed a negation--that of the "abstract" political state by the politicized civil society--and a negation of that negation: negation of civil society as civil society, which depended on the existence of the state. Nothing "positive" appears here. Still, Habermas conceptualizes Marx's appropriation of Hegel's negation of negation to be the basis for a "structural transformation of the public sphere". In this, Marx's appropriation of Hegelian dialectic represents a determinate link in the life of an idea co-extensive with the modern form of

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society generally. Marx--intending to expose the potential impotence of abstraction in theory and its relationship to practice--instead (according to Habermas) contributes to a restructuring of the social order in which abstraction as such (public reason in the place of power) is a necessary part of its identity. Abstraction as such functions to ground and perpetuate (at another level) a differentiation of public opinion and science, society and state; the latter differentiation (society and state)--in its conception and the permanence attributed to it--becomes possible, and later develops even with a re-politicized economy following classical free-market capitalism, the latter however already exposed by Marx as actually determined by "power" instead of "reason" anyway.

Habermas presents the idea that the "wish", idealistic and revolutionary in a romantic sense, of civil society to substitute itself for the fictitious civil society, expresses a dialectic of a public sphere as, eg; a quantitative expansion leading to a qualitative transformation. More plausibly, Marx's intent is to point to mystifications in Hegel's *philosophy*, and the *non-viability* of a social formation to which it accomodated, while working out how the latter is intrinsically related to the former.

Habermas argues that the "enlarged public" Marx attributed key significance, the restructuring of the public sphere it entailed, simply expanded the social terrain thought to be subject to the public sphere's interventions. Habermas conceives this expansion to be absolute--"social life as such" (Habermas 1989a, 127), and "direction and administration of every process necessary for the reproduction of society" (Habermas 1989a, 127)--but sums it up reductively as, "the enigma of a 'political society' that Marx posited with his critique of the Hegelian doctrine of the state found its *resolution* a few years

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later in the phrase of a socialization of the means of production" (my emphasis, RR) (Habermas 1989a, 127).

Up to this point, the key aspect of interpretation of Marx's relationship to Hegel involves Habermas's provision of a positive content to Marx's theory of the non-viable, self-contradictory, transitory, nature of the incipient bourgeois society. Habermas supplies this positive content primarily through a reading of Marx's "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right". At the same time, however, he implies both an essential continuity within the writings of the young Marx (through quotations and citations of "On the Jewish Question", as well as "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right"), and a fundamental topos of all of Marx's work. The latter is supplied through an interpolation which evokes, rather than critically presents, a view of Marx's considerably later critique of political economy, which was anticipated in (and can hardly be understood without) his 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, never mentioned in STPS.

The last two paragraphs of this section proceed from the view that Marx presumed the "restructured public sphere" would be "able to realize in earnest what it had promised from the start--the subjection of political domination, as domination of human beings over human beings, to reason" (Habermas 1989, 128). These paragraphs feature references to the *Communist Manifesto* and *The Poverty of Philosophy* and, for the first time in the work, to *Capital*, significantly, however, to Volume Three, not Volume One. In addition, two references to Friedrich Engels amount to an argument that the latter's theoretical contribution was consistent with, equivalent to, or even, at least in some respects, superior to Marx's. In one case, Habermas has Engels supplying a supposedly cogent summation of the implications of Marx's work

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(Habermas 1989a, 128) and, in the other, has him anticipate its basis and conclusions (Habermas 1989a, 129).

Generally, these final two paragraphs offer a view that Marx resolved the internal tension of civil society and the state (recognition of a tension he shared with Hegel), ending in the abolition of both sides of the totality (which Habermas seems to obscure), merely into the material terms of economic class division. From this, Marx is said to have suggested (wrongly) the inevitable resolution of all social contradictions, which were thought (again wrongly) to be implied by, and dependent upon, these terms.

In Habermas's view, then, the bourgeois concept of the public sphere, as understood (in the critical sense) by Marx, logically encompassed and, in fact, in its practical development, would lead to a *classless society*. Moreover, just this *political* idea of a "classless" society exhausted the content and goal of Marx's theory, from the earliest writings to the latest.

With the undermining of private property as the basis for participation in the public sphere, political domination, always associated with class distinctions, would be replaced by reason. This reason, in the absence of the basis of political domination, that is, class-determined society, would amount to, according to Habermas's interpolation of Engels, the administration of things and direction of production processes taking the place of the rule over men.

Here there is a further development of Habermas's understanding of Marx's analysis of the relationship between civil society and the state. In that, rather than seeing a higher level of intensity of contradiction in theory emerging from the analysis of the demise of civil society and the related collapse of its opposite as well (the "abstract political state") Habermas attributes to Marx a worked out resolution, or synthesis, which seems to have rid itself of internal tension. The type of synthesis attributed to Marx entails an understanding of his

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departure from Hegel as associated with the difference between the critical stance toward public opinion they shared, and the concept of "false consciousness" attributed to Marx alone. "Unmasked" bourgeois public opinion could not escape confronting its own particularistic character, and was obliged to confront the possible consequences of its instrumentalizing, in the form of ideology, the reason with which it had, in the first place, come into its own out of the oppressive conditions of the old.

Habermas's idea is that Marx's critique, an expose of "false consciousness", was itself constitutive of the process of the restructuring of the bourgeois public sphere: It "demolished all fictions to which the idea of the public sphere appealed" (Habermas 1989a, 124). Marx revealed the vulnerability of an only apparently effective abstraction of reason (as ideology), that is, its commitment to, and dependence upon, a universal already shown to be bogus. The implication of Habermas's analysis is that Marx merely aimed to "concretize" the idea of a bourgeois public sphere; he aimed to remove abstraction and integrate reason and practical life through class analysis. A single transparent totality would replace class domination constitutive of and dependent upon ideological occlusion. (As we shall see, Habermas will conclude, however, that Marx's theory, while "demolishing all fictions to which the idea of the public sphere of civil society appealed", helped establish new ones, as well as ultimately left standing the non-fictitious element of the old bourgeois form).

In this study of the bourgeois public sphere, in contrast to that of class in general, Habermas's analysis of labor is thin. In this early work, labor assumes a strikingly subordinate place in his presentation of Marx. Labor appears first in the analysis as a detonation of social class (Habermas 1989a, 126), next as the non-recognized, or the object of social exclusion, subsequently integrated

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(Habermas 1989a, 127), and finally as the object of social planning writ large (Habermas 1989a, 128). (Social planning, in Habermas's view, completes the "reversal" of the public and the private first effected by Marx, in that what had, for the bourgeoise, defined its position as "man", private property, or means of production, while excluding the non-owners, now becomes the only object--as subject to social planning--of the public sphere).

That "realm of necessity"--subject to "administration of things and direction of production processes"--leaves to the private sphere those aspects of social life free from the constraints of social labor, from the economic function. (In the following section, I will return to Habermas's concept of labor. In *Knowledge and Human Interests* he develops an original interpretation of Marx's concept and offers his initial thoughts on the basic theoretical framework required to render Marx's theory as an overall theory of social evolution).

Habermas supplements his analysis of Marx, for the second time, with reference to Engels. He cites Engels's early "Principles of Communism" (Habermas 1989a, 129). There, it is said, Engels identified private property (and/or its absence) as the key to distinguishing social formations and their transformations. However, neither the quotation itself, nor Habermas's own focus here, is concerned with the general question of the relationship of private property to the existence or maintenence of capitalism. (This is a significant omission in view of the importance of this question in light of the rapid ascendency of Communism, and its even more dramatic recent collapse). Rather, the context of the citation is the notion he has already articulated--Marx's "peculiar reversal" of the classical relationship between the public and private spheres. According to Habermas, this reversal was already clearly presented in Marx's *Communist Manifesto*, especially in his anticipation of the disappearance of class antagonism with the concentration of production in the

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hands of a "vast association of the whole nation" (Habermas 1989a, 128). This would represent a power that was public, but not "political", the latter depending on the existence of social classes. With the removal of private property, and the social classes rooted in its existence, the private sphere, as the realm of freedom, would be greatly expanded (if not first fully realized), eg; removing from the purview of "society" even the relationship between the sexes as in the institution of marriage (Habermas 1989a, 129).

Now I want to examine these citations of Engels more closely. They appear in two consecutive paragraphs of Habermas's text. First, Habermas makes a case that Marx's theoretical tendency was to subordinate the "political", and the social generally, to the more strictly "economic". His statement summarizing the movement from Hegel to Marx points in this direction: "The enigma of a "political society" that Marx posited with his critique of Hegel's doctrine of the state found its resolution a few years later in the phrase of a socialization of the means of production" (Habermas 1989a, 127).

Because, apparently, Habermas cannot find a similar formulation in any of Marx's own writings, he instead has Engels interpreting Marx such that, "the administration of things and the direction of production processes would take the place of the rule over men" (Habermas 1989a, 128).

The effect of this is two-fold: a) the uniqueness of Marx's critique of Hegel, which Habermas had just expended considerable energy trying to disclose, is suddenly dissipated. The forced integration of civil society and state which Marx was said to criticize is simply transposed in the late Marx's theory as a "forced" economic integration. Habermas takes up Marx's early writings (from the 1843 "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right" to the *Communist Manifesto*) as the theoretical ground from which both Marx and Marxists alike understood as virtually automatic the transition from the "realm of necessity" to the "realm of

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freedom". Habermas offers an interpretation of the relationship between the 1843, "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right", and the 1848 *Communist Manifesto.* In the former, the movement of the "real civil society" into the "fictitious" civil society (of the legislature) results in a (theoretical) collapse of the contradictory totality which defined the content of the bourgeois social form. Habermas characterizes Marx's interpretation as finally "functionalizing" the principle of the public sphere. The latter was developed in practice and then (self-consciously) conceived as a universal and non-instrumental form of reason which distinguished the new society from the old. The public sphere, including the movement of the concept of it, evolves from a practice with an immanently universal character to a "role" in effecting the transition from one form of society (civil society's antagonistic relationship to an abstract political state) to another (free from social conflict rooted exclusively in private property).

For Habermas, the 1848 *Communist Manifesto* represents Marx's "resolution" of an "enigma", which he had posed in 1843. The writings later than Marx's CM, Marx's mature writings, then, are situated by Habermas as an offer of 'scientific" proof of an original insight which already dismissed as theoretically expendable entire spheres of sociality, eg; morality and law, or practical life generally.

At this point, I will only note that the way Marx posed the relationship between civil society and the state in "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right", described as an "enigma" by Habermas, is far richer in theoretical implications then Habermas's account suggests. For example, there certainly is a clear relationship between, on the one hand, Marx's analysis of civil society and the state, and his positing of production in the hands of a "vast association of the whole nation" at the time he wrote the *Communist Manifesto* in one organizational (both normative and revolutionary) context and, on the other

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hand, the fully worked out concept of the "The Fetishism of the Commodity and its Secret" with its fundamental concepts of abstract and concrete labor at the time he wrote the "Critique of the Gotha Programme", another "organizational" document. I will develop a view of this relationship after taking up *Knowledge and Human Interests*. (The document which offers the best opportunity for initiating such a discussion is the 1971 article, 'Some Difficulties in the Attempt to Link Theory and Practice", which served as the introduction to the fourth revised German edition of *Theory and Practice*, and the first, English translation, which apperared as an abridged version in 1973).

b) Marx's self-understanding of his own theory is put into question if, indeed, Engels must be relied upon to draw such a fundamental conclusion from it. (And, in fact, the text of Engels Habermas cites was written very late in Marx's life. Marx indicated no interest in it.)

The second citation of Engels implies that Engels's important conclusion regarding Marx's anticipation of the radical effects of the abolition of social classes rooted in private property might have had its very origins in a text of Engels own, written prior to his and Marx's famous *Communist Manifesto.* Habermas cites Engels's *The Principles of Communism* in connection with the relationship of private property, man/woman relations, and the family, written in 1843, before Engels met Marx. With the effect of reinforcing the "identity" of Engels and Marx, Habermas next cites Marx in an 1842 article for the *Rheinische Zeitung*: "If marriage were not the basis for the family, it would not be subject to legislation, just as friendship is not". Habermas concludes, "Both Marx and Engels considered a relationship to be actualized as "private" only when it was no longer saddled with any legal regulations" (Habermas 1989a, 129).

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This might appear to be a narrowly focused statement of fact; however, in the context of Habermas's analysis, the statement aims to fundamentally challenge the position he attributes to Marx developed in response to his confrontation with Hegel, in "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right", and in his, "On the Jewish Question". While, remarkably, Habermas never mentions the terms "alienation", or "abstraction", these were principal issues in these texts.

Habermas's characterization of Marx's position, which in this section and the one following, cites texts of Marx ranging from 1842-1875 leads one to the view that Marx understood the bourgeois social formation and the negative features endemic to it--ideology, "false consciousness", exploitation, and social exclusion--as growing out of, and determined by, private property, especially in the "means of production". According to Habermas, "legal regulations", apparently inimical to Marx's "realm of freedom", are understood by Marx to be an abstraction destined for dissolution along with the "abstract political state" generally; both belong to the superstructure dependent upon private property. Socialism is essentially a concretization of bourgeois ideals, already alienated in materialist interests.

The second chapter in STPS involving Habermas's analysis of Marx begins from the conclusion that the, "dialectic of the bourgeois public sphere was not completed as anticipated in the early socialist expectations" (Habermas 1989a, 130), a formulation which collapses Marx not only into Engels's positions, but into an altogether broader political tendency. This was because, "the extension of equal political rights to all social classes proved to be possible within the framework of this class society itself" (Habermas 1989a, 130). While the bourgeois public sphere was successfully exposed as "ideology", leading even its "social-philosophical representatives" to nearly deny it in principle, the

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socialist expectations of the dialectic of the public sphere completing itself in the establishment of a classless society were not met.

This interpretation implies that "Marx and the socialists" were the most consistent in their attachment to the "principle" embodied in the bourgeois public sphere, dependent on a theory of natural law, or a philosophy of history. Habermas concludes that liberalism, gathering strength from the mid-19th century, virtually abandoned the principle, even as it continued to be celebrated, in favor of a "common sense meliorism" (Habermas 1989a, 131).

Habermas, then, first judges the socialist critique to be superior to the self-understanding of the bourgeois public sphere. In exposing the idea of the public sphere as bourgeois ideology the socialist critique forced its representatives into an ambiguity concerning the theoretical understanding of the social order for which they tried to account.

The general outcome--in this battle of ideas--was, however, different. What Habermas calls the "liberalist apologetic" (Habermas 1989a, 130) managed to retreat from its principle of the public sphere. The developing ambiguity of its attitude led to its questioning the "fundamental presuppositions" common to both "models" of the public sphere--its own and the socialist. The basis common to both was the idea of a "natural" basis for society, tied to a philosophy of history. In abandoning these presuppositions, in becoming "realistic", the liberal apologetic was, "superior to the socialist critique" (Habermas 1989a, 130). Habermas notes that this is not to say that liberalism's ambiguity admitted the "structural conflict of society whose very product it was" (Habermas 1989a, 130).

Before returning to Marx at the end of this second chapter concerning the bourgeois idea of the public sphere and its socialist critique, Habermas outlines the evolving liberal views, particularly of Tocqueville and Mill. Both are shown

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to have retreated from the original idea of the public sphere. The latter, as it expanded to include masses--a diversity of social classes and therefore social interests--resulted in a growth of the state. There was a decline of the public sphere's critical function--aimed at replacing power with reason. Instead Mill, for example, conceived of public opinion as just one power among others. It was seen to function primarily to limit state power, rather than as having the potential to dissolve power in favor of the general interest, that is, to replace political power with reason, the original ideal (Habermas 1989a, 136).

In the return to Marx, after discussing the evolving liberal view of the public sphere and the state, Habermas makes three central points.

First, liberalism, particularly Tocqueville, was ahead of Marx in criticizing the implications of the "centralization of government power". Also, in Marx's "belated" recognition of its dangers, he instead (for the first time in 1852) called for it to be "smashed". And, thirdly, in following the "liberalist warning" about the "centralization of government authority", Marx none the less returned to the idea of a "socialistically emancipated public opinion" as an insight into the natural order (Habermas 1989a, 140).

Habermas supports his position here by arguing that Marx's analysis of the Paris Commune entailed the notion that the replacement of bourgeois parliamentarianism with a "system of workers councils" would strip public authority of its political character. Habermas, returning to Engels's words while discussing Marx's views, asserts that the socialist idea was that public authority, divested of political content, would be concerned only with, "the administration of things and the direction of production processes". These could be "regulated by the [natural] laws (discovered once and for all) of political economy without extended controversies" (Habermas 1989a, 140).

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Conclusion

Now, after this description of Habermas's presentation of Marx, and in conclusion, I want to return to the beginning in order to examine his approach more closely. One obvious issue, which Habermas does not explicitly raise, is the continuity of Marx's thought. Yet, the sense of his overall argument is that, firstly, there was a fundamental continuity in Marx's theoretical position from the 1840s through the 1870s, and that this could be fully disclosed through examination of a concept of a public sphere, which was conceived increasingly inclusively. Secondly, a detectable shift in Marx's view of "centralization of governmental power"--while not affecting the essential quality of Marx's theory--was wholly contingent on certain empirical evidence, principally in the political sphere. (This is only conceivable in the absence of an analysis of the 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*). Finally, Habermas indirectly puts forth the position that Marx failed to fully understand the presuppositions and, indeed, the social consequences of his own theory.

Habermas's analysis implicitly includes a thesis involving Marx's work as a totality. It argues that early writings of Marx, which Habermas selectively specifies, were, in a way, at least as weightly as the "mature" works. The argument indirectly states that, however ironically, Marx's critique of Hegel, and therefore of bourgeois society's understanding of itself, while on the basis of a more penetrating understanding of political economy, nonetheless remained grounded in, and dependent upon, categories Habermas distinguishes as uniquely associated with the universal elements of the bourgeois socio-historical form of society.

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But, a problem with this is that it is possible that Marx did not consider Hegel's philosophy merely representative of bourgeois thought. Rather, Marx seemed to have viewed Hegel as a seminal thinker who lived within bourgeois society, but one whose thought in a unique way transcended that society. Characteristics of Hegel's thought pointed to replacement of the existing social form, despite the "solution" Hegel offered to antagonisms he identified in the *Philosophy of Right*. This explains the seriousness with which Marx approached Hegel's ideas, and the kind of critical attention he devoted to them.

A conventional way of explaining the relationship of the ideas of Marx and Hegel is to assert that while Hegel's approach to "reason" was abstract, Marx was concerned with the "concrete". Now, on occasion Marx did criticize Hegel's use of, or the way he situated, abstraction. Yet, Marx, of course, did not categorically dismiss abstraction. Marx attempted to grasp abstraction constitutive of a particular set of social relations unique to capitalist society. Marx's notion of the concrete cannot be grasped outside the constituting element of abstraction internal to the capitalistic social form. Therefore, Habermas's unusual implication that Marx's critique of political economy was little more than an expose of the non-inclusive structure of the bourgeois public sphere, that is, lacked concreteness, and consequently was essentially reformist and "naturalistic" (despite the committment to revolution) demands closer scrutiny.

Marx's 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts* contain crucial conceptual developments highly relevant to theoretical issues raised in STPS. Habermas's later analysis of the young Marx in "Marx's Metacritique of Hegel: Synthesis Through Social Labor" (1968), takes up the third and final Manuscript from 1844. I shall show how Habermas's later essay, while not exactly superseding issues he raised in STPS, represented another, different approach

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to Marx. The new approach can be explained with reference to the relationship between the emerging coherence of Habermas's own theory, and the dependence of the latter on an interpretation of Marx, including earlier ones of his own, later recognized as inadequate.

The analysis of Marx in STPS stands out as the first step in the validation, stamped with the imprimatur of a rigorous analysis from within the anti-capitalist Critical Theory tradition, of the essentially materialistic--and therefore problematic--nature of Marx's theory in the context of contemporary theoretical and practical developments. The cogent insights of Marx's theory are tied to a specific historic period, that of classical free market capitalism. The materialistic determinism of the theory is judged to have been, all at once, a mere product of the time, a contributing factor in the inability of Marx to fully comprehend his own intellectual contribution, and a key element in shaping the entire post-Marx historical problematic of the relation of ideas and social reality.

In STPS, Habermas argued that Marx's theory--in the form of an exclusively immanent critique of bourgeois political economy--understood itself as having proved that the expansion of the public sphere to include non-bourgeois strata would inevitably lead to a classless society. Marx conceived the possibility of fundamental social change on the basis of a planned economy in which the rational allocation of resources could be achieved without political domination. In actuality, Habermas observed, at the very stage of free-market capitalism to which Marx's theory was tied, the public sphere absorbed non-bourgeois strata without its fundamentally altering the class nature of society. (Even later, as the economy again became "politicized", this class nature of society even lost its primacy).

The sense of the earlier BPSMC can be clearly seen to have been an attempt to come to terms with a situation in which Marx's theory, as understood

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by himself, and as the intellectual basis for one of the two poles (though both discredited) of world power, retained some sort of not completely accounted for status. Habermas believed that clarification of this status might open the way for progress toward a more adequate relation between theory and practice within modern society hence seen more soberly. From this perspective, STPS (while not always clear to commentators, *followed* BPSMC by two years) tends to be viewed as Habermas's first basically (though anti-orthodox) Marxist work. As I have shown, it actually initiated a systematic, comprehensive critique of Marx. STPS served, in a fundamental way, as a transition to a type of theory thought to be needed in order to *replace* Marx and Marxism.

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CHAPTER THREE

THE PROBLEM OF THE CONTEMPORARY RECOGNITION OF MARX

Although I will only later take up LC and, in the next chapter, the *Theory of Communicative Action*, Habermas develops an idea in those works which might help orient the present focus on KHI. He develops an early implication that Marx failed to take seriously enough the systemic features of contemporary society.

In BPSMC, Marx's section in *Capital* on the "Fetishism of the Commodity and its Secret" was utilized by Habermas in a demonstration that Marx identified a subsumption of practice by theory, which implied for Habermas the "practicality" (as opposed to the technical potential) of theory itself. This (1960) was prior to the decisive importance for a critical theory (and in distinction from Marx's theory) Habermas was soon to attribute to the difference betwen the practical and the technical.

Recall that the "secret" (of the commodity)--which Habermas did not mention in BPSMC, but analyzed in the second chapter on Marx in his later KHI (which I will analyze below)--was that, according to Marx, the product of labor in the form of the commodity which had become generalized was a social relationship not readily perceivable as such; but even in KHI Habermas did not note that Marx's further (and main) point was that in capitalism labor, in a peculiar relationship to its product, constituted a dehumanized society. To the contrary, Habermas developed an argument, based primarily on a reading of Marx's *German Ideology*, that labor, seen as transhistorical, was a "mechanism

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of evolution", the latter depicted (by Marx) as a process of "humanization" (Habermas 1972, 29).

Since it is already linked to the intital, basic unit of Marx's critque of political economy in Chapter One of Volume One of *Capital*, a work which Habermas suggests is analogous to (or a materialist appropriation of) Hegel's *Science of Logic*, Habermas interprets the element of Marx's description of the fetish to mean that labor's essence is concealed, and thus represented the "lowest rung on the ideological ladder"; this interpretation has the commodity paralleling Being, determined as the other of an essence, in Hegel's *Logic*. (Later, in KHI, Habermas distinguishes Marx from Hegel primarily in the former's rejection of "identity philosophy", and hence reconceptualizes, at least provisionally, the relationship of Hegel's *Logic* and Marx's *Capital*).

In BPSMC, and consistently in several later works, Habermas's analysis does not take into consideration that Marx's concept of fetishism of the commodity was a unique theoretical *result* of his several decades of development of a critique of political economy, beginning as early as 1844 and, in fact, flowed from his writings of that year; crucially, this "result", or conclusion, was in the form of a "return" to the beginning--in the Hegelian dialectical sense--to the concept of humanism he had first generally outlined in the 1844 manuscripts as a whole. In analyzing the fetish, Marx suggested that "freely associated" human relations in respect to material production was a necessary condition for overcoming the social domination in which abstract forms prevailed, uniquely characterizing capitalist society.

The dialectical "height" of the conceptual is not to be found merely through results following sequential development of a text (such as Hegel's *Logic*), or through a series of Marx's texts. Marx's fully developed "fetishism of commodity", while appearing in the first chapter of *Capital*, was conceived (and

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was only conceivable) much later than this suggests, only after the many drafts (including the one finally published) of what became *Capital*, were completed. The concept marks the completion of Marx's immanent critique of political economy and constitutes the real genesis of his own theory proper.

Every stage of Marx's analysis (in respect to his mature theory) presupposes the fully unfolded theory (Postone 1993). From this perspective, it is difficult to to even accept a *conception* of an ideological "ladder" of concepts, or a hierarchy, either within Marx's thought generally, or within *Capital,* (unarguably his greatest work).

At this stage of his thought, a clear ambiguity, which I will examine further in Chapter Four (where he finally decides for the identity in the most crucial respects of the thought of Hegel and Marx) consists in the fact that though Habermas's main argument is that Marx's theory amounts to a "metacritique" of Hegel, he finds more relevant a basic affinity between the two thinkers when he apparently views hierarchial characteristics as integral to Hegel's philosophy as well, particularly the relation he assigns to Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind,* a "first" work (seen as akin to a "lifeworld" perspective on knowledge development) and the *Philosophy of Mind*, the final work (seen as the realm of "formal", "pure" and/or systematic thought) (Habermas 1972, 22).

It has been suggested (see Chapter Six) that, in respect to the latter work of Hegel's just mentioned, the final three paragraphs, added to the text only in the last year of Hegel's life (Dunayevskaya 1989, 39) are especially important for this issue. These paragraphs are not consistent with Habermas's interpretation of Hegel, or the relationship of the latter to Marx's theory. These final paragraphs, in departing from the syllogistic form, undermined an apparent conceptual continuity of key concepts such as "transition" and "mediation"; most

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importantly, they open to serious question any interpretation which views the *closure of a system* constituting the outcome, or "result", of Hegel's philosophy.

In contrast to Habermas's suggestion in BPSMC, Marx's analysis of the "lowly" commodity (supposedly the lowest rung on the ideological ladder) already contains the absolute, not as a "closure", but as a new beginning, when Marx posits "freely associated" social relations' impact on material production relations. In contrast to Habermas's analysis in KHI, Marx's "absolute" in Chapter One of *Capital* (especially the section on the fetishism of the commodity) was not a "ground" (nature), but a recreation of the Hegelian dialectic itself, from "Hegel's revolution in philosophy to [Marx's] philosophy *of* revolution" (Dunayevskaya 1991, 188).

In Marx's conception, commodity fetishism marks the *highest* rung of the ideological ladder of an historically specific social formation, or "bourgeois" society. It exemplifies the "absolute" in the true Hegelian sense of containing the greatest opposition within itself. With this simplest unit of the capitalist social form, Marx once again depicts the non-viability of "bourgeois" society itself--suggesting that its characteristic, universalist, forms of thought must also meet their historic barrier. As Hegel had already intimated in his own "Absolutes", the highest form of the development of the idea includes the greatest opposition within (Hegel 1976, 824). In this sense, the product of labor in capitalism--the commodity--has its basis ("absolute ground") in the opposition between abstract and concrete labor. In order to see how the "highest" form (developed capitalist society) contains the greatest opposition within and whether Habermas's failure to recognize this is relevant for an explanation of Habermas's various approaches to Marx, it is necessary to keep in mind Habermas's intital sequence of steps.

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In the literature on Habermas, Marx and Marxism, which is surprisingly sparse (Rockmore 1989, 18), there is little careful analysis of the relationship of BPSMC and STPS. But these are works wherein Habermas might have recovered from Marx's thought the theoretical direction for a release from the older Frankfurt School's thesis of contemporary society as imprisoned in a one-dimensionality, now lacking an internally generated, potentially revolutionary opposition.

For example, at least in the English language discussion there is virtually no serious analysis of the way Marx is taken up in STPS (even since its translation into English). It is often seen as such a different kind of study, primarily distinguished by historical description, the serious critical intent of its portrayal of Marx is scarcely recognized (Calhoun 1992, 39-40). Nor does there even now seem to be an awareness that significance might be found in the fact that STPS followed by two years the writing of BPSMC. (This is partly explained by the circumstance that BPSMC (in the original German) did not appear in book form until after STPS was published in German in 1962; also, when STPS was finally published in English translation (1989) it was often described as though it were Habermas's earliest "major" theoretical work). Thus, it may have been difficult to see that STPS, in important ways, represented Habermas's first (and only) attempt at a comprehensive and systematic critique of Marx, quite unlike BPSMC; or, in other worlds, that the *initial* trajectory of Habermas's theory (from BPSMC to STPS) was already toward a rejection of Marx's theoretical and practical relevance for the establishment of a viable contemporary critical theory.

BPSMC, seen as contemporaneous with, or even following from STPS, might have seemed directed toward revitalizing Marx's thought by dispelling a characteristic Marxist assumption of crisis narrowly imbedded historically

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contingent conditions grasped by political economy, specifically by what Habermas presented as merely particular (and perhaps outdated and dispensible) critical elements developed by Marx, such as his labor theory of value and the law of the falling rate of profit. Habermas clearly associated this traditional Marxist assumption with Left intellectual stagnation; relatedly (and perhaps ironically) the later STPS clearly argued that there was intrinsic to Marx's thought the impulse only fully developed later for a misguided activist, technocratic approach to practical problems.

It should not be overlooked that the aporias Habermas attributed to a critical theory still (clandestinely) wedded to Marx importantly shaped Habermas's diagnosis of *contemporary* society. The lack of vitality of public democratic deliberation was ascribed not so much to "late capitalism" as to "modernity", closer to Weber's sense than Marx's. STPS, in contrast to his positing of a dogmatic Marxism (which Habermas will increasingly only ambiguously distinguish from Marx), attempted to demonstrate the past (and therefore possibly future) efficacy of a non-dogmatic idea (including Marx's) in furthering emancipation. In this, Habermas meant to uncover the socially integrative potential of an abstraction effective as a social organizing principle (and with it to indicate the historical boundedness of the contemporary Marxist hypostatization of labor seen, in continuity with the older Frankfurt School, as a transhistorical relation of man to nature). In also recalling the historical negation of the efficacy of an implicitly universal idea (reason in place of power) unable to escape its particularism in practice as exposed in theory, the need for reflection on the "dialectical" next step in linking theory and practice in the context of a human "interest" in social change was to be made apparent.

Partly because of Habermas's purpose in respect to Marxism, which included redirecting critical theory away from a "hidden orthodoxy" (Habermas

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1973, 203), there is an evident lack of reflection on a *concept* of labor in these two important early works. In Habermas's view, labor and concept are often viewed as opposites. Labor is asumed to be "labor" (as Postone characterizes the traditional Marxist view), the instrumental relation of man to nature. At this stage of his writings, there is little indication on Habermas's part that a *concept* of labor might be seriously problematic.

A reinterpretation of Marx's basic concepts (such as Postone has acheived) proved necessary in order to convincingly demonstrate that Habermas did not, as he claimed at important theoretical junctures, understand Marx better than Marx understood himself (Habermas 1973, 212; Habermas 1972; 62; Habermas 1989b, 383) and, in fact, failed to understand, in the first place, Marx's basic concept of labor.

In BPSMC, labor appears as a presupposed and minor, or particularistic element of a more central concept of crisis pulled by Marx from out of the entire Western intellectual tradition. This way of analyzing the "crisis" element in Marx's theory, from a broadly cultural, even theological, standpoint attributed to Marx, opens the way for Habermas's developing critique of Marx. Later, he will write that Marx slighted the need for examination of socially effective, ameliorative institutional features regarded by Habermas as permanent, and through which a developmental logic, or social evolution could be discerned.

In posing the issue of "crisis", Habermas refers to the question of the stability of the economic system; he only includes the status and function of labor as a subordinate element within it. This empirical stability--considered as a "test" of the viability of Marx's more general theory--the critique of political economy, or the aim to resolve crisis--is implied to belie the continuity of Marx's age with contemporaneity, but not yet Marx's theory as such.

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In addition, without discussion of a possible intrinsic relation of crisis to other than empirical systemic features, Habermas also relates crisis to the "doctrine of ideology" (Habermas 1973, 222); he asks whether "critique"--in the form given it by Marx--still contained a practical potential (Habermas 1972, 239). Not yet here, but by the second chapter on Marx in KHI Habermas has decided that Marx's form of critique is not adequate to contemporary conditions. He then suggests it is necessary to reconstitute the idea of critique under the diagnosis of a dualistic concept of modern society. Moreover, the problem of the relation of labor and interaction, which Habermas identifies as the key problem, demands a concept of theory, at variance with Marx's, which allows for an altogether different form of critique. Prior to KHI, recall that in STPS, the writing of which followed BPSMC by two years, labor initially appears as a detonation of social class, next as a proxy for the socially excluded, the "non-citizen" (subsequently integrated), and finally as the object of social planning writ large. There are a number of important things to note here. It is difficult to disentangle-especially in STPS--what concept of labor Habermas is attributing to Marx, what exactly is supposed to be seen as the given interpretation of Marx's concept, and/or what is specifically Habermas's contribution, based on the results of the (possibly) promising originality of his analysis of the bourgeois public sphere.

In the earlier BPSMC, the concept of labor in itself (and aside from the labor theory of value which he tended to situate on a transhistorical systemic level) is hardly an object of Habermas's reflections. It does *not* appear that the greater part of an explanation of this is that Habermas's idea was that labor could only be explicated by imbedding it in "higher" categories, eg; "crisis", and "the philosophy of history." Rather, it seems more likely that he believed labor in

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Marx's theory was, in the most important respects, non-controversial, and required no specific theoretical focus.

Due to the same lack of attention to the conceptual problematic, labor in STPS receives more attention, but it is presented as not having a single known meaning; it assumes a variety of roles in the analyses. Habermas does not reflect on the process of their succession, or comment on how or why these metamorphoses were possible. Moreover, he does not indicate that he is aware of them in his own analysis.

Knowledge and Human Interests

However, the two chapters on Marx in KHI offer an indication that Habermas reached some awareness that labor, particularly Marx's concept, needed far closer examination. "Marx's Metacritique of Hegel: Synthesis Through Social Labor" should be seen as an especially important shift in Habermas's approach to Marx. This shift coincides with his first specific examination of a concept of labor, despite his several years of previous work analyzing Marx.

The circumstances of the evident compulsion to return to Marx once again might have led Habermas to ask himself whether Marx intentionally embedded the "lowest" forms of cultural life in the highest refinement of the conceptual. (The "lowest" explained the "highest".) Habermas's initial failure to consider this (he does take it up in KHI) contributed to his relatively late examination of the possible depth of the concept of labor.

An especially potent example of the conceptual relation of the "high" and "low" (or dialectical social theory and labor) in respect to his approach to modern society is the way Marx analyzed the commodity, the fetish and de-humanization as peculiarly capitalist, especially how the relation of the three

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were possible through the particular (degraded, but none the less socially determining) form labor assumed only in "developed" capitalism. At the same time, analysis of the relation of the three could yield a potentially opposite future based on free, and fully developed, human relations definitely not attainable within the confines of the old.

Marx's Metacritique of Hegel: Synthesis Through Social Labor

Habermas had already sifted a wide range of concepts and periods of Marx's theoretical work. But he focuses only now, in KHI, on the potential of a reinterpretation of Marx's concept of labor. The most immediately striking feature in the approach to Marx in Habermas's late 1960s chapter on "Marx's Metacritique" is the textual starting point, a location hardly in sight in his early 1960s approaches in the two earlier texts I considered in Chapter Two.

Some, including many in the Marxist tradition, commented upon what they observed as Marx's procedure in turning Hegel "right- side up", which was supposedly capable of explaining the greater part of the originality, such as it was, of Marx's theory. Habermas approaches this issue at its source.

He begins his analysis by citing three passages, two in Hegel's final work that is, in the Introduction to the *Philosophy of Mind* (Hegel 1971), and one in the last part of Marx's third and final manuscript from the collection known as the *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts* of 1844 (Marx 1967b). The comparison, then, is between works only thirteen years apart: Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*, including the important addition of the final three paragraphs (which neither Habermas nor Marx discussed) was completed in 1831.

In beginning with and focusing on the afore mentioned passages, Habermas seems to want to quickly distinguish himself from traditional Marxism

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by stating plainly that what Marx opposed to Hegel was, "no coarse materialism" (Habermas 1972, 26). The starting point for his analysis of the relationship between Hegel and Marx is the most "mature" Hegel and a work of the young Marx not cited in his earlier studies I have already discussed. In this, however, there is some continuity with STPS, where Habermas juxtaposed some of Marx's even earlier (pre-1844) works with Hegel's "mature" *Philosophy of Right.*

Recall that a range of humanist interpretations of Marx (often focused on 1844) were already rejected by Habermas in the opening pages of BPSMC. Two years later, in STPS, where a wide spectrum of periods of Marx's writings were cited, those writings which are usually classified under the category of the young Marx were instead represented by "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right" and "On the Jewish Question". No reference was made to the 1844 manuscripts. Now, in 1968, with the consideration of a *concept* of labor, missing in the earlier works, 1844 becomes central; in addition, here there is an implication that not only an understanding of Marx, but a grasp of social theory generally, depends in fundamental ways on coming to terms with a section of Marx's 1844 manuscripts.

The crucial aspect of Habermas's approach to Marx in "Marx's Metacritique of Hegel" is directly related to his overall theme, stated in his Preface to KHI. There, in the opening sentence, Habermas writes,

> I am undertaking a historically oriented attempt to reconstruct the prehistory of modern positivism with the systematic intention of analyzing the connection between knowledge and human interests (Habermas 1972, vii).

His two chapters on Marx then argue that Marx while identifying, and even elaborating, the elements necessary for an emancipatory social theory failed to appreciate and therefore satisfactorily develop his own achievement, and

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thereby point a way out of a philosophical position (positivism) which acheived hegemony (Habermas 1972, 5). Just this failure of self-recognition was historically effective in diverting succeeding generations. In chapters Five and Six I will discuss how the theory Habermas developed as an alternative to Marxism relied significantly on what he viewed as his own separation from a typical mode of social theory which seriously lacked a "dialogic" dimension. This missing dimension, Habermas often implies, might have precluded the most serious--and historically consequential--misinterpretations of Marx's thought, even by Marx himself.

At this stage, the form of Habermas's argument borrows directly from Marx's critique of Hegel found in the very text of Marx Habermas examines. However, there is no indication in Habermas's own text that he is aware that his critique of Marx is indebted in this way.

Marx, in his "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General", writes that Hegel's *Phenomenology* is,

> concealed and mystifying criticism, unclear to itself...all the elements of criticism are implicit in it, already prepared and elaborated in a manner far surpassing the Hegelian standpoint...(Marx 1967b, 320-321).

Yet, in the paragraph directly preceding the above, Marx had written,

> Hence there is already implicit in the *Phenomenology* as a germ, potentiality and secret--despite its thoroughly negative and critical appearance and despite the actual criticism it contains which *often* anticipates later developments--the uncritical positivism and equally uncritical idealism of Hegel's later works, the philosophical dissolution and restoration of the existing empirical world (Marx 1967b, 320-321).

It is clear that Habermas's argument contains the same type of criticism against Marx--that the philosophic foundations of his thought (Habermas 1972, 42) held within them an opening for a non-emancipatory strain of social theory

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when fully developed is modern (unreflective) positivism. The full potential of Marx's achievements in his actual socio-historical investigations lie dormant, an outcome that could be attributed in some measure to a "peculiar disproportion" between theory and practice in his intellectual inquiry. Yet, Marx, in his social inquiry, equally emphasized "critical abolition of ideologies", and the synthetic quality of social labor. Habermas traces Marx's self-understanding of his theory, however, to a philosophic framework that was conceived too narrowly to include the ideology critique (Habermas 1972, 42).

Interestingly, in the very text of Marx Habermas examines, it can be seen that his critique of Marx here is simply opposite of how Hegel was said by Marx to have developed within his philosophy (the *Phenomenology*) all the elements of critique, but failed to apprehend his own achievement as evidenced by, in his later works, "the philosophical dissolution and restoration of the existing empirial world" (Marx 1967b, 320-321).

In Habermas's view, Marx (from the standpoint of practice) critcized Hegel for philosophical dissolution and (subsequent) restoration of the existing empirical world; Marx (seen from the standpoint of philosophy) abolished "ideologies" only to play a constituitive part in the triumph of postivism, or the subsumption of social theory by the natural sciences, a turn of events which constituted a formidable barrier in respect to development of a critical theory in the context of late capitalism.

Besides the fact that Habermas borrowed directly from Marx's critique of Hegel (without saying so) in order to criticize Marx, of further interest is the obvious *difference* in the two critiques. Marx intimated that he would set about uncovering the "lie" (Marx 1967b, 329) of Hegel's underlying philosophic principle. I have already alluded to Habermas's key point (what seems a sort of parallel to Marx's critique of Hegel) in BPSMC. Habermas argued that in the

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Grundrisse Marx had already expressed a theoretical reservation in respect to the labor theory of value on which *Capital,* written several years later, none the less depended.

In KHI, the second article on Marx titled, "The Idea of the Theory of Knowledge as Social Theory", Habermas returns to and develops this analysis. There, eight years later, he characterizes Marx's problem in the *Grundrisse* as "indecision", that, "has its foundation in Marx's theoretical approach itself" (Habermas 1972, 52). (In order to clarify the difference between Marx's critique of Hegel and Habermas's critique of Marx, which it resembles, I will return to the *Grundrisse* after my consideration here of "Marx's Metacritique.")

In the opening paragraphs of "Marx's Metacritique of Hegel" Habermas describes the last of Marx's 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*: Marx is "coming to grips" with Hegel's *Phenomenology*, "especially the last chapter on Absolute Knowledge" (Habermas 1972, 25). Habermas writes,

> Marx follows the strategy of detaching the exposition of consciousness in its manifestations from the framework of the philosophy of identity. He does this in order to bring to light the elements of a critique that often "far surpasses Hegel's standpoint", elements that are already contained, though concealed, in the *Phenomenology* (Habermas 1972, 25).

In this specific passage, Habermas attributes to Marx primarily "strategic" intentions; Habermas amalgmates, in a confusing way, his interpretation of Marx with his presentation of the text he is examining. In the full passage from Marx, which I quoted above, Marx emphasizes that he finds in Hegel *all* the elements of criticism, *prepared and elaborated* (also emphasized), "in a manner far surpassing the Hegelian standpoint."

Hegel's "standpoint", according to Marx in the same text, is "modern political economy" (Marx 1967b, 322); below, I will discuss the doubt this casts

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on Habermas's view that Marx's own "standpoint" was political economy, at least in so far as Habermas understood it to include a "materialist appropriation" of Hegel.

The above comparision of the full passage from Marx with Habermas's paraphrase of it suggests that Marx is not only granting a higher status to Hegel's thought than Habermas suggests. The uniqueness of Hegel's philosophy is such that a category of "return" to it (as an indispensibe source for critical social theory) will become central to grasping Marx's own theory.

The form of Marx's 1844 presentation of a critique of Hegel is "dialogic" in an eminent philosophic sense. Specifically, "all"--the word with which Habermas's text dispenses--is the word needed in order to grasp the meaning of the passage. In context, the word "all" indicates that Marx's intention was already to bring out the full revolutionary potential of Hegel's dialectic. Hegel's achievement (even in the face of a critique of it at the deepest level) remains for Marx the vital *source* of critical ideas.

Similarly, in Habermas's KHI the word "often" qualifies Marx's statement, that "all" these elements are, "already *prepared and elaborated* in a manner far surpassing the Hegelian standpoint." Even though subtle, these divergences raise a question of just how circumscribed Marx was in deciding his own originality *vis a vis* Hegel. Habermas's underlying thesis, that Marx's intention involved a global contradiction of Hegel based on a simple reversal of the ground of an Absolute, already appears suspect.

Habermas's text introduces a subtle revision, which then creates an opening for wide critical latitude. As I will demonstrate below, the apparently small "revisions" are the basis for Habermas's eventual claim that Marx's theory--indeed the very process of its formation--hid within it a potential, actually developed by Marx himself, for the non-democratic, repressive features

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associated with later Marxist-oriented political organizations' relationship to ideas.

Following what might be called an amalgamation of textual citation, interpretation and revision of the opening pages of Marx's "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General", Habermas moves to its penultimate paragraph, Marx's quotation of paragraph 381 of Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind.* (Habermas directly cites Hegel's *Encyclopedia*, not Marx's text. There is no indication he has moved from the beginning to the end of Marx's manuscript).

Habermas reproduces only this part of paragraph #381 of Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind* (not as it appeared in Marx's manuscript) as follows:

> *For us* the mind has nature as its presupposition; it is the *truth* and thus the absolute ground (*Erstes*) of nature. In this truth nature has disappeared, and mind has emerged as the Idea existing for itself; both *object* and the *subject* of the Idea is the notion (Habermas 1972, 25).

Immediately following this, Habermas concludes, "For Marx, on the contrary, it is nature that is the absolute ground of Mind" (Habermas 1972, 25).

This conclusion functions to magnify the effect arising from the alterations of Marx's text Habermas had initially introduced. In the first place, by substituting, "the elements of a critique" (for "all the elements of criticism" in Marx's text), and, "*often* 'far surpasses Hegel's standpoint'" (for "already *prepared* and *elaborated* in a manner far surpassing the Hegelian standpoint" in Marx's text) Habermas at least minimizes (or perhaps makes it impossible to see) the specific moments (and their lasting import) of Marx's self-understood *identity* with Hegel; with these moments eliminated, Habermas then posits Marx (in his understanding of himself) to be schematically opposite of Hegel, especially in respect to assessment of the potential of philosophy in transformation of social relations.

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Habermas, at the outset of "Marx's Metacritique of Hegel", drew attention to the fact that Marx, at the end of his manuscript, quoted two paragraphs from Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind.* Here it is necessary to bring to the fore the following sequence of references to Marx and Hegel in Habermas's text: First, Habermas quotes a part of what Marx quoted from paragraph #381 of Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*; next, in the course of his discussion concerning Marx's interpretation of Hegel involving this paragraph, and paragraph #384, he quotes Marx, not on these paragraphs (which involve, as Habermas correctly states, the transition from nature to mind) but rather a passage taken from the beginning of Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature* Marx includes in his 1844 manuscript. Before presenting it, Marx clearly stated that the passage had to do with, "the transition from Logic to Philosophy of Nature" (Marx 1967b, 334).

Hegel's concept of "transition" is perhaps the critical distinguishing feature of his dialectic. If so, it is hightly controversial to analyze his work in a way which ignores the specificity of the actual transitions, eg; from the *Phenomenology*, to the *Logic,* to Nature and to Mind. This issue is relevant in approaching Marx's "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", especially the "interior" section which, as I have pointed out, was not taken up by Habermas. I will consider this section of Marx's manuscript below (see p. 111ff).

Finally, in "Marx's Metacritique" Habermas characterizes while paraphrasing, rather than quoting, Hegel's paragraph #384 as, "the idealist sense of a mind that, as Idea existing for itself, posits a natural world as its own self-created presupposition" (Habermas 1972, 26).

Habermas had already rejected humanist interpretations of Marx (Habermas 1973, 200-201). They were seen as incompatible with contemporary standards of social theory, including its "critical" strand, on the basis of Habermas's view that Marx's "mature" theory could be understood

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virtually without reference to elements within Marx to which these characteristically referred. Habermas does not probe further into the quality of Marx's humanism after his initial focus on Marx's relationship to Hegel. His interpretation of "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General" instead moves ahead and actually pivots on what he understands as Marx's later (1845), limited critique of Feuerbach, the impact of which, he seems to believe, outweighed Marx's 1844 critique of Hegel in specifing what was characteristic of Marx's fully developed social theory. (This was not unprecedented. One need only recall the in other ways excellent translation of, *The Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society* (Easton and Guddat 1967), which situated Marx's 1844 text of Marx under the heading, "Feuerbachian Criticism of Hegel"). Note that this work appeared in the year before Habermas's "Marx's Metacritique of Hegel."

Later, in "Marx's Metacritique", Habermas returns Hegel to his analysis, but only through what he argues is Marx's appropriation of Kant, after Marx developed a more critical attitude to Feuerbach: Hegel's residual influence on Marx's theory is hastily related to the "something general" which Hegel saw as accumulating in "the tool" (Habermas 1972, 29). Habermas's argument ties this to historical materialism as a theory of evolution in Marx. Several years later he develops this idea in his, "Reconstruction of Historical Materialism" (Held 1980 326), first presented as a talk at a German Hegel society

Here it is necessary to quote Habermas's summary paragraph of his analysis of the source of Marx's philosophic relationship to Hegel. Habermas views this relationship as materialized through the context created by the reflection of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* in the the *Philosophy of Mind*, the third and final part of Hegel's later *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*,

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(and therefore through Marx's analysis of the relation between the "first" and "last" stages of Hegel's philosophy):

> This seal placed on absolute knowledge by the philosophy of identity is broken [by Marx] if the externality of nature, both objective environmental and subjective bodily nature, not only seems external to a consciousness that finds itself within nature but refers instead to the immediacy of a substratum on which the mind contigently depends. Here the mind presupposes nature, but in the sense of a natural process that from within itself, gives rise likewise to the natural being man and the nature that surrounds him--and not in the idealist sense of a mind that, as idea existing for itself, posits a natural world as its own self-created presupposition (Habermas 1972, 26).

Though I have not found recognition of this elsewhere in the literature, the above reinvokes the theme Habermas developed in STPS; Habermas's analysis here can therefore be seen as a summary of his work on Hegel and Marx, a summary preparatory for the genesis of his own, different theory.

In STPS, Habermas found an "enigmatic" quality in Marx's relationship to Hegel--specifically where I earlier noted Marx had, without explicitly saying so, reintegrated Hegel's philosophically unique, "negation of negation" into a historically derived problematic--the relationship of civil society to the state. Habermas had noted that Marx implied (in "Critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*") that, according to the dialectic developed by Hegel himself, Hegel's "recision by *reminiscence*" of the already factual separation of civil society and the state unnecessarily left philosophy at an impasse. Therefore, in 1844 (one year later) it can be deduced that Marx is now more sharply posing that critique--that Hegel's philosophy, up against such an impasse, was not viable in the form lent it by Hegel.

However, the real reason 1844 is key, and not 1843 (*Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*) or 1845 (*Theses on Feuerbach*) lies in the way Marx abstracts Hegel's strictly philosophic uniqueness (the concept and method of

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negation of negation) and connects it to 1) humanism; and, 2) an early intimation of a two-fold concept of labor. The first idea is explicitly rejected, the second not noted, in Habermas's analysis in "Marx's Metacritique". Yet, precisely these two concepts represented the beginning of what has been called a transformation of Hegel's revolution in philosophy into a philosophy of revolution (Dunayevskaya 1991, xxiii); this did not negate the unique character of dialectic found in Hegel, it recreated it.

Marx, in specifying socially "negation of negation", defined the particular contemporary sociopolitical problematic--the relation of civil society and the state--identifying a movement from *within* the practical sphere of society as on a par with, if not in advance of, the theoretical sphere represented both by Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* and the young Hegelians. Marx developed a critique of the latter in his own break (1844) from "bourgeois" society, the latter now seen as historically specific. In contrast, the young Hegelians, though critical of the "master's" (Hegel's) accomodation (to the state), still did not grasp the "lie" of the "master's" principle which compelled (and explained) the accomodation (Marx 1967c, 60-61). In other words, in not grasping the method implied in negation of negation, their approach to (and departure from) Hegel retrogressed to the level of simple "critique", or a first negation.

In STPS, recall that Habermas concluded that Marx, in taking Hegel's abstraction (recision by reminiscence of the separation of state and society) to its limit, aimed to demonstrate the "illusion" (or non-viability) of abstraction in social life (thus Marx's later underestimation of society's systemic dimension), as well as its self-dissolving quality in theory. According to Habermas, contrary to Marx's own expectations, this none the less contributed to the institution of abstraction in the form of a scientistic conception of natural law applied to society, a conception Habermas claims Marx on some level shared. Among

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other things, this constituted a barrier to identifying normative structures as a precondition for renewing, as the foundation of social life, the emancipatory potential of the public use of reason.

KHI represents a different approach to Marx, that is, through philosophical reflection on the concept of labor. Yet, this does not lead Habermas to abandon an understanding of Marx which attaches to him an unwarranted partiality for a conception of the "natural". Habermas proposes an interpretation of Marx's concept of labor which he then embraces while implying it required supplementation. In important respects, this concept of labor remains one-dimensional. The thrust of Habermas's argument is to root Marx (even more so than usually) deeply in materialism, only a materialism with some unique turns. While Marx's materialism was not "coarse", it was essentially materialism nonetheless. As I have noted, within the first two pages of KHI's chapters on Marx Habermas offers two observations: 1) In Hegel, mind has nature as its presupposition; mind is the absolute ground of nature. 2) In Marx, mind presupposes nature. In Marx, mind "depends" on the nature it presupposes. In Hegel, nature, "could *only exist* (my emphasis, RR) as mind reflexively remembers it while returning to itself from nature" (Habermas, 1972, 25)--nature "depends" on mind.

Though Habermas does not make the connection himself, this further illuminates the "enigma" Habermas first noted in STPS; he saw in Marx's earlier (1843) critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* that Marx exposed Hegel's approach to the separation (and opposition) of civil society and the state as amounting to an attempt of "recision" (of this separation) by "reminiscence".

It can be seen in tracing the evolution of Habermas's view, Marx's "metacritique" of Hegel (quite likely without Habermas explicitly intending it to) revisits the theme in STPS, which cited Hegel's belief that civil society,

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> could exist only as the mind [state in STPS] reflexively remembers it while returning to itself from nature [civil society in STPS].

Mind and Nature are simply substituted for State and Civil Society, the concepts of interest in STPS.

I have already pointed out that Habermas's analysis of Marx's 1844 "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", in so far as that analysis directly concerns Marx's critique of Hegel, is mainly restricted to the opening pages of Marx's text, and to its last pages--two quotes Marx includes from Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*, and one from the *Philosophy of Nature* (a textual location Habermas fails to identify). That is, Habermas refers to a passage in Marx which is concerned with Hegel's analysis of a transition from the Logic to Nature. But his reference is for the purpose of characterizing Marx's concern with Hegel's analysis of the transition to Mind from Nature. Habermas describes how Marx objected to the "disappearance" of nature. In the passage Habermas quotes, Marx objects to the "elimination of Nature" by the, "abstract thinker [for whom] nature must eliminate itself, because it has already been posited by him as a potentially eliminated being" (Habermas 1972, 24). Yet, on the preceding page, Habermas made clear that he was considering Marx's analysis of paragraphs 381 and 384 of *Philosophy of Mind*, where the "transition from the philosophy of nature to the philosophy of mind is delineated" (Habermas 1972, 25). Both of these paragraphs appear in the Introduction to the *Philosophy of Mind* (the final part of Hegel's *Encyclopedia*).

It is in connection with the latter that Marx subseqently makes clear that a "defense" of nature is not his primary intention. In comments focused on the issue of the transition in Hegel's *Encyclopedia* from the philosophy of nature to the philosophy of mind (Habermas's own ostensible focus) Marx promises to

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explain as well why Hegel's philosophy, "separates thinking from the subject" (Marx 1967b, 335). Here Marx's principal concern is not the elimination of nature by the abstract thinker, but the "elimination" of even the abstract thinker by absolute spirit.

Marx's later theory--in *Capital*--will develop the idea that the power of abstraction is laid bare in Hegel's revolution in philosophy, and is indispensible for penetration of the transcendence inherent in capital. Marx demonstrates that "transcendence" of capitalism (including its own transcendent features) is not conceivable without Hegel's concepts; yet, unless these concepts are effectively developed in association with a dialectics of social organization, no abolition of capitalism is possible. In short, Marx aimed to work out the relationship of philosophic critique to social relations which have become dehumanized. This can be researched as the relation of dialectics of philosophy to dialectics of organization (Dunayevskaya 1991).

Limiting his account, for the most part, to the beginning and the end of Marx's text, Habermas now introduces the argument that Marx, as late as 1844, was involved in little more than, "renewing the naturalism of Feuerbach's anthropolgy" (Habermas 1972, 26). This is only qualified by granting that Marx, in contrast to Feuerbachian materialism, emphasized, "the adaptive modes of behavior and active expressions of life as an active natural being" (Habermas 1972, 26). Habermas continues,

> But as long as he attributes to "objective activity" the still unspecific meaning that man, like every organism, "can only express his life through real, sensuous objects", Marx remains caught in the realm of naturalistic ideas. The first thesis against Feuerbach, however, already goes beyond this...(Habermas 1972, 26).

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The conclusion that might be expected to be drawn from this is two-fold: 1) that Marx, in "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", by presenting an alternative interpretation of the relation of nature and mind, directly opposite of Hegel, rejected the idealistic features of the latter's thought; and, 2) embraced Feuerbach's naturalism, or at least granted to it a higher status than the originality of Hegel's dialectic. If this were indeed the case, 1844 (particularly the final manuscript) should be viewed as ony slightly important, even when assessed against earlier and later writings of Marx himself. In fact, its contemporary importance, then, according to Habermas's account, is restricted to Habermas's own abstraction of certain of its elements useful for piecing together with theoretical statements derived from Marx's later writings. From this perspective, there are disparate insights scattered through Marx's texts which Marx was unable to unify, unified indecisively or, at worst, unified in bad faith. Nonetheless, according to Habermas, contemporary theorists (with the aid of more useful social scientific concepts) ignore at their own peril Marx's individual insights in their attempt to work out a contemporary critical theory.

The primary import of Habermas's analysis here is by no means the issue of Marx's assessment of, or identification with, Feuerbach's thought. (Habermas, in later writings, never returns to Marx/Feuerbach; but he does continuously return to Hegel, Marx and their relationship). Rather, the central contention put forth by Habermas is that Marx himself, in the 1844 manuscripts, particularly their last part, separating from Hegel's "identity philosophy" while only marginally going beyond Feuerbach, led not much later to his practical rejection, if not particular aspects of, then the basic philosophical orientation, the 1844 manuscripts attempted to establish. The outcome of this is that Habermas's earlier rejection of humanist interpretations of Marx is now implied to be immanent to Marx's own philosophical development, or lack of it: Marx's

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own recognition of his failure to successfully "renew" Feuerbach's philosophical anthropology.

For support of the underlying contention that characteristics which specify Marx's thought are exclusively located outside the 1844 manuscripts, Habermas cites, in consecutive footnotes, two passages from the same page of Marx's 1844 text. Quotation of these passages is supposed to further demonstrate that Marx's critique of Hegel was essentially of his "idealism", and that Marx was "for" materialism as opposed to idealism (Habermas 1972, 28-29). Yet, these two passages directly precede and follow respectively this not-so-easily interpreted passage:

> We see here how a consistent naturalism or humanism is distinguished from both idealism and materialism as well, and at the same time is the unifying truth of both. We also see how only naturalism is able to comprehend the act of world history (Marx 1967b, 325).

Habermas, in passing over just this paragraph (while quoting from the one which precedes and the one which follows) avoids confronting the question of the uniqueness of Marx's thought in 1844, at least in as much as Marx began to seek to come to terms with it. This weakens Habermas's own immanent critique of Marx, and is especially noticeable in view of Habermas's explicit judgment, discussed earlier, which attributed to Marx a lack of self-reflection, which was then assessed to be at the core of a Marxism, developed across generations, the effect of which is said by Habermas to have diverged so far from its original intention.

The paragraph just quoted above directly addresses the issue of Marx's self-understanding of his thought. It clearly signals Marx's intention--in the greater part of the manuscript ahead--to develop a philosophic conception

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identical with neither Hegel's nor Feuerbach's, though related in some way to both.

Nevertheless Habermas does *intend* to develop an idea which attributes unique features to Marx's philosophic thought. But it is important to keep in view the question of whether these features are the same ones Marx understood to be his own or are the more eccentric (and one-dimensional) ones attributed to him by Habermas. It is significant that Habermas makes, only implicitly, a case that these are to be found mainly outside, "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General."

Habermas, in moving to Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach", next develops an interpretation of Marx's originality in which elements of Kantian epistemology, though reflected through Hegel's critique, are given prominence. While "objective activity" is said to be given only an "unspecific" meaning in 1844, by the time of Marx's critique of Feuerbach in the next year this same concept is given, "the specific meaning of constituting the objectivity of possible objects of experience" (Habermas 1972, 27). Habermas suggests that it is this movement from the unspecific (in 1844) to the specific (1845) which underlies the cogency of Marx's identification of the "main flaw" in all previous "materialisms" (including Feuerbach's) (Habermas 1972, 27).

Previous materialisms (unlike the one noted by Habermas to have been first discovered by Marx in his critique of Feuerbach) did not apprehend reality, "as sensuous human activity, as practice, subjectively." Here, then, Marx's discourse is seen as referring to practical as well as theoretical dimensions; in fact, Habermas's implication is that from the perspective of German idealism (particulary Hegel) Marx prematurely, and in some instances exclusively so, oriented toward the Practical Idea, underestimating in various ways the need for

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self-reflection in respect to the Theoretical Idea, the responsibility of philosophy in critical social theory.

In Marx's "superior" form of materialism, according to Habermas, elements of Kant's transcendental philosophy reappear in his developing critique of the young Hegelians, including Feuerbach. Habermas writes,

> On the one hand Marx conceives of objective activity as a transcendental accomplishment; it has its counter-part in the construction of a world in which reality appears subject to conditions of the objectivity of possible objects of experience. On the other hand, he sees this transcendental accomplishment as rooted in real labor processes (Habermas 1972, 27).

Marx's concept of labor, understood in a certain way (epistemologically) can be viewed, according to Habermas, as the necessary ingredient in Marx's movement from the unspecific to the specific, from natural being to human activity specified as labor transhistorically understood. This accounts for Marx's originality in comparison to Feuerbach, and to Hegel as well.

Habermas's analysis here raises questions internal to his own argument because already in "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" Marx had criticized Hegel thusly: from Hegel's standpoint, that of "modern political economy", Hegel views, "labor as the essence, the self-confirming essence of man; he sees only the positive side of labor, not its negative side (Marx 1967b, 322).

Habermas, in furthering his argument concerning potentially fertile consequences of Marx's break with a "philosophy of identiy" does not notice that the critical break in question does not lead directly to "labor" or "labor processes" (a synthesis of man and nature in oppposition to "idealism"), but instead applies with equal cogency to a one-dimensional *concept* of labor--itself idealistic as well as mistakenly conceived transhistorically. Marx's own view in 1844 does not include the fully developed concept of labor worked out in his

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mature theory, but it is already conceived in at least two dimensions--the "positive" and the "negative".

Habermas, in trying to demonstrate the potential productiveness, were it to be conceived adequately, of a more sophisticated concept of labor in Marx's thought, that is, one which could be accounted for epistemologically without dilluting its "functional" character, is propelled away from full examination of the uniqueness of Marx's 1844 critique. Thus, at this point Habermas makes it appear that Marx's 1844 manuscripts were a stillbirth, and Marx's "progressive" theory (only fully apparent in later work) relied upon a (unspoken) direct "return" to Kant, although taking in to consideration Hegel's and Fichte's critique of Kant.

In thus moving away from a full examination of 1844, and any possibility of finding the uniqueness of Marx's thought grounded there, and constitutive of the conceptual creativity of his developing theory, Habermas, after introducing the argument about Marx's return to Kant, also contrasts Marx to the latter. While the "productive" (or progressive) difference between Hegel and Marx was earlier argued to be based on Marx's rejection of "identity philosophy", Kant's epistemology (taken account of Hegel's critique of it) is transformed by Marx such that in place of "transcendental conciousness in general", the "concrete human species" (rooted in "real labor processes") is the subject of world constitution. Then, in order to show that the epistemological characteristic of labor, made possible to see by Hegel's radicalization of Kant (consciousness as a historical process of self-formation) is the basic insight of Marx in 1844, and is carried all the way through to Marx's mature theory, Habermas here cites two passages from Volume One of *Capital*. In the first passage Habermas quotes Marx stating that labor is a,

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> condition of human existence that is independent of all forms of society, a perpetual necessity of nature in order to mediate the material exchange between man and nature, in other words, human life (Habermas 1972, 27).

Habermas also quotes Marx in a later passage of *Capital* where Marx writes,

> Labor is above all a process between man and nature, a process in which man through his own action mediates, regulates and controls his material exchange with nature. He confronts the substance of nature itself as a natural power. He sets in motion the natural forces belonging to his corporeal being, that is his arms and legs, head and hand, in order to appropriate nature in a form usable for his own life (Habermas 1972, 27-28).

Recall that these are the passages I referred to earlier (Chapter One) in regard to which Postone, in criticizing Habermas's interpretation of them, also questioned whether they were not problematic in themselves.

Now a range of interpretations at issue can be seen more clearly: Postone argues for a fundamental *development* (at least in regard to a concept of labor) from 1844 to Marx's mature theory in the *Grundrisse* and *Capital.* He recognizes, however, that Marx retained a concept of "alienated labor". Habermas wants to show no difference in Marx's concept of labor in 1844 compared to the definition Marx gave it in Volume One of *Capital* more than two decades later. In doing so, Habermas practically limits the importance of 1844 to Marx's rejection of "identity philosophy", a rejection (which leads Marx back to Kant) he understands as only later made relevant for Marx's, as well as later, social theory.

Now, within the text of "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" it is not clear that Marx conceives the "concrete human species" to be "the subject". In the first place, it is difficult to see how Habermas can attribute to Marx a notion of a

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concrete human species, "rooted in real labor processes", as the subject of world constitution, without discussing Marx's concept of alienation. Already, in "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", although he had not yet investigated "real labor processes" (fully doing so only later in *Capital*) Marx had criticized Hegel for not seeing the "negative side of labor." The subject of Marx's 1844 text was a specific aspect of Hegel's philosophy--negation of negation as the ungrasped but revolutionary element of the dialectic. Marx refers to labor, but it is not his central focus, and he attributes to Hegel the standpoint of political economy in which "labor" was seen only from its "positive" side. Marx suggests that the elements (in Hegel's philosophy) which far surpass political economy are related to *concepts* whose intrinsic potential lie in achievement of social revolution.

In a very obvious departure from Marx's own emphasis in 1844, Habermas disregards Marx's ideas (which were even more fully developed in other parts of the 1844 manuscripts) concerning alienated labor. "Alienation" (and "abstraction") were for Marx key in overcoming the philosophical impasse reached both by Hegel and his followers (including Feuerbach).

Habermas connects *Capital* most clearly to his analysis of Marx's later (1845) relationship to Feuerbach, not to 1844. But after the two quotes from Chapter One of *Capital* (on the metabolic relationship of labor and nature) he does *return* to 1844, offering another passage from "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic":

> Man is not only a natural being, but a human natural being: that is a being that exists for itself and is therefore a species-being and must confirm and activate itself as such both in its being and its knowledge. Thus human objects are not natural objects as they are immediately given. Nor is the human mind in its immediate, objective form the same as human sensuousness. Nature is not immediately present adequately to the human being either objectively or subjectively (Habermas 1972, 28).

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This then amounts to an analysis of Marx which includes two of social theory's most controversial texts--"Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" and Chapter One of *Capital*–stripped of several concepts (alienation, fetishism, abstraction), a critical, historically specific approach to which, in Marx's own view, was central to his distinctive contribution concerning both "world" constitution and self-constitution.

This point can be summarized as follows: according to Habermas, first the 1844 "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" is said not to go substantially beyond Feuerbach's naturalism. It was only with his critique of Feuerbach's naturalism a year later that Marx fully understood activity as praxis, that is, subjectively, wherein "objective activity" acquires the "specific meaning of constituting the objectivity of possible objects of experience," and hence appreciated, as well, the "active side" idealism had developed in distinction from materialism.

Next, to show that the "activity" to which Marx refers is the idea of labor which informs *Capital* as well, Habermas next cites the two passages from *Capital* I reproduced above (see p.101). The passages from Chapter One of *Capital* are intended to make clear and direct the specific meaning of activity, or practice, which Marx discovered only in his critique of Feuerbach. Habermas limits the significance of these passages to an attempt to show that external nature is objective for us only through processes of "social labor": only insofar as "externalization" is mediated by the subjective nature of man, a subjectivity confined to an instrumentalist relation. Habermas writes,

> The system of objective activities creates the factual conditions of the possible reproduction of social life and at the same time the transcendental conditions of the possible objectivity of the objects of experience (Habermas 1972, 28).

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But now the emphasis is on the activity of a species being for whom nature constitutes itself as objective only through its subjective nature, that is, mediated by "processes of social labor."

Habermas here refers to man as a "tool-making animal", which, "signifies a schema of both action and of apprehending the world" (Habermas 1972, 28). Man as a "tool-making animal" has not been introduced by Marx in any of the texts Habermas has so far cited. None the less, from this perspective Habermas concludes this part of his argument by returning to "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", which he had ostensibly left behind in favor of Marx's "progress" in his *Theses on Feuerbach.* He interprets Marx as seeing in labor a natural process in so far as it regulates a "material exchange with nature", but also as more: it, "constitutes a world."

But the passage Habermas quotes here at length (see p. 102) does not refer to labor. Rather, it continues a critique of the solely abstract quality of Hegel's dialectic. Following it (and continuing with the preceding exposition which moved from 1844 to 1845, and to Chapter One of *Capital,* then back to 1844) Habermas concludes, "Thus in materialism labor has the function of synthesis" (Habermas 1972, 28).

This is a turning point in Habermas's theoretical work on Marx and Marxism. At this stage of his analysis, which has included piecing together and presenting passages from the 1844 "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic", the *Theses on Feuerbach*, written a year later, and Volume One of *Capital*, Marx is presented such that it should be clear he made a more or less precisely identifiable potential contribution to modern social theory--social labor as evolutionary mechanism. Yet, according to Habermas, just as important, Marx can equally be held responsible for ensuing misunderstandings. Habermas illustrates this point in the form of a critique of several contemporary individual

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thinkers and theoretical tendencies whose ideas, due to the fundamental misconception they shared, helped make possible Habermas's own pinpointing of what in the first place may and may not be appropriated from Marx in the interest of contemporary critical theory. Habermas criticizes the more or less Marxist theorists Herbert Marcuse, Jean-Paul Sartre, Karel Kosik and Gajo Petrovic from the standpoint of a "different" Marx he is just now in the very process of establishing (or re-establishing) from the perspective of examination of the possibility of a contemporary critical social theory.

Synthesis, "denuded of its idealist meaning" [in Marx], that is, established as social labor, creates a, "danger of a transcendental logical misunderstanding" because, "the category of labor then acquires unawares the meaning of world-constituting life activity in general" (Habermas 1972, 28).

In a digression from the immanent theoretical investigation I have so far attempted, a couple of important historical facts must not be ignored. They are important in themselves but also for making clear the theoretical ground Habermas is now claiming. Herbert Marcuse's 1932 review of Marx's *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts* (Marcuse, 1972), the final part of which is the center-piece of Habermas analysis, was the first to bring them into the public domain after they remained virutally untouched, even by an already long tradition of Marxism, in the near century following their writing. Habermas does not make this directly evident; he only cites his own 1958 work, *Literaturbericht Zur Diskussion Um Marx und den Marxismus*, which included a critical analysis of Marcuse's review. Habermas states that at the time Marcuse's review was written, the latter was "under the influence of Heidegger", and Marcuse's thought represented an example of a "phenomenological strain of Marxism" (Habermas 1973, 29). However, even as late as today it is not difficult to find contention precisely on the question of whether Marcuse's review instead

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exemplified the decisive and fruitful break with Heidegger; in any case, Marcuse's analysis certainly holds up as an important and lasting contribution to a critical (though undoubtedly diverse) strand of Marxism which seriously challenged not only the repressive regimes ruling in its name, but *all* previous interpretations of Marx developed without access to the 1844 Manuscripts themselves. Interestingly, it should be considered whether Habermas in his prior attempt at a comprehensive critique of Marx in STPS (which by-passed 1844) failed due in part to retrogression behind the point when Marx's 1844 writings entered the public domain.

The twist here is that Habermas, evoking the authority of Marx against Marcuse, criticizes the latter (and the others) for what he implies is the "conservative" result of their "phenomenological" appropriation of Marx--wherein the labor process is seen as the, "foundation for the construction of invariant meaning structures of possible social lifeworlds" (Habermas 1973, 29). In fact, in addition to Marcuse and Sartre, this view is said to "govern the interpretaion of Marx in several socialist countries" (Habermas 1973, 29). Habermas refers to the 1967 German translation of Karel Kosik's, *Dialectic of the Concrete* (which he does not note contains criticisms of both Marcuse and Sartre) and to the Yugoslavian Gajo Petrovic's, *Marx in the Midtwentieth Century,* also published in 1967.

Now it was, and is, not difficult to see that Kosik's book, although, remarkably, published in Czechoslovakia at the time, represented a bold critique of totalitarian Communism (socialist countries, in Habermas's terms) identifying itself as "Marxist." Both Kosik himself and Petrovic's tendency--the Marxist Humanists--were hounded out of political life, importantly on the basis of their view of the contemporary import of an interpretation of Marx's theory as revolutionary and humanist. This was seen as a threat to the stability of the

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Communist state. A case can in fact be made that the works to which Habermas referred were integral to the revolutionay upheaval of 1968, which was followed by Communism's invasion of Czechoslovakia. I recount these well-known facts because they provide the necessary prespective for asking various questions about just what was politically at stake, and might still be, in Habermas's examination of Marx and Marxism. For example, given the facts as stated above, what should one think of Habermas's description of Kosik's and Petrovic's views "governing the interpretation of Marx in several socialist countries?"

Were these countries socialist in any way except ideologically? In the context of a critical examination of Marx and Marxism it seems odd that this be taken for granted, rather than something that first needs to be demonstrated. KHI took it as its task a new beginning of a critical approach to ideas, including examination of the question whether ideas might still be potentially constituitve of a changed, improved social life; certainly "socialism" has been one of the key, contentious ideas of recent times. But, according to Habermas, not only could it be assumed that these Communist states were socialist, but some of those dissident thinkers whose social positions were most tenuous, due to their dissident, Marxist ideas, are said to have "governed the interpretation of Marx." Charitably, Habermas might have been saying that while the "Marxists" running the state had all the power, at least the dissident Marxists, "govern the interpretation." Yet, it still should be remembered that KHI was written in the West, where much was known about the extreme repression of intelletuals (and workers) in the "socialist" countries. Despite the availability of much information about the opposition (including theoretical) within these states, Habermas's analysis amalgamates the Communist state and its dissident Marxists.

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In any case, Habermas's present theoretical concern here is to delineate the function of labor given it by Marx. In mediating objective and subjective nature, the category of social labor, "designates the mechanism of the evolution of the species in history" (Habermas 1973, 29). In contrast, in the phenomenological interpretation of Marx labor is regarded as, "the foundation for the construction of invariant meaning structures of possible social lifeworlds" (Habermas 1973, 29).

Once Habermas has, in his view, convincingly identified Marx's "metacritique" of Hegel, he indicates that several things should become clear, and hence subject to theoretical, and perhaps even practical, resolution: Marx, strongly influenced by the times in which he lived, believed "philosophy" could and should be replaced with "science." According to Habermas, far from the young Marx ("discovered" long after the "mature" Marx) casting doubt on such a conclusion long since drawn by many (especially those with some amount of sympathy for governments ruling with a "Marxist" ideology) Marx's 1844 "metacritique", when carefully examined, is precisely what compels this interpretation.

When Habermas implicitly concludes that no fundamental distinction should be drawn between the "coarse materialism" of ideological Marxism (such as was in power in East Europe) and the dissident Marxism which attempted to make relevant the 1844 themes of alienation and humanism, he is actually making a case for the affinity of Marx and all (or practically all) Marxisms in that the latter shared with Marx an understanding of labor as transhistorical, exclusively *determinant* of possible interpretations of society at the categorical level. Habermas concludes that in so far as something might be retrieved from Marx's theory, it can be found neither in Marx's own self-understanding, nor the contemporary Marxism which had established state

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power. The alternative posed by Marxist dissidents is hardly distinguishable from the latter.

Habermas, in an oblique (if not ironic) criticism of humanist Marxism in particular, instead singles out a, "mechanism of humanization" (Habermas 1973, 24) (certainly not to be mistaken for the concept of humanism I showed that Marx named as his philosophic contribution) as a category designating the mediation of objective and subjective nature, which refers to the evolution of the species in history.

What might be easy to lose sight of here is that Habermas's argument relies on two concepts not found in the text of Marx to which he refers. Rather, these concepts belong to Habermas and are subtly introduced in the course of his argument. Now, from this, I intend to pose the possibility that all the terms in the title to the article under consideration here ("Marx's Metacritique of Hegel: Synthesis Through Social Labor") have little or no basis in the texts to which Habermas mainly refers.

First, the idea that Marx's "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" amounts to a "metacritique" of Hegel would imply that one could not find through an immanent investigation of Marx's theory a continuous *return* to Hegel's dialectical philosophy as constitutive of Marx's "mature" critical theory. Yet, there is evidence of a remarkable series of returns to Hegel at key points in the development of Marx's theory.

Second, Habermas himself writes that Marx did not "arrive at" an explicit concept of synthesis, that he had only a "vague conception" of it, and that he would have found, "the very concept of synthesis suspect" (Habermas 1973, 30).

Finally, I have already mentioned that labor, in "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", while occasionally discussed by Marx, is not the main focus. At the

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least, this early critique of Hegel does not rely on an explicit, developed concept of labor, and certainly not, as Habermas's argument attempts to demonstrate, one which emerged essentially unmodified in 1867, compared to 1844 to 1845.

In the course of this examination of Habermas's relationship to Marx the latter's myriad returns to Hegel will become evident. The first return, which I will consider now, already occurs *within* "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic". This "return" is to be found in the "interior" section of the article, a part to which Habermas does not refer. Marx does not name Hegel here, but the conceptual return to his dialectical categories is not difficult to see.

In the early part of the article Marx had praised Feuerbach for his "critical" relationship to Hegel, how he, unlike all the other "young Hegelians", had established a "naturalism", which was capable of both criticizing and explaining Hegel's abstractions. For example, Feuerbach had criticized Hegel's negation of negation which "re-establishes abstraction" as theology *after* the transcendence of religion by philosophy. Marx writes,

> Feuerbach views negation of negation as *merely* a contradiction of philosophy with itself, as philosophy which affirms theology (the transcendent, etc.) after having denied it, thus affirming it in opposition to itself (Marx 1967b, 317).

The implication is that Marx has a view of the real meaning and import of Hegelian dialectic (its distinguishing feature being negation of negation) different from, and explanatory of, both Feuerbach's and Hegel's ideas. Marx, in fact, writes,

> We shall explain both the abstract form of this movement as conceived by Hegel and, in contrast, by modern criticism in Feuerbach's Essence of Christianity, or rather the critical form of this movement which is still uncritical in Hegel (Marx 1967b, 318).

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The implication is that Feuerbach, though alone among the young Hegelians in adopting a genuinely critical stance toward Hegel, is himself to be criticized: Marx intends to demonstrate that negation of negation is *not merely* a contradiction of philosophy with itself or, in other words, is not merely formal. This can be seen after the section of Marx's manuscript containing the passages Habermas cited to tie Marx to Feuerbach's materialism; Marx, turning to the, "positive moments or aspects of the Hegelian dialectic", writes,

> ...Transcendence as an objective movement reabsorbing externalization into itself...This is the insight into the appropriation of objective being, expressed within alienation, through the transcendence of its alienation. It is the alienated insight into the actual objectification of man and into the actual appropriation of his objective nature by the destruction of the alienated character of the objective world, by the transcendence of the objective world in its alienated existence, just as atheism which transcends God is the emergence of theoretical humanism, and communism which transcends private property is the vindication of actual human life as man's property, the emergence of practical humanism. Or, atheism is humanism mediated through itself by the transcendence of private property. Only through the transcendence of this mediation--which is however a necessary presupposition--emerges positive humanism, humanism emerging positively from itself.... (Marx 1967b, 331).

The above passage in Marx's "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" is clearly germane to Habermas's argument, but an interpretation of it is not included in his analysis. It cannot be taken into consideration, for one reason, because Habermas disregards the enitre section in which it is situated. (Of the four references Habermas actually makes to "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", three are situated within the first half of Marx's manuscript, the fourth on the last page of an approximately twenty-five page manuscript).

I want to consider the passage from the interior of Marx's manuscript in some detail. It represents an especially creative moment not only of "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", or the 1844 manuscripts generally, but of the entirety of

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Marx's theory. Moreover, such an analysis need not detour from an immanent critique of Habermas's approaches to Marx.

In fact, the passage in question begins with the concept ("objective activity") Habermas identified as providing the great divide between Marx's mere "renewal" of the insight of another thinker (Feuerbach) and his own originality (see p. 95). This originality of Marx--distinct from Hegel's idealism and Feuerbach's naturalism--must be found, according to Habermas, not in 1844, but only later in the 1845 *Theses on Feuerbach.* There Marx is said to have stressed the "active" side idealism had developed in comparison with materialism. This idea of activity, though gaining in conceptual power in its movement from an unspecific to a specific meaning, as so argued by Habermas, was still insufficient when Marx confined it to "social labor." Habermas's argument does not take fully into account the problematical nature of the "objective", as it refers to both being and knowledge (through activity, or labor).

According to the passage in Marx, *Hegel's* is the fundamental insight into the "objectification" of man. Hegel's *true insight* precedes a proper understanding of objective activity, translated by Habermas as "social labor." According to Marx, from within the perspective of a universalizing alienation characteristic of developing capitalist society, man's "objective" being itself is not given but is "appropriated" only by an act of of negation, "the destruction of the alienated character of the objective world, by the transcendence of the objective world in its alienated existence..." (Marx 1967b, 331).

Hegel, himself "within alienation", developed negation of negation through the *opposite of alienation*, the latter seen as just as objective as the existing reality. It is this movement of externalization and re-internalization which Marx, early in his essay, promised to explain and develop. This

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movement, more abstract compared to "labor", is also instrinsic to man's social "nature". According to Marx, appropriation of this "nature" is achieved through the negation (the destruction) of a world attribute--not objectivity itself, but its alienated character.

According to Marx's analysis, Hegel's "insight" cannot be "transcended" by only another idea, even conceived as "metacritique." Rather, Marx describes Hegel's insight to be *"just as"* (Marx 1967b, 331) what Marx later summarizes as the dual movement of theoretical and practical humanism. Feuerbach's critical approach to Hegel is descriptive of one of the moments of this movement--atheism which transcends God....the emergence of "theoretical humanism"; the other moment is specifically "Marxian"--"communism which transcends private property, or the vindication of human life as man's property, the emergence of practical humanism."

Here, Marx is holding in tension Hegel, Feuerbach and the "results" of his current investigation. As Habermas remarks, Marx of course did not argue for, "invariant meaning structures of possible social lifeworlds", or some transhistorical concept of human nature. What can be seen in the above passage is the "sublation" of Hegel in the form of a negation of Feuerbach's negation, or Marx's *particularization* of negation of negation. Marx's real thrust is the recovery of the revolutionary character of Hegel's dialectic--the theoretical and practical idea as each a moment of the fullest development of the concept. Thus Marx arrives at the point where, rather than resolution or "synthesis", the greatest *tension* resides.

Earlier in this section I had noted that in his introductory remarks in "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", at the same time he affirmed Feuerbach's genuinely *critical* approach to Hegel, Marx indicated that the first negation Feuerbach represented was not sufficient; Marx was preparing the ground for

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passing beyond him. This was seen in his seemingly matter-of-fact statement that Feuerbach viewed Hegel's "negation of negation" as "merely" a contradiction of philosophy with itself. It was not obvious from this off-hand remark that Marx viewed Feuerbach's critique of Hegel (or any successful materialist critique) while an advance, was still incapable of "burying" Hegel once and for all.

In contrast, what seems readily identifiable as specifically "Marxian" is Marx's description of "practical humanism" in this later passage: "...communism which transcends private property is the vindication of actual human life as man's property, the emergence of practical humanism. Or, atheism is humanism mediated through itself by the transcendence of private property...". However, it is possible to grasp the meaning of this passage only in reference to what Marx has already forewarned in regard to the two opposing concepts at issue here: private property and communism.

Notice that the whole passage, as I quoted it (see p.111) is divided about equally between a description of Hegel's "transcendence" of alienation and Marx's own recreation of this moment as a "humanism". The two "halves" of the passage are connected with the phrase, "just as": Marx's concept of "movement" is (in his words) "just as" Hegel's. Contrary to the position Habermas often attributed to Marx, including in "Marx's Metacritique of Hegel", this passage does not express a decision for "materialism" over "idealism", which in turn can be traced to a notion of nature as the "absoute ground" of mind.

Already in the first manuscript of 1844, titled, "Alienated Labor" (Marx 1967a), Marx's first dozen pages consisted of an immanent critique of political economy (to which he later directly tied Hegel as well), the main result of which was that rather than alienation an effect of private property, it was its cause. Marx writes,

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> ...alienated labor is the direct cause of private property (private ownership of the means of production). The downfall of one is necessarily the downfall of the other (Marx 1967a, 299).

Therefore, it cannot be the case that Marx, in the passage under consideration here, is, eg; counterposing the concrete materialist overcoming of property relations to Hegel's abstract, "idealist" transcendence of alienation.

Nor can it be the case that Marx is suggesting that the overcoming of private property relations as the establishment of communism exhausts the dialectic of negation of negation or, in other words, represents for theory the materialist appropriation or "subsumption" of Hegelian dialectic. This is already made evident in the passage that closes the second Manuscript of 1844, "Private Property and Communism":

> The position of communism is the negation of the negation and hence, for the next stage of historical development, the necessary actual phase and dynamic principle of the immediate future but not as such the goal of human development--the form of human society (Marx 1967d, 314).

What this makes clear is that the specifically "Marxian" dialectic, or the outcome of his explicit critique of Hegel wherein he also classifies and explains modes of thought (including Feuerbach's) emerging in the latter's shadow, is a humanism which only fully emerges in opposing, or transcending, not mere atheism or simple private property as such, but the "mediation" of social individual and collective self-development by the opposition of atheism and communism to, respectively, religion and private property. Atheism "depends" on religion, as communism "depends" on private property. Even with the establishment of atheism and communism, their opposites remain constitutive of social reality. The "transcendence" of these oppositions, the necessary second

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negation, first makes possible, "positive humanism, humanism emerging positively from itself." Marx, in tracing the movement of thought after the revolutionizing impact of Hegel's philosophy, demonstrates how a recreation of Hegel's dialectic as a humanism is the only way out of the impasse reached by political economy and the young Hegelians.

Marx's fundamental cirtique of Hegel involves the fact that the revolutionary element in Hegel's philosophy remains bottled up in the *individual philosopher*, lacking dissemenation through social relations. This is so despite the fact that Hegel's critique of Kant aimed to overcome just this limited idealism. Marx, for his part, does not accept the abstract negation of "nature" by the abstract thinker and, moreover, how ultimately Hegelian dialectic "separates thinking from the subject" (Marx 1967b, 335). This refers to a (philosophical) attitude which opposes itself to the "non-theoretical" character of the lifeworld, but even to the *philosopher*, or Hegel himself. Marx is not merely critical of this. He also promises to explain it.

"Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" established the ground of a humanism which incorporated the revolutionary element in Hegel's philosophy. Now I will try to develop a perspective following from this argument by viewing "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" from the vantage point in the manuscript where Marx identifies the, "closing chapter of the *Phenomenology* on absolute knowledge--a chapter containing the pervasive spirit of the whole book..." (Marx 1967b, 321). Marx begins his exposition of the last chapter of the *Phenomenology* by remarking that, "objectivity as such is regarded by Hegel as an alienated human relationship which does not correspond to the essence of man" (Marx 1967b, 322).

Marx indicates at the outset that this is the fundamental error of not only Hegel's greatest work, the *Phenomenology*, but its final chapter, which contains,

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"the pervasive spirit of the whole book." Because he equates "man" with self-consciousness, the "question" *for Hegel* is the surmounting of the object of consciousness. "Man", in Hegel's view, is a spiritual being. Therefore, the objective appearances, or phenomenology of mind, are the coming to be of man's true self, the overcoming not only of alienation from spirit, but of objectivity itself. Marx criticizes this as precluding from the beginning, and in principle, the self-overcoming of forms of alienation intrinsic to man's objective "nature", an example for which he offers is man's "suffering being" (Marx 1967b, 335). Marx writes,

> Suppose there is a being which is not an object itself and does not have one. First of all, such a being would be the only being; no other being would exist outside of it; it would be solitary and alone (Marx 1967b, 326).

What is intriguing in the above is that Marx, in analyzing the general movement of the last chapter of Hegel's *Phenomenology*, does not indicate in his text that Hegel himself seemed to recognize just such a problem in the last couple paragraphs of the work. In the last couple of paragraphs of the final chapter of the *Phenomenology* Hegel describes Golgotha in terms of Absolute Spirit--the crucifiction and resurrection necessary for the birth of the new. Absolute Spirit, as a goal, finds its pathway in a process of recollection of spiritual forms, seen from the side of their free existence, "as they are in themselves" (history, or the form of contingency), and, "looked at from the side of their intellectually comprehended organization" (science) (Hegel 1977, 808). Hegel writes that, "both together form at once the recollection and Golgotha of Absolute Spirit, the reality, the truth, the certainty of its throne, without which it were lifeless, solitary and alone" (Hegel 1977, 808). This is an evocation of the suffering of a revolution in philosophy which has not found social,

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organizational form. From this emerges Marx's perspective, the direction and meaning of his own concept and practice of organization. The various forms they assumed (hardly mentioned by Habermas) are related to the revolutionary element in Hegel's philosophy Marx made his own.

The beginning of Marx's concept of organization (not just his "critique" of political economy) is rooted in the 1844 "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic." It is necessary to see such a concept of organization, as it developed through the 1840s-1880s, in order to grasp the meaning of Marx's relationship to Hegel's thought, a theme to which Habermas constantly returned. I want to keep this question of Marx's idea of organization in view, not only for analysis of Habermas's second chapter on Marx in KHI, to which I will now turn, but because it is among Marx's most misunderstood concepts. Such misunderstanding occurs among both Marx's supporters and his detractors, including Habermas. Thus, the concept is in need of special investigation.

"The Idea of the Theory of Knowledge as Social Theory"

The second chapter on Marx in KHI, which I will take up now, can be shown to proceed on the basis of Habermas's view of a concept of labor constituted by, and constitutive of, Marx's relationship to Hegel. But as I just uncovered in a consideration of "Marx's Metacritique of Hegel", "organization" is an equally critical concept, though not made nearly explicit as labor. I will now show that, in fact, "The Idea of the Theory of Knowledge as Social Theory", the continuation of Habermas's immanent critique of Marx, begins with Marx's concept of labor, and its historical, supposedly mostly negative consequences, as well as its effects on the potential for a contemporary critical theory. But the chapter's "result" actually moves social "organization" to the center. Ironically,

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just when Habermas finally focuses on Marx's concept of labor (toward which, when not ignoring it, he often indicated suspicion) he largely agrees with what he interprets Marx's concept to be. In doing so, however, Habermas "discovers" an absence of a concept of social organization. It is the latter which then strongly influences the direction of his future work, not only in respect to Marx and Marxism, but in its entirety, ultimately self-understood as a necessary alternative to Marx and Marxism, that is, as adequate to the conditons of a changed capitalism.

Just at that point where Habermas understands Marx's concept of labor, such that it demands to be thoroughly criticized on the basis of its exclusion at the categorical level of a concept of social organization, Habermas no longer refers to works of Marx he had earlier taken up, works he had already brought up for discussion in connection with "organization". For example, in STPS Habermas discussed the *Communist Manifesto*, *Critique of the Gotha Programme* and *The Civil War in France* (on the Paris Commune). These works (and a recognition that they might be importantly related to a concept of organization) are inexplicably missing in KHI.

(Interestingly, three years after the completion of the latter work, Habermas acknowledged, and responded to, criticism on this very basis. In the 1971, "Some Difficulties in the Attempt to Link Theory and Practice", which served as an introduction for the second German edition (and first English translation) of the collection of essays known as *Theory and Practice*, Habermas confronts the challenge by, 1) informing his readers that he, unlike Marx, no longer "depended" on Hegelian dialectics; and, 2) indicated that Georg Lukács's philosophic concept of the Party was essentially identical with Lenin's practice of it, and both could find their justification, or basis, in Marx's own theory).

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In KHI, Habermas begins his second chapter on Marx, "The Idea of the Theory of Knowledge as Social Theory", with quotation of another passage from Marx's 1844 "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic."

> The greatness of Hegel's phenomenology and its end result--the dialectic of negativity as motive and productive principle--is this...that Hegel grasps the self-generation of man as a process, objectification as de-objectification, as alienation...and the overcoming of this alienation; in other words, that he grasps the essence of labor and comprehends objective man, who is true because of his reality, as the result of his own labor (Habermas 1972, 43).

Presentation of this passage serves to anchor the next several pages of conclusions following from "Marx's Metacritique of Hegel". In that article (as I have just shown) Habermas was concerned to make clear the philosophic argumentation implicit in Marx's position without which the meaning for contemporary theoretical problems and possible relevance for construction of a contemporary theory could not be discerned. In contrast, Marx's "metacritique" of Hegel now established, Habermas, in "The Idea of the Theory of Knowledge as Social Theory", returns to Marx's "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" from a new, more explicitly critical standpoint. Now, all of Marx's work, beginning with the passage I just reproduced, is posited as unified under the category of an "instrumental" appropriation of Hegel. (Recall that already in the beginning of "Marx's Metacritique" Habermas characterized Marx's approach to Hegel as 'strategic"--"Marx follows the strategy of detaching the exposition of consciousness in its manifestations from the framework of the philosophy of identity..." (see p.86).

In view of the alternative interpretation of Marx's 1844 "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" I have so far indicated in conjunction with a reading of Habermas's first article on Marx in KHI, it is not difficult to see that Habermas's

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conclusions, which he constructs as an introduction to his second article on Marx, contain the potential for extensive controversy in regard to specific texts, but also the relevance of Hegel, Marx and the relationship of their ideas for a critical theory which departs from the older Frankfurt School of Marcuse and others.

Following from my discussion thus far, the context must be seen as defined on the one hand by Marx's promissory note in his introductory remarks to explain both Hegel's conception of negation of negation (as the abstract form of the movement of history) and the difference between it and the critical form it assumes in Feuerbach and, on the other hand, the passage Habermas quoted in the opening sentences of his "Marx's Metacritique of Hegel", that is, where Marx sees "*all* the elements of criticism" in Hegel's *Phenomenology.* (I previously questioned whether Habermas's treatment of this passage in Marx's "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" amounted to a misleading "amalgamation" of textual citation, interpretation and revision.)

The passage from Marx's "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" which opens the second article on Marx in KHI, then, appears in Marx's text in the paragraph directly following the one in which Marx recognizes "*all* the elements of criticism" in Hegel's *Phenomenology.* What characterizes both these passages is a fundamental affirmation of elements in Hegel's philosophy, though not yet fully defined by Marx. Simultaneously Marx intimates that a genuine critical grasp of these elements can only be demonstrated with a conceptual development which re-creates them as a "humanism".

Now the form of Habermas's presentation--in which his second article on Marx in KHI flows from his opening quotation of Marx's passage--implies that there is something very much like a linear development, which Marx consciously constructs, from Hegel's idealism to "historical materialism".

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Habermas's characterization of this is in the sentence opening, "The Idea of the Theory of Knowledge as Social Theory":

> The interpretive scheme set forth by Marx for the *Phenomenology of Mind* contains the program for an instrumentalist translation of Hegel's philosophy of absolute reflection...(Habermas 1972, 43).

The remainder of "The Idea of the Theory of Knowledge as Social Theory"--with all but a very few of its references to the *Grundrisse* and *Capital*--argues that from the very first pages of "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", through the writing of *Capital*, Marx's nearly single-minded purpose was an "instrumentalist translation" of Hegel's philosophy.

Now, Marx's aim--as he stated it--was to "explain" negation of negation through its appearances in Hegel and "modern criticism" (Feuerbach). By contrast, Habermas's opening description of the research problem as Marx supposedly understood it is also posited as the conclusion; from the point in Marx's text with which Habermas opens his second chapter on Marx, the conclusions from the several decades of Marx's theoretical work were already decided. The remainder of "The Idea of the Theory of Knowledge as Social Theory" consists in an attempt to prove this thesis.

The major parts of Habermas's argument consist in discussions of, 1) a combination of references to the 1844 Manuscripts, and to the Epilogue to the second edition of *Capital*, in which an "astonishing" conflation of the human and natural sciences is said to have been affirmed by Marx; 2) the *Grundrisse*, wherein, "there is a model according to which the history of the species is linked to an automatic transposition of natural science and technology in to the self-consciousness of the social subject" (Habermas 1972, 48; 3) "communicative action", as neglected in Marx, and as in need of decoupling from "self-

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constitution through labor", and which refers to "individuals and the organization of their interrelations" (Habermas 1972, 53); 4) *Capital*, by way of return to, and development of, Habermas's own previous analysis of "fetishism of commodity", in light of the thought of the young Hegel, that is, the Hegel prior even to the *Phenomenology*. I will briefly summarize these four discusssions and the way in which Habermas connects them in order to establish the ground of his own theory, which he implies incorporates and passes beyond Marx's instrumentalist "translation" of Hegel.

First, it is important to point out that the last discussion enumerated above actually constitutes the material for the philosophic ground of Habermas's entire interpretation of the relation of Hegel and Marx in the chapters on Marx in KHI, at least in so far as Habermas claims originality for his own view in connection with this. The "beginning" is placed at the "end." Such a presentation, then, demands an explanation.

The concluding section to "Labor and Interaction: Remarks on Hegel's Jena Philosophy of Mind" (1967), written in the year before KHI, contains the same quotation which began "The Idea of the Theory of Knowledge as Social Theory" (see p.120).

However, in "Labor and Interaction" the first few lines appear as:

> What is great in Hegel's *Phenomenology* and its final results is that Hegel comprehends the self-generation of man as a process..." (Habermas 1973, 168).

The actual passage, even as it appears one year later in KHI, is the following:

> The greatness of Hegel's phenomenology and its end result--*the dialectic of negativity as motive and productive principle*--is this...that

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> Hegel grasps the self-generation of man as a process...[my emphasis, RR] (Habermas 1972, 43).

In Habermas's earlier "Labor and Interaction" (which I will argue is the material for the philosophic ground of Habermas's approach to Marx in KHI), the key phrase is missing from the one passage of Marx's 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts.* which Habermas selects as characteristic of Marx's philosophic relation to Hegel, and as defining the point of departure for Habemas's original contribution toward overcoming the aporias of German Idealism. Moreover, there is no ellipsis indicating any part of the quoted text had been excluded. The missing "*dialectic of negativity as motive and productive principle*" (which is several times in Marx's text referred to as "negation of negation") was precisely the philosophic concept the young Marx set out to *explain* in his investigation of Hegelian dialectic. Even when this missing phrase re-appears in KHI, it has no effect on Habermas's argument. He still pays no attention to the concept. Rather, he interprets Marx's intent as to translate the Hegelian dialectic as "labor", or the instrumental relation of man to nature. Clearly, the sentence which directly follows in Marx's text casts doubt on Habermas's reductive interpretation. Marx writes,

> The actual active relation of man to himself as a species-being or the confirmation of his species being as actual, that is, human, being is only possible so far as he actually brings forth *all* [my emphasis, RR] his species powers--which in turn is only possible through the collective effort of mankind, only as a result of history--and treats them as objects, something which immediately is again only possible in the form of alienation (Marx 1967b, 321).

Marx's next two paragraphs indicate that the preceding passages (on *all* the elements of criticism and dialectic of negativity) were meant to delineate the lasting value, but limited social specificity, of Hegelian dialectic. The two

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paragraphs in Marx's 1844 text which follow next, however, single out one particular chapter of the *Phenomenology*--its final one--in order to , "indicate in detail Hegel's one-sidedness and limitations" (Marx 1967b, 321) Marx writes,

> Provisionally, let us say this much in advance: Hegel's standpoint is that of modern political economy. He views *labor* as the *essence*, the self-confirming essence of man; he sees only the positive side of labor not its negative side (Marx 1967b, 322).

Despite this, Habermas interprets Marx's passage, "that he [Hegel] grasps the essence of labor and comprehends objective man, who is true man because of his reality, as the result of his own labor", such that Marx, "discloses the mechanism of progress in the experience of reflection, a mechanism that was concealed in Hegel's philosophy" (Habermas 1972, 43). Habermas continues,

> It is the development of the forces of production that provides the impetus to abolishing and surpassing a form of life that has been rigidified in positivity and become an abstraction. But at the same time, Marx deludes himself about the nature of reflection when he reduces it to labor.

In the two consecutive paragraphs of Marx's text (the first from which Habermas quoted about half, and the one following which Habermas didn"t cite) a critical distinction should be drawn. On the one hand, Marx discerns that Hegel, in a distinctive mode, "grasps the essence of labor." On the other hand, Marx critically notes in the following paragraph that Hegel, "views labor as the essence, the self-confirming essence of man; he sees only the positive side of labor, not its negative side." It should also be re-emphasized here that in Marx's essay there has been no discussion of the "forces of production". Therefore, it must be concluded that a characterization of Marx's view as being that development of the forces of production "provides the impetus to abolishing and

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surpassing a form of life that has been rigidified in positivity and become an abstraction" is dependent upon Habermas's previous interpretation (or virtual reconstruction) of the full range of Marx's writings presented in his previous chapter, "Marx's Metacritique."

None the less, Habermas *approves* of the way in which Marx is said to have disclosed labor as a "mechanism" which was concealed in Hegel's philosophy. However, he is *critical* of Marx's "delusion" which, according to Habermas, reduces the nature of reflection to labor. Habermas offers as the basis for identification of this "delusion" another quotation from Marx's "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic". This appears in the sentence immediately following Habermas's passage (on forces of production) I quoted above (p.125).

> ...[Marx] identifies "transformative abolition... as objective movement which absorbs externalization", with the appropriation of essential powers that have been externalized in working on material (Habermas 1973, 43-44).

As can almost be seen just from the above construction, Habermas's conclusion again consists of a confusing amalgamation of textual citation, interpretation and revision. First of all, Habermas does not indicate where, or in which, of Marx's text appears the phrase, "transformative abolition as objective movement which absorbs externalization". It, in fact, follows ten pages *after* Marx's comments on "essence of labor" to which Habermas directly ties it. In the absence of such an indication, it might seem that Habermas's argument--while critical--respects Marx's originality as it is presented in "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic".

Clearly, this not the case. As I have already shown (see p.111) Habermas, in the prior "Marx's Metacritique", glaringly *disregarded* the specific passage in which Marx commented on "*transformative abolition as objective*

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movement which absorbs externalization." This really was not difficult to observe because Habermas's analysis did not reach that far in to Marx's text; it began with the final pages, followed by a few quotations from the first half of the text. Crucially, the particular passage in which Marx comments on "transformative abolition as objective movement which absorbs externalization" (and which Habermas does not provide reference to) is the one in which Marx describes his philosophy of negation of negation as "humanism" which is only conceivable on the basis of the *ovecoming* of the *mediation* of religion by atheism and private property by communism. As I discussed in the previous section of this chapter, this means religion and private property constitute a negative relation with atheism and communism, a first negation. In this sense, Marx views humanism as a *second negation*, that which *first* begins (represents a new beginning) out of the specified *mediation* (religion by atheism and private property by communism). Since "humanism" was a "philosophy" long before Hegel or Marx, Marx uses the term here for the specific pupose of designating his understanding of the originality of his conception of dialectic in contrast with Hegel's and Feuerbach's.

As I have indicated, *early* in his text Marx reports his insight that Hegel "grasps the *essence* of labor". Immediately following this observation, Marx indicates that he *departs* from Hegel in so far as Hegel's "standpoint" is that of modern political economy, and Hegel, "views *labor as* (my emphasis, RR) the essence, the self-confirming essence of man..." (Marx 1967b, 322).

Here the difference is expressed as that between "essence *of* labor", and labor *as* essence. The further development of Habermas's presentation of Marx in "The Idea of the Theory of Knowledge as Social Theory", including his first argument in the chapter concerning Marx's alleged "astonishing demand"

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for a "natural science of man", proceeds on the basis of Habermas's failure to recognize this difference.

Aside from Habermas's analyses which proceed on the basis of a questionable reading and presentation of "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" in particular, there is an additional peculiarity in his general mode of presentation of Marx's texts. In the first place, it is difficult to trace Habermas's argument in both chapters on Marx (Two and Three in KHI) simply because he fails to note in the references the particular essay of the young Marx (1844) to which he refers. All citations to the young Marx are simply to MEGA (Marx-Engels Collected Works), and a volume and page number.

Habermas opens "The Idea of the Theory of Knowledge as Social Theory" with a quotation from Marx's "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic." Habermas's ensuing argument implies that Marx's "strategic" re-interpretation of Hegel's *Phenomenology* was the basis of his entire social theory. I have just shown, from a perspective *within* Marx's argument in "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", that Habermas's position, in so far as it proposed a textual basis for its acceptance, was not viable.

A further difficulty now consists in the way in which "The Idea of the Theory of Knowledge as Social Theory" opens with a quotation of a passage from "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", and proposes from it to explain not only the entirety of Marx's theory when it was fully developed, but its motivating principle as well. However, in order to support his argument that a "program" of an instrumental translation of Hegel explained Marx's demand for a "natural science of man", with its "positivist overtones", Habermas offers a quotation of a passage not from "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", but from the essay in Marx's 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts* which preceeded it, "Private Property and Communism" (Marx 1967d, 301-314). Habermas writes,

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> ...For Marx as for Kant the criterion of what makes science scientific is methodologically guranteed cognitive progress. Yet, Marx did not simply assume this progress as evident. Instead, he measured it in relation to the degree to which natural-scientific information, regarded as in essence technically exploitable knowledge, enters the process of production... (Habermas 1972, 45).

Habermas then presents the following, including his bracketed material, from Marx's "Private Property and Communism".

> The natural sciences have developed an enormous activity and appropriated an ever growing body of material. Philosophy has remained just as foreign to them as these remained to philosophy. Their momentary union [criticizing Schelling and Hegel] was only a fantastic illusion...In a much more practical fashion, natural science has intervened in human life and transformed it by means of industry...Industry is the real historical relation of nature, and thus of natural science, to man (Habermas 1972, 45).

What Habermas *excludes*, indicated by the ellipsis, is necessary in order to grasp Marx's meaning. One of Marx's sentences Habermas left out, following the one stating that the momentary union of science and philosophy was a fantastic illusion, *criticizes* historiography because it, "only occasionally takes account of natural science as a moment of enlightenment, utility, some particular great discoveries" (Marx 1967d, 311).

With this observation included, it can be seen that Marx's point is that in contrast (but certainly not with his endorsement) natural science (apparently immune from the critical attention of the cultural life of society) proceeded to reconstruct (or undermine) the practical life of millions. This critical approach, contrary to Habermas's interpretation, is made clear in Marx's sentences which follow in the same paragraph from which Habermas quoted:

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> But natural science has penetrated and transformed human life all the more *practically* through industry, preparing for human emancipation however much it immediately *had* to *accentuate dehumanization* (my emphasis, RR). Industry is the actual historical relationship of nature, and thus of natural science, to man. If it is grasped as the exoteric manifestation of man's essential powers, the human essence of nature, or the natural essence of man can also be understood. Hence, natural science will lose its abstract material--or rather idealistic--tendency and become the basis of human science as it has already become, though in an alienated form, the basis of actual human life. One basis for life and another for science is in itself a lie (Marx 1967d, 311).

Here Marx is commenting on a new, expansive science which understands itself as an abstraction from practical life. Its specificity consists in the detachment of its thought as thought from its historical concretization in the form of "industry." Describing this situation, perhaps the most telling sentence among those I just quoted, left out by Habermas, is the one wherein Marx indicates the moving together of (and thus the difficulty in distinguishing between) materialism and idealism. This alienation develops at a time when natural science is coming to so directly "determine" practical life; at the same time, the socially established "thought" of the society so determined does not regard the process (practically or philosophically conceived) as within its domain. In criticizing this Marx is also staking a claim in what he identifies as the historically conditioned need for a new relationship of ideas to social reality.

Marx's analysis demonstrates a peculiar reversal. "Nature", the object of the emerging science, is materialist at its core. Yet, because this science abstracts from *human* natural attributes their *natural* objects, and in doing so adopts a passive attitude toward the relation of the two forms of "nature" as it develops (importantly as following from science's own achievements) in "industry", its materialistic mode of knowledge is "abstract", transforming itself into an *abstract materialism*, or an idealistic tendency. As I have noted, Marx describes his own philosophic originality in terms of a humanism which gets at

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the root of idealism's and materialism's aporias, the impasse reached in the shadow of Hegel's Absolutes. This is the basis upon which Marx describes the process of development of natural science and industry as "dehumanized", the description which is indispensible for understanding the passage at issue here; and, it is this description which Habermas's quotation of the text ignores.

When Marx writes that, "however much it [natural science through industry] had to accentuate dehumanization", clearly he is not affirming the process. Instead, he is disclosing a process which, in his view, is not even critically approached by society's existing philosophies--idealist or materialist. I have already shown that Marx, in the final part of these 1844 manuscripts, and thus in something like a "summation", describes his own philosophy as "humanism". Here, in "Private Property and Communism", Marx is clearly searching for a divergence--particularly in thought--from a powerful historical tendency in which thought (natural science applied in industry) is uncoupling from life, not unlike the description of Hegel's Absolute as a separation of thinking from the subject, including the philosopher (Hegel) himself, I recounted in the first part of this chapter.

Following his questionable presentation of a part of a paragraph from "Private Property and Communism", Habermas quotes a Russian reviewer of *Capital*, in order to reinforce his argument concerning Marx's, "program" for an instrumentalist translation of Hegel's philosophy of absolute reflection, in which Habermas holds Marx identifies "labor" as the "mechanism" of "progress" in the experience of reflection, and in which this progress is measured, "in relation to the degree to which natural-scientific information, regarded as in essence technically exploitable knowledge, enters the process of production."
The features of the passage he quotes include the reviewer's reference to Marx's demonstration,

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> through "precise scientific investigation", and to how Marx, "considers the movement of society as a process of natural history, governed by laws that are not only independent of the will, consciousness and intention of men, but instead, and conversely, determine their will, consciousness, and intentions... "(Habermas 1972, 46).

In the epilogue to the second edition of *Capital*, Marx is said to quote with approval this passage from the Russian reviewer,

Marx's *Capital* did analyze historically specific features of capitalist society--forms of abstract social domination specific to capitalism of which the Russian reviewer's description is accurate. However, Marx's theory pointed to the possibility of overcoming precisely the historically specified society of which this form of domination was characteristic.

Obviously, this interpretation is not congruent with Habermas's presentation. Following the quotation from the Russian reviewer, Habermas returns to "Private Property and Communism", and quotes a sentence from the paragraph directly following the one he quoted (see p.129 this chapter) before citing the Russian reviewer of *Capital*:

> Natural science will eventually subsume the science of man just as the science of man will subsume natural science: there will be a single science (Habermas 1972, 46).

Since Habermas has already excluded the important context in which Marx poses the challenge of bringing the knowledge attained in natural science to the point where its results are not imposed on life, he is able to then argue that from 1844 to 1867 (completion of volume one of *Capital*, what motivated Marx's theory construction was an endorsement of the "subsumption" of the human sciences by natural science.

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More generally, Habermas's argument implies that all of Marx's work was intentionally molded into a preconceived framework already set in the 1844 manuscripts. (This raises a different problem in that earlier I showed that in "Marx's Metacritique" Habermas's argument implied the contrary, that 1844, because it remained for the most part, within the naturalistic realm of Feuerbach, still lacking a specified epistemological dimension, was relatively unimportant in his more mature theory).

Habermas's ensuing argument aims to demonstrate that Marx only recognized the real consequences of his early intentions when confronted with problems in his later working out of the *Grundrisse*. In this connection, Habermas returns to his conclusion in "Marx's Metacritique" wherein it is said the philosophic framework of Marx's thought was too narrow to include all the elements his actual theory admitted. Thus, it is precisely at this point, that is, in his consideration of the *Grundrisse*, where Habermas first proposes "communicative action" (organization of social relations) as the "second dimension" necessary in order to grasp the meaning of "dialectic" of forces and relations of production, supposedly Marx's essential finding. Hence now I will consider how Habermas relates his analysis of 1844 to the *Grundrisse,* including his initiation of "communicative action", related to the impasse Marx is said to have reached (the transposition of natural science into a self-conscious subject).

First, recall that in BPSMC, Habermas had already found in some of the same passages in the *Grundrisse* an economic argument which contradicted Marx's "labor theory of value." Habermas had concluded from this that Marx chose to ignore the finding, suggesting that this was perhaps because Marx's preconceptions were at odds with rigorous social theoretic concerns.

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Similarly, in "The Idea of the Theory of Knowledge as Social Theory", Habermas finds that Marx identified how development of the forces of production, the direction of which was toward the reduction of necessary labor time to a minimum, leads to a qualitative change, wherein the worker takes a, "place alongside the process of production instead of being its chief agent". The *Grundrisse* also indicated that such a state of affairs (an automatic regulation of social production) was not in itself a sufficient condition of social emancipation; yet, in view of Marx's "metacritque of Hegel", which emerged as an idea of "synthesis through social labor", Marx's hypothetical example in the *Grundrisse* depicted the limits intrinsic to Marx's philosophical self-understanding. Hence, Habermas in effect claims that the philosophical foundations of Marx's thought, traced directly from the 1844 "Critique of the Heglian Dialectic" to the *Grundrisse*, are thrown into serious doubt not primarily by the opposition to them of another theory, but by the logic and development of Marx's own investigations. At this point, Habermas understands his critique of Marx's theory as immanent. If, however, contemporary theory is unable to understand Marx better than Marx understood himself, and thereby "rescue" the theory, the obvious alternative would be to reject Marx's theory, assuming that a better theory was available or was in the process of development.

Habermas notes that in the *Grundrisse* Marx, "very precisely distinguishes the self-conscious control of the social life process by the combined producers from an automatic regulation of the process of production that has become independent of these individuals" (Habermas 1972, 51). Yet, according to Habermas, this was only one of the two versions Marx presented. The important feature of Habermas's analysis consists in the idea that Marx presented in the *Grundrisse* two separate models: one according to which there is, "an automatic transposition of natural science and technology

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into a self-consciousness of the social subject"; and another according to which (in Habermas's view), "the self constitution of the species takes place not only in the context of men's instrumental action upon nature but simultaneously in the dimension of power relations that regulate men's interaction among themselves" (Habermas 1972, 51). It is on the basis of his detection of two different "models", or "versions" that, Habermas concludes, "makes visible an indecision that has its foundation in Marx's theoretical approach itself" (Habermas 1972, 52).

Before considering Habermas's *Grundrisse* argument in detail, it is important to make clear the way in which he links the 1844 Marx to it. Recall the passage Habermas quoted from "Private Property and Communism" in which, "natural science will eventually subsume the science of man just as the science of man will subsume natural science: there will be a single science." In interpreting this as an "astonishing demand" for a natural science of man, "with its positivist overtones", Habermas views this passage as Marx's "self-understanding of economics." Moreover, he understands it as an "abbreviated methodological self-understanding...nevertheless a logical consequence of a frame of reference restricted to instrumental action" (Habermas 1972, 46). Habermas argues that 'synthesis through social labor" or, in other words, acceptance of his interpretation of Marx's "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" as a "metacritique of Hegel", leads to a science of man analogous to natural science, both under categories of "knowledge for control" (Habermas 1972, 47).

Earlier I found that the context of Marx's passage Habermas quoted did not support Habermas's interpretation. Now, by reference to a long passage in the *Grundrisse*, Habermas proposes to reinforce and extend further into the "mature theory" Marx's supposed early, non-critical approach to the natural

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sciences, an approach with which Habermas argues Marx 'subsumes" the 'science of man":

> To the degree...that large-scale industry develops, the creation of social wealth depends less on labor time and the quanity of labor expended than on the power of the instruments that are set in motion during labor time and which themselves in turn--their powerful effectiveness--themselves in turn are in no proportion to the immediate labor time that their production costs. Rather they depend on the general level of science and technological progress, or the application of science to production. (The development of this science, especially natural science, and all others along with it, is itself in turn proportional to the development of material production.) For example, agriculture becomes the mere application of the science of material exchange as it is to be regulated most advantageously for the entire social body. Real wealth manifests itself rather--and large industry reveals this--in the tremendous disproportion between labor that has been reduced to a pure abstraction and the power of the productive process that it oversees. As man relates to the process of production as overseer and regulator, labor no longer seems so much to be enclosed within the process of production. (What holds for machinery holds just as well for the combination of human activities and the development of human intercourse.) The laborer no longer inserts a modified natural object between the object and himself. Instead he inserts the natural process that he has transformed into an industrial one as a medium between himself and inorganic nature, of which he takes command. He takes his place alongside the process of production instead of being its chief agent. In this transformation what appears as the keystone of production and wealth is neither the immediate labor performed by man himself nor the time he labors but the appropriation of his own general productive force, his understanding of nature and its mastery through his societal existence--in a word, the development of the social individual...
>
> Therewith production based on exchange value collapses, and the immediate material process of production sheds the form of scantiness and antagonism. The free development of individualities and therefore not the reduction of necessary labor time in order to create surplus value, but rather the reduction of society's necessary labor to a minimum, which then has its counterpart in the artistic, scientific, and other education of individuals through the time that has become free for all of them and through the means that have been created (Habermas 1972, 48-50).

In respect to Habermas's transition from Marx's 1844 manuscripts to the *Grundrisse*, quotation of the above passage is intended to show the obvious

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limits of Marx's early notion, as interpreted by Habermas, that "synthesis through social labor" potentially characterized an emancipatory theory of society. Habermas presents a nearly seamless theoretical progression from the short passage in "Private Property and Communism" to the passages he then quotes in the *Grundrisse*. However, the alternative interpretation I suggested--that the context of "Private Property and Communism" rendered Marx's observations unambiguously critical of what Habermas argues they affirm--is supported as well in the long passage from the *Grundrisse* Habermas selects to illustrate his argument.

Although I intend to summarize (though briefly) in more general terms Habermas's argument concerning the *Grundrisse*, first it should be noted that the ellipsis in Habermas's quotation of Marx's *Grundrisse* refers to a passage that seems to be relevant in respect to Habermas's investigation. As a matter of fact, the several sentences Habermas does not quote, from a passage he reproduces covering nearly one and a half pages, are the *only ones* containing phrases Marx emphasized. Beginning at the ellipsis, and ending where Habermas continues his quotation, Marx writes,

> *The theft of alien labor time, on which the present wealth is based,* appears as a miserable foundation in face of this new one creatd by large-scale industry itself. As soon as labor in the direct form has ceased to be the great well-spring of wealth, labor time ceases and must cease to be its measure, and hence exchange value of use value. The *surplus labor of the mass* has ceased to be the condition for the development of general wealth, just as the *non-labor of the few*, for the development of the general powers of the human head (Marx 1973, 705).

Marx develops his analysis of alienated labor, here as the basis of a contradictory relationship of value and wealth constitutive of capitalism as a historically specific social formation. The specificity of this formation is made vivid by way of a demonstration of self-abolition immanent in the categories

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adequate to their object. It is a way of making a point Marx emphasized on many occasions: that a specification of the unique features of a social formation, or demonstration of its particularity, is the ground for conceiving that formation as transient. Obviously, the "particular" features thus identified could be held to be bound up with the "absolute", or universality as such. Here, Marx's analysis of the contradictory relation of value and wealth specifies the relation of the universal (value) to the particular (form of wealth) as pointing to the "end" of capitalism intrinsic to its constitutive feature (labor as mediating itself and social relations generally).

The last sentence is most directly relevant in the present context, that is, for the particular issue of the importance of the part of the text not quoted by Habermas in his connection of the theoretical basis of 1844 to the *Grundrisse*:

> *The surplus labor of the mass* has ceased to the condition for the development of general wealth, just as the *non-labor of the few*, for the development of the general powers of the human head.

The idea in "Private Property and Communism", that the relation of natural science and industry was the dehumanized but "real historical relation" of nature, and thus of natural science, to man", is developed here in the *Grundrisse* as the division between mental and manual activity (labor) constitutive of the capitalist social form, its abolition immanent in the contradictory relationship of value and wealth. The idea of the relationship of the development of the "general powers of the human head" to "the non-labor of the few" as its condition is akin to the relation of natural science to industry Marx had analyzed in 1844 as a mode of alienation constitutive of a historically specific social formation. Marx's analysis does not imply a transhistorical concept of labor, a "non-theory" of knowledge which conceives nature as an

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"absolute" ground of mind. Rather, it suggests a socio-historical theory of knowledge, in which the mediation of labor by labor, and of social relations by labor, characterizes only modern (capitalist) society.

While the interpretation I just suggested makes clear that Marx viewed his investigation in the *Grundrisse* as making more concrete his earlier criticism of the relation of natural science and industry, Habermas argues that the same investigation, to the contrary, rendered Marx's philosophy as the ground for social theory non-viable. Habermas indicates that the significance of this section of the *Grundrisse* lies in a dead-end Marx reached in his attempted narrow, materialistic appropriation of Hegel. This is expressed as the idea that in order for Marx's attempt to have succeeded, the end of direct labor as the source of value, and labor time as its measure, would have to include an "automatic transposition of natural science and technology into a self-consciousness of the social subject (general intellect)..." (Habermas 1972, 48).

Habermas concludes that the *Grundrisse* contains evidence that Marx recoiled from such a notion. The section of the *Grundrisse* containing the passage Habermas quoted at length (see p.136) marks, for Habermas, the end of a line of thought he had traced, originating in "Marx's Metacritique of Hegel". Noting that the *Grundrisse* was only a "rough sketch" (Habermas 1972, 50) of *Capital*, Habermas now brings to view that his entire preceding expositon, of the movement of Marx's thought over the period 1844-1858, was of only the "non-official" version of Marx's theory, a version based on an appropriation of Hegel on a relatively narrow scale, that is, "production as the "activity" of a self-constituting species" (Habermas 1972, 51). Habermas writes,

> Even in the *Grundrisse* we find already the official view that the transformation of science into machinery does not by any means lead of itself to the liberation of a self-conscious subject (Habermas 1972, 51).

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Without commenting on it, much less providing an explanation, Habermas now cites passages (which he says articulate Marx's "official version") appearing more than two hundred pages prior to those he has just analyzed and consigned to the non-official version. These earlier passages (Marx 1973, 470), which Habermas characterizes as a departure from an idea of a self-constitution of the species through instrumental action upon nature only, are said to recognize another dimension, that of "power relations" that regulate men's interaction among themselves" (Habermas 1972, 51):

> ...so that the aggregate labor as a totality is not the work of the individual worker, and is the work of the various workers together only insofar as they are combined and not insofar as they relate to each other as combining of their own accord...(Habermas 1972, 51).

> ...In its combination this labor [of scientized production] appears just as much in the service of an alien will and an alien intelligence, which directs it. It has its psychic unity outside itself and its material unity subordinated to the unity of the machinery, of fixed capital, which is grounded in the object. Fixed capital, as an animated monster, objectifies scientific thought and is in fact the encompassing aspect. It does not relate to the individual worker as an instrument. Instead he exists as an animated individual detail, a living isolated accessory to the machinery (Habermas 1972, 51-52).

Now, the passages do not indicate a possibility (and therefore any necessity at the categorical level) of separating labor (insturmental action) in capitalism from "interaction" (power relations). Rather, Marx's observation is that intrinsic to the specific mode of production with which he is there concerned, not only is the individual subsumed by the general. The general itself has its unity outside itself. This insight is the basis of Marx's distinction between abstract and concrete labor, or more precisely, the mediation of labor by itself, constitutive of captialist social relations generally. In the passage which appears later in the *Grundrisse*, specifically those sentences Habermas

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excluded, Marx held that, "As soon as labor in the direct form has ceased to be the great well-spring of wealth, labor time ceases and must cease to be its measure, and hence exchange value of use value" (Marx 1973, 705).

Here Marx is describing an abstract form of social compulsion (and its transience) which is not captured through an uncovering of "power relations" alone, or in an evocation of the concreteness associated with characterizations such as "class domination". The more abstract type of social domination is rooted in the process whereby labor mediates itself, and also mediates social relations generally, captured at the categorical level through the concepts of value, commodity, captial, etc. In capitalist society the instrumental and social, which might exist as two different dimensions in other forms of society, constitute in a historically specific relationship a single contradictory social totality.

Habermas interprets as Marx's "official" version the above passage (p.140) in the *Grundrisse*, and another he next quotes from the same text. Habermas's view is that Marx was forced by his own investigation to recognize a critical second (differentiated) dimension of social constitution not only in a general historical sense, but even with capitalism specifically.

Following this, Habermas next explains Marx's idea of class struggle in terms of the, "institutional framework that resists a new stage of reflection" (Habermas 1972, 52). In other words, from the perspective of development of science and technology, wealth (which Habermas conflates with Marx's concept of value), when losing its basis in labor time, does not automatically lead to "self conscious control of the social life process" (Habermas 1972, 52).

According to Habermas, the "distinctive feature of capitalism" (Habermas 1972, 52) is that the "power relations" at the basis of class struggle are defined economically, not politically (Habermas 1972, 52). Habermas then concludes

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that Marx's attempt to develop an emancipatory social theory as self-constitution through labor intended to escape, but in fact necessarily compelled, labor's distinction from social interaction. In fact, it became clear there was a need to directly confront the former's primacy.

One more peculiarity in Habermas's citation of Marx's texts should be noted here. As I mentioned earlier, Habermas's argument begins with an analysis of what he eventually designates as only one of two versions of Marx's appropriation of Hegel. His attention first to this "unofficial version" relies on passages in Marx's *Grundrisse* which appear much later in the text than those he subsequently cites to ground his analysis of Marx's "official" version, which is said to recognize the centrality of "interaction", and is connected to a much broader materialist appropriation of Hegel. Yet, Habermas's final citation of the *Grundrisse*, offered as conclusive support of his idea of Marx's second, "official" version, reverts to the same page he initially cited for support of his idea of the existence of a first, non-official version:

> On the one hand it [capital] thus calls to life all the powers of science and of nature as of social combination and social intercourse, to make the creation of wealth (relatively) independent of the labor time expended on it. On the other, it wants to take the gigantic social forces generated in this way and measure them against labor time and confine them within the bounds required in order to preserve as value the value already created (Habermas 1972, 52).

In short, for textual support of his thesis of two versions or models, characteristic of Marx's attempt to develop a social theory, Habermas relies for his reconstruction of the later officiated version on portions of the *Grundrisse preceding* by hundreds of pages the paragraphs he maintains describe the first (or earlier) non-offical version. Moreover, while on the one hand implying that a comprehensive reading of the *Grundrisse* brings to view "two versions" of

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Marx's attempt at a critical social theory not otherwise easily accessible, Habermas ends his treatment of the *Grundrisse* by citing the same page in Marx's text to support the "official" version he had already cited to support the non-official version. I point this out to suggest that while it is in principle possible to argue that Marx offers two mutually exclusive versions (or models) of a possible social theory on a single page, this does not appear to have been Habermas's intent. None the less, for support of an idea of a second, "offical" model, Habermas inexplicably quotes from the textual evidence he offered for his assertion of the first, non-official model.

This in itself does not demand a rejection of an idea that two (or more) versions of the conditions for social theory might be found in Marx's *Grundrisse.* Neither, however, does it provide convincing support for Habermas's major thesis, originating in "Marx's Metacritique of Hegel", that Marx embarked on a *futile quest* (over nearly two decades) to construct a social theory on the basis of the idea of "synthesis through social labor."

Predominately on the basis of his tracing a sort of subterranean line of development found in a pair of texts Marx never published (both of which remained unpublished for several generations after Marx's death) Habermas next characterizes Marx's theoretic originality. From Marx's broad, evolutionary perspective, a new stage of reflection connected to objective changes following from the relationship of man to nature are met by resistance of an "institutional framework...not immediately the result of a labor process" (Habermas 1972, 52). Habermas connects this to a broader, materialist appropriation of Hegel.

In light of this broad, evolutionary context Habermas, then, pinpoints Marx's specific theoretical contribution--identification of the distinctive feature of capitalism, which consists of grasping "power" and/or class-struggle (apparently common to all societies) as economically instead of politically defined. The

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implication is that Marx, as his material investigations unfolded, was forced to take account of both labor and interaction, despite the fact that he never revised the metatheory of "synthesis through social labor." Habermas writes,

> While instrumental action corresponds to the constraint of external nature and the level of the forces of production determine the extent of social control over natural forces, communicative action stands in correspondence to the suppression of man's own nature (Habermas 1972, 53).

Habermas, continuing an apparent paraphrase of Marx's "official" version, describes, on the one hand, a transhistorical concept of labor in which, "society owes emancipation from the external forces of nature to labor processes, that is to technically exploitable knowledge (including the 'transformation of natural sciences into machinery'") (Habermas 1972, 53).

On the other hand, "the revolutionary activity of struggling classes (including the critical activity of reflective sciences") (Habermas 1972, 53), needed for emancipation from the compulsion of internal nature, and the replacement of institutions based on force by an, "organization of social relations that is bound only to communication free from domination", occurs in a different medium that that of "productive activity" (Habermas 1972, 53).

Habermas emphasizes that Marx sees both categories of social practice connected in the system of social labor. Yet, as Marx was led to see by his investigations found in the *Grundrisse*, constitution of the species in the dimension of labor, a supression of the constraint of external nature, finds its limits none the less in the "organization of society itself as an automaton" (Habermas 1972, 55). In the other medium, the "social formative process", communicative action is set free as communicative action...the organization of society linked to decision-making processes on the basis of discussion free from domination" (Habermas 1972, 55).

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Following these observasions (among others)--which serve the purpose of defining the limits of Marx's attempted materialist appropriation of Hegel on the narrow scale of self-constitution of the species through social labor, and moving the intial outline of his own theory of communicative action into the philosophic vacuum thus identified--Habermas concludes the chapter with a discussion linking the young Hegel's theoretical-practical synthesis (not incorporated into his system) to Marx's concept of commodity fetishism in the first chapter of *Capital.*

As Habermas describes it, the basis of the synthesis, found only in the early Hegel, is the "dialectic of the moral life" in Christianity (Habermas 1972, 56). Hegel construed crime as a destruction of the moral totality which negates the complementarity of unconstrained communication, placing the individual over the (social) totality. After struggle there is reconciliation between the criminal and the other when they experience the common ground of their existence through a dialogic relation of recognizing oneself in the other.

Here, Habermas returns to the question of the specificity of contemporary capitalism. Habermas sees Marx's "mystery of the commodity form" as a description of "objective illusion", wherein the object of social conflict is unrecognizable for both parties (Habermas 1972, 59). The significance of this, according to Habermas, is that it restricts the communication of the conflicting classes while bringing, "ideologies from the heights of mythological or religious legitimation of tangible domination and power down into the system of social labor" (Habermas 1972, 60). This is "unmasked by the critique of commodity fetishism" (Habermas 1972, 60).

From this, Habermas argues for two consequences for the methodological status of social theory. The "science of man" includes the 'self-reflection of class consciousness in its manifestations" (Habermas 1972, 61),

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and as self-consciousness, knows, "itself to be involved in the self-formative process that it recollects", in order to free itself from "objective illusion" (Habermas 1972, 61). Marx does not distinguish between a "science of man" as critique of ideology and the natural sciences:

> By equating critique with natural science, he disavowed it. Materialist scientism only reconfirms what absolute idealism had already accomplished: the elimination of epistemology, in favor of unchained universal scientific knowledge--but this time of scientific materialism instead of absolute knowledge (Habermas 1972, 63).

The meaning of "The idea of the Theory of Knowledge as Social Theory", the title to his second chapter on Marx in KHI, only becomes clear in view of the difficult conclusion I just outlined. The idea in the title does not ultimately refer to Hegel, to Marx, or to Marx's attempted "materialist appropriation" of Hegel. Rather, it proposes a new ground for a contemporary critical theory, dependent upon a reconfiguration of not only the elements of labor and interaction, but of philosophy and natural science. The implication is that Hegel substantially worked out, but abandoned, a dialectic of morality intrinsic to which was the dialogic relation missing in his absolute knowledge. The negative historical effects of Hegel's abandonment of this dialectic are equated with Marx's refusal to separate natural science from critique as the principle of a science of man. Habermas, in contrast, proposes the task of a reconstruction of forms of class consciousness which would include "self-consciousness" in the form of critique, the only way to escape "objective illusion", his characterization of what Marx identified with his analysis of "fetishism of commodity."

In view of "Marx's Metacritique of Hegel", this amounts to the idea that both Hegel's absolute ground (of nature) as mind, and Marx's metacritical absolute ground (of mind) as nature, not only were both perhaps constitutive of

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the state of affairs in which a non-reflective positivism prevailed; equally importantly, these "absolutes" proved not to contain within them the resources for an emancipatory critical theory of contemporary society. I will conclude this section with some brief critical comments on Habermas's conclusion.

In Habermas's interpretation, Marx's section on "Fetishism of the Commodity and its Secret" analyzes a phenomenon of "objective illusion". He traces this sort of illusion to the historical condition wherein class domination (and conflict) shifted from a more or less direct political form to an imbededness in the economic relation, defined by the free labor contract, or the, "justice of the exchange of equivalents inherent in exchange relations" (Habermas 1972, 60). It is precisely "self reflexive critique" (of ideology), then, which would dissolve the fetish of the commodity. Just as labor as the relation of man to nature has historically created the material conditions free of scarcity (constraint of external nature) "critique" as specific to "science of man" has its purpose in the freeing of people from "ideological delusion" (Habermas 1972, 55).

As I have previously emphasized, Marx's analysis of capitalism developed a concept of a specific and, in crucial respects, unique form of social relations. Apparently, with similar close attention to nuance, he also remarked on the indebtedness of his own theory to previous thought, and reflected on its unique features. This is especially so in regard to the section on "The Fetishism of the Commodity and its Secret." In fact, in the first edition of volume one of *Capital*, this section was not even included as a separate section of Chapter One (Anderson 1998).

In the "Fetish of the Commodity" Marx appears to be at pains to dispel any possible illusion that capitalism's social fetish is any sort of illusion--objective or otherwise Marx writes,

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> In other words, the labor of the private individual manifests itself as an element of the total labor of society only through the relations which the act of exchange establishes between the products, and, through their mediation, between the producers. To the producers, therefore, the social relations between their private labors appear as *what they are* (my emphasis, RR) ie; they do not appear as direct social relations between persons in their work, but rather as material relations between persons and social relations between things (Marx 1977, 165-166).

In addition, Marx does not root this dehumanized social form (which is not an illusion) in the "justice of the exchange of equivalents inherent in exchange relations", but rather in the "two-fold character of labor itself" (Marx 1977, 166). Marx is referring to the abstract domination characteristic of capitalism, the mediation of labor by itself, and of social relations generally.

Next, Marx proceeds to argue that no amount of "ideology critique" can alter the basic form of dehumanization that has been identified at the basis of the capitalist social formation. Marx writes,

> The religious reflections of the real world can, in any case, vanish only when the practical relations of everyday life between man and man, and man and nature, generally present themselves to him in a transparent and rational form. The veil is not removed from the countenance of the social life process, ie; the process of material production, until it becomes production by freely associated men, and stands under their conscious and planned control (Marx 1977, 173).

Legitimation Crisis

Legitimation Crisis (LC) is comparable to the earlier works of Habermas I have already considered in that it too depends on an approach to Marx in order to ground its inquiry into the possibility of a contemporary critical theory. In contrast to the previous studies I have considered, however, there is little evidence of an increasingly close reading of Marx in any way constitutive of Habermas's work. To the contrary, Marx's theory is presented as largely

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assimilated and classifiable within the history of critical thought. Habermas, in fact, classifies it, on one level, as belonging to one of four social formations, intrinsic to each of which is a typical crisis potential. Marx "belongs" to the liberal-capitalist social formation while, by implication, the emerging theory of which LC itself is a groundwork, "belongs" to a qualitatively changed "advanced capitalism".

KHI could be interpreted to have suggested that, *from a contemporary perspective*, and in recognition of the particular problems to which it must respond, Marx's theory was inadequate in the form in which he presented it. The inadequacy was rooted in Marx's own ambiguity and indecision, and also tied to Marx's own theoretical principle concerning dependency of theory on historical specificity.

According to Habermas, the theory itself, however, might still, on the basis of a process of reconstruction, be *supplemented* in such a way as to make plausible its contemporary *relevance*. None the less, in the previous section my close reading of Habermas's text raised questions concerning Habermas's methodology and mode of appropriation of Marx's ideas upon which one would be expected to evaluate what might be relevant for a contemporary critical theory. The importance of this challenge to Habermas's approach to Marx is two-fold: if Habermas's immanent critique of Marx fails, and that proposed critique's specificity is judged by Habermas to be a necessary step toward overcoming the predominance of a traditional, non-emancipatory form of theory, then it might be concluded that a different approach to, and interpretation of, Marx demands a different orientation than that which is found in *Legitmation Crisis* and in later works which follow. In other words, yet another rethinking of Marx's theory might be necessary in order to accomplish Habermas's goal (a contemporary emancipatory social theory which has settled accounts with

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Marx's theory), a rethinking that might also, however, open to very close scrutiny as well Habermas's various claims for the status of his own, emerging theory. Arguably,Habermas's claims are substantially based on overcoming limitations he claimed to disclose but did not credibly demonstrate in his close examination of Marx's theory.

Upon close examiniation, Habermas's presentation of Marx was weakly executed. This can be seen in the examples I provided concerning what has to be frankly described as inaccuracies in key textual citations of Marx's work. On the theoretical level, I demonstrated that Habermas's interpretation of Marx led not to reasonable prospects for its possible supplementation and/or reconstruction, but rather to a necessity for its *rejection.*

In LC, Habermas's dual form of approach to Marx's theory continues. On the one hand, and in the most affirmitive sense, Marx's theory is presented as adequate, though bound, to liberal capitalism. In a negative sense, the presence of Marx's theory is extremely tangential to Habermas's attempt to conceptualize what has succeeded the form of capitalism to which he has confined the problematic identified with Marx. The exception to the latter is Habermas's couple of reminders to the effect that Marx, besides his development of an economic theory (or a theory of society as basically economic) was *also* the author of political works, such as *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (Habermas 1975, 31; 114). However, he does not attribute contemporary importance to the political orientation of those works. Rather, he suggests that their current significance lies in how Marx (not even fully consciously so) felt compelled to link the systemic theory of crisis he had worked out with the law of value to actual historical events; in other words, Habermas implies that Marx's economic theory of society as a crisis theory was not intrinsically related to actual social relations but, as he holds Marx's shows,

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was capable of offering a certain type of explanation of them, through a basically external standpoint. However, it is precisely this form of theory Habermas proposes to overcome with an increasingly invoked theory of communicative action.

My consideration of LC will not be in the form of a close reading of the text, unlike in previous sections. In earlier sections, a careful reading of Habermas demanded a close reading of Marx's texts. Much more than was the case with the first generation of Critical Theorists, Habermas made his interpretation of Marx's texts directly accessible, and deliberately rendered transparent his evaluation of the consequences flowing from his reading. In doing so, he thus consistently attempted to illustrate the importance of preparing the ground for, and thus making it possible to practice, critical self-reflection. Here, "critical self-reflection" refers to the type of "dialogue" Habermas invoked in KHI, where he proposed to uncover abandoned stages of reflection from Kant to Marx in order to reorient a contemporary critical theory characterized by its own pessimism and apparent lack of social relevance.

Yet, to re-emphasize, in contrast to Habermas's earlier studies, LC quite clearly is not based on any further close reading of Marx. Rather, Marx's theory is quickly relegated to the background, as Habermas proposes a framework for a theory of social evolution, the inspiration for which, ironically, is attributed to Marx. In respect to this, Habermas implies his willingness to learn from Marx. The primary lesson he recognizes derives from his interpretation of Marx's notion of the *specificity* of capitalism. This specificity is defined primarily in terms of *property relations and the market*, or the legitimating function of the latter for the former. In addition, Marx's concept of crisis is thought to describe the "deep" structure underlying their surface complementarity.

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In Habermas's view, capitalism according to Marx is distinguishable from other social formations in that its "principle of organization" is defined economically, through wage labor and capital, a relationship of classes, the initial expression of which however is not *directly* political. The idea of the exchange of equivalents in the market is the legitimating ideological form said to be the target of Marx's "unmasking" critique. Thus, very early on in LC Habermas attributes to Marx, "the first social-scientific concept of system crisis" (Habermas 1975, 2). Yet, in what sets the basic tone for the remainder of the study, Habermas writes,

> But I do not wish to add to the history of Marxian dogmatics yet another elucidation of his crisis theory...My aim is rather to introduce systematically a social scientifically useful concept of crisis (Habermas 1975, 2).

Hence, Habermas defines the context as essentially set by, on the one hand, "dogmatic" crisis theory rooted in an idea of the contradiction between the social production of wealth and its private appropriation, the systemic effects of which turn back on and threaten that which is socially integrated. On the other hand, in consideration of possible basic changes in the social formation since Marx, the potential for a social-scientific concept of crisis has emerged. In counter-posing these two perspectives--the one dependent primarily on an idea of economic integration of society, the other mainly systems theoretic, dependent on an idea of political integration (Habermas 1975, 5)--Habermas highlights the originality, and suggests the superiority, of his own theory, in so far as it offers a salient critique of both positions. He analyzes the socio-cultural sphere as the locus of crisis potential integral to specifying the contemporary social formation in contrast with early captialism.

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Legitimation in late capitalism has been re-politicized in that the state plays a major role in the distribution of obligations and rewards, thus rendering Marx's "scientistic economism" obsolete: Politics has been introduced into the foundation of value theory. In view of Weber's research on rationalization, autonomous forms of reason--science, art, and morality--characterize a modernity wherein demands for legitimation of decisions uncouple from purely market mechanisms. Functionalist systems theory, in attempting to conceptualize the integration of society at *only* the political level, ignores the problem that, according to Habermas, "there is no administrative production of meaning" (Habermas 1975, 70). Habermas argues that "meaning"--bound up with the intersubjectivity central to the practical, moral domain--must be socially generated.

The dessication of the public sphere, and its substitution with "formal democracy", is concurrent with civil privatism (Habermas 1975, 75) and certain traditional values and meanings whose very resilience lied in their not being problematized, or thematized, a situation upon which the development of early capitalism parisitically fed (Habermas 1975, 76). Yet, with the politicization of the economy, and the need for legitimation of decisions which followed, the civil privatism upn which its administration of power depended become increasingly endangered. Habermas sees the greatest crisis potential located in the socio-cultural sphere, where the purely traditional basis of motivation to perform the roles required by the political and economic systems are eroding, leading to the possibility of a revitalization of a public sphere. The latter is conceived as the rational potential alternative to tradition, the market, and power. At this stage of Habermas's theory formation, the public sphere is conceived as containing a potential for a needed "discursive redemption of validity claims" (Habermas 1975, 89) upon which motivation and legitimation increasingly depends. Such

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a revitalization, however, must upset the requirements of the merely formal democracy prevalent in "late capitalism."

Even with this brief overview of the thrust of Habermas's argument it is not difficult to see that while it seems to bracket Marx's theory (following his view of Marx's own insights concerning what specified capitalism) Habermas ultimately must rely on a specific interpretation of Marx's theory. I will now consider Habermas's interpretation, in LC, of several of Marx's basic concepts. This is both in the sense of in light of competing interpretations and in view of any possible alterations compared to his works I have previously taken up.

Value, abstract labor, and commodity fetishism are three fundamental concepts, most fully worked out in Marx's *Capital.* Therefore, these concepts are characteristic of what Postone has specified (through a reinterpretation) as Marx's "mature critical theory." The reinterpretation is primarily (though far from exclusively) as against the positions of early members of the Frankfurt School, but with the heaviest emphasis on Habermas--understood to be the most important contemporary representative of the Critical Theory tradition.

In connection with this it is important to recall here that Postone's "reinterpretation", though proceeding through critique of individual founding members of the Frankfurt School, as well as of Habermas, still situates himself *within* the tradition. Not only his selection of theorists for critical attention are predominately from within this tradition, but his very characterization of Marx's thought as "critical theory", indicate theoretical affinity at some basic, but perhaps not easily identifiable level. My intention here, then, is to assess the status of Marx's theory reflected through the stage Habermas has reached with LC, suggest the extent to which Habermas's claims depend on an interpretation of Marx, and what effect a successful critique of that interpretation might have on the viability of Habermas's own theory. Central to Postone's critique of

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Habermas is his position that Habermas misconceived Marx's concept of value. His misconception led to an inability to grasp Marx's "mature critical theory". This in itself would be a substantial topic for analysis. However, Postone's intent is not limited to singling out a figure of classical social theory (Marx) in order to measure the depth of the understanding of his theory by an important contemporary thinker, even one, such as Habermas, who happens to be perhaps the most closely followed within the so-called neo-Marxist tradition. Rather, that Habermas did not grasp Marx's concept of value (and the categories unfolded from it in Marx's *Capital*) is linked to a demonstration that this misunderstanding was constitutive of the form and content of Habermas's own theory formation. Postone's critique is with the awareness that Habermas believed his own theory to be original in the sense it avoided internal defects in Marx's theory, while also taking into account the historical contingencies external to Marx's horizon.

Following from this, it is clear that a critique which confined itself to contrasting with another thinker one's own understanding of an "original" concept really proposes at most a delineation of three observations for the purposes of comparison. The crucial second step, however, consists in showing that the attributed misconception was constitutive of a divergent theory, and that that (perhaps incompatible) theory itself could be explained in reference to the characteristics of the social formation it did not (and could not) specifiy. After executing this second step, Postone then provides arguments to support his claim that Marx's mature critical theory, when interpreted through a critique of important strands of Marxism which succeeded Marx, grasps the essential features of contemporary (post-Marx) society, including the problem of a *contemporary recognition of Marx*. In LC, Habermas's starting point is a

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heuristic question posed in combination with a critical summary of Marx's "theory of value". He writes,

> ...the theory of value is...directly a systems analysis of the economic process of reproduction. The fundamental categories of the theory of value are thereby set up in such a way that propositions that follow from a theory of contradictory capital accumulation can be transformed into action-theoretic assumptions of the theory of classes. Marx holds open for himself the possibility of retranslating the economic processes of capital utilization, which take place within the bounds of class structure into social processes between classes--after all, he is the author of the *Eighteenth Brumaire* as well as *Capital*. It is precisely this sociological retranslation of an economic analysis that proceeds immanently that gives rise to difficulties in the altered conditions of organized capitalism. I would like to take up the not yet satisfactorily answered question Has capitalism changed? (Habermas 1975, 31).

It is clear from his starting point that Habermas's understanding of Marx's value theory has not substantially changed in comparison to his analyses in earlier works. For Habermas, Marx's theory of value constitutes an "economic analysis" dependent on a view of labor--the instrumental relation of man to nature--and the division of classes on the basis of distribution of a surplus. A result of the changed conditions of capitalism is to make increasingly problematic the character of Marx's "indecision" concerning the emancipatory potential of the instrumental relation of man to nature, or of scientized production, versus the need to recognize "power relations that regulate men's interaction among themselves" (see 135). Habermas had already argued that this problem lie at the foundation of Marx's philosophy seen as a "metacritique" of Hegel. The interesting difference is that, unlike KHI, there is a specific reference to political (or historical) investigations (*The Eighteenth Brumaire*), but with the implication that even if granted such a study was "successful" in translating an instrumental labor-determined value theory into interaction terms,

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it is precisely that type of "translation" which developed capitalism has made increasingly improbable.

Habermas's implication here is that Marx understood his own theory of value such that it explained capitalism's distinction from prior social formations. In capitalism, class relations assumed a non-political form, that is, through the labor-capital relationship and the supposed exchange of equivalents in the free market. In respect to this, Habermas sees the cogency of his question, "has capitalism changed?" Once the state intervenes directly in the economic process (Habermas 1975, 52), class domination can no longer be conceived as "non-political." This is a variation on Habermas's critique of a theory of value on the basis of his "traditional Marxist" transhistorical concept of labor.

Marx's "value theory" depends on an understanding of a mode of labor *specific* to capitalism, not on property relations or the existence of the market. Labor in capitalism, as analyzed by Marx, possesses a dual character, concrete and abstract. It is the fundamental contradictory nature of labor in capitalism which determines the dual character of the basic unit of its mode of production, the use value and exchange value of the commodity.

Marx's value theory entails a demonstration of how quasi-independent structures (such as the commodity and capital), related to structured forms of practice, exercise a form of domination on a different, higher level of abstaction than that which Habermas argues Marx needed to empirically demonstrate through "translation" in the concrete relationship between classes. In crucial respects, Habermas's analysis in LC simply fails to grasp these fundamental concepts of Marx's "mature critical theory." In not demonstrating that he has first grasped them, there is no way for him to supply a valid criticism.

Thus, also in Part II (Chapter Six on "Theorems of LC"), which composes his analysis of "crisis tendencies in advanced capitalism", Habermas writes,

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> ....class domination can no longer take the anonymous form of the law of value. Instead it now depends on factual constellations of power whether, and how, production of surplus value can be guaranteed through the public sector, and how the terms of class compromise look. With this development, crisis tendencies shift, of course, from the economic to the adminstrative system. Indeed, the self-containment of exchange processes, mediated only through the market, is destroyed. But after the liberal-capitalist spell of commodity production is broken (and all participants have become, more or less, good practioners of value theory), the unplanned, nature-like development of economic processes can re-establish itself, at least in secondary form, in the political system (Habermas 1975, 68).

Recall that in the final pages of "The Theory of Knowledge as Social Theory" Habermas discussed the meaning of the "Fetishism of the Commodity", and the conditions for dispelling the "objective illusion" he interpreted it to describe: Habermas believed it required a certain type of "self-reflective" critique. Here, in contrast, the implication is that the systematic development of "private" capitalism into "state" capitalism was itself a sufficient condition for dispelling what Marx analyzed as commodity fetishism. Such a radical shift in the formulation of the relationship between "system" and social theory, and their respective efficacies, is due primarily to yet a third treatment of a concept of Marx Habermas offers in Part II of LC.

Habermas never discussed the dual character of labor Marx understood to be his sole original contribution to political economy. If this is the case, in all the works I have considered to this point, when he took up Marx's concept of fetishism of commodity, it could not have been on the basis of how Marx understood labor in capitalism. Thus, in Chapter Five of LC, a couple of pages before he implied that the systematic development of capitalism itself led to the unraveling of the "objective illusion" at the core of Marx's concept of commodity fetishism, Habermas writes, "...in connection with the functions of the public

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sector, there arise occupational spheres in which abstract labor is increasingly replaced by concrete labor, that is, labor oriented to use values" (Habermas 1975, 66). And, again, in Chapter Seven, "Motivation Crisis":

> ...tendencies that are weakening the socialization effects of the market, especially, on the one hand, the growth of those segments of the population who do not produce their lives through income for labor...and...the spread of areas of activity in which abstract labor is replaced by concrete labor (Habermas 1975, 83-84).

Now, in Marx's analysis of capitalism, which brings into focus an historically specific social formation, no concept is more fundamental than that one and the same labor assumes a contradictory form of both a concrete and abstract character. Marx's concept of abstract labor does not refer to one type of labor in capitalism. Rather, abstract labor describes the specificity of labor in capitalism only in its contradictory relationship to concrete labor as one and same labor. In contrast, what I have quoted above clearly indicates that Habermas misconceives Marx's concept of labor in capitalism. He cannot then explain Marx's concept of commodity fetishism, and is not able to account for Marx's concept of value production as unique to the capitalist mode of production.

Thomas McCarthy (1978), in the comprehensive treatment of Habermas's theory up to and including LC, argued that the latter assumed, a Marxist form of critique (McCarthy 1978, 358). It was, however a Marxist form of critique, "with important differences" (McCarthy 1978, 358). By the time of Moishe Postone's study (1993) a decade and a half later the tables had been turned completely. For many, the issue had rather become whether Marx's theory belonged in the Critical Theory tradition, despite its "important differences".

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After a brief consideration of Habermas's ostensible attempt at a "Reconstruction of Historical Materialism", I will take up *The Theory of Communicative Action* and its aftermath, the real beginning of Habermas's theory proper, in so far as he and his supporters conceived of it as "instead of" Marx.

"Reconstruction of Historical Materialism"

In part, Habermas seems to have conceived his exercise in LC to represent a practical demonstration of how one might experiment with, or test for, the possibility of an immanent critique of Marx's theory. The basis of such a critique presupposes identification of what Marx regarded as capitalism's specificity. The formation and clarification of concepts is necessary for determining whether the specificity so identified still defined contemporary society. If features Marx identified with capitalism's specificity were no longer dominant in contemporary society then, immanent to Marx's theory, a different social formation might be said to have emerged. Since, according to Habermas, Marx's theory was essentially a theory of crisis, or a "crisis theory", immanent critique of Marx's theory should either affirm the crisis potential of contemporary society on the basis of the original theory, re-identify it for the possibly changed conditions of what was heretofore understood as capitalism or, finally, reject the idea that contemporary society is best understood in terms of "crisis" potential.

LC still held out the possibility that the specific features of capitalism identified by Marx (characterized by the displacement of class domination from the political sphere to the economic sphere, where it was veiled) might still inhere and be connected to contemporaneity by a concept of a displacement of their crisis potential into the socio-cultural sphere. Marx's directly "economic

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crisis", mediated politically (overtly) reappears in the form of a "motivation crisis". In other words, it was clear to Habermas that what defined "organized capitalism" (as opposed to private property/free-market capitalism) was the overt politicization of economic conflict (or opposed interests) in the state. Furthermore, on the basis of a class compromise at the heart of this form of capitalism, it was not inconceivable (in fact was conceived by systems theory) that this type of crisis could also be "managed". A potential system-threatening political, as opposed to economic crisis, should be conceived on essentially the same model as Marx's original economic conception, where crisis proved resolvable within capitalism itself.

The move, then, to a consideration of a theory of social evolution is implicitly conceived by Habermas on the basis of a proposal for an investigation into the question of whether empirically-identifiable changes in the social formation--which came about without the kind of overt social revolution Marx assumed to be intrinsic to the formation's basic contradictory character--might offer clues to the possibility for the development of a contemporary critical theory of society which, rather than rejecting Marx's ideas wholesale, would reconstruct them at a higher level of abstraction. As opposed to basing a refutation of Marx's theory on historical contingencies to which Habermas believed Marx tended to tie his own theory, Habermas proposes to examine whether the theory (as Habermas understood it) might be reconceived on a higher level of abstraction. One purpose of such an attempt would be to theoretically unlock the unrealized potential of certain social learning processes (which Habermas began to identify in LC) accompanying the social alteration (the object of Habermas's question, "has capitalism changed?") in relation to which, according to Marx's own understanding, Marx's analysis (bound up with too specific concepts of what constitutes capitalism) should no longer apply.

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It is important that Habermas in "Reconstruction of Historical Materialism" assumes for his starting point what he had at several points in LC explicitly noted. In the earlier work he emphasized that Marxism (as opposed to a re-engagement of abandoned stages of reflection represented in part by the original Marx) was trapped within its own dogmatism. While Marx, for example, could still "hope" that what he had discovered at the level of a systems theoretic approach as the law of value might still be directly translated into sociological terms (*The Eighteenth Brumaire*), today "meaning" itself (in the face of eroding tradition and the problematizing of previously taken-for-granted world views) is precisely the problem. The dogmatism characteristic of Marxism, however, is still ultimately (if only implicitly) traced to Marx and, in a different way, to Engels. This becomes clearer, and assumes more importance, in "Reconstruction of Historical Materialism".

First, in relationship to Marx, Habermas identifies only two texts where Marx is said to have, "expressed himself connectedly and fundamentally on the materialist conception of history" (Habermas 1979, 130). Outside the first part of the *German Ideology* and the *Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, it is Habermas's view that the materialist conception of history, as a theoretical framework, served Marx to interpret particular historical situations or developments. However, since in "Reconstruction of Historical Materialism" Habermas does not analyze Marx's historical interpretations, the appropriateness of his declaration that he will treat historical materialism as a theory, "indeed as a theory of social evolution" (Habermas 1979, 130), can only be assessed on the basis of his interpretation of the two texts.

A complication of the matter consists, on the one hand, in Habermas's reference to a current work of Lawrence Krader "on the relationship of the assessments of historical materialism by Marx and Engels" (Habermas 1979,

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225) (a notation which doesn"t give away whether they are assessed to be fundamentally divergent, complimentary, or identical) and, on the other hand, positively linking Marx, Engels and "Marxist theoreticians", as well as the "history of the labor movement" (Habermas 1979, 130). All these are said not to have understood "historical materialism" simply as a "heuristic". Importantly, Habermas does not say, to the contrary, that they understood historical materialism as a theory.

Rather, Habermas's position is that since Marx and Marxists generally, as well as the labor movement he apparently identifies with them, did not understand historical materialism as a "heuristic" but, to the contrary, in respect to a particular content, the *motivating* aspect of the *latter* needs to be examined. But more importantly, Habermas's *central* focus will be the prospective viability of Marx's historical materialism in respect to its potential contribution to a general theory of social evolution. This should be understood against the background of LC wherein Habermas's analysis already "included" Marx's theory. This was mainly polemically; it implied that Marx's economic theory, at least, was unable to stand independently--to capture categorically the essential features of contemporary society.

As might already be apparent, the opening paragraphs of "Reconstruction of Historical Materialism", while phrased rather matter-of-factly, contain controversial implications which, in some ways, are more informative for understanding Habermas's approach to Marx (and Marxism) at this stage than the ensuing arguments for which they supposedly provide only the general perspective.

For example, Habermas states, in effect, that just the fact that in only two places Marx reflected on historical materialism might constitute the predominant factor in an explanation for a divergence between practice and theory in much

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of recent history. Yet, Marxism is still accorded reflective status, and hence Habermas deems it socially useful in terms of political action; it, "can under certain circumstances be connected with the theory and strategy of revolution" (Habermas 1979, 130). But, Habermas, in the course of his argument never returns to and explicitly develops precisely how this might be so. Perhaps his argument, which I will consider below, that Marx regarded the economic base as determinant for the superstructure only in the transition from one social form to another, is indirectly related to this.

From the perspective of these opening statements and the earlier writings I have already considered what stands out most clearly is Habermas's rather uncharacteristically polemical statement in the early part of LC. There Habermas wrote that though Marx's was the first social scientific theory of system crisis, he did not intend to offer yet another exposition of Marx's "crisis theory." In contrast, he intended to offer a "socially useful" discussion of crisis. In comparing this with the opening paragraphs of "Toward a Reconstruction of Historical Materialism", it becomes clear that while Habermas regarded Marx's economic theory, or a fundamentally economic theory of society to be exhausted, and hence not "socially useful", the more general concept of historical materialism, though (or perhaps because) not substantially developed as theory (and hence adding to the weight of his earlier charge that Marx's "unofficial" synthesis through social labor lacked a self-reflective dimension), potentially contained resourcs valuable for developemt of a contemporary critical theory. Habermas sums up this "second chance" he is willing to grant Marx's theory in the single sentence concluding the first paragraph of, "Toward a Reconstruction of Historical Materialism": "The theory of capitalist development that Marx worked out in the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* fits into historical materialism as a *subtheory*" (Habermas 1979, 130).

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If only briefly, it should be recounted that Habermas's most substantial discussion of Marx's theory prior to this statement occurred in the chapters I analyzed in KHI. There, in an interesting mode of presentation, he traced what he described to be Marx's "unofficial" appropriation of Hegel on a narrow scale. This was rooted in what he viewed as a simple reversal of terms in reference to an "absolute". For Hegel, mind was the absolute ground of nature; for Marx, to the contrary, nature was the absolute ground of mind. From this reorientation of an absolute Marx developed a "metacritique" of Hegel, or a synthesis through social labor, rather than through a Logic. Yet, already in the *Grundrisse* Marx is said to have reached an impasse, which led him to an "official" position characterized by recognition of the distinctiveness of social interaction compared to social labor. Habermas uses for illustrative purposes the "Fetishism of the Commodity" section from the first chapter of *Capital.* There Habermas sees in the dispelling of "objective illusion" (said to describe the meaning of identification of commodity fetishism) Marx's practical move to appropriation of Hegel on a much broader scale. Thus Habermas's mode of appropriation of Marx in KHI (where he attempted to reconstruct Marx's position primarily with the resources available in the latter's writings not published in his lifetime) is in contrast to "Reconstruction of Historical Materialism". In the latter he tests the ability of Marx's theory to "absorb" later research. Habermas's procedure here--testing the possibilities of appropriating Marx's theory-- might be seen as analogous to Marx's "narrow" and "broad" attempted appropriations of Hegel.

It is also important to recall, however, that Habermas ends his discussion of Marx by drawing the conclusion that, in retrospect, seemed inevitable, given his starting point. The mere transposition of nature and mind--when from either of which is accounted the unfoldment of an absolute--does not result in a very

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consequential distinction in terms of an interest in the development of a contemporary critical social theory. Habermas, in fact, concluded that Marx merely reconfirmed the "elimination of epistemology" in a scientific materialism Hegel had already accomplished as "absolute knowledge".

Thus, his earlier consideration of Marx's theory, particularly the movement from the *Grundrisse* to *Capital*, pivoting on the addition of "Fetishism of Commodity", strongly distinguished Marx's two works, only the latter published in Marx's lifetime. Now, in contrast, the *Grundrisse* and *Capital together* represent a subtheory of capitalist development within a theory of social evolution; the categories internal to Marx's analysis of *capitalism*, then, are not to be seen as constitutive of the specificity of Marx's theory, or at least of its potential utility.

In connection with the above, it should also be kept in mind that "Reconstruction of Historical Materialism" is but one piece in a collection representing a series of occasional writings devoted largely to elaborating Habermas's own incipient theory. I have already described, in the section on KHI how Habermas's intervention at a point where he had concluded that contemporary critical, or dissident Marxist, theory had failed to grasp (on the basis of the ideas of the young Marx) labor as a "mechanism of evolution". Habermas proposed an alternative to a phenomenological approach to labor, where labor was considered to be the, "foundation for the construction of invariant meaning structures of possible social lifeworlds". It is precisely there where Habermas seemed to put a stamp of *approval* on what he understood to be Marx's own concept of labor, not grasped adequately, that is, as a "mechanism of evolution", even by "critical" Marxists.

In LC, Habermas suggested that the "dynamic" of contemporary society--in so far as it might be conceived in other than the pessimistic terms of the older

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Frankfurt School, or the "romantic" terms of a "resurrection of nature" (Habermas 1972, 32)--resided in the socio-cultural sphere as a potential "motivation crisis". Now Marx's analysis of capitalism was to be taken as relevant only in its place of a subtheory within a broader theory which had yet to be satisfactorily elaborated.

This could be viewed in at least two different ways. Writings of Marx preceding the *Grundrisse* and *Capital*, such as the *German Ideology*, were the basis for explaining the former and pointing to elements necessary for a contemporay critical theory or, alternatively, assessed not to possess the necessary resources out of which a theory adequate to contemporary conditions might be developed. If the latter were the case, this reflected a shift in the social formation's identity, and the focus should shift to Habermas's nascent theory.

Now, t is Habermas's contention that the prospects for the substantial contemporary relevance of Marx's theory depended on the very element of Marx's methodology which Habermas had heavily and consistently criticized over the course of many years and in various texts. Habermas often contended that Marx's theory lacked a self-reflective dimension, the absence of which proved historically consequential. He now locates Marx's theoretical self-reflection in sparse comments confined to the *German Ideology* and the *Preface to a Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy*. The full import of this emphasis is only seen in his next comment:

> In 1938 Stalin codified historical materialism in a way that has proven of great consequence...the historical materialist research since undertaken has remained largely bound to this theoretical framework. The version set down by Stalin needs to be reconstructed (Habermas 1979, 131).

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This emphasizes Habermas's position, made clear practically from the start of his theoretical writings, that Marx's social theory, while perhaps adequate to the times in which he lived, both lacked a critical self-reflective dimension and, in so far as the latter could be discovered retrospectively, was not in itself adequate to contemporary social conditions. Most remarkable here, however, is Habermas's assertion that, whether or not it was possible to "reconstruct" Marx's historical materialism, due to Marx's own failure to adequately reflect on it, Stalin's version was in need of "reconstruction." According to Habermas, to reconstruct a theory,

> signifies taking a theory apart and putting it back together again in a new form in order to attain more fully the goal it has set for itself (Habermas 1979, 95).

Since Habermas's lengthy discussion briefly refers to Stalin on only two other occasions, one possible interpretation of this is that a re-interpretation of *Marx's* theoretical self-reflections might prove productive in formulating an adequate theory of historical materialism. In the context of the collection to which this proposed reconstruction belongs, however, this would require a new attempt equipped with theoretical concepts so far developed by Habermas, often to either supplement perceived deficiencies in Marx's theory, or as a means for critical departures from it.

In respect to this issue, Rockmore, for one, in an otherwise excellent study, is not able to adequately explain Habermas's references to Stalin. He decides, based on his notice of only two references to Stalin (there are in fact three) that the evocation of Stalin and theory was merely "tactical" (Rockmore 1989, 84) But he does not clearly explain toward what end the tactic was employed.

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Habermas's important discussion in the third German edition of the collection of essays titled, *Theory and Practice*, is relevant for this issue. The first English translation of the work was of this edition, and the 1971 introduction, "Some Difficulities in the Attempt to Link Theory and Practice", was written for it. In this introduction, Habermas summarizes criticisms directed at his earlier KHI. He then directly responds to these criticisms.

In one instance, Habermas acknowledges Oskar Negt's criticism that Habermas, in KHI, failed to consider a concept of organization in his discussion of the conditions for the possibility of an emancipatory social theory. Habermas's response is broader even than was perhaps necessary in order to answer the particular question. In what might have sounded somewhat jarring to some at the time, in the course of somewhat lengthy remarks on the subject, Habermas wrote,

> We no longer find, in dialectical logic, as in a certain way Marx still did, the normative basis for a social theory constructed with practical intent (Habermas 1973, 16).

Following this comment, he proceeds with a lengthy discussion of the problem of organization, viewed from within the Marxist tradition. He refers to Lukács's relatively little discussed, "Toward a Theory of Organization", an essay included in *History and Class Consciousness* (Lukács 1971). He criticizes it for recapitulating at a philosophical level Lenin's practice of Party organization in which scientific (theoretical) discourse is not separable from perceived organizational requisites. Habermas's argument suggests that his own supersession of Hegelian Marxian dialectics provides a standpoint capable of critically linking Lenin's practice of subordination of theory to organization through Lukács's Hegelian Marxism to, finally, Stalin's totalitarianism. (Habermas 1973, 36).

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It is difficult to overstate the importance of this discussion. It mediates the movement of Habermas's thought from KHI to his ostensible attempt to reconstruct historical materialism. This is especially so in light of the, eg; otherwise unelaborated observation in "Reconstruction of Historical Materialism" that, while various Marxists interpreted differently the "superstructure theorem" (consideration of which is central to Habermas's attempt at a reconstruction of historical materialism and to which I will therefore soon return), "Among Hegelian Marxists like Lukács, Korsch and Adorno, the concept of the totality excludes a model of levels" (Habermas 1979, 143).

Habermas does not elaborate the significance of this remark. But in the context of his then recent introduction to *Theory and Practice*, and a presentation to a German Hegel society (for which "Reconstruction of Historical Materialism" was prepared) it reinforces the importance Habermas now attributes to his own efforts to construct his own theory--and the concomitant need he sees to separate Marx from Hegel (which Stalin certainly did). Moreover, through the allusion to Adorno as a Hegelian Marxist whose concept of totality excluded a "model of levels", Habermas strongly hints at the possible benefits of a break from the very (Critical Theory) tradition with which he himself was hitherto associated.

Recall that at the outset of LC Habermas disqualified Marx's theory of crisis, while declaring that he was interested only in a "socially useful" concept of crisis. With this in mind, it seems even the more remarkable that he now makes a reference to Stalin's theory as potentially useful, at least in the sense it was one from which an adequate reconstructed theory might emerge. Stalin's theory of historical materialism as a theory of evolution, not Hegelian Marxism which excludes levels, was relevant to Habermas's current efforts.

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I interpret Habermas's approach to Marx here, then, as motivated by the increasing urgency (and the potential efficacy) he attributes to a need for grasping the distinctiveness of the domains of labor and interaction. Habermas has not conceived capitalism's specificity (as does Postone) in terms of structured forms of practice constituted by, and constitutive of, quasi-independent structures. According to Postone's re-interpretation, Marx analyzes these as exerting a social compulsion which is not overt, and as such explain not history generally, but capitalism's trajectory as dynamic, directional, and inevitable. Habermas implies that a break up of the hegemony of traditional Marxism (which largely shares his basic concept of labor as the transhistorical relation of man to nature, but not his view of the emancipatory potential of communication) could be effective in releasing the potential of society "outside" the sphere of labor, or instrumental action.

That Habermas in this new approach to Marx has not re-specified what constitutes capitalism (though he does pose it anew as a system-theoretic problem) is seen in his characterization of the form of its evolution as economic (the dialectic of forces and relations of production) in distinction from other social formations. This, however, is not substantially different from his previous specifications wherein class domination, a situation in which socially produced wealth is privately appropriated, is legitimated through an ideology of an exchange of equivalents.

Habermas, in another attempt at focusing on Marx's specifications, supplements his interpretation of the "base" as economic only in capitalism with an observation that the context of Marx's articulation of historical materialism in the *Preface to the Critique of Political Economy* leads to the conclusion that the dependency of the superstructure on the base was intended only for the critical

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phase in which a society passes into a new developmental level (Habermas 1979, 143).

After drawing out these specifications, which he attributes to Marx and indicates are often overlooked, Habermas next proposes the insertion, at its own level, of his incipient theory of communicative action. The significance of this is two-fold. On the one hand, it implicitly refers back to the opening paragraph where historical materialism was said to be potentially useful for purposes of political action, and even for the "theory and strategy of revolution". On the other hand, it proposes a crucial place for his own theory in a possible "reconstruction of historical materialism" in opposition to technologistic conceptions attributed to the young Marx, Engels, Plekhanov, Stalin and others. The dialectic of forces and relations of production, in order to be reconstructed, must separate out the, "*level* of communicative action from that of the instrumental and strategic action combined in social cooperation" (Habermas 1979, 145). Habermas's proposed "reconstruction", then, hinges on the separability within capitalism of a domain of strategic and instrumentalist action from one of communicative action.

The critical perspective of a differentiation of the level of communicative action, in which, "knowledge of a practical and moral sort" (Habermas 1979, 146) is required, is apparently able to unify thinkers as diverse as Marx and Stalin as against Habermas's emerging theory. Such a prespective harbors the potential of a new form of social integration--or principle of organization--which must be conceived more abstractly than can be the case with a concept of an evolution of modes of production alone. The latter is incapable of explaining evolutionary innovation. While,

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> the rules of communicative action develop in reaction to changes in the domain of instrumental and strategic action...in doing so they follow their own logic (Habermas 1979, 148).

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CHAPTER FOUR

THE THEORY OF COMMUNICATIVE ACTION: CRITICAL THEORY'S THEORETICAL EXILE OF MARX?

Habermas on several occasions in the *Theory of Communicative Action* orients his attention to Marx with a succinct description of its circumscribed purpose. He writes that his is a second attempt from within Western Marxism to appropriate Max Weber for a contemporary social theory (Habermas 1989, 302). Lukács, and later Horkheimer and Adorno, were key figures in the first attempt, an attempt which failed, in Habermas's view, due to aporias identifiable only in light of a theory of communicative action once it had reached a certain level of maturity. Perhaps the key conceptual advance Habermas sees here is in his analysis of the rationality implicit in language, and its even greater potential--a basis and prospect unrecognized by Weber, but hinted at in the later years of the older Critical Theory (Habermas 1984, 390). In an elaboration fully his own, Habermas analyzes this potential as preceding and underlying the societal rationalization elaborated by Weber (Habermas 1984, 342, 343; Habermas 1989, 318).

Among the implications to be drawn from this are the following: in spite of the "neo-Marxist" status generally ascribed to it, contemporary Critical Theory's stake in (let alone reliance upon) Marx's theory should no longer be assumed as it might have been in the past; since the early Lukács himself, apparently, no

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interpretation of Marx has provided a convincing explanation of contemporary society. Rather than the test of the theory of communicative action lying in its ability to bring Marx's critique of capitalism to bear on contemporary problems, the idea now was to show that the possible continuing relevance of Marx's theory necessarily depended on the positive development of Habermas's own communication theory, the potential of which he now attempts to demonstrate through a critical appropriation of Weber and a consignment of Marx to essentially an historical interest. The potential relevance of Marx's theory is confined to a function of a historic/theoretic marker from which the theory of communicative action gets its bearings.

This, of course, contrasts very sharply with Lukács's "first attempt" at an "appropriation" of Weber. Lukács's attempt is inextricably bound to a certain re-interpretation of Marx's "*mature* critical theory" (principally commodity fetishism) which then *gained* power and credibility when publication of Marx's early writings, previously unknown to him, confirmed the reconceptualization of Marx's theory he initiated. He demonstrated that Marx's theory of overcoming capitalism was dependent on philosophic concepts, without which it would not be possible to specify capitalism, and therefore how to oppose it. Lukács's approach (contradicting existing Marxism's self-understanding that its own genesis was from the *overcoming* of philosophy) was necessary for an uprooting of modern, fully developed capitalist social relations, in as much as he correctly identified them.

The sharp contrast of Habermas's "second attempt" (which might be more accurately described as a Weberian appropriation of Marx) with the first attempt (Lukács's Marxist appropriation of Weber) raises the following questions: Can Habermas's attempt be defended as a second from *within* Western Marxism? Were there, in any case, serious flaws with the very

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conception of Western Marxism from the beginning (see Chapter Six), such that its "revival" (even for, arguably, Habermas's purpose of dissolving it) could provide a basis for no more than a strawman argument, in so far as it developed, in the first place (in the wake of Lukács's *History and Class Consciousness*) as a stand-in for Marx's "outmoded" theory?

As I have discussed, Habermas's preparation for replacing Marx and Marxism had already progressed over the decades. He then in fact leaves it behind in TCA. How dependable is Habermas's allusion to Lukács's *History and Class Consciousness* in support of his argument which attributes considerable significance to Lukács's positive relationship to Max Weber's theories, while under-emphasizing, or even disregarding, its more central critical thrust? This is not the place to take up these questions in detail. While keeping them in mind, however, it is important to also remember that among Lukács's strongest theoretical motivations was to explain, and thus point a way to overcome, the fact that the 1917 Russian Revolution, seen (not only by Marxists) as a beginning of a process of world-wide uprooting of capitalism, was not extending to Western Europe. This is not just an historical issue. Habermas himself often appealed to historical or empirical facts in order to support an idea of the need for his theory in place of Marx's (Habermas 1973, 195-198; 1990, 11-13).

In short, after at least two decades of publications in which Habermas occasionally invoked the *implications* of a theory of communicative action for purposes of critical evaluation of the entire German philosophical tradition from Kant to Marx, without being able to offer recourse to the *actual* theory itself, he draws a necessarily controversial parallel. He now compares his own theory to Lukács's, an earlier thinker whose primary goal was an end to capitalism; given this, it was necessary that Habermas more carefully specify capitalism (which

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he began to do in LC), and the distinctiveness of his own theory in relation to Marx's.

Even at this late date Habermas had not made his goal *vis a vis* Marx and Marxism crystal clear. Though it certainly differed from Lukács's (Dews 1992, 81) his presentation assumed an obligation (like Lukács's) to include consideration of the problem of understanding the potential effects of his own theory on the comprehension and molding of the meaning and purpose, not alone of critical theory, but social theory generally. But while Lukács evidently believed that his Marxism was uniquely qualified to explain the limitations of social theory generally (within capitalism) Habermas, to the contrary, argued that his own theory (particularly in its appropriation of classical social theory) revealed the limitations of Marx and all of Marxism. In connection with this, a detailed discussion of its metamorphoses from Marx to Lukács to Horkheimer and Adorno would provide a valuable perspective on Habermas's muted but potentially telling allusions to a concept of revolution, arguably what he implies is constitutive of the boundary marking off Marxian dogmatics from social scientific theory, including that of Mead, Durkheim, Weber, and his own. In Habermas's argument, dogmatism, while not strictly attributable to Marx's own theory, was traceable to it none the less, and not obviously to other forms of social theory. Moreover, according to Habermas, Marx set a damaging precedent when he insisted upon certain practical/political applications of his theory (Habermas 1989, 339-340).

Yet, Lukács's theory, in its approach to Kant, Hegel and Marx, not unlike what Habermas uncovered in his examination of Mead, Durkheim and Weber (and Parsons's analysis of them) disclosed undigested features of classical thought and, in doing so, rescued *them* from a dogmatism of a sort. Lukács's essays in *History and Class Consciousness* were suggestive of the notion that

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philosophy itself had a revolutionary potential and was a missing dimension in Marxism. This dimension was indispensible for any conceivable revolution abolishing capitalism, establishing essentially different social relations; Habermas's "second attempt" required mainly acceptance of his own self-consciously normative social theory--a "social theory" which none the less criticized someone of the stature of Parsons for the "non-philosophical" character of *his* strictly social theory (Habermas 1989, 200). But the ground of *this* philosophic critique was Habermas's *break* with Hegelian Marxian dialectical logic, a break he thought to be necessary in large part due not merely to the fact it was philosophy (which he held still contained metaphysical qualities) and not social theory, but precisely *because* the Hegelian Marxian dialectic contained philosophy and revolution as importantly linked (Dunayevskaya 1989), a link Lukács insisted upon and succeeded, to some extent, in specifying in the historical circumstances.

With respect to Marx, it is useful to recall that Habermas's major critique of Marx and Marxism, immediately prior to the TCA, suggested a "reconstruction of historical materialism". As he often experimented with ways of placing Marx and Marxism in the history and development of social theory generally, several notable features of this particular attempt are relevant to recall here: 1) His ostensible theoretical appropriation of Marx found no continuity with earlier thinkers within the Critical Theory tradition; 2) As I pointed out in the previous chapter, it contained suggestive, fundamentally critical allusions to both especially the young Marx and Hegelian Marxism specifically; 3) Rather than a refutation, it implied (with no direct reference to Hegel) the possibility of an appropriation of a different Hegel (along the lines of rational reconstruction) on what he conceived as necessarily a higher level of abstraction than that attributed to previous Hegelian Marxian attempts; 4) Finally, a very large part of

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"Reconstruction of Historical Materialism" delineated an area of sociality--specifically a moral domain--and presented it, on the one hand, as basically inaccessible to any theory still committed to Hegel's logic (dialectic), effectively and lastingly appropriated in Marx's "coup de main" (Habermas 1989, 334) as development of the species through social labor; on the other hand, the moral domain was suggested to be the key *contemporary* problem area for a critical social theory.

Hence, Habermas's "Toward a Reconstruction of Historical Materialism", as the title indicates, did not actually carry out the reconstruction in question (Rockmore 1989); Habermas offered suggestions for such a project, but one, it turned out, which might (ironically) dispense with Marx, and instead proceed primarily on the basis of concepts Habermas introduced in the context of his own incipient communication theory. The implications, often ignored, were that, 1) Habermas's theory was adequate to contemporary society in a way which disclosed the inadequacy of Marx's, and 2) an adequate social theory was in the interest of, in fact was essential to, the current stage of social development; its capitalist element was a deformation of a pre-established universal potential, "tameable" with the development of social, primarily moral, domains.

Already, then, in "Toward a Reconstruction of Historical Materialism", Habermas's analysis implied a fundamental criticism of the Critical Theory tradition with which he was heretofore identified. This was, however, overshadowed by a confusing, only ostensible direct return to Marx, along with a barely noticeable new type of appropriation of Hegel, which he extended in TCA (Habermas 1989, 383). His explicit criticism of Critical Theory is elaborated only in the later volumes (of TCA) as well. Yet, in respect to the theories of Horkheimer and Adorno, Habermas eventually understands his own

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theory, in the aftermath of an elaboration of basic differences with them, as still just the re-establishment of a *viable* "critical" theory (Habermas 1989, 401).

For one thing, there now comes into its own (with Habermas's theory) a firm "convergence" of, a) heretofore presumed non-official, or only quasi-institutionally based, theoretical forms with, b) social theory generally. The latter (Habermas would agree) is for the most part driven by, and shaped within, a ("split-off") culture of experts (Habermas 1989, 330; 397-398) who are certified and pass on certification.

Recall that "Critical" as opposed to "Traditional" was the distinctive characteristic Horkheimer attributed to Marx's philosophy, tying to it a requirement of some degree of autonomous status not only from political party organization or the state, but *vis a vis* even, eg; the University as such. It was mainly (if not alone) Lukács who earlier was seen to have managed to some extent to restore this element of Critical Theory's specificity, extracting it from its submergence in the institutionalized forms of the Marxist Second International, which was in (or on its way to) state power. It is difficult to see how Habermas's approach to Weber, Marx and contemporary social theory tries to return, particularly in this practical sense, the "critical" edge to Critical Theory. Charitably, it naturally goes without saying that it must remain open to question whether, substantively, Habermas's interpretation of Marx (if not Weber) was in fact regressive compared to that of Lukács.

It is often remarked that Lukács's basic achievement consisted in his conceptualization of the historical specificity of the processes of societal rationalization (as described by Weber). Lukács tied them to a particular, that is, a commodity, form of production which had become generalized; but just as crucial (and more *problematic*) was his simultaneous radical *universalization* as "reification" of *thought* what Marx had carefully circumscribed in his analysis

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of the capitalist *mode of labor and production* as a *self-contradictory*, non-viable ground of "bourgeois society". According to Marx, materialization of the non-viability of this mode involved, besides uncovering, forming a theoretical (as well as practical) relationship with, a certain type of subjective opposition, and self-development, of workers in capitalist production, as well as with other types of revolutionary subjectivity (Dunayevskaya 1991). The limited extent to which Lukács captured the latter can be measured in terms of the weakness of his theoretical approach to organization (though not limited to it) (Lukács 1967, 295-342) which hardly departed from Lenin's 1903 concept of the vanguard party-to-lead, a concept (peculiar in Lukács's case) singularly antithetical to dialectical philosophy.

None the less, assessments of Lukács's attempt, rather than simply requiring an abandonment of Hegelian Marxian dialectic, have instead often led to further examination of the latter, and thus to new possibilities of theory in the context of contemporary capitalism (Anderson 1995). In any case, it is hardly disputed (including by Habermas) that early Lukács's theory *was* a deeper penetration of Marx's thought than that achieved by tendencies within the Second International, traditional social sceince, or the "actually existing socialist" states and their supporters, and therefore than among all post-Marx Marxists. Lukács's interpretation has served as something of a model of creativity if only in the sense that it went some distance in explaining both the continued existence of capitalism and an institutionalized form of Marxism as its psuedo-opposite. Habermas noted the latter point, but did not elaborate (Habermas 1989, 332). A key question lost in his not doing so is whether Lukács's theoretical attempt contains a viable argument that social science generally, as well as post-Marx Marxism (possibly implicating Habermas himself), was constitutive of what it ostensibly opposed.

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Lukács's central essay in *History and Class Consciousness* develops his concept of reification from an analysis of the commodity fetishism section of the first volume of *Capital.* Along with this he did not have available to him the young Marx's detailed analysis of Hegel's concept of alienation and its transcendence, the meaning Marx gave it in terms of his concept of revolution, the uprooting of capitalist social relations. The *later* (1932) publication of Marx's 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts* confirmed in crucial respects Lukács's direction by highlighting the theoretical features of Marx's "mature" critique of capitalism which were hardly comprehensible unless considered as recreations of certain unique aspects of Hegel's dialectic, most explicitly investigated in Marx's early (1844) writings. Thus, the brilliance of Lukács's "anticipation" of the young Marx via close philosophical investigation of the "mature" Marx (commodity fetishism) represents one type of proof of the indivisible concepts of alienation and "law of value" intrinsic to Marx's theory of capitalism. Unfortunately, as the historical situation changed, Lukács never gave Marx's 1844 writings (when they became available) the attention his own theory implied was eminently warranted. Consequently, there are theoretic strands, especially in Marx's 1844 essay, "Private Property and Communism", which Lukács did *not* anticipate, and never felt compelled to address, despite their obvious relevance to developments of the the post-World War II realities (Dunayevskya [1998]).

In TCA, it is the denial of a unity of the concept of alienation and the law of value in Marx's own understanding from which Habermas builds his critique which amounts to a *theoretical exile of Marx* from the terrain of contemporary critical theory. This unity might be sought not so much in any single example of Marx's study of Hegel's dialectic as by attention to Marx's continuous return to the latter as a practically inexhaustible source of the notion of philosophy as the

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key revolutionary dimension in the context of socio-historical features which were only coming to be understood as specifically capitalist. In this sense, Marx's earliest articulation of his theory (1844) "anticipated" the situation to which Lukács's theory responded, a situation in which those most committed to Marx's ideas tended to reduce them to "economics", or a "critical political economy", or (as to some extent in Habermas and definitely in Postone's case) to "social theory".

Another perspective I intend to develop in the following contrasts with Habermas's analysis in TCA wherein it is presupposed that the basic resources for a contemporary critical theory were not to be found in any reinterpretation of Marx, practically consigning the theoretical significance of Lukács's attempt to recover Marx in this way to the unintentional side effects of vitalizing the discussion of Weber. Lukács is thus classified as an essentially transitional figure. He is positioned as unintentionally contributing to bringing Weber's theses to the point where they could eventually be made fruitful for what was an epochal task when viewed from within the Critical Theory tradition, and which only Habermas was to carry out--a social-theoretic break from Hegel and Marx, sometimes characterized as from a "Hegelianizing philosophy of history" (Habermas 1989b, 332). Hence, according to Habermas, the lasting (though unintended) effect of Lukács's work was that it stimulated a turn to "serious" social theory proper, that is, a grounding in its own proper element, without the "philosophic ballast"--autonomous in respect to metaphysical residues of idealist philosophy (Habermas 1989b, 383).

In the TCA, then, it seems Habermas is quite concerned to avoid an identification of his latest revisitation of Marx with his encounter with Weber, Mead, Durkheim or Parsons. In this work, Habermas develops a direct re-interpretation of the theories of the latter four. In contrast, in TCA the opening

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sentence of his section on Marx explicitly proposes a different sort of approach. Habermas writes,

> There are a number of reasons for going back to Marx, or more precisely, to the interpretation of Marx stemming from Western Marxism's reception of Weber (Habermas 1989, 332).

This detached justification clearly contrasts with his apparent enthusiasm in re-interpreting the theories of Mead, Durkheim, and even Weber in light of, and as constitutive of, a first fully articulated theory of communicative action. In contrast, here he could, in fact, be taken to mean that a re-interpretation of Marx's theory was neither of interest nor possible. With his "going back" to a previous interpretation (rather than working out a re-interpretation) Habermas tends to emphasize that the only Marx of consequence was the one constituted by the predominant influence Weber is judged to have achieved in the movement from Lukács to Horkheimer and Adorno, culminating in Habermas's own theory. In short, the *end* of Marx (as in Horkheimer's and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*) would constitute the condition for the *beginning* of contemporary social theory proper, even if unclear to itself at the time.

However, keeping in mind results of the close reading of Habermas's earlier considerations of Marx's theories, it is not difficult to discover that, aside from Habermas's characterization of his current concern with Marx (which focuses away from, or precludes the need for, a direct re-examination of his theories), his actual analysis of Marx breaks new ground, not in comparison with Marxism generally, but surely in relationship to Habermas's own earlier studies. The most obvious example in this regard consists of his new dependence on a description of the "dual character" of the commodity, understood to be the concept characteristic of the originality and even "superiority" of Marx's theory.

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Thus, Habermas tends, in the explicit justifications for his return to Marx, to evoke the "taken for granted" (including by him) Marx. Yet, in the actual course of his analysis it becomes clear that he has substantially revised and/or updated his own view of the characteristic substantive and methodolgical aspects of Marx's work, and especially the relationship of the two. He begins the section, "Marx and the Thesis of Internal Colonization" by suggesting that a plausible justification for his current preoccupation with Marx could be that "dynamics of class opposition" (and thus Marx),

> might explain the inner dynamics of bureaucratization--the hypertrophic growth of media-steered subsystems, resulting in the encroachment of administrative and monetary steering mechanisms upon the lifeworld (Habermas 1989, 332).

Habermas sees Lukács (who differed from Marx, in that Marx supposedly could not anticipate the emergent structures of "late capitalism") responding to Weber's competing interpretation of this, the latter's diagnosis of modernity in terms of a societal rationalization which is "class unspecific".

However, Lukács's aim was far from primarily an appropriation of Weber in the interest of a more adequate social theory generally. Rather, his aim was to explain the existence of Marxism and overcome the philosophic void in the Marxist revolutionary movement in particular. Only with the filling of this void could the deep structures of capitalism (the ground of a social domination no less pernicious for its abstract character), as analyzed in Marx's mature critical theory, be recognized by contemporaneity. (At the same time, Lukács is responsible to some extent for Habermas's type of *interpretation* of his theory, because Lukács did not extend to the Marxist concept of organization his well-known challenge to the traditional, "orthodox" Marxist idea of the passive role of philosophy). In respect to this, in so far as neither of them extended their

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development of Hegelian dialectic to a fundamental critique of the vanguard party, Habermas's coupling of Lenin and Lukács (Habermas 1973, 35; 1984, 364-367; 1990, 12-13) is not far off the mark; however, neither Lenin (despite his "return" to Hegel's *Logic* and *Critique of the Gotha Programme*) on the eve of the 1917 Russian Revolution nor Lukács (despite his recovering the importance of the "Fetishism of Commodity" section of *Capital*, in its aftermath) extended their rethinking of Hegelian Marxian dialectic to new probings in to Hegel's and Marx's own concepts of "organization" (Dunayeveskaya [1998]), that is, what follows labor's mediation of capitalism's social relations.

Instead, Habermas confines the significance of Lukács the Marxist to an idea of a certain expansion of complexity of what Habermas sees as Marx's basic and characteristic "class theory". Only with this expansion (as opposed to a deepening) Habermas argues, could a "supplemented" Marxism even hope to claim some explanatory power in regard to increasingly apparent social phenomenon (societal rationalization processes) which were recognized only in their incipient form by Marx, according to Habermas, under the category of the "realm of necessity", as opposed to the "realm of freedom" represented in the lifeworld (Habermas 1989, 340). They became a predominant concern to social theorists after their twentieth century expansion was analyzed by Weber.

As described by Habermas, Lukács's contribution is centered on a view of class unspecific "side effects" (Habermas 1989, 332) seen (unlike in Weber) as a "result" of "underlying class conflict". While this may seem adequate in respect to a goal of appropriating Lukács for social theory proper (even its "critical" persuasions) it excludes (or at least minimizes) consideration of Lukács's internal challenge to Marxist *thought* which had become institutionalized in such a way as to be *inimical to philosophy*. This issue is important because it touches directly on the question of an alternative to

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Habermas's thesis that Marx's societal critique rested upon a view of the primacy for capitalism of private property and the market, and their *external* analysis by a theoretical avant garde committed to exposing and thereby eliminating their inequities. Habermas's view on this radically departs from the genesis and structure of Marx's theory I examined in earlier chapters. Even more seriously, it precludes from the start consideration of the part Habermas's more or less typical interpretation of Marx's theory possibly played in *producing* the reification effects he sets out to isolate from, "structural differentiations" necessary for, or common to, "every modern society" (Habermas 1989, 340).

Habermas's interpretation of Marx's theory is naturally incapable of providing a critique of Communist societies. Communist states eliminated private property and markets, but not capitalism in the sense of its deep defining structures analyzed by, eg; Postone. In this, it is clear that critique involves the need to take into consideration the effects of failed revolutions, revolutions which, identified with Marx's philosophy as the radical critique of capitalism, turned into their total opposite. This rendered *deeply suspect* (including down to the deepest layers of society) even the *idea* of existing society as a particular from of social relations, and therefore transformable, since attempts at a revolutionary alteration proved not only misguided and therefore spurious but apparently destructive of even any semblance of freedom. Lukács's idea of proletarian class consciousness as in principle capable of grasping the social totality in counter-distinction to bourgeois society's endemic dualisms seemed to at least point in the direction of potential forms of opposition to capitalism which, from practice, demanded a new relationship (or unity) of philosophy and revolution.

Habermas argues that Lukács's Marxism amounted to something like a concession. It conceded the importance of "class unspecific" modern social

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phenomenon. (This, of course, assumes that "class analysis" specified Marx's own claim to critical, revolutionary theory). From these class unspecific phenomenon outliving adherence to the idea of revolutionary proletarian class consciousness, it was a "small step" (Habermas 1989, 333) on the part of Horkheimer and Adorno to a more complete turn to Weber and beyond, to a theory of instrumental reason and a totally administered society. It is only from this definition of the situation, Habermas makes clear, that in his pursuit of a contemporary social theory there is still a warrant for discussion of Marx. This means that Marx's theory, *at its deepest level*, might today still be characterized as exhausting itself in the aim of explaining merely the distribution of negative social phenomenon in a class specific manner.

Marx, the "Thesis of Internal Colonization", and Habermas's Appropriation of Georg Lohmann's "Original Interpretation" of Marx's Capital

The title of the one section of TCA devoted to Marx, "Marx and the Thesis of Internal Colonization", should not then be interpreted to mean that Habermas was suggesting that the "thesis of internal colonization" could still have its basis in Marx's theory. To the contrary, the title summarizes the form of Habermas's *critique* of Marx in which he proposes to translate a theory of reification (Lukács derived from Marx) in to the fundamental concepts of his own incipient social theory. The central idea here is to test what (if indeed any) residual explanatory power Marx's theory of value (after its merely tacit retention in Horkheimer and Adorno despite their dropping of the early Lukács's theory of class consciousness) retains for a contemporary critical theory. Accordingly, Habermas sets the ground for his discussion of Marx in the following:

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> Horkheimer and Adorno were unable to appropriate the systematic content of Weber's diagnosis of the times and to make it fruitful for social scientific inquiry, because...they did not take seriously enough Weber's studies on the rationalization of worldviews, or the independent logic of cultural modernity; but also because they were uncritical in two directions...vis-a-vis Marx in that they held fast to the basic assumptions of the theory of value as the core of their tacit orthodoxy, and in this way blinded themselves to the realities of a developed capitalism based on the pacification of class conflict through welfare state measures... (Habermas 1989, 333-334).

Habermas then proposes to examine, "what Marx's theory of value can contribute to a theory of reification translated in to system-lifeworld concepts..." (Habermas 1989, 334). He writes that he will point out its weaknesses, in order, "...to see how we might explain the pacification of class conflict in welfare-state mass democracies and how we could combine the Marxian view of ideology with Weber's reflections on cultural modernity" (Habermas 1989, 334).

While it will be necessary to follow the declared synthetic intent here, I also want to avoid departing from the question of Habermas's approach (or various approaches) to Marx specifically. As I have already demonstrated through analysis of several of Habermas's earlier works, specific interpretations and criticisms of Marx's thought were clearly constitutive of the direction of Habermas's theory formation. The resulting theory is first fully articulated in TCA. Yet, some of Marx's basic concepts, neglected or simply not grasped by Habermas in his two decade-long examination of the theory, now suprisingly serve as the starting point for an argument he carefully characterizes not as a return to a consideration of Marx's theories, but in crucial contrast, "the interpretation of Marx stemming from Western Marxism's reception of Weber" (Habermas 1989, 332).

Reading Habermas in the way Habermas himself suggests here pulls in a direction opposite of what my investigation demands. My aim has been a

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critical interpretation of Habermas's various approaches to Marx, attempting to demonstrate that they were strongly constituitve of his own theory. Due to his unsatisfactory accounts of Marx's theories, there are grounds for serious concern with the viability of Habermas's own theory, or at least the claims Habermas makes for it.

With TCA, it is easy to see that there was a turning point from which Habermas understood his theory, if not a replacement for, then something of an alternative to, Marx's theory. This presents a problem of consistency in terms of fulfilling the intentions of an immanent critique of Habermas's approach to Marx. A tension arises between, on the one hand, Habermas's new attempt here to circumscribe in advance the content and meaning of his current return to Marx and, on the other hand, the critical requirements of an assessment of a theory that, at least up until this point, had internal to it a principle of reflection on the formative steps of this theory. Habermas now seems to direct scrutiny of these steps to only the volume (TCA) principally devoted to elaboration of his own theory, which up until now he had not fully presented. This moves in a direction opposite from and, in fact, *a priori* excludes, a possibly more viable and convincing alternative of "reinterpretation" of Marx's theory, which Postone indeed later produced.

The notes to Habermas's section (of about fourty pages) on Marx (Habermas 1989, 332-373) illustrate the different quality of this approach to Marx. Unlike his previous analyses of Marx, these notes contain no references to Marx's writings; also, Habermas does not refer to his own previous analyses of Marx. In contrast, there are plentiful textual references in his TCA studies of the other classical theorists, Mead, Durkheim and Weber, as well as of Parsons. Among possible interpretations of this might be that Habermas is, in effect, arguing that, once and for all, the notion should be discarded that there was

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separate (or competing) potential in research in to Marx's ideas in the wake of his own new appropriations of other classical theory, principally Weber.

Another problem, which will emerge in the analysis which follows, is that the negative rationale Habermas offers for his return to Marx--that it is justified mainly (or even only) from discoveries resulting from the productive relationship of his own maturing theory and classical social theory--does not hold up in so far as it is clear that Habermas not only must give an account of Marx's ideas yet again (as opposed, for example, to dropping consideration of them altogether) but also shift his own interpretations, compared to earlier texts I have already considered. On this last point, it is peculiar that Habermas fails to note, even indirectly, that his approach to Marx substantially differs from his earlier ones, let alone reflect on the significance of this.

From the beginning of this section, the new approach to Marx is clear. For the first time, after extensive analyses of Marx's work in STPS, BPSMC, KHI, LC and "Reconstruction of Historical Materialism", right from the start *Capital* is presented as containing analyses of both labor and interaction, and/or the later re-conceptualization of lifeworld and system, *and* as representing a credible (in a contemporary sense) attempt to "*combine*" them. For example, as late as the mid-1970s--in LC and "Reconstruction of Historical Materialism"--while Habermas recognized that Marx investigated both dimensions in his work as a whole, he held that *Capital* contained the "scientific" exposition of the theory of value, while he located in separate volumes the "historical" writings (Habermas 1979, 130), or the "political" writings (Habermas 1975, 30). Following from this re-situation of the problem of a conception of systematic and social integration by his late recognition that it was already realized and taken up by Marx *within Capital* (obviously Marx's central work of social theory) Habermas, yet again, revisits the concept of labor.

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Recall that earlier I criticized his failure to analyze Marx's concept of the dual character of the commodity, or the further step Marx takes in rooting it in the two-fold character of the labor which produced it, an understanding of both of which was crucial for grasping what Marx saw as capitalism's specificity. For example, in LC Habermas employed the terms abstract and concrete labor in a way which indicated that he understood them, in Marx's analysis, as two different *kinds* of labor. In his new approach in TCA Habermas combines his familiar (and inadequate) formulation of Marx's idea of capitalism's specificity with a nod to the crucial element of Marx's theory expressed in the idea of the "double character of the commodity":

> ...Marx starts from the idea that the form of the conflict bred in all class societies by the priviliged appropriation of socially produced wealth had changed in a characteristic way with the establishment of the capitalist mode of production. Whereas the dynamics of class in politically constituted, stratified societies were manifested directly on the level of conflicts of interest between social groups, in bourgeois society they are objectivistically concealed and objectivated through the medium of exchange value. The mechanism of the labor market, institutionalized in private law, takes over functions that had previously been performed by politically institutionalized relations of social force and economic exploitation. *The monetarization of labor power becomes the basis of class relations. The analysis of these relations has to begin therefore with the double character of the commodity* (my emphasis, RR) (Habermas 1989, 334-335).

The familiar portion of this passage expresses Habermas's basic idea that the specificity of capitalist domination lies in the non-overt character of the determination of its class relations, wherein a mechanism of actual unequal distribution of social wealth is masked as equal exchange. The unfamiliar element (compared to Habermas's earlier texts) expressed in the last two sentences seems to pay closer attention to Marx's *Capital* in its tracing

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specifically capitalist social domination to unique features of one commodity among all others--labor power.

Yet, on closer examination it is not intrinsic characteristics of the commodity "labor power" despite being a commodity like all others which Habermas posits as unique to capitalism, but rather monetarization of labor power. This latter suggests that capitalism's specificity is grounded in a relationship of labor to something outside itself. Habermas complicates this analysis by, while identifying the necessity of beginning with the "double character" of the commodity (due to a particular commodity's "monetarization"), presenting a passage from a work of Claus Offe (Habermas 1989, 355). The latter describes Marx's understanding of the features of the commodity labor power which differs from all others; it is a "living" labor power that, 1) does not arise for the purpose of salability; 2) cannot be separated from its owner; and, 3) can be set in motion only by its owner. From these, Offe concludes an,

> inextirpable subject-rootedness of labor power [which] implies that in wage labor the categories of action and functioning, of social and system integration are inextricably intertwined (Habermas 1989, 335).

In citing this passage, Habermas means to develop his argument that Marx was preoccupied with the contradiction between a complete abstraction of monetarization versus an "inextirpable subject-rootedness" of labor power determinant of a synthetic function--a duality suggestive of a return to a Kantian formulation of the problem he had developed in KHI.

Offe, and Georg Lohmann as well, two thinkers, like Habermas (and Postone, who I have discussed on several occasions), associated with the Critical Theory tradition, are cited in support of his analysis of Marx's "theory of value", identification of strengths and weaknesses of which is supposed to

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compel a turn to Habermas's own theory. Citation of two contemporary thinkers within the tradtition (as opposed to directly confronting Marx's "mature critical theory") has the effect of down-playing that his *own* analysis in the end implies an argument for the vitality of Marx for contemporary social theory. Habermas, in yet another approach to Marx's theories, and without directly saying so, supports his argument with two contemporary Critical Theorists already heavily influenced by his own social-theoretic concepts.

Habermas begins by asserting that analysis of class relations when their basis has become the monetarization of labor power, "has to begin with the double character of the commodity". In line with this proposal, Habermas next associates expenditure of labor power in "concrete actions" and its absorption as an "abstract performance" with, on the one hand, imperatives of social integration and, on the other hand, system integration (Habermas 1989, 335). Habermas writes,

> ...as an *action* it [labor power] belongs to the lifeworld of the producers, as a *performance* to the functional nexus of the capitalist enterprise and of the economic system as a whole. Marx was concerned to uncover the illusion that labor power is a commodity like any other (Habermas 1989, 335).

This seems to imply that Marx conceived transhistorical "labor" in a functional sense, that it served to underpin the "unity" of society (in opposition to the individualistic, privatistic outlook of the bourgeioise) and, furthermore, Marx affirmed this uncritically. Yet, Marx's analysis, to the contrary, draws a crucial distinction between *labor* and labor power; only the latter is capable of assuming the commodity form. Marx's analysis in *Capital* proceeds to demonstrate that the very recognition of a *distinction* between labor and "labor power in capitalism" reflects the value *form*, intrinsic to capitialism's particular

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form of wealth. Living labor (concrete labor "shaped" by abstract labor), not "labor power", is the *source* of value, capitalism's "substance" (Postone 1993, 75). Capital's drive to *absorb* living labor *and* to reduce the socially necessary labor time for the production of commodites lies at the heart of the non-viable ground of a social formation based on value, that is, contstituted as a contradictory totality. It is just as accurate to say that *Capital* was concerned to show that *in capitalism* "labor power", alienable from the person, and, in fact, antithetical to him or her, *was* a commodity like any other. Then, in addition to the unique value producing capacity of living labor I identified, Marx's description referred to in the passage from Offe, would not indicate merely Marx's "concern" to uncover an illusion, but his attempt to closely specify with the concept labor power the contradictory nature of capitalism, pointing to its non-viability. Seen in this way, Marx's specification of the commodity labor power is not ultimately concerned with "uncovering an illusion". Marx dispenses with the efficacy of this procedure already in Chapter One of *Capital*); rather it aims at analyzing a subjectivity intrinsic to which is a dynamic tension between concrete labor "shaped", or subsumed, by abstract labor (the ground of the "automatic" regulation of social relations in capitalism) and freedom. Critical revolutionary theory must connect to this type of subjectivity in order to not merely *oppose* capitalism, but contribute positively in its abolition to the creation of the new. The latter represents the domain of second negation, which Marx took from Hegel. Marx identified it as the thoroughly revolutionary element of Hegel's dialectic. The non-viability, expressed at the level of the contradiction between living labor and labor power (rather than a synthetic feature), at the core of the capitalist mode of production, is disclosed in Marx's analysis with his examination of a situation in which, immanently, "labor power"

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is a commodity like all others and, from the perspective of the possibility of transcendence of capitalism, is unique among all others.

In the interpretation immediately following the quotation he takes from Offe, Habermas begins to attempt a more precise explanation of "abstract labor" in the framework of his theory of communicative action. Following Offe, Habermas analyzes abstract labor in terms of its role in an explanation of the necessity of the concepts of system and lifeworld for an adequate categorical interpretation of modern society. Habermas employs a peculiar mode of expression for this. Under conditions of the wage labor relation (which he has already translated with the underspecified "monetarization" of labor power),

> wage laborers declare their general willingness to expend their labor power as a suitably programmed contribution to maintaining the capitalist enterprise (Habermas 1989, 335).

In this it is difficult to distinguish the metaphorical from the theoretical. Attribution to "wage laborers" some sort of "declaration" (pro or con) concerning the "capitalist enterprise", is certainly not a conventional view. Habermas continues,

> It is this monetarized labor power which is appropriated as a commodity and alienated from the life context of producers, that Marx calls "abstract labor" (Habermas 1989, 335).

However, "labor power" is *not* alienated from the life context of producers, it *is* the life context of producers.

But then at the same time (though in sharp contrast to the "general willingness to expend their labor power as a suitably programmed contribution to maintaining the capitalist enterprise"), Habermas, quoting Georg Lohmann (whom I consider below), describes a process wherein abstract labor makes

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highly unlikely a wage laborer's concern with capitalist enterprise or, for that matter, anything else:

> It [abstract labor] is indifferent to the natural-material object of use and to the need it satisfies; it is indifferent to the particular kinds of activity, as well as to the working individuals and their social situations. These marks of indifference find expression in the determinations of labor which produce exchange value; it is characterized as "human labor" that is the 'same", "without difference", "without individuality", "abstract", "universal". *These same features continue on in the relations of indifference that mark the workers" behavior toward others and himself* [my emphasis, RR] (Habermas 1989, 335).

Habermas, then, before assessing the strengths and weaknesses of "this theoretical approach" (which he holds describes Marx's "theory of value") summarizes it as Marx's explanation of a process of *real abstraction* (Habermas 1989, 336). In line with his proposal to translate into system-lifeworld concepts a theory of reification (which Lukács was the first to trace, and describe as a central feature of *Capital*) Habermas argues that Marx (while not employing social-theoretic terms developed later) referred to,

> objectification of socially integrated contexts of action, which takes place when interactions are no longer coordinated via norms and values, or via processes of reaching understanding, but via the medium of exchange value. In this case, participants are primarily interested in the consequences of their actions. Inasmuch as they orient themselves to "values" in a purposive-rational manner, as if the latter were objects in a second nature, they adopt an objectivating attitude to each other and to themselves, and they transform social and intrapsychic relations into instrumental relations. In this respect, the transformation of concrete into abstract labor power is a process in which communal and individual life become reified (Habermas 1989, 336).

At this point, Habermas merely makes an argument that Marx's analysis of capitalism, when "translated", describes a process following from (transhistorical) labor's intrinsic means-ends rationality when, via the market, it

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is transformed from its "natural" concrete form in to a socially abstract form with potentially expansive societal effects. What Habermas sees as a form of reason (associated with a transhistorical concept of labor) spreads beyond its proper place in the relationship between man and nature, and tends to assume a function of coordination of social interactions generally.

Habermas, then, in his initial remarks on the "strengths" (attributed primarily to its specification of "rules for the fundamental interchange relations between the economic system and the lifeworld") of Marx's analysis (Habermas 1989, 336), writes that the transformation of concrete into abstract labor is a "metaphor", tied to a "basic intuition" (because the differentiation of lifeworld and system only became an explicit "problem" with Parsons) (Habermas 1989, 336). This "basic intuition" (presumably the requirement of a bi-level concept of society) is involved in Marx's attempt to make clear how action theoretical statements (concerning class interests, concrete labor, etc.) can be "translated" in to systems-theoretical statements (concerning "abstract labor" and "value") (Habermas 1989, 336).

It is necessary to emphasize several points before describing in greater detail what, at this stage, Habermas understands to be the "strengths" of Marx's law of value. 1) All of Habermas's arguments which follow this refer back to and depend on an understanding of Marx's theory as only an idea of *transformation of concrete labor in to abstract labor*; 2) Yet, Marx's analysis involves the dual character of the commodity and the *two-fold* nature of the labor embodied in it. Analysis of the transformation of one in to the other (of concrete into abstract) is therefore one-sided; 3) The other way around, the problematic of a transformation of abstract labor in to concrete labor (though itself only equally, not more than, a moment of the social constitution of a dynamic social totality

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which includes the transformation of concrete into abstract labor) is perhaps *more* crucial for understanding "late capitalism".

In so far as the very constitution of value (though not material wealth) remains dependent upon expenditure of direct human labor, and value's magnitude on the quanity of labor time abstracted from specific labors, at the same time value (and surplus value) is dependent on the reduction of socially necessary labor time, the shaping of concrete labor by abstract labor becomes telescoped and increasingly effective (socially manifest). Postone, for example, recognizes the increasing importance of the transformation of abstract labor in to concrete labor (in fact the "determination" of the latter by the former). But he seems to avoid discussion of the ramifications in terms of a potentially revolutionary subjectivity intrinsic to this type of labor. Instead, Postone (significantly in the chapter on Habermas) argues for the potentiality of "dead" labor opposed to "living" labor.

Habermas writes that he intends to review the strengths and weaknesses of Marx's theory of value in the context of his previous accounts of the current status of Weber's action-theoretic framework and Parson's functionalism. He attributes to Marx's theory an attempt from a "basic intuition" (Habermas 1989, 336) to connect the two methodological approaches:

> Viewed *methodologically*, the theory of value had for Marx a status similar to that which the action-theoretical introduction of steering media had for Parsons. From a *substantive* perspective, however, Marx's connecting of systems theory and action theory had from the start a critical sense that is absent in Parsons: he wanted to *denounce* the self-maintainence of the economic subsystem as a dynamics of exploitation made unrecognizable under the veil of objectification (Habermas 1989, 337).

There are at least two controversial implications in this. First, I have already shown in several places where Habermas analyzed Marx's theory *not* as

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essentially critical of the "self-maintainence of the economic subsystem" but to the contrary, as affirmatory toward it and as comprehensible in terms of a natural law theory. For example, as early as STPS, Habermas implicitly criticized Marx for an idea of a return of social life to the "private" sphere where the only "public" function needed (after the full maturation of private capitalism) was, "the administration of things" (Habermas 1989, 128). Marx is said to think that this could be done on the basis of natural law discovered once and for all in political economy. Moreover, Habermas's theoretical trajectory was directed on the basis of these assumptions concerning Marx and Marxism (Habermas 1972, 55).

Habermas's description of Marx's *denunciation* of the "self-maintainence of the economic subsystem as a dynamics of exploitation made unrecognizable under the veil of objectification" differs from his earlier approaches to Marx's theory both in its reference to "self-maintainence" as the aspect toward which Marx is *unambiguously* critical, *and* in his placing this criticism as "from the start", and *within Capital.* Remarkably, then, prior to the TCA Habermas's own twenty-five year study of Marx's theory had not yet discerned a hermeneutic dimension within *Capital.* This is clear from the mode of presentation here, not from any explicit self-criticism on the part of Habermas.

Next, two paragraphs summarize Georg Lohmann's 1980 "original interpretation" of *Capital,* an interpretation more influential in Germany than in the U.S., one which happens to have appeared in the interregnum between Habermas's LC and TCA. In Lohmann's analysis, rather than strictly a political economy, or a critique of political economy, as *Capital* has previously been understood by Habermas, Lohmann provides an original interpretation of the intention, "behind Marx's 'critical presentation'" (Habermas 1989, 338). Lohmann's achievement, as Habermas sees it, pivots on his explanation of the

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relation of "historical excursuses" to "economic passages" (Habermas 1989, 338), akin to the lifeworld/system problematic. With this approach, according to Habermas, Lohmann in interpreting *Capital* as a critique of the destruction of pre-capitalist forms of life views the Hegelian concept of the whole, not as the, "move toward more developed categories" being, "at the same time an advance in the manifestation of 'truth'...". Rather, according to Lohmann,

> for Marx the further conceptualization of the whole is an advance in uncovering the *truth about Capital*: that, as a whole, it is something "negative", something that is historically changeable (Habermas 1989, 338).

The end of a full-page summary of Lohmann marks the beginning of Habermas's remarks on the "weaknesses of the theory of value" (Habermas 1989, 338).

As indicated, Habermas analyzes concrete/abstract labor such that they refer to a virtually uni-directional transformation of the former in to the latter--a qualitative change of the one in to the other which can then be viewed as determinate of the passage from one form of life to another, a radically different conception than one which specifies capitalism as having internal to it a contradiction, which points to the non-viability of the *form of labor itself*. According to Marx's analysis, what is at issue in this is the inseparability of the two in capitalism--not only the "transformation" of concrete labor in to abstract labor, but also the "transformation" of abstract into concrete: in capitalism, labor mediates itself (Postone 1994, 169). In contrast, common to otherwise very disparate thinkers such as Lukács and Habermas (or whom can be seen, respectively, as the genesis and the dissolution of a critical theory of capitalism) is a concept of labor which implies a "one-dimensionality". Such a concept (even if internally consistent) is not adequate to its object.

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The above passage (and Lohmann's analysis generally) is important for marking Habermas's apparent recognition that an interpretation of Marx at variance with his own offered a credible argument that Marx, within *Capital*, not only seriously considered both system and social integration, but also put forth a critical perspective concerning their actual relationship that challenged Habermas's very understanding of Marx's theory over the course of at least two decades. A closer look at a part of Postone's argument in *Time, Labor and Social Domination* (next section) will make it easier to see that Lohmann's argument (and the way Habermas confronts it) is important in a full consideration of a critique of Habermas understanding of Marx, particularly in TCA. This is so partly because *through* Lohmann Habermas re-encounters the issue of whether Marx's *Capital* represented a socio-historical interpretation of Hegel's Absolute, and if so, the theoretical soundness of it. At issue is assessment ofLohmann's type of approach to philosophy which, in contrast to a discredited materialist appropriation of Hegel, understands itself as *successfully* integrating Hegel's Absolute in *toto* ("explaining" it) in the constitution of a critical *social* theory.

Habermas seemed to refer affirmatively to Lohmann's reinterpretation (from within the Critical Theory tradition) of Marx's *Capital* where it uncovered and "explained" the, "relation of the 'historical excurses' to the economic passages in the narrower sense" (Habermas 1989, 338). Paraphrasing Lohmann's argument, Habermas writes,

> The farther it consolidates the production of social wealth into a system steered autonomously via the medium of exchange value and has, in that respect, become an end in itself, and the further the social reality of the sphere of social labor thereby gets adapted to the basic catgegories of system theory, all the more does the "whole" reveal itself to be the "untrue" (Habermas 1989, 338).

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But Habermas concludes that, even granted Lohmann's point that Marx's *Capital* develolped a "lifeworld perspective" broader than the "narrow economic" perspective with which he is more often associated, and therefore recognized as a problem, and dealt seriously in a contemporary sense with, how to relate action-theoretic concepts to system theoretic concepts, Lohmann in the end *confirms* Habermas's more fundamental thesis first fully developed in TCA, that is, that Marx's limitation for social theory might be explained by his "inability" to escape the bounds of Hegel's *Logic*. After paraphrasing and quoting Lohmann on Marx's Captial, Habermas writes,

> At this point we can see a first weakness in the theory of value. My reconstruction tacitly began with the problem of connecting the action/lifeworld and system paradigms--a problem that became explicit only with Parsons. This was a marked stylization. Marx does move at the analytical levels of "system" and "lifeworld", but their separation is not really presupposed in his basic economic concepts, which remain tied to Hegelian logic. On the contrary, the interconnection between the two types of theoretical *statements* could be explained through a *semantic* explication of the shifts in meaning involved in using these basic terms only if it is assumed that there is a logical (in the Hegelian sense) connection between the development of the system and the structural transformation of the lifeworld. It is only under this assumption that Marx could hope to grasp a totality comprising both moments at one blow, so to speak, by means of a theory of value that proceeds in terms of semantic analysis. Otherwise, it would have been necessary to engage in empirical investigations of real abstraction, that is, of the transformation of concrete into abstract labor (Habermas 1989, 338-339).

But even if only indirectly, perhaps the most important point Habermas attempts to make in this passage has to do with the extent to which Marx's theory of value may have been driven by unwarranted assumptions, not unlike those Habermas (in KHI) had described in connection with Hegel's critique of Kant. Hegel's critique was said to derive much of its power from demonstrating that, despite Kant's intention of a presuppositionless philosophic inquiry, the most important features of Kant's philosophy were inextricably tied to fundamental,

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even conventional, assumptions. Habermas, without explicitly recalling his description of this sort of critique, employs it here with the purpose of re-inforcing his obviously controversial (at least from within Critical Theory) claim for the central relevance of Talcott Parsons' theory, even perhaps at the direct expense of that of Marx's.

The "presupposition" at issue here is the idea of a social totality derived from Hegelian logic which, in culminating in an Absolute, presupposes it as that from which it unfolds. The course of the *Logic* describes only so many abstract moments of an implicit, unfolding totality, which becomes concrete only in its culmination. To the contrary, Habermas's *bi-level* concept of society, in which system and lifeworld develop according to their *own logics* (Habermas 1979, 148) is perhaps the fundamental thesis in the TCA. This thesis of autonomous logics is the basis for his "negation" of Marx's only "hope" (based upon an assumption that there is a logical--in the Hegelian sense--connection between the development of the system and the structural transformation of the lifeworld) to, "grasp a totality by means of a theory of value..." (Habermas 1989, 339).

Habermas next outlines the consequences following from what he insists is Marx's "economistic" appropriation of Hegel's *Logic*. First, in an unusual comparison of the young Marx with the young Hegel, both are said to have conceived, "the unity of system and lifeworld...on the model of a ruptured ethical totality whose abstractly divided moments are condemned to pass away" (Habermas 1989, 339) Then, in a single paragraph, he combines his analysis of Marx and Hegel as he developed them first in KHI, and then in "Reconstruction of Historical Materialism". Following from KHI, the transposition of class domination from an overt politcal form to an embededness in economic processes,

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> literally amounts to an illusion--the capitalist system is *nothing more* than the ghostly form of class relations that have become perversely anonymous and fetishized...Marx is convinced a priori he has before him [in the "system"] *nothing more* than the mystical form of a class relation (Habermas 1989, 339).

And, following from "Reconstruction of Historical Materialism", Marx's interpretation,

> excludes from the start the question of whether the systemic interconnection of the capitalist economy and the modern state administration do not *also* represent a higher and evolutionarily advantageous level of integration by comparison to traditional societies. Marx conceives of capitalist society so strongly as a totality that he fails to recognize the intrinsic evolutionary *value* that media steered subsystems possess. He does not see that the differentiation of the state apparatus and the economy *also* represents a higher level of system differentiation, which simultaneously opens up new steering possibilities *and* forces a reorganization of the old, feudal class relationships. The significance of this level of integration goes beyond the institutionalization of a new class relationship (Habermas 1989, 339).

Hence, Lohmann's new critical theoretical approach to Marx's *Capital* does no more than delineate and spell out Marx's, "move at the two analytical levels of 'system' and 'lifeworld'"; it does not succeed in moving Habermas from his long-held position that the fundamental barrier to critical theory's appropriation of Marx for an adequate contemporary social theory lies in Marx's failure to separate himself from Hegelian logic.

Habermas terms a "misperception" (Habermas 1989, 339) Marx's view of the systemic quality of modern society in that Marx viewed its "automony" as temporary or false, condemned to pass away, rather than as a possibly desirable advance over pre-capitalist, particularly feudal, social formations. Hence, Marx's hands are tied theoretically, because he cannot appreciate the significance of this possible evolutionary advance for a further challenge to, or development of, social theory, particularly the potential of what Habermas develops as communicative reason.

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Tied to this circumstance, but perhaps even more ominous, was the consequences for Marx's theory of revolution (Habermas 1989, 339), because the effect of the latter perhaps unlike the implications for "merely" social theory, was clearly practical. Marx was not satisfied to theoretically criticize, "capital's self-realization, the subsumption of labor power under the commodity form", or the way it, "uproots feudal modes of existence in a plebian fashion, and then shapes them into proletarian forms" (Habermas 1989, 339). Rather, "he projects a practical-political perspective for action..." (Habermas 1989, 339). In a perspective opposite of systems theory (and with a sort of reliance upon it), Habermas writes,

> Marx has in view a future state of affairs in which the objective semblance of captial has dissolved and the lifeworld, which has been held captive under the dictates of the law of value, gets back its spontaneity. He forsees that the forces of the industrial proletariat, at first merely in revolt, will under the leadership of a theoretically enlightened avant-garde, form themsleves into a movement that seizes political power for the purpose of revolutionizing society. Along with the private ownership of the means of production, the movement will also destroy the institutional foundations of the medium through which the capitalist economic system was differentiated out, and will bring the systematically autonomous process of economic growth back again into the horizon of the lifeworld (Habermas 1989, 340).

An important point to note here is that if Habermas's account of Marx's theory is correct, then Marxism itself, for example the form which existed in eastern Germany, east Europe and Russia up until the late 1980s, represented a more or less adequate practical expression of that theory. In any case, this assumption seems to ground Habermas's reflective criticism of Marx's "misperception" I cited earlier, that,

> ...an accumulation process that has broken away from orientations to use value literally amounts to an illusion--the capitalist system is *nothing more* than the ghostly form of class relations that have become

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> perversely anonymous and fetishized. The systemic autonomy of the production process has the character of an enchantment (Habermas 1989, 339).

Thus, these Marxist "experiments" could be said to have failed perhaps primarily as a more or less direct result of Marx's inability to adequately distinguish philosophy from social theory. Habermas's principal point, then, is that Marx failed to distinguish between his own *concept* of the relationship between lifeworld and system, and that concept's ability--or even the advisability of its doing so--to overcome the diremption of an original totality it presupposed.

Habermas's view here suggests a peculiar affinity, despite obvious differences, of Weber's and Marx's thought. Weber traced a process of cultural "disenchantment" in Western society's rationalization, and suggested a resulting inevitable loss of meaning and freedom; Marx classified capitalism itself as "pre-rational". According to Habermas, Marx attributed capitalism's social cohesion to, "the systemic autonomy of the production process [having] the character of an enchantment" (Habermas 1989, 339).

By hinting at an important measure of affinity between the two in how Marx and Weber dealt with modernity Habermas attempts to strengthen the case he makes that Parsons later confronted directly and consciously in theory what in Marx, at least, was still an "intuition". Furthermore, both Marx and Weber judged the rationality potential of society from an (intrinsically limited) *action*-theoretic point of view (Habermas 1989, 342). This amounts to an elaboration of Habermas's opening argument that previous critical theory (Horkheimer and Adorno),

> ...solved the problem of connecting Marx and Weber by leaning all the more heavily on Weber. If, following Weber, one conceives of the

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> rationalization of life's orders as the institutionalization of purposive rational action, it is only a small step to generalizing the reification of consciousness in to an expression of instrumental reason (Habermas 1989, 332-333).

According to Habermas, fundamental to Marx's theory was the supposition that private ownership of the means of production (Habermas 1989, 340) was the basis for what Weber conceived as the "iron cage of modern industrial labor", and determined the type of revolutionary expectations attached to political action Marx advocated, latter carried out under the Marxist banner. These expectations were not met, confirming "Weber's prognosis". Habermas writes,

> System and lifeworld appear in Marx under the metaphors of "the realm of necessity" and "the realm of freedom". The socialist revolution is to free the latter from the dictates of the former. It seems as if theoretical critique has only to lift the spell cast by abstract labor (subsumed under the commodity form). The intersubjectivity of workers associated in large industries is crippled under the self-movement of capital; theoretical critique has only to free it of its stiffness for an avant-garde to mobilize living--critically enlivened--labor against dead labor and lead it to triumph of the lifeworld over the system of deworlded labor power...
>
> ...As against these revolutionary expectations, Weber's diagnosis has proven correct: the abolition of private capitalism would not at all mean the destruction of the iron cage of modern industrial labor. Marx's error stems in the end from dialectically clamping together system and lifeworld in such a way that does not allow for a sufficiently sharp separation between the *level of system differentiation* attained in the modern period and the *class-specific forms* in which it has been *institutionalized* (Habermas 1989, 340).

Habermas, concluding his discussion of the "first weakness in [Marx's] theory of value", attributes it to Marx's failure to, "withstand the temptations of Hegelian totality thinking" (Habermas 1989, 340). This is similar to the argument he presented in the second chapter on Marx in KHI (see above,

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Chaper Three). But here he refers not to that analysis, but to Lohmann's "original interpretation" of *Capital*, which I cited above.

However, as Habermas characterizes Lohmann's study, the latter's idea was of a reversal of the manifestation of a relationship between "truth" and "totality". According to Lohmann, in Hegel there is a positive relationship between the two; in Marx's analysis of capital there is a negative, inverse relation. Thus, here Habermas *seems to* obscure the spirit of Lohmann's argument, or at least his summary of it, after having introduced it as central to the presentation of his new, updated approach to Marx. While Lohmann described "capital" as the Hegelian totality Marx rejected, Habermas remains focused on an interpretation of Marx's relationship to Hegel which substitutes the proletariat (or the lifeworld) for the Hegelian *Geist.*

A closer look reveals that Habermas's emphasis is on the "totality thinking" itself, not whether the totality in question is a manifestation of "truth" or "untruth", represents capital or the proletariat. Hence, while at first appearing to endorse Lohmann's analysis of the Hegelian basis of Marx's *Capital* as fruitful for social theory, the actual implication is that Lohmann's analysis cannot alter Habermas's earlier view in K&HI that,

> Materialist scientism [Marx] only reconfirms what absolute idealism [Hegel] had already accomplished: the elimination of epistemology in favor of unchained scientific knowledge--but this time for scientific materialism instead of absolute knowledge (Habermas 1972, 63).

The conclusion of Habermas's discussion of, "the first weakness in [Marx's] theory of value" is as follows:

> Marx did not withstand the temptations of Hegelian totality thinking; he construed the unity of system and lifeworld dialectically as an "untrue whole". Otherwise he could not have failed to see that *every* modern society, whatever its class structure, has to exhibit a high degree of structural differentiation (Habermas 1989, 340).

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Habermas begins the passage with a seemingly unconscious, but obviously controversial, identification of Marx with the "Marxist tradition". Habermas writes,

> In Marx and the Marxist traditon the concept of "alienation" has been applied above all to the wage laborer's mode of existence. In the Paris Manuscripts it is still the expressivist model of a creative productivity, in which the artist develops his own essential powers as he shapes his works, that furnishes the standard for criticizing alienated labor (Habermas 1989, 340-341).

While "Alienated Labor" and "Private Property and Communism" (the first two Paris Manuscripts) may be characterized as studies of labor and alienation, implicit even in those works is the "alienation" of the "mode of existence" of theory itself. In contrast, as I recounted in the earlier chapter (Three), Marx's third and final Paris Manuscript, "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General", explicitly analyzes the alienated mode of existence of the individual philosopher, as well as philosophy itself. While the essay contains some analyses of labor, clearly the focus of the concept of alienation here is not on the *laborer's* mode of existence, but rather the philosopher's, or the theorist's. (In the present context, it makes no difference). "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General" is not only the lengthiest of the three Paris manuscripts, it is also the most difficult, and the least analyzed. Moreover, just on the basis of the fact that it contains Marx's only explicit, detailed analysis of Hegel's philosophy would be enough for arguing that it is the most important of the three. In any case, Habermas clearly mischaracterizes Marx (though not perhaps the "Marxist tradition") with the opening sentence of his argument for the "second weakness" of Marx's theory of value.

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After this dual mischaracterization of Marx's 1844 Manuscripts, as well as relationship of Marx to Marxists, Habermas's critique of Marx here is basically in two steps. The first is immanent, in that he argues that Marx himself, "broke free of this ideal of self-formation...when he moved on to the theory of value" (Habermas 1989, 341). In counter-posing this, Marx's supposed fundamental revision of his theory, to the "more strongly phenomenologically and anthropogically oriented versions of contemporary praxis philosophy" (Habermas 1989, 341) where the original model was retained, Habermas implies that no fruitful distinction might be drawn within the Marxist tradition, at least in terms of the potentialities of an adequate social theory. In other words, Habermas argues that Marx, the Marxist tradition generally, as well as those tendencies often associated with political and philosophic dissidence within the tradition, whatever differences in their various approaches, had in common a conception of alienation and labor inadequate to contemporary society. With his suggestion that in his analysis of labor Marx "broke free" from an aesthetic model of productive activity Habermas attempts to both further secure his initial position that Marx's 1844 *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* were directed primarily at a description of alienation as concerning wage laborers' "mode of existence", as well as align Marx himself with the overcoming of the "romantic idealism" which grounded such a model. According to Habermas, this "breaking free" consisted in development of an idea of an "exchange of equivalents" in which the theory of value, "retains only a formal perspective of distributive justice from which to judge the subsumption of labor power under the commodity form" (Habermas 1989, 341). Habermas, consistently developing his one-sided view of concrete/abstact labor, concludes,

> With the idea of transforming concrete into abstract labor, the concept of alienation loses its determinancy. It no longer refers to deviations from

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> the model of an exemplary praxis, but to the instrumentalization of a life that is represented as an end in itself...
>
> ...This concept of alienation remains indeterminate insofar as there is no historical index for the underlying concept of a life that is reduced in its possibilities as a result of violating the ideal of justice inherent in the exchange of equivalents. Marx speaks in the abstract about life and life's possibilities; he has no concept of a rationalization to which the lifeworld is subject to the extent its symbolic structures get differentiated. Thus, in the historical context of his investigations, the concept of alienation remains peculiarly ambiguous (Habermas 1989, 341).

Habermas's assessment of the movement of Marx's theory consists of the criticisms that, on the one hand, the early concept of alienation is not "sufficiently selective" to distinguish in the, "repressive uprooting of traditional forms of life between the aspect of reification and that of structural differentiation of the lifeworld" and, on the other hand, the theory of value, "provides no basis for a concept of reification, enabling us to identify syndromes of alienation relative to the degree of rationalization attained in the lifeworld" (Habermas 1989, 341).

The "third and decisive weakness" of Marx's theory of value (which Habermas later develops as an immanent critique at the conclusion of TCA in such a way as to argue for the replacement of Marx's theory with his own) consists in Marx's, "overgeneralization of a specific case of the subsumption of the lifeworld under the system" (Habermas 1989, 342). In other words, in Marx's identification of the reduction of concrete labor to abstract labor social theory is restricted to an analysis of only the media of money, and treats other media, such as power, as "derived" phenomenon. Habermas writes,

> The Marxian approach requires an economistically foreshortened interpretation of developed capitalist societies...As opposed to the monism of the theory of value, we have to allow for two steering media, and four channels through which the two complementary subsystems subject the lifeworld to their imperatives. Reification effects can result in

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> like manner from the bureaucratization and monetarization of public and private areas of life (Habermas 1989, 343).

It should be emphasized that Habermas's section, "Marx and the Thesis of Internal Colonization", specifies the contemporary theoretical highpoint in analysis of Marx's theory as worked out in the Critical Theory tradition in an "original interpretation" (Lohmann) of the relation of Marx's, "economic analysis to the historical excurses". Habermas then structures his entire presentation in "Marx and the Thesis of Internal Colonization" on Georg Lohmann's "new" approach to Marx, quoting at key points in the section three long passages from Lohmann's work.

However, it is clear that if Lohmann's analysis is really considered original, and that Marx, contrary to all of Habermas's previous analyses, integrated within *Capital* concepts of "system" and "lifeworld" in an attempt to combine them in a single social theory, *and* there is ongoing controversy within Critical Theory concerning the meaning (and success) of this attempt, then surely a document such as Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, which both forcefully focused on his value theory *and* recapitulated the principal themes in his 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, must be relevant in this discussion. Yet, none of the three--Habermas, Lohmann, or Postone (whom I consider in more detail below)--recognize its relevance for their respective arguments. Written eight years after the completion of Volume One of *Capital*, the essential point of *Critique of the Gotha Programme* is negation of the unity of the two major tendencies of German Social Democracy, one of which identified itself with Marx's theory presented in *Capital*. In the initial part of his critique, Marx writes that the Gotha Programme botched the concept of labor. In the concept, as it was wrongly presented in the Programme, Marx saw, in the

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supposed socialist future represented by the new Party, the subsumption yet again of the individual by the social. In Marx's criticism of the Programme it was not only a question of the subordination of the individual to the "social" state (where "equality" meant the reduction of all to what was common to them--the ability to labor--all else being ignored), but the subordination of philosophy, the sacrifice of the uniqueness of Marx's philosophy, in the service of Party unity. In the following passage Marx clearly understands his mature theory as fulfilling the potential of his early, humanist concepts:

> ...after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labor, and with it also the antithesis between mental and physical labor, has vanished; after labor has become not only a means of life but life's prime want, after the productive forces have increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly--only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs! (Marx 1972, 17.

This is the "post-*Capital*" Marx (not the young "humanist" Marx). The themes of alienation and "law" of value are combined here in such a way that at the least they must lead to a rejection of Habermas's thesis that Marx's law of value--supposedly a replacement for Marx's previous theory of "wage laborers mode of existence"--restricted critique to a "violation of justice in the exchange of equivalents". The 1875 *Critique of the Gotha Programme* indicates that the revolutionary humanism Marx posed in 1844 as the "transcendence of [capitalism's] mediation" (which he specified even then) had internal to it Hegel's concept of second negativity, a concept Marx re-created at key turning points in his theory.

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Moishe Postone's Self-Limiting Critique of Habermas's Theoretical Exile of Marx

Postone's section on abstract labor in his book, *Time, Labor and Social Domination* can be read as a criticism of all previous interpretations of Marx's mature critical theory, Habermas's specifically, though the latter is taken up in detail only in his following chapter. Here I will call attention to, on the one hand, the structure of Postone's presentation and, on the other, an aspect of the substantive interpretation, that is, where it refers to Marx's *Capital*, particularly Chapter One. First, it is important to consider the overall structure of Postone's investigation, at least in so far as it situates itself in respect to the Critical Theory tradition. Postone writes,

> This reinterpretation both has been influenced by, and is intended as a critique of, the approaches developed by Georg Lukács (especially in *History and Class Consciousness*) and members of the Frankfurt School of critical theory--they remained bound...to [a] transhistorical conception of labor. I intend to appropriate the critical thrust of this interpretive tradition by reinterpreting Marx's analysis of the nature and significance of labor in capitalism (Postone 1994,15-16).

Postone's book is divided in to three parts. Part I (A Critique of traditional Marxism) criticizes a range of interpretations of Marx. This initial part concludes with a Chapter 3, "The limits of traditional Marxism and the pessimistic turn of Critical Theory", in which the theories of Friedrich Pollock and Max Horkheimer are shown to share a concept of labor erroneously attributed to, or at least thought to derive from, Marx.

"Toward a Reconstruction of the Marxian critique", then, is divided over the other two Parts of the book--Part II taking up the commodity, Part III analyzing capital. Thus, while Pollock and Horkheimer are considered under Postone's "critique of traditional Marxism" in the initial Part, Habermas is

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accorded a separate chapter in Part II ("Toward a reconstruction of the Marxian Critique: the commodity"). This division should *not* be seen as a result merely of the fact that Habermas belongs in a different *historical* context than the earlier representatives of Critical Theory. Rather, it reflects the circumstance that Habermas directly criticized certain basic theoretic assumptions and their presumed ramifications for critical social theory shared by founders of the tradition, such as Pollock and Horkheimer. At the same time, Postone indicates, with his *placement* of Habermas, that Habermas's departure from Pollock and Horkheimer (including Habermas's erroneous assumption that their positions were largely congruent with Marx's) is appropriately considered at the early stage of Marx's analysis of the commodity, as opposed to Marx's further development of his critique in its treatment of capital.

This is not to say that "Habermas's Critique of Marx" (the final chapter of Part II of Postone's book) judges Habermas's approach to Marx to be adequate to the level of the commodity (unlike the early Critical Theorists) but only proves inadequate in the further determination of Marx's theory at the level of the concept of capital. Postone, in his theoretic location of Habermas indicates that because Habermas's critique of *Marx* (and *indirectly*, or implicitly, of Pollock and Horkheimer) fails to grasp the concepts already basic to the commodity (such as abstract and concrete labor) it cannot be adequate to an appropriation of their further determination as capital, the analysis of which composes Part III.

But here, where I intend to show my points of agreement with Postone's analysis, as well as provide an immanent critique of his position, it is necessary to point out that Postone himself emphasized that Marx's presentation in *Capital* is such that each stage presupposes the whole of his theory. For example, Marx does not present the commodity as it historically appeared before it constituted what he describes as the basic unit of the capitalist mode of

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production. He unfolds it as the material result of the dual character of labor--abstract and concrete--which, in its function as a mediation of social relations generally, specifies capitalism.

Postone's re-interpretation of Marx's view of abstract labor relies on a two-stage theory of Marx's concept of alienation (which he understands as two inconsistent appropriations of Hegel's view of "objectification") (Postone 1993, 159). Postone then explains how this evolved concept of alienation figured in the later development of commodity fetishism. In fact, Postone holds that Marx's early theory of alienation, which he later abandoned, was essentially a philosophical anthropology. Only with Marx's develoment of the two-fold nature of labor in its function of a social mediation specific to capitalism allowed him to ground socially his concept of alienation, and thereby explain and surpass Hegel's thought (Postone 1993, 159). Yet, as I have already argued in earlier chapters, examination of Marx's progress in socially grounding his early appropriation of Hegel's concepts does not exhaust the question of the relationship of the early Marx's thought to Hegel's dialectic (or its contemporary potential) whether or not one accepts the idea that Marx's early articulation of his theory is best described as a "philosophical anthropology".

In respect to this, Postone's contrast of Marx's 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts* and *Capital* takes a crucial turn. In the text (Postone 1994, 74, 159) Postone indicates that he understands Marx's early concept of labor to be "transhistorical": he argues that such a misconception was involved in Marx's "well-known" criticism of Hegel for, "not having distinguished between alienation and objectification" (Postone 1993, 159). Postone writes,

> Yet how one conceptualizes the relation of alienation and objectification depends on how one understands labor. If one proceeds from a transhistorical notion of "labor", the difference between objectification and alienation necessarily must be grounded in factors extrinsic to the

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> objectifying activity--for example, in property relations..., rather than as, intrinsic to the character of that labor itself.

Postone then argues that in Marx's "later writings", only after he has worked out the "double character of commodity determined labor", another approach to the question of the difference between objectification and alienation was possible. Postone writes,

> This difference, in Marx's mature works, is not a function of what occurs to concrete labor and its products; rather, his analyis shows that objectification is indeed alienation--if what labor objectifies are social relations... (Postone 1993, 160)

The paragraph which follows this, then, argues that the difference between the mature Marx's and the young Marx's theory is rooted in the social appropriation of Hegel as opposed to, for example, a "materialist" appropriation. Just as a "materialist appropriation" of Hegel's thought based on an undifferentiated notion of labor leads to an understanding of Hegel's notion of an historical subject as a social grouping instead of a "suprahuman structure of social relations" (Postone 1993, 160), a failure to grasp Hegel's notion of objectification as alienation, specific to capitalism, can also be traced to an inadequate understanding of labor in capitalism.

Now, after having traced inadequate versus adequate understandings of labor, and materialist appropriations of Hegel, versus a social appropriation, to the difference between the young Marx's and the mature Marx's theory, Postone writes in a footnote:

> Marx's discussion of alienated labor in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* indicates that he has not yet fully worked out the basis for his own analysis. On the one hand, he explicitly states that alienated labor is the core of capitalism, and is not based on private property, but that, on the contrary, private property is the product of

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> alienated labor. On the other hand, he has not yet clearly worked out a conception of the specificity of labor in capitalism and, hence, cannot really ground that argument: his argument regarding alienation is only fully worked out later, on the basis of his conception of the twofold character of labor in capitalism. This conception, in turn, modifies his notion of alienation itself (Postone 1993, 160).

Earlier (see Chapter Three) in a detailed analysis of Habermas's interpretation of Marx's 1844 Manuscripts, I referred to Marx's explicit criticism of Hegel, where he linked the latter's thought to political economy on the basis of the undifferentiated notion of labor Hegel shared with it. Marx *already* instead split the concept of labor in two, the positive and negative, indicating the special importance of the latter dimension. This is not to argue that Marx's concepts did not develop from the beginning of the 1840s through the late 1850s. It signifies, however, that the uniqueness of Marx's theory, which was perhaps fully grounded socially in its later articulation, was intrinsic to his *early* critique of Hegel's dialectic. Furthermore, "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" was not exhausted by Marx's progress in socially grounding it. "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General" retained the transcendent element intrinsic to Hegel's philosophic thought, and continued to develop that, even in works *later* than *Capital*. This interpretation suggests caution in (and the distinct possibility of) overemphasizing the capacity of "social theory" to one-sidedly "explain" philosophy, a tendency in Postone, which he actually attributes to Marx as well.

Postone's argument that, "the difference [between objectification and alienation] in Marx's mature works is not a function of what occurs to concrete labor and its products" is even more problematic because it implies that this (in a pivotal sense) is in contrast to Marx's earlier analysis of labor, which

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supposedly was not only undifferentiated, but referred immediately and narrowly to the relationship of humans to nature.

As I considered in some detail in earlier chapters, in "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General" Marx's approach to labor involved (even primarily) his attempt to "explain" Hegel's philosophic concept, "negation of negation". Marx first evaluated positively Feuerbach's critical relationship to Hegel in comparison to other "Young Hegelians", who adopted what they believed was a thoroughly critical attitude toward everything, without noticing this was except the "master", meaning Hegel's own dialectic. More difficult to see in that analysis was that, after Marx affirmed aspects of Feuerbach's thought, he criticized Feuerbach's notion that Hegel's negation of negation merely represented the re-establishment of theology after the negation of religion. I suggested that Marx, instead (and as opposed to Feuerbach), grounded a conception of a relation of philosophy, labor and social organization, shaped by a "return" (in the same manuscript) to Hegel. Considering this, it is questionable whether Postone's analysis of Marx's "social appropriation" of Hegel, which he distinguishes from the more typical idea of a "materialist" appropriation, itself fully captures either Marx's own relationship to Hegel or that relationship's potential for a contemporary critical theory of capitalism, which encompasses a potential for overcoming it.

There are several instances in which Postone demonstrates his contention that an important dimension of Marx's theory can be explicated in reference to a "social appropriation" of Hegel, which at the same time discloses severe limitations in practically the entire range of post-Marx Marxism. While this is so, it is questionable whether such a conception of Marx's relationship to Hegel exhausts either Hegel's own potential relevance for contemporaneity, or Marx's relationship to Hegel particularly. Perhaps the pivotal example is

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Postone's equation of Marx's concept of capital with Hegel's Absolute, an equation I will discuss below.

First, Postone presents Marx's analysis of the "fetish" character of the commodity as the intermediate stage *between* the young Marx's concept of alienation, still on the basis of a transhistorical concept of labor, and the fully "unfolded" concept of capital. In the latter, abstract labor "shapes" concrete labor. Abstract labor "subsumes" the worker. Postone, unlike Habermas, recognizes the structure of Marx's analysis where, in addition to transformation of concrete labor into abstract labor, there is a transformation of abstract into concrete. He, in fact, grants to the latter movement the distinguishing feature of capitalism. In this way, his analysis surpasses TCA, wherein Habermas views the conceptual movement, at least in respect to labor, as a movement from the concrete to the abstract only. But Postone situates his own analysis of "abstract" labor and alienation--in so far as it grasps Marx's concept of labor as a concept of social mediation--in respect to debates around Habermas's early KHI. These included the question of whether Marx's concept of labor was,

> sufficiently synthetic to fulfill all that Marx demanded of it, or whether the category of labor needed to be supplemented conceptually with a sphere of interaction (Postone 1993, 158).

Remaining within such a framework necessarily confines a reinterpretation of Marx's theory to capturing the essential features of *existing* society. This is the level of social theory as critique, or critical theory, but does not grasp Marx's appropriation of Hegel's negation of negation in terms of the potentiality of revolutionary *social transformation.*

Recall that in a previous chapter (see Chapter Three) I discussed Habermas's analysis of the movement of a "subterranean" Marx (from the 1844

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Manuscripts to the *Grundrisse*). In respect to this analysis, I showed the power of Postone's re-interpretation of Marx's concepts of labor and wealth in its ability to criticize Habermas's approach. The power of Postone's approach was manifest not only in its ability to criticize particular arguments of Habermas having to do with Marx, but in its implication that Habermas's own theory was shaped, in crucial respects, by mistaken conceptions of Marx's ideas.

Much of Postone's analysis of Habermas's treatment of Marx was centered on a criticism of texts in KHI, where Habermas explicitly analyzed Marx's works. Postone's analysis of TCA does not and cannot so directly engage Habermas's treatment of Marx's basic concepts. As I have already described in respect to TCA, in contrast to KHI, there is an explicit tension between, on the one hand, Habermas's statement of his intentions in respect to Marx's theory, along with the form of his subsequent presentation (in which there are no direct references to Marx's text) and, on the other hand, his actual argument. Thus, at least immediately, it seems unquestionable when Postone does not directly address the circumstance that Habermas's analysis of Marx in TCA takes as its starting point the relation of concrete and abstract labor, the dual character of the commodity as its product, fundamental to Marx's theory. Postone's presentation implies that his criticism of "Marxism as Critique" and KHI is sufficient in respect to Habermas's treatment of *these* concepts. Yet, Habermas's "new" approach in TCA, particularly the affinity with Postone of his analysis of the young Marx, is crucial for grasping Postone's decision to not *break* from the Critical Theory tradition, while leveling the strongest possible critique.

The consistent failure of "traditional" Marxism (where Postone's own analysis implies even Critical Theory belongs) to grasp the categories abstract and concrete labor and their implications for overcoming "state" capitalism is a

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central theme of Postone's work. Surprisingly, however, Postone does not note, let alone directly analyze, this new, unprecedented development in Habermas's approach. Following from this, I want to examine whether his not doing so is somehow related to the limitations of his argument concerning Marx's "social appropriation" of Hegel versus a "traditional" materialist appropriation, that is, is sufficient in terms of possible conceptions of the Hegel-Marx dialectic.

Essence and Notion in Postone's Critique of Critical Theory's Approach to Marx's Theory

In Postone's analysis, a "social appropriation" of Hegel's dialectic refers to Marx's "explanation" of Hegel's philosophy, the latter's concepts of Essence and Notion, especially the Absolute's situation in the latter. In Postone's view, determinate social relations issue forth forms of objectivity and subjectivity. Generally, Postone's analysis proposes to develop a socio-historical epistemology in which subject/object relations themselves characterize specifically capitalist social relations. Thus, Hegel's philosophy, Hegel's self-understanding notwithstanding, can be understood as the philosophy most adequate to a particular socio-historical form of society, the capitalist. Marx, in specifying this social form, was able to situate and explain the "universality" characteristic of Hegel's Absolutes. In Postone's view, contrary to traditional Marxism, wherein the proletariat was the subject, and capital was the object (or in the radicalized, critical perspective of Lukács, where implicit in the proletariat was subject/object identity) Marx analyzed *capital* as the Subject of history, the unfolding Absolute subsuming difference in realizing itself. As Postone cites Marx in *Capital*, when it has reached its mature form, capital is a "self-moving substance" which "moves itself" (Postone 1993, 75).

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Postone's type of analysis implies a sufficiency of merely deepening what he sees as Marx's own trajectory--secularization of Hegel's mystified dialectic--despite decades of a Marxist tradition presumably already expert in that procedure. Postone implies (in substantial accord with Habermas) that Marx's 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts* did not go beyond Feuerbach, and he explicitly, "rejects the humanist reaction to structuralist neo-objectivism, which fails to recognize the major changes in the development of Marx's analysis" (Postone 1993, 74).

In connection with this, in a comparison of Marx's relationship to Feuerbach's and Hegel's thought within the 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, I criticized Habermas's view that Marx did not really "go beyond" Feuerbachian materialism in the 1844, "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General". I pointed out that in these manuscripts Marx already made clear that Feuerbach's "naturalistic" inversion of Hegel was itself inadequate, though it did represent for Marx the only truly critical approach to Hegel's philosophy among the radical Young Hegelians. According to Marx's manuscript, it was not sufficient to demonstrate that in religious representations could be found projections of man's natural conditions, or that his social relations were reflected in mystified, religious or metaphysical forms.

Postone's argument concerning Hegel's Absolute is similar to (while developing) the one I showed Marx criticized in Feuerbach, propelling Marx to a *return* to Hegel, a movement undetected in Habermas's analysis as well. Postone's argument is essentially that Marx explained Hegel's dialectic, outside Hegel's own consciousness, as merely a reflection of the movement of capital. This is contrary to Marx's own assessment of the power of Hegel's philosophy, specifically the concept of negativity, even *within* the 1844 manuscripts, where Hegel was also strongly *criticized*.

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In the 1844 "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", Marx *returns* to an idea of the preeminence of Hegel *after* appreciating Feuerbach's criticism of him. Key passages, which describe how Marx *preserved* Hegel's original dialectic, and which I singled out earlier, included Marx's references to, on the one hand, labor (where Marx sees a fundamental similarity in Hegel and political economy in their inability to grasp its "negative" side) and, on the other hand, Hegel's *notion* of negativity when it is consistently developed, ie; not separated from an analysis of labor's specificity, its *dual* character in capitalism. Then Marx grasps Hegel's concept of negativity as the "creative and moving principle of Hegel's dialectic", transcendence as objective, what Marx conceived (before, within and after 1844) as adequate to a "revolution in permanence" (Dunayevskaya 1991), necessary for overcoming capitalism. Following this, when Marx analyzes Absolute Knowledge in Hegel's *Phenomenology*, he indicates that, in addition to a dual concept of a labor and a philosophy of negation of negation, a dialectical concept of revolutionary social organization is suggested in Hegel's thought (See Chapter Three).

Now, with consideration of Postone's counter-posing of the alternatives of Marx's "materialist" or "social" appropriation of Hegel, it becomes possible to look again at the further importance Marx already (even in the same text following his appreciation of Feuerbach's approach in 1844, and before fully working out his concept of *Capital*) attributed to Hegel's Absolute, and therefore the necessity of explaining (appropriating) it. Such an appropriation, as conceived by Marx, meant the need for its re-concretization in each new presentation of his theory. In the 1844, "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" recall that Marx's *return* to Hegel, *after* appropriating Feuerbach's criticism, was already at the level of Hegel's Absolute (Absolute Knowledge in the *Phenomenololgy*). In this context, Marx grasped the core of Hegel's philosophy

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as "negation of negation," appropriating the transcenent movement of Hegel's dialectic. At the same time, Marx criticized Hegel's making an abstraction of nature, including the natural attributes of man. This is clearly the identical form in which Marx later (in *Capital*) developed concrete and abstract labor, as well as an idea of the shaping of the former by the latter. Hence, the form of Hegel's negation of negation is central in both the early and late expressions of Marx's theory, in that it appropriates the *internal* movement of Hegel's Absolute. Marx criticized in Hegel's philosophy the de-humanization not only of that which was external to philosophy, but philosophy (and the philosopher) as well. This particular criticism was at the core of Marx's own concept of a dialectical working out of philosophy and non-alienated forms of organization (in attempting a relationship to mass social movements) which aimed at overcoming this dehumanization, no longer merely contigent but as crystalized in the movement of the developing social form itself (See Chapter Three).

Postone's outline of a socio-historical epistemology (derived from Marx's *Grundrisse* and *Capital*) implies an identity of chronological and theoretical "maturity" in Marx's development of concepts. But while Marx may indeed have sharpened over time a socio-historical theory of knowledge, such a conception reflexively moved to the *center* of his social theory early humanist concepts, rather than (as Postone holds) merely kept them as "concerns" while further "secularizing" his approach in the interest of an adequate "critical theory" of capitalist society, a perspective (in tune with the critical theory tradition generally) which denies Marx's theory contained a worked out dialectic of philosophy and organization, either social or political. Postone considers the implications (for social and politcal organization) of his own re-interpretation of Marx in his concluding chapters, but seems to believe that these are contemporary issues outside Marx's concerns as expressed in his "mature

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critical theory". Both Postone and the critical theory he attempts to criticize and develop fail to see that such a concept of philosophy and organization was intrinsic to Marx's theory. In fact, it is perhaps the strongest link between the early and mature Marx (Dunayevskaya 1991). According to my analysis, neither Marx's 1844 critique of Hegel, nor particularly Marx's concept of alienation, can be fully explained as superseded by attribution to him of a later more fully devloped perspective of a socio-historical epistemology, the core of which was a qualitatively developed concept of labor, that is, merely stripped of Marx's early supposed transhistorical assumptions. Further consideration of this is possible by briefly continuing to follow Postone's analysis, in Part II of his work, of Marx's concept of the commodity. In "Abstract Labor and Alienation", Postone writes,

> ...it is clear that Marx's mature critique succeeds in grasping the "rational core" of Hegel's position--in this case that objectification *is* alienation--by analyzing the specificity of labor in capitalism. I noted earlier that a "materialist appropriation" of Hegel's thought on the basis of an historically undifferentiated notion of "labor" can apprehend socially Hegel's conception of the historical Subject only in terms of a social grouping, but not in terms of a suprahuman structure of social relations. We now see it also fails to grasp the intrinsic (albeit historically determinate) relation between alienation and objectification. In both cases, Marx's analysis of the double character of labor in capitalism permits a more adequate social appropriation of Hegel's thought...(Postone 1993, 160).

In the following section, "Abstract labor and the fetish", Postone concludes his analysis of abstract labor and Marx's "social appropriation of Hegel" by referring to the final part of Chapter One of Marx's *Capital*, "The Fetishism of the Commodity and Its Secret". He begins by recalling that in his own initial section on abstract labor he had noted the problem of explaining why Marx (in Volume One of *Capital*) began his own discussion of abstract labor

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(characteristic of capitalism) by presenting it as physiological labor. Postone attributes this to Marx's immanent analysis:

> The appearance of labor's mediational character in capitalism as physiological labor is the fundamental core of the fetishism of capitalism (Postone 1993, 170).

This judgement follows from a several page analysis in which he depicts Chapter One of *Capital* on the commodity as, on one level, a deliberate appropriation of Hegel by Marx. Postone's view of Marx's critical "immanent analysis", here of the commodity as a form of appearance of labor in general (transhistorical) as socially mediating, implies that Marx's "fetishism of the commodity" section (in merely negating this appearance) did not, and could not, "appropriate" (Hegel's) Notion (in which the Absolute appears). Since Postone identifies only the fully developed concept of capital with Hegel's Absolute, for him commodity (as fetish) refers only to Hegel's concept of Essence. (Here it is necessary to recall that Hegel's *Logic* unfolds the Absolute from Being through Essence to Notion, the latter containing the section on the Absolute Idea). According to Postone, Marx's "social appropriation" of Hegel, as opposed to traditional Marxism's "materialist appropriation" (which Postone, remarkably, equates with the young Marx) is distinguished in that while traditional Marxism looks "behind" the commodity and finds mere expenditure of labor as constitutive of value, actually Marx's analysis identifies the constitution of value as the function of *socially mediating labor*, which is *specific* to capitalism. Marx's immanent mode of presentation itself explains the widespread misapprehension characteristic of attempted "materialist appropriations" of Hegel:

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> The fetishized appearance of labor's mediating role as labor in general, taken at face value, is the starting point for the various social critiques from the standpoint of "labor" I have termed "traditional Marxism". The possibility that the object of Marx's critique can be transformed into what traditional Marxism affirms with its "paradigm of production" is rooted in the circumstance that the core of capitalism, according to Marx, has a necessary form of appearance that can be hypostatized as the essence of social life...(Postone 1993, 170).

Postone introduces this point earlier with his observation that,

> It is labor's unique role in capitalism that constitutes labor both as an essence and as a form of appearance. In other words, because the social relations characterizing capitalism are mediated by labor, it is a peculiarity of that social formation that it has an essence (Postone 1994, 166).

Thus, Postone, in effect, argues that Hegel's categories of essence and appearance--and Hegel's key philosophical argument that "essence must appear" (and that, therefore, appearance is no less essential than essence)--are adequate categories for illustrating Postone's interpretation of Marx's procedure of "social appropriation" of Hegel's dialectic at the categorical level of Marx's "Fetishism of the Commodity and its Secret". Here it can be pointed out again that in Postone's own immanent analysis (after assessing traditional interpretations of Marx), in his reinterpretation of Marx's mature critical theory, he begins to analyze the commodity, followed by capital. The last chapter in his section on the commodity (which I am analyzing here) first takes up Habermas's KHI, then "Marxism as Critique", followed by TCA.

In an earlier chapter (See Chapter Three), I highlighted the power of Postone's critique of Habermas's analysis of Marx in KHI. His analysis of Habermas's failure to recover and develop Marx's concept of the two-fold character of labor as characteristic of the capitalist social formation, and his

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related inability to distinguish between value and material wealth, led me to investigate in even more detail Habermas's analysis of the *Grundrisse*, especially the way in which he related it to Marx's 1844 *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*. My study uncovered other points on which to question Habermas's reading of Marx, while allowing for an opportunity to suggest alternative interpretations. In retrospect, it also becomes clear, Postone's critique--unequalled in disclosing the theoretic barrier constituted by an historic inability of Critical Theory to grasp Marx's concept of labor and social mediation--is importantly shaped, and therefore *limited* by, Postone's notion of Marx's "social appropriation" of Hegel. The main reason for this is Postone's failure to discern Marx's concern with a dialectical concept of "organization" that was inseparable from his socio-economic explanation of philosophy and, in fact, led him back into dialectical philosophy. (Besides Marx's "return" to Hegel *within* "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General", the most striking example is the Hegelian language permeating the *Grundrisse* itself).

For Habermas, and thus for Postone's critique of the latter, at issue is the the idea of capital as an automaton, a "moving force that moves itself" (a description which also fits well Hegel's Absolute, and thus the social implications for the control and regulation of "society" following from it). Specifically, while Postone (in his re-interpretation of the *Grundrisse*) criticizes Habermas's conflation of value and wealth, and cogently points out that Marx criticized precisely what Habermas suggests he affirms (automatic regulation of social relations), Postone does *not* refer to the parallel analysis in the further developed *Capital*'s Chapter One section on "fetishism of the commodity and its secret". Marx's theoretical position there is that *only* the coming into being of "freely associated" relations among people abolishes the fetishism of the commodity.

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This suggests that already within Chapter One of *Capital*, intrinsic to his analysis of the commodity, and preceding his unfoldment of the concept of capital proper, Marx has already appropriated not only Hegel's "Essence", but Hegel's "Notion", as well (Dunayevskaya 1991, 144), here again (thirty-three years after "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General") as a "humanism"--a humanism which can be seen as unfolded from his initial determination in 1844 I discussed in an earlier chapter (Chapter Three). Internal to the commodity form, Hegel's Notion, as appropriated by Marx as a humanism, is an expression of the most developed contradiction--that between, on the one hand, the automatic regulation of production and society along with the predominance of the social relations between things and objective relations between persons and, on the other hand, "freely associated" relations, the impact of which penetrates even material production. The potential *basis* for the latter was now viewed as creation of material wealth, in place of value. Such a perspective places at the center the potentiality of the development of individual capacities and talents, rather than wealth in general as the aim of production.

Postone's chapter on Habermas considers in greater detail than anywhere else in the book the contradiction between value and material wealth Marx outlined in the *Grundrisse*. Yet, oddly enough, it does not directly tie the Absolute Marx described explicitly in the *Grundrisse* to how he more fully worked it out in Chapter One of *Capital*. Already in the *Grundrisse*, Marx writes:

> Do we never find in antiquity an inquiry into which form of landed property etc. is the most productive, creates the greatest wealth? Wealth does not appear as the aim of production...The question is always which mode of property creates the best citizens. Wealth appears as an end in itself only among the few commercial peoples--monopolists of the carrying trade--who live in the pores of the ancient world, like the Jews in medieval society. Now, wealth is on one side a thing, realized in things, material products, which a human being confronts as subject; on the

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> other side, as value, wealth is merely command over alien labor not with the aim of ruling, but with the aim of private consumption etc. It appears in all forms in the shape of a thing, be it an object or be it a relation mediated through the object, which is external and accidental to the individual. Thus the old view, in which the human being appears as the aim of production, regardless of his limited national, religious, political character, seems to be very lofty when compared to the modern world, where production appears to be the aim of mankind and wealth as the aim of production. In fact, however, when the limited bourgeois form is stripped away, what is wealth other than the universality of individual needs, capacities, pleasures, productive forces etc., created through universal exchange? The full development of human mastery over the forces of nature, those of so-called nature as well as humanity's own nature? The absolute working out of his creative potentialities, with no presupposition other than the previous historic development, which makes this totality of development, i.e. the development of all human powers as such the end in itself, not as measured on a *predetermined* yardstick? Where he does not reproduce himself in one specificity, but produces his totality? Strives not to remain something he has become, but is in the absolute movement of becoming?...(Marx 1973, 487-488).

Postone's criticism of Habermas makes clear the severe consequences, for an understanding of Marx's theory, of a failure to grasp the two-fold character of labor specific to the capitalist social formation. But Postone directs the reader to Part III (specifically on capital) of his own work in order to see how Marx unfolds his critique of the "automatic regulation of production and society". It is thus implied that Part III, "Toward a reconstruction of the Marxian Critique: *Capital*", is the only really appropriate place for a discussion of the mature Marx's treatment of the Absolute. Postone writes,

> ...emancipation would require not the *realization* but the *overcoming* of the consequences of this mode [capitalist] of social constitution. Overcoming the contradiction outlined in the *Grundrisse* does not, then, imply emancipation from hunger and toil alone; overcoming the capitalist relations of production, as expressed by the categories of value and capital, also entails overcoming the automatic regulation of society... Postone 1993, 236-237).

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But Postone's analysis here does not yet return to the *individual*, to Marx's humanist dialectic of the "social individual".

Recall that at this point Postone has already finished considering Chapter One of *Capital* (on the Commodity and Money), an analysis of which composes (along with the chapter on Habermas) the entire Part II of his book. The significance of the structure of his argument, then, can be seen in one of Postone's most original substantive claims--that Marx rooted the possibility of overcoming the automatic regulation of production and society in the potentiality of "dead labor", *exclusive* of "living labor" (which he equates with a social existent--"proletarian labor").

In his consideration of TCA, in opposing Habermas's contention that Marx's critique of capitalism was essentially romantic in its misguided nostalgia for destroyed traditional (including proletarian) forms of life, Postone writes,

> Marx's vision of emancipation, which follows from his analysis, is precisely opposite of what Habermas attributes to him. Jumping ahead for a moment, I shall show that, far from conceiving of socialism as the victory of living labor over dead labor, Marx understands dead labor--the structure constituted by alienated labor--to be not only the locus of domination in capitalism but also the locus of possible emancipation. This makes sense only when Marx's critical analysis of capitalism is understood as one that points toward the possible *abolition* of proletarian labor ("living labor"), not toward its *affirmation* (Postone 1993, 256)

Yet, according to Postone's own analysis, *all* the categories Marx develops in *Capital* presuppose the fully developed concept of capital. This is a strikingly different feature compared to the "preparatory" *Grundrisse*. In *Capital*, within the section on commodity fetishism, *after* he discusses the essence and appearance of the commodity (so incisively described by Postone, including the observation that capitalist society's specificity consists in the fact that it has an essence), Marx proceeds (in a further analysis which Postone does not notice)

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to the realm of the Hegelian Notion, which culminates in the Absolute Idea. Marx's analysis in the commodity fetishism section does indeed implicitly incorporate "dead labor", or the structure of alienated labor. However, here Marx's appropriation of the concept of the Absolute (as containing the highest contradiction) unfolded by Hegel in the realm of the Notion (which follows Essence in the *Science of Logic*), does not *exclude* "living labor" in the abolition of proletarian labor. Marx, in fact, explicitly demonstrates the *specificity* of the abolition of capitalism in comparison to the overcoming of previous socio-historic forms in terms of social *organization* of "living labor" in thought and activity. After an account of capitalism ("fetishism of the commodity") Marx describes the primitive (Robinson Crusoe) and feudal forms of production, as well as the religious representations in accord with them. He then writes:

> Let us imagine, for a change, an association of free men, working with the means of production held in common, and expending their many different forms of labor power in full self-awareness as one single social labor force (Marx 1977, 171-173).

This should be seen as Marx's further working out of the contradiction he outlined in the *Grundrisse*, not only between value and wealth, but between conscious social organization and "automatic regulation" of production and society. In constrast with both Habermas and Postone, I traced the latter problematic's inception to Marx's 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts* where, in fact, it was already immanent.

By now it should be clear there is indeed a connection between limitations of Postone's powerful critique of the earlier Habermas (up to 1968) and his seemingly inexplicable failure to discuss in a direct manner the later Habermas's return (in TCA) to analysis of Marx's *Capital*. Postone's account of

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Habermas's early treatment of the *Grundrisse* should have led Postone's own analysis to what Marx had worked out in the later Chapter One of *Capital*, the concept of historic possibility of "freely associated" relations, their effect on material production, as the necessary condition for overcoming the contradiction intrinsic to the value form of wealth; Marx, in the development of this point in Chapter One, went "beyond" the *Grundrisse* (and later chapters of *Capital* itself), presenting it as the "secret" of the "Fetishism of the Commodity".

Yet, as I have just shown, Postone characterized Marx's commodity fetishism as a socio-historic situation of Hegel's concept of Essence alone. This is related to Postone's overall thesis that Marx unfolds capital from the commodity (as Hegel unfolds the Absolute from Being), two key steps of which are the "formal subsumption of labor", followed by the "real subsumption of labor" (Postone 1993, 182). The latter refers to chapters of *Capital* (subsequent to Chapter One) wherein is described the shaping of concrete labor by abstract labor. These constitute the basis for Postone's position that Marx, in positing the abolition of proletarian labor (which Postone equates with "living labor"), thus posits "dead labor" as, "not only the locus of capitalist domination, but of its possible transcendence" as well. Postone's pursuit of an idea of Marx's presentation of a concept of capital as a socio-historic explanation of Hegel's Absolute obscures the dialectical presentation fully present in Chapter One of *Capital*, which provides the basis of the resolution of the problem Marx identified (or re-identified, considering the 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*) in the *Grundrisse*.

It is important to see in connection with this that Postone does not directly consider Habermas's return to Marx's *Capital* in TCA. While it is true, as I pointed out in the beginning of this chapter, that *Habermas* takes up Marx in a very circumscribed manner (especially so in regard to *Capital*, where he refers

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exclusively to its interpretations by other contemporary Critical Theorists) his analysis in that work tries to critically appropriate what can be described to be an understanding of *Capital* as a socio-historical interpretation of Hegel, different from Postone's and, in fact, preceding it by a full decade. Yet, neither Habermas (with his acceptance, at least for argument's sake, of Lohmann's idea of capital as a "negative totality"), nor Postone (who understands Marx's approach to Hegel in terms of an explanation of the latter's absolute as capital) saw the absolute "as new beginning" (Dunayevskaya 1989) Marx already embedded in the *first* Chapter of *Capital*.

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CHAPTER FIVE

CRITIQUE OF AN INCIPIENT PUBLIC SPHERE: DIALECTIC OF HABERMAS'S INTERVENTION IN THE JOURNAL *PRAXIS INTERNATIONAL*

It is a remarkable that, when viewed from within the post-world War II Critical Theory tradition, the attempt to grasp Marx's theory in light of contemporary conditions began and concluded with a lack of consensus concerning his concept of labor. What makes this doubly remarkable is that within Marx's own lifetime he already noted that his concept of labor had been "bungled" (Marx 1972, 11), even within the organization whose theoretical tendency was in support of his ideas generally. In *Critique of the Gotha Programme* Marx viewed as serious social "retrogression" (Marx 1972, 18) an attempt to form a unified German social democratic party on the basis of, or despite, such a "bungled" concept. Not a redeemable categorical misunderstanding (which might be resolved with organizational unification) Marx characterized the proposed programme's theoretical core, derived from its mistaken concept of labor, as an historical "crime" (Marx 1972, 24) and indicated he wished to disassociate from its knowing subordination of theoretical achievement to supposed organizational requisites.

As I have demonstrated in previous chapters, Habermas wrote on Marx for at least two decades before he found his way to a direct confrontation with Marx's concept of the dual character of the commodity, and the two-fold nature of the labor which produced it, as the *differentia specifica* of the capitalist social

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formation. Yet the very inception of Habermas's theory included proposals for renewing Critical Theory on the basis of a break from Marx's concept of labor. More precisely, the development of Habermas's social theory retained, as a permanent feature it turned out, a critique of a concept that, according to even his own evolving account, must have miscontrued Marx's theory.

But a decade after the publication of TCA, and also from within the Critical Theory tradition, Moishe Postone re-interpreted Marx's "mature critical theory", developing labor as the social mediation specific to capitalist society. In doing so he provided a convincing up-to-date critique of contemporary capitalism *and* Critical Theory, most extensively Habermas's. On one level, Postone formulates his difference with Habermas, in respect to interpretation of Marx's theory, as a problem of reflexivity. According to Postone, Marx's concepts of labor and capital were developed along with a socio-historic epistemology. Aware that an understanding of labor as transhistorical amounted to a fundamental barrier to a grasp of the capitalist social formation, Marx restricted his own basic concepts to a particular set of social relations.

From the standpoint of his idea of a deepening of the secularization of philosophy, Postone attempts to explain subsequent misunderstandings at the core of traditional Marxism. Moreover, he attempts to show how these misunderstandings are constitutive of limitations of oppositional practice, ie; the labor movement, Social Democratic and Communist parties, etc., where traditional Marxist thought has been influential (Postone 1993, 371).

But Postone's critique of these forms of opposition to features of contemporary capitalism (though sufficient to discredit the traditional Marxism integral to them) are derived exclusively from his re-interpretation of what he delineates as Marx's "mature critical theory". Thus, Postone cuts away Marx's own conceptualization of the relation of philosophy and organization, which

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(though more implicit in his earlier writings) can be traced from "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" (1844) to its most focused treatment in the post-*Capital Critique of the Gotha Programme* (1875). This conceptual development had internal to it a continuous *return* to the dialectic in Hegel's philosophy. Postone's interest in the Marx-Hegel relationship is exhausted with a "secular" explanation of the latter by the former.

In my examination of the journal *Praxis International*, where practical and theoretical discourse intersected, I will argue that Habermas's intervention shaped an incipient public sphere in line with his critique of Marx and Marxism. The core of this critique was an attempted theoretical reconstruction of the relation of labor and social organization (with implications for the self-organization of Critical Theory itself) following from more than one experimental separation of Marx from Hegel, the two of which, in the end, he rejoins and abandons as inimical to an adequate contemporary social theory.

The central purpose here is to deepen my analysis of Habermas's peculiar relationship to Marx's thought. As Postone has remarked, Habermas's mistaken conceptions of Marx's ideas blunted the critical edge of his own theory. He understood the latter, *contrasted* with the former, as adequate to contemporary society; but, since his grasp and presentation of some of Marx's basic ideas are problematic, this self-understanding is thus rendered questionable. My analysis will attempt to make clear that Habermas's projection of his self-understanding of the distinctiveness of his own theory *vis a vis* Marx's, as it emerged in the 1980s, achieved its goal in many respects; but in the process the independent *cogency* of Habermas's theory was rendered even more clearly problematic. This is only partly due to the fact that Habermas's critique of modernity and Marxism loses much of its pull along with

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the disintegration of the political and economic power (in East Europe and the Soviet Union) associated with the traditional Marxism Habermas assumed.

Praxis International was the descendant of the semi-underground dissident international Marxist Humanist journal, *Praxis*, published in the former Yugoslavia. However, the historical and theoretical landscape was shifting rapidly. Habermas's TCA appeared in 1981, as did the journal, but now in England rather than in the former Yugoslavia. Just when the fact that non-Stalinist Yugoslavia had long since found itself unable to tolerate a dissident Marxist tendency represented by *Praxis* might have seemed to point to the power and long term determination and prospects of the ruling regimes, not only in non-aligned Marxist Yugoslavia, but in the aligned Marxist East bloc generally, the Solidarity movement burst on the scene and shattered the Polish Communist Party. Martial law descended upon the land. Perhaps 20 million workers went out on strike in an oppositional social movement in some ways unparalled in the post-World War II period. In my concluding chapter I will return to this congruence of pivotal events--the publication of TCA and the emergence of Polish Solidarity. Here I just want to note that the historical simultaneity of TCA, Polish Solidarity and the disintegration of Communism in central and eastern Europe, including the Balkans and the Soviet Union itself, presents a potentially instructive challenge for any attempt to grasp the relationship between Habermas's theory, Marx, Marxism and social revolution in the post-World War II world.

Though rarely noted, Habermas contributed substantially to the founding of *Praxis International*. Richard Bernstein (an American), along with Mihailo Markovic (a Yugoslav) were the journal's founding editors. In his Introduction to *Habermas and Modernity* (Bernstein 1985), a collection of 1980s writings which appeared in the journal and were concerned with Habermas's theory, Bernstein

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wrote that Habermas, "epitomizes the ideals of *Praxis International*" (Bernstein 1985, 32).

Quite likely unknown to Bernstein, Habermas was developing nearly simultaneously a theoretical presentation of his radical separation from the "praxis philosophers". In the series of lectures, published under the title, *Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, Habermas questions praxis philosphy's, "connection with the conception of reason" (Habermas 1990a, 75).

In contrast, Bernstein concluded his introduction to *Habermas and Modernity* (where he projected a growing "unity" of Habermas and praxis philosophy) with a passage taken from Habermas's "Reply to My Critics", an earlier exchange (Thompson & Held 1981, 221): "...[the claim to reason develops a] stubbornly transcending power, because it is renewed with each act of unconstrained understanding," and with, "each moment of living together in solidarity".

Recall for a moment Habermas's several (somewhat puzzling) illusions to Stalin's theory in "The Reconstruction of Historical Materialism". Habermas identifies it as the tendency among the varieties of Marxism which was in "need of reconstruction". Habermas described theory reconstruction as, "taking a theory apart and putting it back together in a new form" (Habermas 1979, 95). Such a description seems to imply a "reformist" approach to what many have regarded as the most vulgar, if not sinister, perversion of Marx's thought. Recall also that "Reconstruction of Historical Materialism" dismissed the young Marx as well as Adorno as representing theories which precluded "levels" in terms of social analysis and, as such, were not viable subjects for Marxism's potential "reconstruction". Also, as early as in his major essay on Marx in *Knowledge and Human Interests* Habermas rather bluntly dismissed thinkers such as Marcuse and the Czech dissident Marxist philosopher Karel Kosik, arguing

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(among other issues) that they misunderstood the young Marx's concept of labor which, according to Habermas at the time, was a key concept of Marx's "metacritique of Hegel". Here, and later, Habermas viewed Marx's theory as essentially a materialist (if not economistic) theory of social evolution, which included a materialist appropriation of Hegelian logic (Habermas 1979, 96).

If Bernstein, in his introduction to a volume of essays concerned with Habermas's theory, seemed a pains to present a united front of dissident Marxist Humanism with Habermas's theory, this was consistent with the peculiar manner in which he portrayed "praxis philosophy's" attitude as essentially conformist in respect to the social relations which prevailed in Tito's Yugoslavia on the eve of that country's social collapse, its plunge into a nightmare of genocide:

> The Praxis group considers themselves loyal and comitted members of Yugoslav society working in the tradition of Marxist humanism (Bernstein 1985, 31).

The implications of such an assessment are numerous, including a surprisingly positive assessement of prevailing social conditions, and the possibility of maintaining a genuinely critical stance in the shadow of Communist Party domination in the former Yugoslavia. Thus, as late as 1985, a thinker of the stature, and in possession of the theoretical links, of Richard Bernstein appears, at least with the hindsight of the late 1990s, in a dizzying position of disorientation. It seems that all the theoretical and practical discourse in the world failed to steer this milieu generally from its descent into a morass of illusory self-confidence and progressive intellectual "unity". Though the thrust of my analysis has been critical in respect to Habermas's long journey of confrontation with Marx's thought, it is evident in examining the inception of his

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approach to PI that he, compared to other theoretical tendencies, was clearly more prepared to present a coherent explanation--whether or not one accepted it--of the contemporary status of Marx's theory. None the less, here I am not as concerned with comparing varying diagnoses of the state of contemporary theories as I am with examining how Habermas's theory in particular depended upon, and was molded by, inadequacies in his grasp of Marx's concepts.

Keeping this in mind, I want to turn now to a necessarily brief analysis of Habermas's "intervention" in PI, the intent not all difficult to discern with a careful reading of Albrecht Wellmer's article, "Reason, Utopia, and the Dialectic of Enlightenment" (Wellmer 1985, 35-66), as well as Habermas's own initial contribution in memoriam to Herbert Marcuse, "Psychic Thermidor and the Rebirth of Rebellious Subjectivity" (Habermas 1985a, 67-77).

Next, I will turn to the 1984 symposium in the journal dedicated to discussion of Habermas's ideas. In that special section, Habermas replied directly to several essays discussing his work. In the context of the evolution of PI, this might have represented a high-point of Habermas's achievement. None of the symposium participants challenged (directly, at least) the coming into its own of Habermas's critique of Marx. (Thomas McCarthy, only in a later essay (McCarthy 1991), seemed to sense, with reservations, Habermas's vulnerability in this respect).

The third part of my consideration of PI, while noting the theoretical and historical cross-currents involved in the journal's break from its identification with Marxism, specifically Marxist humanism, will assess the outcome in terms of the status of Marx's theory, taking into account Habermas's TCA critique of Marx.

Habermas's Critique of Marcuse and "Praxis Philosophy"

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"Psychic Thermidor and the Rebirth of Rebellious Subjectivity", a transcript of a 1980 talk delivered at University of California at San Diego to honor the memory of Herbert Marcuse, was included as Habermas's first contribution to the re-established PI, its first number appearing in April, 1981.

He begins by establishing that, compared to other critical theorists of his generation, Marcuse (according to his own description) was, "an absolutely incurable and sentimental romantic" (Habermas 1985a, 70). This is best seen in how Marcuse "praised negativity" (Habermas 1985a, 67) (as had other critical theorists). Yet, according to Habermas, Marcuse (among them all) was the most "affirmative"; he made, "appeals to future alternatives". The question, then, which Habermas proposes to address in his talk, is whether this characteristic was a "personality trait", or was due to a theoretical position (Habermas 1985, 70). I want to single out two key points he makes on his way to answering this question. While not obviously political, they assume a practical/theoretical meaning in the context I have just described in respect to the at least implicit tensions at the very inception of PI . First, Habermas states,

> Since he first joined the Institute, Marcuse had made the most "orthodox" contributions to Critical Theory. This is true of his essays in the *Zietschrift* where Marcuse was chosen to write the article, "Philosophy and Critical Theory", counter-point to Horkheimer's famous position paper on "Traditicnal and Critical Theory". But it is also true of his later writings including the very last: in *Reason and Revolution*, in *One-Dimensional Man* and in *The Aesthetic Dimension*, Marcuse elaborated themes and arguments, pursued lines of reasoning, which were more or less shared by the whole group (Habermas 1985a, 69).

A few pages later, however, Habermas states that in the years following the 1937 "Philosophy and Critical Theory",

> ...Marcuse elaborated the classical position of Critical Theory in careful studies of Hegel and the rise of social theory. At the same time,

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> Horkheimer and Adorno, who had moved to Santa Monica, had already taken a somewhat different line. With *Dialectic of Enlightenment* they definitely lost their trust in the revolutionary dynamic of the productive forces, and in the practical impact of negative thinking...(Habermas 1985a, 73).

What might seem obvious in a comparison of these two passages is that *Reason and Revolution* in the first, classified as just one among several of Marcuse's "orthodox" (shared by the whole group) contributions to Critical Theory, is the very same work referenced in the second as Marcuse's, careful studies of "Hegel and the rise of social theory" (which is, in fact, the subtitle to *Reason and Revolution*), written at the same time (in the midst of the Nazi Holocaust) as Horkheimer's and Adorno's radically divergent *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Now, the implication here is that Horkheimer's and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944) represented a fundamental break from "orthodox" Critical Theory, while Marcuse's *Reason and Revolution*: *Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory* represented its continuity.

This analysis overlooks key facts. Marcuse's 1941 *Reason and Revolution*, the first work in English to analyze Marx's hitherto virtually unknown 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, represented a further development of Marcuse's break with his own philosophic past. Thus, *Reason and Revolution*'s essential continuity with the tradition of critical theory was not in general (or the elaboration of an "orthodox" position), but only with Marcuse himself. Recall that Marcuse, less than a decade earlier (1932) (Marcuse 1972, 1-48) had been the first to analyze Marx's 1844 manuscripts when they initially appeared in their original German. In a further development, *Reason and Revolution* was the, "first systematic published analysis of Hegel's major works from a Marxist standpoint in any language" (Anderson 1993, 244).

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Habermas's 1980 lecture in honor of Marcuse suggests that neither the initial appearance of Marx's *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts* themselves (which Marcuse first interpreted) nor their potential for clarifying the relationship between Marx's theory and Hegel's philosophy in the interest of a contemporary critical social theory, which Marcuse attempted to further develop in *Reason and Revolution*, represented an *alternative* basis for the orientation and direction of an incipient contemporary Critical Theory. However, what is at issue in the context of my analysis is not so much the young Marcuse's philosophic stature and orientation *vis a vis* Marx's thought (compared to Horkheimer and Adorno). Rather, the main issue here is the significance of Habermas's 1980 attempt to pinpoint chronologically a lasting impact of *Heidegger* on Marcuse, "in terms of personal loyalty...as in terms of philosophical motivations" (Habermas 1985a, 71).

Aside from its condescending tone--perhaps difficult to fully appreciate as it is couched in terms of an informal talk--the substance of Habermas's argument is that Marcuse's analysis of the "Paris Manuscripts" in no way represented a break from Heideggerian philosophy, much less from Critical Theory's incipient neo-Marxism, which Habermas soon intends to show failed completely. To the contrary, according to Habermas, Marcuse's analysis represented no more than the beginning of existential phenomenology's appropriation of the young Marx. The informality, and the affectionate tone of the lecture, served to veil its seriously critical quality. For such an informal talk, to honor Herbert Marcuse, Habermas reports going to some extraordinary lengths. He says,

> For the preparation of this lecture Leo Lowenthal lent me a copy of *Hegel's Ontologie*, and in this old copy I found a yellowed cut out from feuilleton of the *Vossiche Zeitung* with a long and intense review of the three volumes of Karl Jasper's *Philosophie*, written by somebody with the

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> initials H.M., dated Dec. 14, 1933. It is in this context of a criticism of Jaspers that we find a passage which indicates, still guarded by clauses, Marcuse's detachment from Heidegger. Here, Marcuse insists that the formal properties of historicity conceal rather than disclose the substance of history. He raises the question, "whether it is not the case that particular and contingent situations can destroy the authenticity of human existence, can abolish freedom or transform it into sheer illusion." Any talk about historicity, he continues, "must remain abstract and uncommitted until the analysis focuses on the concrete, 'material' situation.
>
> The term "material" is printed in quotes, thereby inconspicuously referring to an earlier article of the same author on the recently discoverd *Paris Manuscripts*, not by Karl Jaspers but by Karl Marx. This article shows how young Marcuse appropriated the young Marx from the viewpoint of existential phenomenology, taking the very notion of *Praxis* and *Lebenswelt* as guidelines for the liberation from alienated labor. Marcuse was the first Heideggerian Marxist, anticipating the later phenomenological Marxism of Jean-Paul Sartre, Karel Kosik, Enzo Paci, and the Yugoslav *Praxis* philosophers (Habermas 1985a, 71-72).

Habermas's lecture reached deeply into recently emergent theoretical and practical problems. His connection of Marcuse's Marxism to Heidegger, and implicitly to the Marxist humanist tendency with whom Habermas had just collaborated in reconstituting the "only Marxist humanist" theoretical journal, fulfilled but the first step (A) of Habermas's "ABCs" of what amounted to a broadly sketched, though fundamentally based, reminder of his position on the past, and (more importantly) virtually non-existent future, of Marx and Marxism for the development of a contemporary critical social theory.

Step B, to a part of which I already alluded, has Marcuse himself consign to the past his work of the 1930s and early 1940s (*Reason and Revolution*).

Step C briefly reconstructs Marcuse's acceptance of Adorno and Horkheimer's "eclipse of reason" while, unsuccessfully, attempting to reconstruct a "rebellious subjectivity" outside of reason, that is, in the instincts.

Habermas summarizes the thesis of *Eros and Civilization*, "the most Marcusian one" (Habermas 1985a, 74):

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> Once instinctual repression loses its function for necessary self-preservation the two conservative powers [Eros and Thanatos] behind the scenes of civilization form a coalition and demand the recalling of energies from alienated labor (Habermas 1985a, 75).

Then, higly suggestive of the critique of Critical Theory generally, fully worked out in TCA, which appeared in the following year, Habermas explains,

> This [Marcuse's] theory has the weakness that it cannot consistently account for its own possibility. If rebellious subjectivity had to owe its rebirth to something that is beyond--a too deeply corrupted--reason, it is hard to explain why some of us should at all be in a position to recognize this fact and give reasons in defense of it...However implausible the argument may seem, it had the function to preserve in Herbert Marcuse one of his most admirable features--not to give in to defeatism...He felt the obligation to give theoretical explanations and thereby to ground action in reason (Habermas 1985a, 75-76).

However, such attempts (and Habermas concludes with a couple of examples where Marcuse appealed to universal morality) are implied to be inconsistent with Marcuse's theory.

As I have indicated, it is possible to interpret Marcuse's approach to Marx, especially the work of the 1930s, including *Reason and Revolution*, in a radically different manner. A different interpretation, with an eye to what it might still contribute to a contemporary critical theory, would pay closer attention to Marcuse's analysis of the Hegel-Marx relationship. (Anderson 1993). My purpose here, however, is simply to demonstrate how, at its very inception, Habermas's intervention in PI suggested a fundamental opposition not only to any notion of a continuing relevance of Marx's theory for today's problems, but of either of the two most sophisticated Marxist tendencies as they had hitherto developed, Marxist Humanism and Critical Theory itself.

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Wellmer's Programmatic Appropriation of Late Habermas's Social Theory

Albrecht Wellmer's "Reason, Utopia, and the Dialectic of Englighenment", placed as the first article in the Bernstein collection, actually appeared a couple of years after Habermas's own contribution on Herbert Marcuse in the journal's first number. Aside from any advantages Bernstein may have seen in disregarding the chronology, for purposes of my study his doing so raises interesting questions. The fact is, though a chronological presentation of theoretical "events" is not intrinsically superior, Bernstein's collection, in not providing dates of publication of the various articles, obscures the dialectic of the intervention of Habermas and his supporters into the discussion of Marx and Marxism at the opening of the 1980s. Habermas's piece was prepared and presented before the publication of TCA. Habermas's fundamental "turn away" from a full consideration of the Critical Theory tradition's analysis of Marx, and its foreshadowing of Habermas's controversial assessment of the breaking apart, or differentiation, of individual thinkers and periods within the Critical Theory tradition, was for the most part suggestive and highly implicit.

Albrecht Wellmer's piece, prepared *after* the publication of TCA, can be seen as the first systematic (or perhaps programmatic) presentation of the *results* of TCA in respect to Habermas's conclusions on the status of Marx. Habermas has now come to terms with the distinctiveness of his own theory versus the entire "critical" tradition, broadly defined. Thus, in placing Wellmer's article prior to Habermas's, while perhaps facilitating the comprehension of Habermas's earlier analysis of Marcuse, Bernstein closes off an important perspective on the internal movement of ideas without which the significance of his own journal cannot be understood.

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More than a decade earlier, Wellmer, an early student of Habermas, performed a function similar to that represented by his 1982 PI article. His *Critical Theory of Society* (1971) extracted the fundamental critique of Marx implicit in Habermas's early work, principally the essays collected in *Theory and Practice* and in the volume, *Knowledge and Human Interests*.

Because of its apparently programmatic character, I will summarize "Reason, Utopia, and the Dialectic of Enlightenment" in some detail. Its presentation of Habermas's then current critique of Marx in view, the article attempts to demonstrate that Habermas's critical theory, contrasted with Marx's, is adequate to a goal of radicalization of democracy in its grasp of the "positive" potential of the normative basis of modern social structures.

Divided into five sections, the thirty-one page article attempts a great deal. The first part attempts to present Marx's theory in the context of its time. This is supposed to be appropriate to a "strategy" of immanent critique. That Wellmer is deeply sensitive to "strategy" can be seen clearly in the approach to his last section where he writes (in reference to his entire preceding analysis) that,

> Of course, these statements should be taken with a grain of salt: I am not talking here about the substantive content of either Marx's theory or Critical Theory as a whole, but about problems of conceptual strategy, about problems of depth grammar, as it were...[T]hese metatheoretical problems of conceptual strategy evidently have a bearing on the content of theoretical analysis as well; it is for this reason that sometimes a revision of conceptual strategies appears necessary to save the truth content of great theories (Wellmer 1985, 51).

The first section on Marx in his time argues that Marx did not overcome the limitations (also present in competing theories) he himself identified as necessary to overcome in order to produce an adequate critical theory of society. In summarizing this section, I will pay particular attention to arguments

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already familiar from my previous analysis of Habermas's work. In addition, I will "read back" into this first section of the essay an idea of "conceptual strategy" Wellmer only reveals in his last section. The question here is whether Wellmer actually employs in the beginning the notion of "conceptual strategy" he reveals only near the end of the article and, if so, to what effect. Finally, this will lead to a concluding consideration of whether Wellmer's "conceptual strategy" is reflective of Habermas's own approach. Alternatively, if Wellmer's analysis is inaccurate in respect to Habermas's theoretical intentions in respect to Marx and Marxism I expect to find that misunderstanding the object of critique in Habermas's ongoing clarification of his theory. Approaching Wellmer's article in this way might make it possible to trace Habermas's own orientation and trajectory both in respect to Marx's theory and in terms of his use of a public sphere in the interest of crystalizing his self-understanding contrasted with any other, including even those who support his basic positions in the way supporters generally treat a "founder".

Wellmer begins the first section of his article with a thesis concerning Marx's self-understanding of the uniqueness of his theory. Marx, in a lesson learned from Hegel, avoided the "futility of opposing ideal, utopian counter-images to the bad reality of an existing society" (Wellmer 1985, 35). Marx distinguished his ideas from ideal conceptions of the future held by socialists and anarchists of his time, as well as from what he saw as the mere formulation of a problem in, "the reconciliation of opposites in Hegel's theory [which] was for Marx only a reconciliation in thought, while in fact it had still to be brought about practically" (Wellmer 1985, 35). This description is found in the opening paragraph and sets the structure for the ensuing critique of Marx, which is with an eye to an idea of Habermas's theory (at least its conceptual strategy) as a

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solution to the aporias of critical theory originating with Marx and extending practically all the way to the 1980s.

Certain weaknesses are immediately apparent in Wellmer's argument. Contrary to Wellmer's understanding of Marx's critique of Hegel, the "problem", in view of my earlier analysis of Marx's 1844 "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", including the latter text's permanent ramifications in the development of Marx's theory, was not merely that a reconciliation of opposites was in Hegel confined to thought. The "secret" (Marx 1967b, 320) of Hegel's reconciliation of (accomodation to) state and society, despite the "thoroughly critical" quality of his philosophy, was that there was to be found none the less a *principle* of accomodation in his dialectic. Recall that Marx, when analyzing *Phenomenology of Mind*, criticized Hegel's Absolute Knowledge, exemplified in Hegel's phrase, "at one with itself in its other as such". This indicated that Marx's critique of Hegel's philosophy stood independently, that is, did not require (though it did include) a reference to practice generally, much less to "society".

According to Wellmer, Marx's relationship to Hegel is characterized by a sort of division of labor, familiar in the antinomies of "bourgeois society" itself. Hegel first *achieved* the reconciliation in thought Marx sought to carry out in practice. But Marx's text provides evidence that Marx objected, from the start, to Hegel's dialectic *in* thought, at the categorical level. Marx then developed the implications of such a critique for thought and practice. I have already described how Marx appropriated Hegel's negation of negation, identifing it as the revolutionary element in Hegel's philosophy (see Chapter Three). Here it is necessary to focus more on its implications for Marx's concept of practice (or the practice of philosophy)--a concept which can hardly be fully understood on the basis of Wellmer's initial description of Hegel's reconciliation as a model Marx

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employed to imply a future "society". Recall that in connection with an earlier discussion of *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* I also emphasized Marx's appropriation of Hegel's negation of negation in his analysis of the intrinsically contradictory relationship of civil society and state at the basis of the peculiarly bourgeois social formation. In view of Marx's critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* (and Marx's critique of Hegelian dialectic proper in 1844 it preceded) Wellmer now commits a double mistake.

First, by implication, he attributes to Marx the positivistic presupposition of a "sphere" of civil society, the *fact* of its independent, transhistorical existence presumably outside the pale of critical thought. Thus, Wellmer writes that Marx merely aimed at a practical negation of the, "loss of 'ethical' life in the sphere of civil society" (Wellmer 1985, 36). As I demonstrated in the earlier chapter, Marx's critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* was both more fundamental than this and at the same time inclusive of an affirmative Hegelian moment, an appropriation of the latter's negation of negation. Marx, contrary to Wellmer's understanding, did not aim to restore in the future the "ethical life" of a civil society, but rather demonstrated the alienated essence, and the dialectical non-viability of civil society itself, owing to its intrinsic relation to the state.

In the following paragraph, related to how he earlier argued that Marx believed that "privatism", or pursuit of individual interest, (or an ethical void) was at the basis of capitalist civil society, Wellmer now writes,

> The end of capitalism, however, ie; the abolition of private property, will according to Marx result in the establishment of a classless society (Wellmer 1985, 36).

As I have argued in connection with discussion of Habermas's own texts, Marx (as early as 1844) uncovered the possibility that alienated labor was the cause

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of private property (and the oppressive class structure arising from it), instead of the reverse. Moreover, Marx wrote that an abolition of private property (or the establishment of what he called vulgar communism) could not be the goal or the end; rather, Hegel's own dialectic implied non-alienated social relations, what Marx termed humanism. Wellmer argues that Marx's theory--distinguished both from Hegel's abstraction from practice and utopian socialism's abstraction from theory--is characterized primarily by an attempt to demonstrate, "that the...conditions of the communist society were already forming themselves in the womb of capitalist society..." (Wellmer 1985, 36). The key words here are "forming themselves".

Wellmer writes, again following Habermas's lead (see Chapter Two) in appealing to an idea of Marx's insufficient articulation of his own ideas, "Marx, in other words, had to transform socialism from utopia into a science, as Engels later put it" (Wellmer 1985, 36).

Thus, Marx is rendered scientistic, naturalistic, and deterministic in his failed attempt to move beyond "idealism", both of the Hegelian and utopian socialist varieties. He fails to specify a normative basis for his critique:

> Marx in fact is led back to the impasses of utopian thinking--only now they appear in disguised form. For Marx cannot really show that the planned economy which he predicts for the time after capitalism will take the form of a communist society; consequently, the idea of communism remains as much a utopian ideal in his theory it was for earlier socialists and anarchists (Wellmer 1985, 36).

His attribution to Marx of an idea of "conditions of the communist society...already forming themselves in the womb of capitalist society", is the basis for Wellmer's implication that Marx, just as Hegel and the utopian socialists before him, failed to develop the conceptual tools necessary for breaking through an historical impasse. In fact, Marx's supposed solution

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seems worse than Hegel's idealism or socialism's utopianism because, though he really gets no further than his predecessors, the impasses of his theory are more difficult to detect: they, "appear in a disguised form" (Wellmer 1985, 36). Hence, Wellmer (in a return to an analysis made by Habermas twenty years earlier) tries to demonstrate that, due to Marx's unsuccessful attempt at an immanent critique of "capitalist commodity production", his vulnerability in respect to an adequate concept of social organization can easily be made manifest. Or, perhaps more precisely, supposedly it can be demonstrated that since Marx's understanding of social transformation is not limited to a concept of normativity in respect to social organization, his theory in some ways falls short of Hegel's concern (in *Philosophy of Right*) with an institutionalization of freedom, and has little positive to offer beyond typical socialist and anarchist ideas.

Utilizing the exact passage from Engels quoted by Habermas twently years earlier, Wellmer writes,

> With the abolition of capitalism, people will no longer be forced to "externalize" their social powers into institutions which then confront the individuals with an independent existence and with a logic and power of their own. With the background of such assumptions Engels has spoken about the transfromation of the domination of humans over humans into the administration of things, and Lenin has predicted the, "withering away of the state" in the coming communist society (Wellmer 1985, 38).

I have already criticized in connection with Habermas's argument twenty years earlier the idea that a formulation from Engels (especially in such a crucial context) can substitute for an analysis of Marx (see Chapter Two). Here it is clear that Wellmer's reference to Lenin in order to supplement this argument is to Lenin's recovery of Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, virtually undiscussed by Marxists since it had been issued nearly a half century earlier.

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Lenin's analysis of it in *State and Revolution* on the eve of the Russian Revolution notwithstanding, Marx's 1875 *Critique of the Gotha Programme* in demonstrating the specifically capitalist social organization and the demands of a dialectic of theory and organization necessary to overcome it, remains one of the "undigested" writings of Marx to the present day (Dunayevskaya 1991; Meszaros 1997).

The fundamental error from which Wellmer's argument unfolds consists in his misunderstanding of the relationship of Marx's theory to Hegel's thought. Marx did not criticize Hegel merely for a reconciliation which was confined to thought but, to the contrary, criticized that very reconciliation *within* thought. At the same time, Marx saw a revolutionary element developed in Hegel's philosophy, potentially constitutive of revolutionized social relations succeeding those of capitalism. The fundamental point of *Critique of the Gotha Programme* was that revolutionary organization take responsibility for an articulation of this element--as its primary task. Marx found Hegel's *principle* of accomodation in Hegel's *thought*, and purposely distinguished himself from the other "young Hegelians" in this respect (Marx 1967b, 316); he therefore certainly did not attempt to extend this mode of reconciliation to practice or to a (future) society. In Marx's view, Hegel's reconciliation in thought constituted a *principle* of accomodation with existing society.

Wellmer argues that a political "strategy", entailing the mere abolition of private property thought to lead inevitably to a classless society and a "planned economy" (what he identifies as an intended concretization of Hegel's abstract reconciliation), long associated with obvious failures of Marxism, is fully consistent with the fundamental core of Marx's theory.

Here Wellmer introduces the concept of "associated individuals". Since, even in the space of a lengthy essay, he cites a text of Marx on only one

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occasion, this concept's origin and context in Marx's work is not made clear. However, in view of his exposition it is quite likely that he is referring primarily to "freely associated men", introduced by Marx in "The Fetishism of the Commodity and its Secret" section of Chapter One of *Capital*. Wellmer relates the concept to what he supposes to be Marx's notion of a communist society which would have, "brought [human] metabolism with nature under their conscious and rational control" (Wellmer 1985, 36).

But, as should be clear by now, Marx's concept of "freely associated humanity" does not refer to "nature". Recall that Marx introduces the concept in a disclosure of the commodity's secret--the perspective needed to "see" the specificity of social relations of capitalism, while disclosing a real potential to overcome them. Recall that in the previous chapter (Chapter Four) I documented that Marx's analysis, already in the *first* chapter of *Capital*, critically appropriates not only Hegel's philosophic concepts of essence and appearance, but notion as well. There I argued that Marx's appropriation of Hegel's philosophic concepts demonstrates how they point to a society with social relations not only different from, but opposite to, those characteristic of capitalism. This illustrates how Marx's critique of Hegel was not simply from the plane of practice; rather, Marx makes clear that the revolutionary quality of Hegel's philosophy escapes what Hegel understood to be the social bounds. Hence, it is impossible to conceive, as Wellmer attempts to, the significance of Marx's "freely associated humanity" in terms of "associated individuals" whose only barrier to freedom, after the abolition of private property and the institution of a rational economic plan, is their metabolism with nature (Wellmer 1985, 37). Labor, mediating itself and social relations generally only in capitalism--though appearing to be material and transhistorical--was not, Marx argued, intrinsically

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a mere means of life, in other words, the mediation of humanity and nature, determinate of social relations in some ontological sense.

Rather, in a passage in *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (see p.214) Marx demonstrated that, while it is possible (even for Marxists attempting to write an organizational programme) to exploit labor in new ways (La Salle's concept of the state) in order to once again subsume the individual under the social, Hegel's concept of negation of negation points to a potential opposite of this. Marx analyzes labor's potential transition from from a "mere means of life" and the mediation of social relations, to life's "prime want" or need. In this transition, labor need not be and, in fact, cannot be, the "essence" of a *society.*

Even Wellmer's own argument (its strategy), despite his intentions, points to the overriding significance of Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme* in how it might inform a conceptualization of the relation of speficically capitalist social relations and the requirements of organization of "critical theory" which ostensibly aims to overcome them. If Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme* could be summarized in a word, it would say that "practice", or its organization, when permitted to subsume the fullness of the critical idea already achieved in Marx's appropriation of Hegel's dialectic, demonstrated the need to spell out, in fully critical terms, negation of negation. After *Capital*, Marx wanted no part of an only apparent opposition (to capitalism) intrinsic to which was something other than that philosophic concept (the continuous reappearance of which I have traced in Marx) worked out in terms of specifically capitalist social relations. But in conceiving the relation of Marx to Hegel, that is, in terms of categorical development, Wellmer situates Marx *below* the achievement of Hegel:

> As far as the coordination of social interaction and the formation of a common will is concerned...Marx, in contrast to Hegel, does not develop

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> the categories which would allow him to articulate the idea of a free association of individuals--given the conditions of modern, industrialized societies--beyond its most abstract formulation. Consequently this idea [freely associated labor] is abstractly opposed to the system of class domination which was the object of Marx's analysis. Since, however, it plays the "theoretical" role of signifying the type of postcapitalist social formation which, according to Marx, is already immanent in capitalist society, this idea of a free association could only be understood via a built-in category mistake...as also spelling out the organizational principle of a communist society... (Wellmer 1985, 38).

If it is recalled where Marx first introduces the concept of "freely associated humanity", Wellmer's critique of Marx's "abstract formulation", and his failure to "develop the categories" cannot be accepted. As I already discussed, *Capital*'s categories certainly elaborate "the conditions of modern industrialized societies", as well as provide the basis for grasping "freely associated labor" as the only concrete perspective for an overcoming of these conditions.

Moreover, while class domination was an object of Marx's analysis it was very far from *the* object. Class domination long predated capitalist social relations, the fundamental object of Marx's analysis. Wellmer's "conceptual strategy" (which he indicates he borrows from Habermas) is driven (though hardly intentionally) by attribution to Marx of precisely what Marx criticized. Wellmer writes,

> Basically one could say that Habermas has translated the project of critical theory of society from the conceptual framework of a philosophy of consciousness, geared to a subject-object model of cognition and action, into the conceptual framework of a theory of language and communicative action. This basic move enabled Habermas to distinguish categorically between types of rationality and action--in particular between instrumental and communicative rationality and action--which for conceptual reasons neither Marx, nor Weber, nor Adorno and Horkheimer could clearly keep separate from each other... (Wellmer, 1985, 51).

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This passage confirms Wellmer's lack of a grasp of Marx's concept of labor in capitalism without which it becomes plausible to postively *attribute* to Marx's theory affirmation of aspects of the social determination of the unity which structures capitalism itself. The basis of the latter is a relation of concrete and abstract labor, constitutive of an abstract form of social domination. Postone has explained Wellmer's type of limited interpretation of Marx's theory by focusing attention on the assumption of traditional Marxism, unexamined by Critical Theory, that a future non-capitalist society differs from a capitalist society primarily (and merely) in that the socially constitutive role of labor is direct and transparent in the former, indirect and obscured in the latter (Postone 1993, 10).

Praxis International Symposium on Habermas's Social Theory on the Eve of the Collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe

A certain perspective can be gained in viewing the symposium on Habermas's theory, which appeared in 1984, against the preceding background of Habermas's 1981 contribution in the opening number of PI and Wellmer's piece contributed a couple of years later (the two reversed in Bernstein's collection). One might have anticipated extensive discussion of the status of Marx's theory in a symposium on Habermas ("Modernity and Postmodernity") in the aftermath of the publication of TCA, and in the context of the fundamental nature of the critique of virtually all forms of Marxism levelled by himself and a closest collaborator. Recall that PI, at its inception, described itself as the only "Marxist Humanist" journal. What is remarkable about the symposium is that there is virtually no mention of Marx's theory or of Habermas's critique of Marx and Marxism, let alone any challenge issued to the latter. The simplest explanation of this might be that the four authors found nothing new in Habermas's up-to-date critique of Marx and Marxism, or found it

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non-controversial. Moreover, they might have shared an assumption that Habermas (and the times) had left Marx and Marxism behind.

Perhaps even more surprising is Habermas's reply, titled "Questions and Counter-Questions" (Habermas 1985b, 192-216); it is as if he detected an unwarranted attitude underlying the various approaches, an attitude not conducive to full comprehension of precisely how, and with what consequences, he believed that had moved beyond Marx's theory in particular.

Before taking up Habermas's reply, I will briefly mention the basic themes of the other four contributions to the symposium. Richard Bernstein's introduction to *Habermas and Modernity*, while it was not previously published in the PI symposium, none the less prompts Habermas in his "Questions and Counter-Questions" to include consideration of Bernstein's current work. Also, it should not be overlooked that U.S. theorists supplied all the contributions to the symposium. This is relevant in respect to Habermas's subtle but key critique of the fact that none of the contributors noticed his fundamentally new approach to the concept of "alienation". Habermas writes,

> What is perhaps specifically German is the philosophic concept of alienation, both in the Hegelian-Marxist version and the early Romantic version taken up by Nietzsche.

And, perhaps related to this, Habermas remarks,

> An added difficulty is that only McCarthy directs his remarks to my more recent works (Habermas 1985b, 197-198).

In a general characterization of the symposium, Habermas writes,

> Rorty puts in question the entire undertaking of the theory of communicative action. As opposed to this form of questioning, the reservations of Martin Jay, Thomas McCarthy, and Joel Whitebook are directed toward particular steps in its execution. These authors direct their attention to complications in my attempt to work out the concept of

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> communicative rationality. Jay points out an under-illuminated aspect; McCarthy touches upon a central difficulty; Whitebook deals with a problem which emerges as a consequence of the theory (Habermas 1985b, 198).

While, on the one hand, Habermas seems to question the void in discussion in respect to the "specifically German" philosophic theme of alienation, on the other hand, in attempting to draw up a balance sheet, or coherently summarize the various contributions, he concludes that all of them, except Rorty, concede a great deal of the claim he has attached to his working out the theory of communicative rationality, including (at least implicitly) its critique of Marx.

An examination of Habermas's response as a whole (and to Rorty in particular) might demonstrate that Habermas implicitly serves notice on the participants, including Bernstein (and excepting only Jay), that while refraining from issuing wholesale rejections of Habermas's theory, none was immune to, or lacking potentially important affinity with, Rorty's position. Motivating this subtle, but actually potentially far more fundamental counter-critique, is Habermas's aspiration to vitalize a critical public sphere in line with a diagnosis of a dissipation of Marxist energies (an assessment perhaps also derived from the threadbare contributions from Marxist humanists in prior issues of the re-born journal), and a resulting critical theoretic void. An article by Mihailo Markovic, PI's co-editor at the time, illustrates the weakness of the Marxist humanist response to Habermas's theory (Markovic 1982). If a symposium in a Marxist Humanist journal could take place in which none were prepared to counter (or seriously assess) Habermas's critique of Marx and Marxism (including the neo-Marxism of the Frankfurt School from which he traced his own departure) and how it was fundamental in shaping his own theory, then was this in itself demonstrative of an exhaustion of critical energies as such, that

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is beyond too specialized and/or merely current intellectual, or political, interests?

The "problem" Whitebook brings to the fore (Whitebook 1985, 140-160) as a consequence of Habermas's theory of communicative rationality is "materialism". Both Whitebook and Habermas used the term as something of a theoretic code for Marx and Marxism. Whitebook, in tracing the incorporation of Freud in the theory of the original Frankfurt School's neo-Marxism, and its basic alteration in Habermas's theory, suggests that the price of this alteration is the loss of much of the claim to originality of the Critical Theory tradition. He sees a danger in Habermas's theory of giving up the individual, subjectivity, and the concrete, which had previously served to "fill-in" Marx's too objectivistic theory of classes.

Thomas McCarthy's contribution, "Reflections on Rationalization in the Theory of Communicative Action" (McCarthy 1985, 176-191) provokes by far the most extensive response from Habermas. Connected to this is the fact that it is the one symposium contribution which takes up the recently published TCA. More precisely, it takes up two elements of TCA. According to Habermas's own characterization, McCarthy succeeds in touching upon, "a central difficulty" of "communicative rationality". In dissecting a schema, presented in Volume One of TCA, of "rationalization complexes" derived from Max Weber's view of societal rationalization, McCarthy puts in question both the core of Habermas's claim to have developed a concept of rationality adequate to a contemporary social theory (White 1989), as well as the status of critical theory, even if a successful appropriation of Weber is granted Habermas. When it is recalled that Habermas's sharpest critique of Marcuse (though it was presented in a form of special appreciation) was that the latter's theory lacked a concept of rationality and, in effect, was the result of an "abandonment of reason", the full

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significance of McCarthy's questioning of Habermas's own concept of rationality can be discerned. It should be added, however, that McCarthy by no means, directly or indirectly, suggests that what might be seen as his implicit attempt at melioration of Habermas's critique of Marcuse and perhaps other more "subject", or praxis-oriented forms of Marxism, points to a need for re-evaluation of the potential of Marx's theory, or of Habermas's interpretation of it in particular. In short, Habermas's description of McCarthy's approach--"touching upon a central difficulty of communicative rationality"--as well as Habermas's title to his reply--"Questions and Counter-Questions"--accurately reflect the carefully circumscribed quality of McCarthy's critique. Yet, in so far as Habermas stakes so much on his appropriation, "from within Western Marxism", of Weber's theory of rationality, McCarthy's focused attack on this appropriation clearly provokes what seems to be a sort of emotional quality in Habermas's reply.

Only in some respects McCarthy continues the role he assumed several years earlier with the publication of *The Critical Theory of Jürgen Habermas* (McCarthy 1978). The pioneering character of the latter work is reflected in the fact that, among the symposium participants, McCarthy's PI piece was the only one that focused on Habermas's latest work. But, in contrast to his earlier comprehensive study, McCarthy, from the outset, casts doubt on Habermas's theoretical direction. In this primarily critical approach, McCarthy highlights, with references (McCarthy 1985, 190) the central criticisms of Habermas's early work, specifically *Knowledge and Human Interests*, which were present in the 1978 study.

McCarthy's critique of Habermas centers on the latter's presentation (in Chapter Two of TCA) of a schema he says is derived from Weber's "Religious Rejections of the World" (Habermas 1984). In Weber's study Habermas finds

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an analysis of cultural modernity and societal rationalization. Habermas interprets Weber's analysis as disclosing differentiated rationality complexes characteristic of the West. A reason split into its various parts exists as differentiated value spheres--science, morality and art. Connected to these are formally defined worlds--the objective, the social and the subjective--and corresponding basic attitudes: objectivating, norm-conformative and expressive (McCarthy 1985, 177).

In a dense and compressed examination of Habermas's schema, McCarthy does not question the interpretation of Weber from which it is derived. Rather, he poses questions on the level of the possibility of the internal relations the schema delineates. Then, in order to explain the numerous weaknesses he finds, he turns to Habermas's discussion of the logic of *Verstehen* (understanding meaning) in Chapter One of TCA: McCarthy writes,

> Habermas attempts to establish the very strong thesis that meaning, intelligibility and understanding are in the final analysis inseparable from validity, rationality and assessment, that, "access to the object domain of social action through understanding meaning makes the rationality problematic unavoidable. Communicative actions always require an interpretation that is rational in approach...(McCarthy 1985, 183).

McCarthy quotes a long passage in TCA in which Habermas explicates the internal relation of the rationality problematic and the, "paradigm case of a speech act oriented to reaching understanding" (McCarthy 1985, 183-184). The basic idea is that interpretation depends on familiarity of the conditions under which the validity of a speech act is acceptable or would have to be acknowledged by a hearer. The only way to gain this knowledge is from the context. In this an interpreter must reflect on the reasons a speaker would offer in the defense of the validity of an expression. Thus, an interpreter is, "drawn into the process of assessing validity claims" (McCarthy 1985, 183). McCarthy

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questions what he calls the "very strong thesis" that interpretation requires judgement of validity claims. He writes,

> Habermas does...allow for a reaction of "abstention", of leaving the validity claim "to one side as not yet decided"...It might appear that his type of suspension of judgement is nothing else than Weber's *Werturteilsfreiheit* (value freedom);...but...Weber...thought that questions of value were ultimately undecidable in any rationally binding sense...Habermas is not a skeptic in such matters. For him normative validity claims, no less than truth claims, admit of rationally motivated consensus...But even if one grants Habermas's version of cognitivism in matters ethical, and even if one agrees that the social scientist can, may, and even should adopt a critical stance toward validity claims, the questions remains: Must he or she? (McCarthy 1985, 185).

McCarthy's principal objection is to the "methodological consequences" (McCarthy 1985, 183) of Habermas's interpretation and appropriation of Weber's concept of rationality. This criticism turns on Habermas's analysis of the schema, which presents nine possible world relations. Habermas states that only six of these are "suitable for the accumulation of knowledge", and thus rationalizable (McCarthy 1985, 178). The differentiation of just these six world relations characterize the West.

Thus, after raising questions concerning Habermas's theory of "understanding meaning", McCarthy returns to the schema itself. He concludes by arguing that the three world relations not admitting of rationalization (according to Habermas's interpretation) might actually not be fundamentally different than the six Habermas analyzes as rationalizable. McCarthy traces what he sees as the fallacy of Habermas's position to Habemas's implicit admission of "complementary" attitudes in the relations he designates as rationalizable, while denying the same potential to the relations he excludes from rationalizability.

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McCarthy's criticism continues themes present in his original study of Habermas's early theory; Habermas elaborated his differences with McCarthy in *Critical Debates* (1981). These revolve around the social relationship to nature, principally Habermas's view that only an objectifying relation to nature can be "theoretically fruitful". Here McCarthy returns to his earlier objection, expanding it to the two other relations Habermas now identifies and excludes from rationalizability, based on his interpretation of Weber's "Religious Rejections of the World". Essentially, McCarthy is looking for a stronger hermeneutic dimension in critical social theory than Habermas appears ready to admit. After taking up Martin Jay's contribution, I will return to some further implications of McCarthy's critique in my consideration of the full significance of Habermas's reply to the symposium participants.

Martin Jay's "Habermas and Modernism" (Jay 1985, 125-139) traces the treatment of aesthetic experience from Walter Benjamin through Adorno and Marcuse. Against this background, he then gathers together Habermas's scattered statements on the subject, arguing that, while cohering slowly, an idea of the aesthetic has emerged as a central, unresolved issue in Habermas's theory. Jay pays special attention to the importance of this theoretic dimension in assessing the prospects for both filling out Habermas's theory generally, and as pivotal in responding to recent critiques of Marxism and neo-Marxism (including Critical Theory), such as those of Jean-Francois Lyotard and Andreas Huyssen. In addition, Jay indicates with a reference to Thomas McCarthy's arguments with Habermas, that even within Critical Theory one of Habermas's least clarified themes was that of aesthetic experience.

As I noted earlier, Habermas's response to the various contributions to the symposium ("Habermas, Modernity and Postmodernity"), appearing in Volume Three of PI, seemed implicitly critical of an apparent lack of awareness

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of the significance of his critique of Marx, and his assessment of the status of Marx's theory, for an understanding of his own theory. An equally important aspect of his reply was that it contained not only a serious individual criticism of each of the participants (with the possible exception of Jay) but also suggested an internal link among apparently quite disparate approaches. Finally, Habermas's reply suggested that it was only the maturation of his own theory which provided the perspective necessary to forge the unity he ascribes to the various contributions, the background against which the particularity (that is, the universality) of his own theory could be projected.

That, in a Marxist Humanist journal, no symposium participant chose to discuss in a direct manner the relationship of Habermas's ideas to Marx's, and that it was Habermas who flagged this, seemed to serve to round-out and extend Habermas's initial position in the very first issue of the journal: 1) Neither Marxist Humanism (nor praxis philosophy which Habermas believes is traceable to Marcuse's "Heidegerrian Marxism"), nor Critical Theory in the mold of Horkheimer's and Adorno's, were adequate to a contemporary standard of rationality; and, 2) that there was no alternative to a grasp of his own theory of communicative action and reason as a whole in confronting this unavoidable rationality problematic.

To begin with, it would have been difficult for Habermas to pose in a sharper manner his theoretical difference with the co-editor of PI, Richard Bernstein. This issue might be approached in view of Hegel's *Science of Logic*, where the absolute idea contains the "highest degree of opposition" (Hegel 1976, 824), ie; the practical and and the theoretical idea.

The structure of the beginning of Habermas's "Questions and Counter-Questions" (Habermas 1985b, 192-216) is the key to grasping the way he shapes the symposium as a whole. Habermas begins with some general

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comments aimed at establishing a minimum commonality among all the symposium participants, including himself. They are, "concerned if not with the same problems, then at least with the same themes" (Habermas 1985b, 192). He contrasts this situation with controversies among adversaries who, "feeling that their identity is threatened by the other's fundamental convictions, struggle with rhetorical weapons" (Habermas 1985b, 192). It is this latter condition, Habermas then argues, which charaterizes "the modern experience", or what he says Hegel called the shattering of naive consensus as an impetus for "the experience of reflection" (Habermas 1985b, 192). In this way Habermas views the symposium self-reflexively. According to this philosophic/historic approach, then, the symposium can be viewed either as a function of modernity (in so far as Habermas adds that, "In the framework of our culture, invested as it is with reflection, the thrust of this experience had to be worked through politically but also philosophically") (Habermas 1985b, 193), or its negation: "We cannot simply wish this experience away; we can only negate it" (Habermas 1985b, 193).

Habermas's starting point is philosophy. From the vantage point of the mid-1980s, the "modern experience" has the fluidity of a spectrum, running from historicism to transcendentalism. These two poles are also in tension. In characterizing the state of philosophy in this manner Habermas also selects out from among the symposium participants the philosoph*ers*. In comparison to himself, then, he begins his response with a consideration of the views of Richard Rorty and Richard Bernstein. Commenting that no one who gives the situation of a tension between historicism and transcendentalism, "much thought would want to be left in this bind" (Habermas 1985b, 193), Habermas states that he, Rorty and Bernstein react to it in different ways.

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In a comparison of Rorty and Bernstein, Habermas concludes that Rorty (in seeing philosphy itself as the sickness whose symptoms it previously and unsuccessfully tried to cure) absolutizes the perspective of the observer while Bernstein (who, "refuses to regard the procedural unity of rationality within the historical and cultural multiplicity of standards of rationality as a question that is accessible to theoretical treatment...") absolutizes the perspective of the participant (Habermas 1985b, 196). While he does not directly pose it as a conclusion, the idea seems to be that neither Rorty nor Bernstein, from their respective standpoints of observer and participant, escape the bounds of the historicism/transcendentalist spectrum.

More importantly, in his description of Rorty's advice (that, "philosophers need only recognize the hybrid character of their controversies and give the field over to the practicioners of science, politics and daily life to be rid of the problem") (Habermas 1985b, 193-194) and Bernstein's conclusion to *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism* (Bernstein 1983) (that the utility of philosophy is restricted to the horizon of practical reason) (Habermas 1985b, 196) Habermas might be understood to be saying that only his own theory offers an alternative to the "end of philosophy" thesis, taken up most directly and extensively in postmodernist theory. Rorty and Bernstein, certainly aware of the "bind of historicism and transcendentalism", propose symmetrical, though each unsatisfactorily one-sided solutions. Next, in a single paragraph, Habermas makes a succinct case for precisely how his own theory (which he calls a *third path*) is superior to that of either Rorty's or Bernstein's, or their theories in combination, and overcomes particularly Bernstein's restriction of the potential of theory and, by extension, philosophy. The main emphasis in the paragraph is, again, the problem of rationality. Habermas writes of his "third path" ("my theory of communicative action") that, "...philosophy surrenders its claim to be

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the sole representative in matters of rationality and enters into a nonexclusive division of labor with the reconstructive sciences" (Habermas 1985b,196). (These include theories of the development of human competencies, eg; learning and moral development in Piaget and Kohlberg, respectively). Further down in the same paragraph, Habermas adds,

> This revisionary self-understanding of the role of philosophy marks a break with the aspirations of first philosophy (*ursprungphilosophie*) in any form, even that of the theory of knowledge; but it does not mean that philosophy abandons its role as the guardian of rationality (Habermas 1985b,196).

Then, in a comparison of science and philosophy, which serves to justify the autonomy, and reason for existence, of the latter, Habermas refers, with a footnote in the text, to the final chapter of TCA: "Unlike the sciences, it [philosophy] has to account reflectively for its own context of emergence and thus its own place in history..." (Habermas 1985b,196).

While a response to Rorty and Bernstein is the immediate occasion for these remarks, it is clear that they are directed more broadly to the symposium as a whole, especially to the criticisms developed in Thomas McCarthy's contribution. In fact, in both these "introductory" remarks and in his reply to McCarthy Habermas refers to precisely the same page in the final chapter of TCA. Thus, there is a clear indication that Habermas believed that his recently completed TCA went some way toward answering questions, implicit and otherwise, raised in the symposium as a whole. Interestingly, as I indicated in Chapter One, an analysis of the metatheoretical implications of Marx's approach to labor in the *Grundrisse* served as the model for Habermas's self-understanding of "the context of emergence and thus its own place in history" of his own theory.

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Habermas is hostile to Rorty's "bid adieu" to philosophy as such. It is apparently Rorty's judgement that Habermas's approach does little to alter a situation of an exhaustion of philosophical discourse. Habermas attributes this to Rorty's notion that Western logocentrism defines the potential of philosophy as such, rather than the specific manner in which a full spectrum of rationality potential present in the modern lifeworld has been cut-off by a "restriction of reason to its cognitive-instrumental dimension" (Habermas 1985b, 197). Here, Habermas adds parenthetically, "...a dimension, we might add, that has been noticeably privileged and selectively utilized in processes of capitalist modernization" (Habermas 1985b,197).

The mode of presentation of his position here is key to my attempt to illuminate his dual aim in the symposium to both emphasize the importance of the Marxist perspective in order to gain a full appreciation of the potential of his critique of it, and bring to the foreground the singularity of the achievement of his own theory. Habermas appears to concede Western "logocentrism" and even accept it as an indication of an exhaustion of philosophical discourse, at least as one possibility. He in fact states that the alternative is nothing less than a transformation of philosophy (Habermas 1985b,197). However, it is Habermas's view that Rorty attributes to "philosophy as such" not only conceptual limitations, or limitations of the conceptual, but destructive practical effects. Habermas sees Rorty particularizing the modern need for self-reassurance in, that first, he attributes to intellectuals creation of a capricious problem and second, identifies the latter with Germany especially. Habermas believes that Rorty's argument, that an unnecessary problem is created by the response, the *weltshmerz*, of small circles of intellectuals to the loss of a world along with the religious beliefs of their fathers, implies an unmistakably conservative attitude toward critical thought and is associated with serious

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political ramifications. Yet, Habermas does not approach the issue directly through a discussion of any political differences he might have with Rorty. Rather, he raises the question of whether Rorty's diagnosis of the times is based on a misplaced theoretical specification. Habermas argues that both German idealism and the best of American pragmatism were motivated by the attempt to find an equivalent in reason for the social integrative powers of the religious tradition, which were shaken by the Enlightenment. Since Rorty identifies himself with thinkers in the tradition of American pragmatism, Habermas's observation both serves to open to question Rorty's apparent attempt at a separation of himself from his object of criticism, and point to the objectivity of the direction philosophy has taken, contrary to Rorty's interpretation, an interpretation nearly completely subjectivistic and culturally-bound, in a too narrow, restrictive sense.

Habermas's key point here is that there is, however, something "specifically German" relevant to the problem which concerns Rorty. In identifying it as "the philosophical concept of alienation", Habermas intends to strongly dispute the idiosyncratic quality Rorty attaches to what Habermas regards as the necessary and positive features of critical social thought. This philosophic dimension was not an imposition from outside the vanishing of an old world and the beginning of a new, but rather was intrinsic to it. Furthermore, the world is neither done with the problem by philosophy washing its hands of it and moving on, nor by an "intellectuals as a new class" explanation. Rather, Habermas indicates, the problem is still central and unavoidable. It has affected contemporary politics in different ways in Germany and the U.S. The philosophic concept of alienation has, in one way or another, basically defined the current situation in so far as both postmodernism and its target are rooted in

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the concept, that is, "the Hegelian-Marxian version and the early Romantic version taken up by Nietzsche" (Habermas 1985b, 197).

Habermas concludes this opening section of his reply, which focuses mainly on Rorty's contribution to the symposium, by suggesting that the latter confuses cause and effect:

> Do not these and similar signs [the uneasiness with the direction of modernity and the prominence of postmodern themes in France since the 1960s, as well as neo-conservative movements in the U.S. and Germany] indicate that intellectuals articulate shifts in mood, which they in no way invent, but which have instead palpable social and often economic causes? (Habermas 1985b,198).

As I previously noted, in both his reply to Rorty, whom he designated as the one symposium participant who "put in question the entire undertaking of the theory of communicative action" (Habermas 1985b, 198), and his engagement with McCarthy, who provoked by far his most extensive response, Habermas referred to the final pages of TCA. Recall that in the case of Rorty the issue was the defense of philosophy, particularly the continuity of its role as the "guardian of rationality". In contrast to the sciences, now philosophy must, "account reflectively for its own context of emergence and thus its own place in history" (Habermas 1985b, 196). With regard to McCarthy, rationality is again what is generally at issue. But here, instead of emphasizing the centrality of philosophy, Habermas demonstrates a need for its self-limitation. Habermas interprets McCarthy's criticism as implying that Habermas's theory of communicative action bars, "all substantive moments from [a] concept of procedural rationality" (Habermas 1985b, 211). In countering this, Habermas suggests that the concluding arguments in TCA have not been fully digested. First, he points out,

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> ...science, morality and art have not only been differentiated from each other, they also communicate with each other. But within the boundaries of each expert culture, the different moments of reason come into contact with one another in such a way as to avoid violating the inner logic of the dominant form of argumentation specialized either in truth, normative correctness, or aesthetic harmony. This is one concern of the last chapter of *The Theory of Communicative Action*...(Habermas 1985b, 209).

Next, Habermas argues that two other separate questions are involved, questions he says McCarthy conflates with the first. These are

> ...how the knowledge produced in expert cultures can be mediated with everyday practices...and second, the question of whether we can provide an equivalent for the meaning of traditional worldviews--for their function of "*sinngebung*" (Habermas 1985b, 209).

Habermas describes how the three moments of a differentiated reason have produced similar problems. In the case of science, the question is of a relation between theory and practice; of morality, its relation to ethical life; and, finally, the relation of art to life.

In the final two paragraphs of his reply to McCarthy Habermas circumscribes the capacity of philosophy, referring for the second time to an idea he first presented in the final pages of TCA on the relationship of his philosophy to that of Marx's. Habermas notes that discussions of morality and ethical life, theory and practice, art and life, all center around the "idea of a non-reified everyday communicative practice". In his most direct suggestion of an active role for Critical Theory, he writes that the possibility of a

> form of life with structures of an undistorted intersubjectivity...must be wrung from the professional, specialized, self-sufficient culture of experts and from the systems-imperatives of state and economy which destructively invade the ecological basis of life and communicative infrastructure of our lifeworld (Habermas 1985b, 210).

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The self-sufficient culture of experts--presumably including the reconstructive sciences with which philosophy forms a relationship of a "non-exclusive division of labor" (as described in his reply to Rorty)--represents, on a par with state and economy, the potentially reifying forces of contemporary society.

In a reinforcement of Albrecht Wellmer's analysis I criticized earlier, Habermas next tries to distinguish his Critical Theory from Marx's theory by attributing to the latter dependence on an utopian element absent in his own, demystified approach. First, what he shares with Marx, he says, is an "intuition":

> This same intuition [a form of life with structures of an undistorted intersubjectivity] is expressed in Marx's utopian perspective on the realization of philosophy: to the extent that the reason expressed in Hegel's philosophy can be embodied in the forms of life of an emancipated society, philosophy somehow becomes pointless. For Marx, philosophy realized is philosophy *aufgehoben* (Habermas 1985b, 210).

However, in contrast to Marx's supposed attempt to have life conform to an idea, Habermas claims to have turned things around, to have given the idea of the realization of philosophy "another reading" (Habermas 1985b, 210). Here Habermas claims that his theory of communicative action makes good the goal present in the "intuition" it shares with Marx's theory. Habermas suggests an incompatibility of Marx's practical intent and the possibilities of theory in the context of the modern structures and understanding of the world. The utopian element of Marx's theory consisted in the wish, or expectation, that the reason expressed in Hegel's philosophy was irresistible in its pull on society. In so far as the reason of philosophy was embodied in society, the impulse responsible for philosophy--the diremption between idea and social reality--would dissipate. Habermas claims to have radically revised this approach in locating an already

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(at least in a certain way) realized unity of reason in communicative action. The "certain way" is defined as only in so far as "we have an intuitive knowledge of it". There is no direct access to it, nor any prospect of bringing it to full realization, "on the level of cultural traditions in terms of a substantive world view, but only on this side of the expert cultures, in a non-reified, communicative practice of everyday life" (Habermas 1985b, 210).

Habermas classifies McCarthy with Marx, that is, with a discredited and outmoded theoretical approach, when he, at the conclusion of his remarks in response to him writes,

> A philosophy that wants to bring this intuition to a conceptual level must retrieve the scattered traces of reason in communicative practices themselves, no matter how muted they may be. However, it cannot simply repeat the attempt, long since discredited, to project some theoretical picture of the world as a whole.
>
> I think that I have learned from the tradition of Hegelian-Marxism, from the history of critical social theory from Marx to Benjamin, Bloch to Marcuse and Adorno that any attempt to embed the perspective of reconciliation in a philosophy of history of nature, however indirectly it is done, must pay the price of dedifferentiating forms of knowledge behind whose categorical distinctions we can no longer retreat in good conscience (Habermas 1985b, 210-211).

A Habermasian Turn in Critical Social Theory?

The PI symposium on Habermas's theory, what Ferrara later called the "Habermasian turn" in critical social theory (Ferrara 1989), actually transversed three editions of the journal, covering nearly the whole of 1984. The articles of Jay, Whitebook and Rorty appeared in April; McCarthy's in July; Habermas's reply in October.

One of the complexities involved was that while Habermas himself observed that only McCarthy discussed his latest work (TCA), translated into the English the same year by the latter, the fact of the matter was that Habermas

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was set to present a second major work of the still young 1980s: *Der philosophische Diskurs der Moderne: Zwolf Vorlesungen* was published in Frankfurt in 1985.

It was the latter work (first prepared as a series of lectures in Paris, then later in the United States), which most directly criticized what Habermas regarded as the remaining vestiges of a credible, contemporary Marxism, namely the "praxis philosophy" he associated with Marcuse, as well as Kosik and other East European theorists. The work, however, is far more often recognized for its confrontation with the theories of Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, and the contemporary postmodern theories based upon them. As late as 1988, Richard Bernstein was confronted with this issue during an interview with Duja Melcic (Melcic 1989). Bernstein explained that,

> We had a symposium on Habermas's work in the journal and it was the idea of the publisher of the journal to collect the contributions to that discussion. Since the publisher made this suggestion when I decided to resign as editor of the journal, *Habermas and Modernity* was a farewell present to the journal (Melcic 1989, 209).

In substantial sections of the long interview, Bernstein's overall tone is not always approving of Habermas and his supporters. Initially, he refrains from a directly critical approach when the interviewer recalls Bernstein's statement in the introduction to *Habermas and Modernity*: "Habermas epitomizes the ideals of *Praxis International.* Consequently, the journal has served as a vehicle for the expression and critique of his views". She then asks, "Do we see here a sign of how the spirit of the journal has changed according to a new historical situation?" (Melcic 1989, 209). Bernstein replies,

> Its true that the social theory of Habermas has been one of the most outstanding topics of the journal, but nevertheless it is important to realize that there have also been many other types of discussion,

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> including the issue (in my opinion one of the best) on feminism and critique. Indeed the guest editors of this issue, Seyla Benhabib and Drucilla Cornell, have published a book, *Feminism as Critique*, based on this issue...There have also been many other social theories and movements discussed, such as the work of Foucault and the political movements of the Third World...(Melcic 1989, 209).

This reply does not, of course, respond to the interviewer's obvious inference that since the departing editor's 1984 perspective that Habermas epitomized the ideals of PI, conditions had changed so radically by 1988 it would be far more accurate to state that PI now epitomized the ideals of Habermas's (and his supporters') social theory. Bernstein's reply also ignores the important fact that in the issue on "Feminism and Critique" the dominant topic was the implications of Habermas's "discourse ethic" for feminist theory. In addition, it was an article of Seyla Benhabib, "The Marxian Method of Critique: Normative Presuppositions" (Benhabib 1984), appearing in the same issue of the journal as Habermas's reply to Rorty, Jay, Whitebook, McCarthy and Bernstein, which served as the focal point for the special issue on feminist theory (January, 1986) for which Benhabib served as guest editor. Finally, before that year (1986) is out, Seyla Benhabib (along with Svetozar Stojanovic), in a new Editor's Introduction to PI, writes,

> When *Praxis International* was launched over five years ago...the programmatic spirit behind it was expressed as follows: "At the moment there is no journal of Marxist humanist orientation, despite the increasing urgency for it...
>
> ...discussions among members of the Editorial Board, usually taking place in conjunction with the course on "Philosphy and the Social Sciences" at the Inter-University Center at Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia, have led to some reformulations and revisons in these original statements. A consensus has eventually emerged that the dominant orientation of the journal would be best characterized not as "Marxist humanist" but as "democratic socialist", since Marxist humanism is one among a number of theoretical orientations compatible with goals and aims of democratic socialism...

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> ...since the beginning of this decade, a growing sense of being at the end of a process, at times named "modernity", at others "industrial society", and even the "Enlightenment" has spread. Post-modern, post-industrial, post-Enlightenment, post-structuralist, post-analytic, post-empiricist, and post-Marxist are by now familiar terms of intellectual discourse in Western Europe and North America...If, as some have argued, Marxist theory is very much shaped by the experience of capitalist modernity; if Marxism endorses the naive faith in scientific-technological progress and in the emancipatory content of production relations; if Marxism as a class-based theory has remained insufficiently sensitive to forms of opression deriving from gender, race, ethnic, linguistic and religious identity, can it still serve as the primary theoretical framework for an emancipatory social praxis?...
>
> ...the intellectual climate of the 1980s can best be described as that of an "interparadigmatic struggle", when Marxism itself has been radically challenged by the post-structuralist, hermeneutic-contextualist, and post-modernist epistemology and political theory. It will be important for *Praxis International* to address this "inter-paradigmatic struggle" in contemporary science and philosophy, and to encourage critical exchanges between varieties of Marxist and non-Marxist theories of social and political emancipation... (Benhabib & Stojanovic 1986, 251-255).

Hence, the next two concluding parts of my analysis of an incipient public sphere, importantly shaped by Habermas and his supporters in line with the former's critique of Marx and Marxism, which he initiated at least a quarter century earlier, will first take up the inaugural article of the soon-to-be new editor of PI, Seyla Benhabib, in the journal, "The Marxian Method of Critique: Normative Presuppositions" (Benhabib 1984). Following this, I will analyze the conceptual linkage of this article with a contribution of Georg Lohmann's, "Marx's *Capital* and the Question of Normative Standards" (Lohmann 1986, 353-372), a work which appeared in the first edition of Benhabib's editorship of PI, and contained original theses in reference to which Benhabib had, in her just cited article in PI which preceded his, noted, "I am much indebted to Georg Lohmann's insightful analysis..." (Benhabib 1984, 298). Recall that Habermas's final chapter in TCA, where he at last takes up Marx's theory of the two-fold

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character of labor in capitalism, relied heavily for this on a perhaps too-selective appropriation of Lohmann's theses. However, it should be clear with a careful reading of his PI article that Lohmann is fundamentally *critical* of Habermas's notion of Marx's theory of capitalism, since Habermas views the latter as a "subtheory" within a broader evolutionary theory of historical materialism. To the contrary, Lohmann views any theory of historical materialism as internal to Marx's critique of capitalism.

Seyla Benhabib and Habermas's Critical Social Theory as an Incipient Political/Philosophical Tendency

If there were indeed a "Habermasian turn" in critical social theory, the real substance of which was a level of consensus, even if *expo facto*, involving a concession to the idea of a positive replacement with Habermas's theory of Marx's critical approach to contemporary society, then Benhabib's "The Marxian Method of Critique: Normative Presuppositions" should be judged to be exemplary of that new direction.

The first thing to notice is that Benhabib's article was not included in the original symposium on Habermas's theory. However, it did appear in the issue of the journal which contained Habermas's reply to the symposium articles assigned to assess his theory. Consequently, Habermas did not consider Benhabib's article.

The real affinity of Benhabib's contribution is with Albrecht Wellmer's, "Reason, Utopia and the Dialectic of Enlightenment", which *preceded* the original symposium on Habermas's theory. (As I have shown Bernstein included the latter in *Habermas and Modernity*, though it was not either officially part of the PI symposium on Habermas's theory, having appeared in the journal several years earlier).

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Though a rise in the stature of Habermas's theory and of his critique of Marx particularly were results of the symposium, an equally important point was that each of the symposium participants seemed ready to place some distance between himself and Habermas. Yet, both Wellmer's (pre-sympopsium) and Benhabib's (post-symposium) articles implied a more or less wholesale embrace of the fundamental basis of Habermas theory and the "project" it suggested. This project proposes a process of reasoned argument for a displacement of Marx from the center, implied or otherwise, of a critical theory of contemporary society.

A significant *difference* between the pre-symposium and post-symposium programmatic-type appropriations of Habermas's theory as a publicly-reasoned separation from Marx's critique of capitalism was that Albrecht Wellmer had been Habermas's student in Germany, while Seyla Benhabib's background was American. It is interesting to consider Habermas's remarks, made in his reply to the symposium participants (all of whom were American) that what was specifically German in respect to the development of modern social theory was the "philosophical concept of alienation". As I noted earlier, Habermas's implication was that none of the U.S. theorists had confronted this pivotal philosophic concept in terms of the question of its contemporary status in critical social theory. Coincidentally or not, Benhabib's *post*-symposium piece confronted the concept directly, as had Wellmer's article which had appeared several years earlier--before the Habermas symposium.

While McCarthy, for example, suggested that Habermas had given up too much of the holistic quality of Hegel's philosophy for Kant's distinctions, and thereby fell short of providing an adequate replacement for the Hegelian-Marxian attempt at social concreteness, and Whitebook saw the weakness of Habermas's theory in its lacking a material substitute for the role an

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interpretation of Freud played in the original theory of Horkheimer and Adorno, such criticisms failed to get inside the deeper motivations of philosophy which had driven the Hegelian Marxian dialectic. It was necessary to recognize and confront the latter in order to comprehend Habermas's solution to this still contemporary problem. Hence, both "Reason, Utopia and the Dialectic of Enlightenment" and "The Marxian Method of Critique: Normative Presuppositions" attempt to develop Habermas's basic position on the outmoded quality of Marx's approach to contemporary society. They share the position that it can be shown that what they view as Marx's fundamental appropriation of the Hegelian dialectic of exteriorization and re-internalization, the movement of consciousness in Hegel and labor in Marx, is not adequate to the complexity of contemporary society. However, the position they share is linked to how both authors understand Marx's critique of capitalism. Both believe it pivots on property relations and the market.

Consistently, Benhabib follows Habermas when she selects strategically from Lohmann's theses. As Lohmann's subsequent (1986) clarification of his analysis of Marx's *Capital* makes clear, Benhabib's attempted appropriation of Lohmann's theses notwithstanding, even after the maturation of Habermas's social theory, their remains a critical residue in Marx's presentation in *Capital*. This remained unrecognized by Habermas and Benhabib. Thus, Benhabib writes of Marx's *Capital*,

> There is by now a long debate on the methodolgical significance of [the] historical observations and digressions...whereas the main analysis itself proceeds from a systematic abstraction called "the capitalist mode of production", the historical digressions rely primarily on the English case and the development of the English working class. Are these historical digressions illustrations of the systematic analysis, or is there a sense in which the main analysis itself is historically specific and expresses the development of capitalism in one particular case only? For the purposes of my argument, I need not get involved in this debate. The dual perspective displayed in *Capital* through historical observations, on the

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> one hand, and systematic analysis, on the other, corresponds to the dual quality of labor-power as a commodity. In the historical passages the subjects are the laborers themselves as owners of concrete labor power, whereas according to the systematic analysis capital itself is the subject; from the standpoint of capital, labor-power is simply what is paid in the form of wages, ie; variable capital. This dual perspective of the text reflects the unresolved struggle between laborers as subjects and capital that objectifies them (Benhabib 1984, 293).

With the completion of this paragraph, Benhabib writes in a footnote, "I am much indebted to Georg Lohmann's insightful analysis" (Benhabib 1984, 293), in reference to "Gesellschaftskritik und normativr Masstab", which had appeared in a 1980 collection, *Arbeit, Handlung und Normativitat*, edited by A. Honneth and U. Jaeggi. I must first briefly remark here on two important considerations.

The first, seemingly minor, is perhaps telling in respect to Benhabib's apparent reliance on an indirect grasp of Marx's *Capital*. While referring several times to "passages" and "digressions" to describe Marx's attention to the "lived crisis" contrasted with his main analysis of a "systematic abstraction", on exactly two other occasions Behnabib describes them as "chapters" (Benhabib 1984, 288; 293).

Georg Lohmann's PI article, "Marx's *Capital* and the Question of Normative Standards" is best understood as an argument constructed to raise doubts about 1) Habermas's assessment of Marx prior to TCA; 2) Habermas's new attempt (in TCA) to apply the social-theoretic categories heretofore developed to an appropriation, as well as a surpassing, of Marx's analysis in *Capital* particularly; and, 3) Benhabib's utilization of his [Lohmann's] analysis, because it suggests a lack of understanding, or a disregard on her part, for the significance of his thesis at this level. It is in respect to the third point that a first consideration should be kept in mind in assessing the quality of the

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"Habermasian turn" in critical social theory, viewed through PI. Lohmann, in "Marx's *Capital* and the Question of Normative Standards", writes,

> these historical observations [in Marx's *Capital*] which should make it possible to correct the...objectivism of the Marxian conception of history internally, concerns the pursuit of transcendent critique throughout *Capital*. As an aspect of immanent exposition this occurs through the contrasting historiographic passages which finally lead to a separate chapter (Lohmann 1986, 366).

Thus, Benhabib, in suggesting that Lohmann's analysis of Marx's *Capital* supposed a division of chapters between "systematic abstraction" and "lived crisis", is clearly mistaken.

The second consideration goes to the core of the misconceptions underlying Benhabib's attempted critique of Marx from the standpoint of Habermas's social theory. The last sentence of the passage taken from her PI article I just quoted refers to "concrete labor power". This latter, by virtue of its being owned, is said to constitute the possibility of a perspective, developed by Marx in *Capital*, of workers as subjects. Benhabib contrasts this with simple "labor power" viewed, from the perspective of capital as the subject, as "what is paid in the form of wages, ie; variable capital" (Benhabib 1984, 293). Thus, according to Benhabib,

> the dual perspective displayed in *Capital* through historical observations, on the one hand, and systematic analysis, on the other hand, corresponds to the dual quality of labor power as a commodity (Benhabib 1984, 293).

The starting point such an analysis represents as a normative assumption in Marx's theory is precisely what Marx fundamentally criticized. Marx, in his analysis of capitalism, develops the implications of a two-fold character of *labor*, concrete and abstract, *not* labor viewed from two varying

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perspectives, ie; on the one hand, each commodity with an owner and, on the other, its representation by capital as merely what is paid in wages. The latter views Marx's critique to be from the standpoint of "labor" (human relationship to nature), making central property ownership and the market. Postone, for example, in criticizing this traditional misconception of Marx's approach, writes,

> The difference between an analysis based on the notion of "labor", as in classical political economy, and one based on the concept of the double character of concrete and abstract labor in capitalism is crucial; it is, in Marx's phrase, "the whole secret of the critical conception"...It delineates the difference between a social critique that proceeds from the standpoint of "labor", a standpoint that itself remains unexamined, and one in which the *form of labor itself* is the object of critical investigation. The former remains within the bounds of the capitalist formation, whereas the latter points beyond it (Postone 1993, 57).

Postone's analysis could be referring to Benhabib's argument as the paradigmatic case of where the constructions of even the most sophisticated attempts of traditional Marxism, necessarily leads. I can demonstrate this by following Benhabib's argument from her questionable appropriation of Lohmann's insights into Marx's method, including the significance of the "historical chapters", through her conclusions on the contemporary status of Marx's theory. Benhabib, after explaining the "dual perspective" in Marx's text as merely an identification of two opposing standpoints, next criticizes the central problem as involving a lack of "mediation" between, "...these points of view. The text weaves in and out of both without an explicit guidance as to what is involved" (Benhabib 1984, 293). This "missing" mediation has, she writes, theoretical and normative implications.

In Benhabib's explication of the theoretical implication can be found what amounts to a brief recapitulation of a central element of Jürgen Habermas's argument in Volume Two of TCA. What is peculiar, however, is that in

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identifying modern social theory's, "distinction between social integration and system integration", Benhabib first refers to Habermas's 1973 work, *Legitimation Crisis*, and then to an article written by Claus Offe for a collection, edited by Habermas, titled, "The Spiritual Crisis of the Age", which she notes was translated into the English in 1984. The passage she takes from Offe reads:

> All social systems reproduce themselves through the normatively regulated and meaningful action of their members on the one hand, and the effectiveness of objective functional contexts on the other. This differentiation between "social integration" and "systems integration", between followed *rules* and *rule-like regularities* that assert themselves beyond subjects, is the basis for the entire sociological tradition (Benhabib 1984, 294).

In a summary virtually identical with a statement found in Habermas's analysis in *Legitimation Crisis*, Benhabib writes,

> We certainly cannot take Marx to task for not having developed the social-theoretical means of analysis by which to integrate these two perspectives (Benhabib 1984, 294).

Benhabib relies heavily on Habermas's critique of Marx without reference to TCA, upon which it apparently relies. Since Habermas's work was published in 1981, while her own article appeared in 1984, TCA must have been available to her. What makes her lack of acknowledgement of TCA especially puzzling is the central role the theses developed in Lohmann's 1980 article plays in her analysis; there is no indication of an awareness that Habermas had already clearly highlighted the importance of Lohmann's work for the entire conception of his most recent (TCA) critique of Marx. As a result, there appears to be no requirement for Benhabib to take into her account this crucial step in Habermas's theory development. Given the serious if somewhat

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unrecognized tensions (which only became public and widely apparent a few years later) at the inception of PI, the creation of an impression of some distance from Habermas's current project, including critique of Marx and Marxism, especially in an article which proved to be "programmatic", probably served well the process of replacing the "Marxist Humanist" orientation of PI. Whatever the reasons for the form of Benhabib's presentation, the remaining paragraphs of her article basically follow the outline of Habermas's three-decade long critique of Marx. Thus, after describing the "theoretical" implications of Marx's failure to provide "explicit guidance" as to what mediated the "two points of view" in Marx's *Capital,* Behabib turns to the normative implications.

First, the normative implications are "consequences" of the unresolved theoretical problem, particularly the lack of explicit guidance from Marx in "what is involved" in the shifting of standpoints noticeable in *Capital.* What is really involved, according to Benhabib, is Marx's positive evaluation of the "process of the constitution of workers into a class" (Benhabib 1984, 294). The capitalist infliction of misery on the workers, which forces them into collective struggle and identity, is alone what can bring into being a consciousness of class interests, the latter knowable only with the ascriptive abilities of a "thinker-observer". Thus Marx, in an immanent critique, while demonstrating a dual perspective of "lived" experience and the systemic aspect of capitalist society, finally,

> adapted [sic] exclusively the point of view of the thinker-observer, ignoring the very social experiences of *collectivity* and *plurality* (Benhabib 1984, 295).

Benhabib offers the explanation for this in Marx's inheritance from classical German Idealism and its philosophy of history, the "dual perspective of

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humanity as an empirical subject and as a *normative* goal" (Benhabib 1984, 296). She writes,

> Marx often conflates the two principles and writes as if what is a regulative idea in history--the idea of humanity--is also operative in history as an agent--history as an empirical subject" (Benhabib 1984).

Marx, due to a consistently immanent analysis, identifies the proletariat as the universal class, "representing" humanity generally: "Marx thereby commits the fallacy of 'representational logic'", which Benhabib says he shares with the bourgeoise:

> This allows for some of the most objectionable equations of traditional Marxism. If the working class represents the universal interest of humanity, then the Party represents the universal interests of the working class, and the Central Committee represents the universal interest of the Party. Authoritarian, substitutionalist politics, while not being deducible from, is not incompatible with, this point of view (Benhabib 1984, 297).

Recall that Habermas, thirteen years earlier, issued a practically identical critique of Marx, tracing the Leninist or political concept of the Party, through Lukács's philosophical justification, back to the opening left by Marx's appropriation of Hegel's dialectical logic (see Chapter Three, p.100). In fact, in reaching the conclusion to her analysis Benhabib refers twice, not to classical German idealism generally, but to Marx's appropriation of Hegel's negation of negation. And, interestingly, in drawing her conclusions, she amplifies an interpretation of a passage in the *Grundrisse* (which I reproduced in Chapter 4, p. 58-59) she quotes extensively in an earlier part of her analysis. Shortly, I will describe these references, primarily in order to make clear the "programmatic" intentions of Benhabib's article.

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In her argument concerning Marx's method in *Capital* Benhabib cites the *German Ideology* in order to prove that much earlier in his theoretical work Marx understood that class was only a,

> meaningful social category for analyzing those social systems in which stratification is not ascriptive, in which birth, age, blood-lineage, and profession no longer determine social rights and priviliges, and where social integration is achieved primarily through the free market of wage labor...(Benhabib 1984, 294).

As I have indicated, it is fruitful to compare Benhabib's conclusions to Lohmann's when it is first understood that Lohmann's PI article, which appeared a couple of years after Benhabib's, is most properly seen as, firstly, a critique of Habermas's approach to Marx (which Lohmann himself indicates at the beginning of his article) and, secondly, a rejoinder to Benhabib's attempt to, if not carry Habermas's criticism further, at least make it more specific in a programmatic sense. But, both Lohmann and Benhabib attempt to identify a theoretical barrier Marx could not (or did not) cross at a point where he then merely evokes Hegel's "negation of negation". This critique they share of Marx's phrase is no less interesting, in fact it is even more so, considering the widely divergent texts of Marx to which each respectively refer.

In contrast to the main text of her article, Benhabib writes in the footnote referring to the 1845 *German Ideology* I quoted above, that Marx was,

> critical of the subsumption of individuals under the category of "class", but has blind faith in the power of double negation (Benhabib 1984, 298).

Marx believed, as a matter of "faith", that the historical process of subsumption of individuals under the category of class was necessary and ultimately desirable for the realization of humanity. Her central criticism is, then, that Marx

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understood that the category of class-*interest* could only be "ascriptive". Yet, modern social systems are distinguished from the pre-modern precisely in that stratification, "is not ascriptive...birth, age, blood-lineage, and profession no longer determine social rights and priviliges, and...social integration is achieved primarily through the free market of wage labor (Benhabib 1984,.294). Thus, class interest can be ascribed only though an objective analysis of the social system itself. It presupposes that, at the subjective level,

> what is supposed to "bind" members of a class together is their "objective interest", ie; the preservation of their material and power status within the system of production...(Benhabib 1984, 294).

Benhabib, then, before proceeding to its philosophical basis, summarizes her critique of Marx at this more conventional level:

> There is...no such purely "objective" analysis; the determination of so-called "class interests" requires us to specify what we see as just or unjust, as exploitation or domination, in social relations. If the concept of class interests is to designate more that just a statistical regularity of the behavior of large human groups, and is to be used as a *normative* measure as to how real groups *ought* to act, then one's normative standards must be indentified previously and not subsequently to "objective" class analysis...[Marx] was wrong in ascribing normative status to the only mode of collective identification that capitalism seemed to create...(Benhabib 1984, 295).

According to this, Marx consistently approached the question of future social relations fundamentally different from capitalism's on the basis of a concept (taken over from Hegel) of negation of negation, appling it religiously (with blind faith) even after the critical, socially specific categories developed in *Capital*. I have already described in some detail (see Chapter Three) the depth of Marx's discussion (as early as 1844) of Hegel's concepts. I have also discussed Postone's reinterpretation (including its limitations) from within the

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Critical Theory tradition of Marx's appropriation of the Hegelian dialectic (Chapter Four). Even considering its limitations, Postone's reinterpretation of the Hegelian Marxian dialectic certainly contain original and persuasive arguments concerning the contemporary potential of Marx's radical secularization of Hegel's dialectic, incompatible with Benhabib's cryptic description of its "blind faith".

In her conclusion, Benhabib also attempts another, deeper analysis of what she sees as Marx's basic mistake. It follows her attribution to Marx's theory the concept of organization strongly associated with traditional Marxism, as well as with the Communist parties which until recently held power in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. A persuasive argument of these points might be expected to have debilitating consequences for anyone thinking of taking up Marx's theory anew. But, beyond this, Benhabib does not specify which--if any--theory might be admissable. She is for, "a form of universality in ethics and politics that does not deny the *otherness* of the Other(s)" (Benhabib 1984, 297). She writes, in reference to her just completed interpretation of his basic ideas, that Marx's was, "a move that pre-empted in theory the kind of universality and commonality of interests that could only derive from practice" (Benhabib 1984, 297).

Recall that Habermas's reply to the PI symposium participants included a direct reference to Richard Bernstein's latest work. Habermas explicitly rejected the latter's elevation of the "Practical Idea". In this context, Habermas offered a strong defense of theory, and of the necessity of philosophy. He implies that a grasp of his own theory entails, at the least, a continuing engagement with the conditions of modernity to which was traceable the key concept of the age-- the "philosophical concept of alienation", whether found developed in the Hegelian Marxian dialectic, or in the early Romantic version

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taken up by Nietzsche. In addition to Habermas himself, recent criticisms of "post-Marx Marxism" from within the Marxist humanist tradition have moved to the center Hegel's assessments of the limitations of the Practical Idea (Dunayevskaya 1989; Anderson 1995).

Benhabib's second reference to Marx's negation of negation is indirect. Immediately prior to her attempt to link Marx's theory to "traditional Marxism", she quotes Jean Cohen's *Class and Civil Society* (1982) This is supposed to buttress an argument linking Marx's theory to the authoritarian, single party, and presumably to the states which have ruled through these forms:

> The concept of the universal class and the identification of one historically produced, empirically existent group as the bearer of universality rests on the problematic attempt, derived from Hegel, to present history as positive and rational. The universal class, the subject/object of history, the negation of the negation, are concepts in Marx's thought that imply a return to Hegel's absolute through the substitution, first of species for *Geist*, second, of the class as the general representative of society for the species. The concept of the universal class subjugates the contingencies of historical praxis, and the plurality of potential actors to the demands of "reason"--to the demands of a logic that seeks to discover its own operations on the level of human praxis... (Benhabib 1984, 296).

To fully understand the implications of Benhabib's argument here it must be recalled that she is writing in a "Marxist Humanist" journal, rooted in the dissident Marxist movement which opposed not only totalitarian Stalinism, but Tito's anti-Stalinist state as well. Recall that as early as the 1844 "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General", Marx criticized Hegel's "exemplary" phrase, the dialectic concept, "at one with itself in its other as such". Earlier, (Chapter Three) I interpreted this critique as the ground for Marx's life-long development of a concept of revolutionary social organization which would not subordinate in practice an idea of freedom, but would make its full

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development possible. The full potential of Hegel's concept of negativity, transcendence as objective (Marx 1967b, 321), which Marx in the same essay termed, "the great thing", the, "productive and moving principle of Hegel's dialectic" (Marx 1967b, 321), has its potential realization in a new relationship of philosophy and social organization.

Benhabib bases her *denouement* on Cohen's analysis of the "universal class...the negation of negation", pairing Marx with Hegel precisely where the former identified "the lie of Hegel's principle" (Marx 1967b, 329). Marx's intent was to apprehend the revolutionary core of Hegel's dialectic, not restricted to the realm of religion and the individual philosopher, an intent I have suggested is not entirely incompatible afterall with, for example, the last pararagraph of Hegel's *Phenomenology*, and the final three "syllogisms" of Hegels *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, in the *Philosophy of Mind* (Dunayevskaya 1989).

On one level, Marx's consideration of Hegel's phrase, which appears in the final, Absolute Knowledge chapter of the *Phenomenology*, criticizes the purely abstract character of Hegel's dialectic. This dialectic fails to alter its object. The object of Hegel's dialectic is consciousness. The other, the object (non-philosophy), is not altered, is not brought through the potentialities inherent in it to the level of its concept, just as the philosopher, in contact with its object, is not himself altered. In a phrase Marx seemed to borrow from the last words of Hegel's *Phenomenology*, the philosopher is, hence, "solitary and alone" (Marx 1967b, 326). Marx attributes the latter to a fundamental alienation which "separates thinking from the subject" (Marx 1967b, 335). This alienation is originally found both in and by Hegel, though the latter did not recognize its full social implications.

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I have argued that Marx's concept of social organization, developed along with his participation in a series of revolutionary organizations (Dunayevskaya 1991), followed from his 1844 "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic". Marx's concept of social organization developed from a critique of Hegel's dialectic specific to the problem of abolishing capitalism "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", and is perhaps the single most "undigested" moment in Marx's theory (Dunayevskaya 1991; Meszaros 1997).

Marx's confrontation with, "at one with itself in its other as such" is actually the paradigmatic *critique* of what Benhabib (on the authority of Cohen) attributes in a positive sense to Marx: subjugation of "the plurality of actors to the demands of 'reason'--to the demands of a logic that seeks to discover its own operations on the level of human praxis..." (Benhabib 1984, 296). Benhabib's conclusion attributes to Marx's "purely immanent" critique of bourgeios political economy an inability to point toward a fundamental shift in the relationship of theory and practice which could fully realize the potential of modernity--"overcoming modernity through a fuller and deeper modernity", a phrase she borrows from Marshall Berman (Benhabib 1984, 291).

In contrast, Lohmann opposes with another--transcendent--critique an interpretation of Marx's *Capital* structured upon immanent critique. Before describing Lohmann's implicit argument with Benhabib's conclusions, I need to include one other of Benhabib's references to Marx. Her intention is to expose--from the standpoint of widespread disillusionment with modernity irrespective of its various political or historical forms--the philosophical limitations of Marx's theory. Benhabib presents the passage from Marx's *Grundrisse* which I quoted in another context (see p.232). In this passage Marx asks a series of questions, exploring the socio-historic specificity of the concept of wealth.

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Benhabib's interpretation includes an understanding of Marx's analysis of capitalism as opposing to the limiting relations of production the forces of production, which the bourgeoise has unleashed and which will underlie as well the non-capitalist future. At present, the relations of production are self-limiting in the form of a bourgeois civil society structured on the opposition of two classes. The universality immanent to civil society will first be realized by the coming into its own of the proletariat.

This fails to consider an important dimension of the uniqueness of Marx's critique of capitalism. It is rooted in an analysis of value as the form of wealth intrinsic to it. Marx's critique is not primarily a counter-position of the future potential of bourgeois civil society to its historical form, or a matter of an internalization at the level of each individual of its linear, developmental dynamic. In analyzing value as the specific form of wealth in capitalism, Marx demonstrates that the material and value forms of wealth in that social formation are not merely different; they can even be opposites. Value, the specifically capitalist form of wealth, has its magnitude measured in abstract labor time. An increase in average productivity, while increasing material wealth, does not change the total value created in equal periods of time:

> ...if average productivity doubles, twice as many commodities are produced in a given time period, each with half the previous value (Postone 1993, 193).

In fully developed capitalist production, direct labor becomes increasingly superfluous in the production of material wealth, while value remains dependent on the expenditure of this labor. However, value is not constituted by the mere expenditure of this labor. Value is constituted by labor's mediational role in the capitalist social formation. As opposed to a

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transhistorical concept of labor, which posits labor as the mediation of nature and humanity, I have discussed how labor mediates itself, the dialectic of its abstract and concrete dimensions, and *constitutes social relations*, not generally, but in capitalism. With this in mind, consider that Benhabib believes that the passage in Marx's *Grundrisse* "expresses in a nutshell the normative ideal underlying Marx's critique of capitalism" (Benhabib 1984, 291). Benhabib understands the passage such that it *affirms* the potential of "capitalist civil society", its dynamic of "change and growth" versus all previous societies, the basis of whose ideologies was order and stability. In fact, Benhabib writes, for this reason Marx demanded that the bourgeoise is, "not to be rejected, but sublated" (Benhabib 1984, 291). Here Benhabib misquotes the very passage from the *Grundrisse* she has just herself reproduced. Once again, Marx writes in the *Grundrisse*,

> In fact, however, when the limited bourgeois form is stripped away, what is *wealth* other than the universality of individual needs, capacities and pleasures, productive forces, etc., created through universal exchange?

In contrast Benhabib, in elucidating the idea that the passages demonstrated that Marx believed the "bourgeoise was not to be rejected", reproduces a part of the quoted passage thusly:

> For in bourgeois society the "*true* (my emphasis, RR) universality of individual needs, capacities and pleasures" is identified with a *limited* form (Benhabib 1984, 291).

The word "true", which she includes between quotation marks with the rest of Marx's sentence, is Benhabib's *own* addition to Marx's passage she had just quoted otherwise (and accurately) on the preceding page. Adding the word "true" apparently seemed legitimate to Benhabib based on an interpretation of

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Marx which does not take into account the way Marx analyzes the *value* form of wealth. In Marx's theory, this (value) form does not merely constitute a limit on a non-contradictory content, but is in fact capitalism's fundamental core, the result of a long historical process. It is what differentiates, or particularizes, the capitalist *vis a vis* all previous social formations, including "needs", capacities and pleasures. Thus, when Marx refers to the "limited bourgeois form" of wealth he is not affirming its "true" content, which is presently obscured and/or contained by its limited form. Illustrative of his critique, which is far more radical and shows how deeply implicated the "bourgeois form of wealth" is in the core of the social formation it underlies, Marx writes in the sentence directly following the passage Benhabib quotes:

> In bourgeois economics--and in the epoch of production to which it corresponds--this complete working out of the human content appears as a complete emptying out, this universal objectification as total alienation, and the tearing down of all limited, one-sided aims as sacrifice of the human end-in-itself to an entirely external end. This is why the childish world of antiquity appears on one side as loftier...(Marx 1973, 488.)

Clearly, Benhabib's interpretation, which holds that Marx's idea of the "limited bourgeois form" refers merely to "wealth in the sense of the mere accumulation of material objects" (Benhabib 1984, 291) fails to grasp the depth of Marx's critique of capitalism. Marx criticizes how an *opposition* of material wealth and the value form of wealth, following from the two-fold nature of labor *within* the "bourgeois" social formation constitutes its social relations, characterized by an abstract form of domination which does not appear social at all. Therefore the object of Marx's critique is not the opposition of form to content, but the the social *content* itself, which is characterized by internal contradictions. Consequently, Benhabib's conclusion, that Marx's critique of modernity held within it normative presuppositions also intrinsic to his object of

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criticism--bourgeois society and production--is dependent on a misinterpretation of Marx's texts, as well as a selective utilization of the studies of the contemporary Critical Theorist, Georg Lohmann, to whom I shall now turn.

Lohmann's Attempted Appropriation of Marx's Capital as a Radicalization of Habermas's Critical Theory

Lohmann, though original in developing a detailed analysis of *Capital* with the use of Habermas's categories and even, to some extent, turning Habermas's critical categories against the latter's own theory, mistakenly puts at the *center*, as does Habermas himself, Marx's negative view of capitalist property relations. Due to his misplacement of the centrality of Marx's critical categories, an error he shares with Habermas, several aspects of the latter's critique of Marx are positively affirmed, or simply left standing. In addition, some of Lohmann's own analyses of Marx can not make sense of theoretical developments after Marx's *Capital*, especially *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (Dunayevskaya 1991) and writings on the potential of "pre-capitalist", or "non-capitalist" lands to bypass the capitalist path of social development (Shanin 1983); more importantly they tie his hands in respect to his attempt to present an interpretation of Marx adequate to contemporary social and political conditions.

Lohmann writes that Marx analyzes, through the "normative, legal and voluntary relations accompanying commodity exchange", the ideas of freedom and equality of Locke's state of nature, recapitulated, "in part word for word in Hegel's theory of abstract right" (Lohmann 1986, 360). Marx specifies in reference to exchange relations the "abstract right" concepts of "person" and "private owner". A reifying self-relation of person and individual wherein the latter exists in a relation of indifference is the point of reference of social integration. The self-relation of person and individual is the *basis* for, or makes

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possible, with purchase and sale of labor power, interpersonal relations becoming a pure relation of ownership and property:

> Just as the reifying self-relation is based on indifference to oneself, so too, relations among persons are indifferent to their respective individuality...
>
> ...This graduated inner structure of private owners to one another and to their respective selves is based on the mediation of all their relations through property. *It is this domination of mediating property* (my emphasis, RR) that specifically restricts the integrating norms of freedom and equality. These are formal and universal in their claim but are in fact internally related to private property. They are hence abstract norms of freedom and equality, valid only because indifferent to one's own individuality and that of others. A reconstruction of the fulfillment of their validity claims would therefore have to make these limits explicit and this would be the task of transcendent critique (Lohmann 1986, 361).

Related to this, near the conclusion to his article Lohmann alludes dismissively to the integration of "negation of negation" into Marx's analysis. Moreover, his disappointment with this concept is coupled, somewhat elliptically, with how Marx brings in organization. He suggests, in his situation of the philosophic negation of negation and Marx's concept of organization at the point where transcendent critique begins in *Capital*, that both can be explained by historical limitations in the conceptual tools which were available to Marx. Still, among the most interesting aspects of Lohmann's analysis is the idea (which he does not take as far as he might) that modern social theoretic concepts, which Habermas has been among the most important in developing, often driven by his perception of Marx's objectivistic or economistic theory, are in some cases already found, and in others, at least implied, in Marx's *Capital*. Moreover, often these can provide the basis for a fundamental critique of Habermas's supposedly more developed theory.

So, while Lohmann does indeed incorporate in to his own analysis much of Habermas's critique of Marx, as well as adds some additional criticisms of his

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own, the real significance of his article lies in how he shows that Marx's *Capital* contains many of the *elements* adequate for a critical approach to contemporary society, opening to doubt many of the basic assumptions upon which Habermas bases claims for innovations in his own theory. It is precisely this properly critical side of Lohmann's analysis Benhabib obscures, while leaving an impression that her own views are--in the most crucial respects--in basic accord with those of Lohmann, as well as Habermas.

As I mentioned in my discussion of Benhabib, it is difficult to explain, Benhabib does not indicate that Habermas, in TCA, already had taken up in some detail (and in a crucial place) Lohmann's new and original insights into *Capital*. It is puzzling, in fact, that Benhabib never refers to TCA. In that work, Habermas not only relies heavily on a consideration of Lohmann's analysis for the structure of his own most up-to-date critique of Marx. In addition, when Habermas comes to the "concluding reflections" of his final chapter he refers to an article *writtten by Benhabib*, an article he finds exemplary of the idea that cultural countermovements to unity, as opposed to the radically differentiated moments of reason characterizing modernity, "might be established this side of expert cultures, in a non-reified everyday practice" (Habermas 1987, 398). Two pages later, in the concluding paragraphs of Volume Two of TCA, he returns to the basic issue of Marx's method, particularly to a passage in Marx's *Grundrisse* which remarks on abstract labor and "indifference", concepts basic to Lohmann's analysis. Habermas had extensively utilized these a few pages earlier. Thus, it is highly unlikely that Benhabib was unaware of these theoretical developments when she published her own "programmatic" critique of Marx, heavily reliant on Habermas and Lohmann individually.

Since I have already discussed the importance of Lohmann's ideas for Habermas's TCA, and for what turned out to be Benhabib's programmatic

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article in the transitional edition of PI containing Habermas's reply to the participants in the symposium on his social theory, here I want to just briefly consider Lohmann's analysis of Max's "transcendent critique", as a proposed radicalization of Habermas's critical social theory. It is an appreciation of Marx's theory, which specifies perceived inadequacies. Both of these aspects of Lohmann's argument imply sharp disagreement with Habermas's original appropriation of Lohmann's views, as well as with Benhabib's independent attempt to do likewise.

My purpose here is to mark the limits of the dialogue stimulated by Habermas's critique of Marx in the light of what was widely understood to be a major breakthrough in contemporary thought, Habermas's social theory. Habermas's critique of Marx was arguably the central theme, though until now only implicitly so, of a key theoretical journal, international in character, which brought into the open, into a public sphere, the question of the contemporary viability of various competing interpretations of Marx. While, at the beginning of the 1980s decade this could have been prospectively conceived as principally a dialogue between the Critical Theory tradition and Marxist Humanism, or two forms of neo-Marxism, my analysis has already indicated that Habermas's Critical Theory was just at the point where a substantial break from his own tradition might be justified, while the Marxist Humanist tendency virtually perished, with few important exceptions (Dunayevskaya 1984, 1988), in the first few years of the decade.

Discussion of Habermas's social theory, which in many ways long presupposed the lack of contemporary social or political relevance of Marx's ideas, eventually overwhelmed any and all other themes taken up by the journal. Thus, it was not until the early 1990s, specifically Moishe Postone's work, that a comprehensive (and credible) challenge to Habermas's critique of Marx

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appeared. I have already discussed in some detail specific points of Postone's challenge to Habermas's presentation of Marx's ideas. I have emphasized the importance of the fact that Postone's critique is developed from *within* the Critical Theory tradition. In respect to this, I have raised the question whether the nature of his critique even implies, despite his own lack of attention to the issue, Postone's own break from this tradition. In the concluding chapter, which follows this one, I will discuss further the implications of Postone's critique of Habermas from within the Critical Theory tradition, as well as the significance of its form of presentation, given recent discussions of Habermas's concept of a public sphere, following from the first English translation in 1989 of *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, a work written in 1962.

I am concluding the present chapter with further consideration of Lohmann's PI article because, as I mentioned, it marks the limits of the type of discussion of Marx's ideas founded on Habermas's social-theoretic concepts. Lohmann's discussion leads all the way into, but does not succeed in passing beyond, the impasses in Habermas's consideration of Marx which then shaped his social theory such that it blunted its critical edge. As I will show, Lohmann's interpretation, which attempted to preserve the idea of Marx's theory of capitalism as critical through and through, is still such that Habermas utilized it to reinforce his notion that Marx's ideas are of the past.

Besides this, however, I will show that Lohmann, in taking up the ideas of immanent and transcendent critique in Marx's *Capital*, is confronted with the problem of the relationship between Marx's philosophic concepts and his concept of organization. Lohmann does not resolve this issue, primarily because he does not fully recognize the problematic he has uncovered.

In the passage I reproduced earlier (see p.299) Lohmann suggests that Marx's analysis of capitalism, structured on immanent critique, has a

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transcendent critique internal to it. The latter critique, according to Lohmann, appears in "historiographic passages" dispersed throughout Marx's dominant abstract narrative. Only with "Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation", Marx is confronted with the difficulties of his own presentation. Since he has depicted capital as an inexorable force, subsuming socio-historical lifeworlds, while presenting in scattered passages the struggle to preserve their "unitary claims", Lohmann asserts that Marx had to "bear the cost" (Lohmann 1986, 364).

After the fully developed concept of capital Marx, in an "astonishingly thin chapter" (Lohmann 1986, 364) , merely evokes "negation of negation" at the point where transcendent critique begins. Lohmann states that whereas the first edition of *Capital*, at this point in the text, put forth the "category of the 'free laborer' as a creation of the creation of the capitalist era", the second edition substituted, "for this idea a reference to the 1848 Manifesto of the Communist Party" (Lohmann 1986, 364). (I will put aside for now the issue of the meaning of Communist "Party" as Marx understood it, and the meaning it assumed later).

Lohmann argues that the ambiguity expressed in the contrasting editions indicates that Marx is, "competing with the systematic intentions of his own critique" (Lohmann 1986, 366). This is due to Marx's "inadequate means" (Lohmann 1986, 366). Here, Lohmann evokes aspects of Habermas's critique of Marx. Marx's

> understanding of processes of development...underdefine the relation to historical agents by hypostatizing them as "subjective carriers" of development, whose subjectivity is then only interpreted within the framework of strategic or purposive rational behavior while treating them moreover as a collective singular (Lohmann 1986, 366).

Lohmann believes that certain of Habermas's theories, unlike Marx's, allow for theoretically *explicit* consideration of the normative content of historico-

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social lifeworlds. Habermas's idea of reconstruction of competencies (in what Lohmann describes as the later version of Habermas's theory), "tries to bring history into play...as a process of enlightenment of all participants", based on a, "practical discourse between concerned persons". Lohmann believes that something similar can already be found in *Capital* but, "where the whole of capital-formation is not yet thematic" (Lohmann 1986, 369). Lohmann writes,

> ...under the topic of the "Abolition of Critique by a Practical Turn"...Marx gives a paradigmatic version...He changes from the retrospective stance of a describer and narrator into the present voice of dramaturgy...in which, "the voice of the worker, which had fallen silent in the storm and stress of the production process...'suddenly'" is raised. The worker makes his claims and argues for them on the basis of prior development. He is thus still ignorant of the exchange of equivalents, so that his argumentation still shares its limitations and one-sidedness: But it is a practical turn of critique that leads thus to a "struggle for the limitation of the work day" (Lohmann 1986, 370).

Unlike Benhabib, Lohmann is sufficiently critical of Habermas's basic approach to Marx to allow him to reject the idea that the latter's theory is inadequate to contemporary standards of critique. Rather, he holds that in some senses elements of Habermas's theory are necessary *supplements* to Marx's still viable critical approach. Yet, like Benhabib, his criticisms of Marx, taken largely from Habermas, lead him to subordinate theory to practice. This follows from his idea that Marx's later reference to the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* in *Capital* suggests that Marx's idea of conscious organization was congruent with an idea of the vanguard party whose self-appointed task was to represent (from the outside) the interests of the proletariat and, by extension, humanity.

Clearly, from Chapter One of *Capital*, Marx made clear that only "freely associated men", *integral* to which was his own analysis of the specificity of capital's form of social domination, including its abstact dimension, might

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dissolve the fetishism of the commodity. This anticipated social relations radically different from, or opposite to, the dehumanized form constituting capitalism. Let me conclude this part by offering an alternative interpretation of the link between Marx's "Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation" (Chapter 32 in the English Pelican edition), and the reference to his 1848 *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. In connection with this, Lohmann argues that a modification in the second edition of *Capital*, which replaced Marx's formulation of the "free laborer" as the "creation of the creation of the capitalist era" with a citation of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, reflected Marx's broader, unresolved theoretical difficulty. It shows that Marx was,

> again competing with the systematic intentions of his own critique, by presenting political and evolutionary considerations which approach the problem from the outside (Lohmann 1986, 364).

Lohmann simply mentions Marx's citation, which appears after the last sentence of "The Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation". He does not summarize the content of Marx's citation, thus implying that the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* represented an "external" critique of capitalism. This discloses that among the presuppositions of Lohmann's approach is the notion that Marx's theory of the overcoming of capitalism did not encompass Marx's *own* working out of the dialectic of philosophy and organization as a necessary element of it. The very short (five pages) chapter at issue here summarizes the specificity of *capitalist* private property as the historical negation of individual private property. The negation of this negation,

> does not re-establish private property, but it does indeed establish individual property on the basis of the achievements of the capitalist era: namely co-operation and the possession in common of the land and means of production produced by labor itself (Marx 1977, 929).

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At the end of this chapter, Marx quotes the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*:

> The advance of industry, whose involuntary but willing promoter is the bourgeoise, replaces the isolation of the workers due to competition with their revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of large-scale industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoise produces and appropriates products for itself. What the bourgeoise, therefore, produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable... (Marx 1977, 930).

In mentioning the title of the text referenced by Marx, while not characterizing the specific passage, Lohmann leaves an impression of Marx's inability to satisfactorily resolve two levels of his analysis. As I have previously shown, Habermas consistently, though with some variations, presented essentially the same argument. Lohmann states that Marx,

> at the very beginning of his critique, flings at the faces of the bourgeois economists as an unmasking dictum, that, "there once was a history, but there no longer is" (Lohmann 1986, 364).

But when Marx arrives at the end of his analysis, after his "critical exposition", or immanent critique,

> the capitalist system portrays itself as an eternal, unhistorical formation of society, with contingent beginnings, and unsurpassable rationality, to which there is no future alternative

At this point, Marx can only appeal to "negation of negation" and fall back on the Communist Party.

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Why, if Lohmann's article is strongly critical of both Habermas's approach to Marx, and Benhabib's programmatic use of it, does Lohmann seem compelled (just like Benhabib) to refer dismissively to Marx's small conceptual phrase, "negation of negation"? Here I will examine more closely the respective contexts in which each refer to this concept.

Lohmann, in section III of his PI article, "Immanent and Transcendent Critique Reinterpreted", pinpoints "Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation", writing that it marks the "end of immanent exposition", even though, "immanent exposition structures *Capital* as a whole" (Lohmann 1986, 365). Prior to this chapter, the immanent exposition includes historiographic passages, according to Lohmann, which appear as constrasting to the "system-constitutive processes" (Lohmann 1986, 364). Transcendent critique begins with "Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation". Lohmann writes,

> At the end of immanent exposition the object is considered in its totality, as the reproduction process of capital. Marx explains this to be the reproduction of the capital-specific precondition, namely the separation of capitalists from wage-laborers. Capital has become its own precondition, and no longer bothers with historical preconditions that are alien to it (Lohmann 1986, 365).

With this, Lohmann believes, there is a clear indication in Marx's text that his method of immanent critique creates a great difficulty in presentation of history:

> Since in the systematic construction of his critique, Marx undertakes a mimetic recapitulation of capitalism in order to achieve a unity of critique and exposition, he must also bear the cost: the capitalist system portrays itself as an eternal, unhistorical formation of society, with contingent beginnings and unsurpassable rationality, to which there is no future historical alternative. "Thus there once was a history, but there no longer is"...This conclusion which Marx, at the very beginning of his critique, flings at the faces of bourgeois economists as an unmasking dictum forces itself upon him at the end of his critique: the astonishingly thin chapter on the "Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation", where it would all have to unfold, itself operates with the make-shift category of the "negation of negation"; in the second edition the category of the "free

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> laborer" as a creation of the creation of the capitalist era is eliminated...and the 1848 Manifesto of the Communist Party is cited. Again Marx is competing with the systemic intentions of his own critique, by presenting political and evolutionary considerations which approach the problem from the outside (Lohmann 1986, 364).

Lohmann and Benhabib are in accord with the notion that Marx's "negation of negation" covers over a conceptual inadequacy in his attempt to specify a society different from capitalism in terms of his own immanent critique. Prior to Lohmann's reference to "negation of negation" as it appears in the concluding pages of Marx's *Capital*, Benhabib had cited its appearance in an altogether different, far less "mature" work of Marx, the 1845 *German Ideology*. Marx's method of immanent critique of capitalism obliged him to uncritically accept features of modernity contemporary critical thinkers have apparently since learned to abhor without reservations.

From my previous analysis, it can be recalled that, from the start, that is, Chapter One of *Capital*, the section on the "Fetish of the Commodity and its Secret", Marx suggested the possibility of freely associated social relations, on the basis of previous historical development, including their negation of labor mediated social relations. Lohmann's thesis is that because he did not have accessible to him the socio-theoretic concepts developed in response to "late capitalism", the unfoldment of Marx's systematic categories overcame his critical intentions. Yet, to the contrary, very much like in the first chapter of *Capital*, in the climatic section Lohmann describes, Marx links the overcoming of capitalist social relations to a form of "association" possible in view of present capitalist social relations, and as the negation of them.

In Chapter One, Marx refers to an "association of free men", and "freely associated labor". In the final part of *Capital*, in his citation of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, the reference is to "revolutionary combination, due to

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association". Lohmann, in his conception of the link of the beginning to the end of Volume One of Marx's *Capital*, in terms of Marx's own self-understanding, attributes an implausible contradiction to Marx's presentation. An alternative interpretation might focus on the question of Marx's *concept* of organization, its normative and revolutionary dimensions. As I mentioned at the outset of this chapter, with *Capital's* completion, Marx attempted (especially in *Critique of the Gotha Programe*) to clarify as far as possible his critique (immanent and transcendent) of the concept and practice of social organization, particularly its revolutionary potential, not only its normative dimension. This was in light of, and inclusive of, the theory *Capital* represented.

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CHAPTER SIX

HABERMAS, MARX AND POST-COMMUNISM

If in the previous chapter I found, somewhat surprisingly, that Habermas noted a lack of interest in discussion of Marx (or more precisely in the approach to the latter adopted in Habermas's theory) this certainly did not seem to stimulate new attention to Marx in PI's next major symposium (Passerin d'Entrèves & Benhabib 1996) this one on Habermas's work, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (1990a) The various contributions focused on Habermas's analysis of those thinkers taken up most extensively in postmodern social theory--Nitetzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida and Francois Lyotard.

Since the journal did not carry a response from Habermas, such as I described in respect to the earlier symposium, I do not have the advantage of a direct exchange on which to base my starting point for this chapter, which seeks to extend the analysis of the Habermas-Marx relationship into the 1990s. I will demonstrate that in the 1990s he claims a substantial theoretical continuity with the early 1960s inception of his critique of Marxism (as well as its practical/political character). His 1980s intervention in PI, a theoretical journal rooted in an internal opposition to established Communism (even if independent of the Soviet bloc) is significantly associated with his subsequent analyses of, a) the collapse of Communism; b) dissident, Left Marxism; as well as, c) the historical self-understanding of his own theory, which developed from

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1960 through the mid-1990s. Examination of these issues will serve as something of a summation of this study of Habermas's relationship to Marx's ideas, a relationship I have attempted to demonstrate throughout Habermas attempted to make constitutive of a public sphere, the success of which he understood to be critical to the coming into its own of his own theory.

That is, with the 1990s it is clear Habermas believes that he has not only replaced Marx's theory with his own. In contrast to the the 1960s and 1970s, he has now done so in a form adequate to the standards of the emergent theory itself--in a public dialogue, the context for which was an international forum comprised of interested persons from both "state socialist" as well as "late capitalist" historical and, perhaps most importantly, political backgrounds. By now Habermas is confident that he has definitively established his own theory as the one capable of fulfilling the role--the "guardian of rationality"--he had assigned to philosophy. This had practical implications I will discuss in more detail when considering his important article, "What does socialism mean today?: The rectifying revolution and the need for rethinking on the Left" (Habermas 1990b). This established, it is none the less troubling that Habermas, unlike his counter-parts in discourse, was still not satisfied with the understanding (including his own) of the status of Marx in contemporary theory.

After briefly characterizing Habermas's approach to Marxism in PDM I will examine Habermas's political analysis of the revolutions in Eastern and Central Europe, an analysis published on the eve of the collapse of Communism in Russia itself. Attention to this article is fitting here in so far as, internal to it, Habermas summarizes his several decades-long analyses of Marx and Marxism. He suggests that his theory represents its rightful heir.

Finally, I will address Habermas's re-assessment of the status of his concept of the public sphere, especially in respect to the question of how one

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should now approach Marx and Marxism. Habermas remarks extensively on this issue in a 1992 symposium. On his study of the public sphere (thirty years after its original publication), the symposium was organized around the occasion of its English translation as *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Habermas 1989a).

In Chapter Five, I considered the curious circumstance that a symposium on Habermas's theory featured (over the course of nearly a year) in a Marxist Humanist intellectual journal consisted of virtually no discussion of Habermas's interpretation of Marx's theory. The main exception was Habermas's own reflections on the topic. I analyzed this situation in detail, leading to the conjecture that the symposium marked the collapse of a tendency of Marxist Humanism and a concomitant definitive "Habermasian turn" in critical social theory. This Marxist Humanism was not only politically significant in its internal critical relationship to Communism, but historically (and theoretically) important through its connection to Marx's 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscipts*, writings available in the German since 1932, but not before the late 1950s in English, concurrent with Habermas's initial writings on Marx's theory. Seyla Benhabib, who (by the mid-1980s) sought to develop Habermas's specific critique of Marx's theory, soon assumed co-editorship of PI, which (I have noted) only a few years earlier was re-founded as the world's only "Marxist Humanist" journal.

Several years later, Richard Bernstein, an editor of *Praxis International* at the time of the first Habermas symposium, mentioned in an interview published in the same journal, that Habermas was developing for publication an explicit critique of "praxis philosophy". Bernstein noted that the current editors of PI were planning a new symposium on that work, *Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*. Recently, the contributions to that symposium were published in

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book form (Passerin d'Entrèves & Benhabib 1996). Yet, among the nine contributors to this volume, no one so much as mentioned Habermas's extensive critique of, in turn, Hegel, Marx and Marx's philosophical relationship to the former. What makes this especially puzzling is that PDM contains a sweeping philosophical critique precisely in terms of an approach to Marx's theory which grants a "praxis" interpretation, often referred to as "Marxist Humanist" (Rockmore, 1989)--at least within the East European dissident millieu during the period of Communist party domination.

In the period of the two PI symposiums on the development of Habermas's theory in the 1980s, none of those involved had anticipated the imminent collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Yet, it is interesting to imagine that Habermas foresaw this possibility. Consequently, the politicization of his theory in PI might be seen to have been motivated by the wish to dispel any illusions (or pre-empt any notion) that a dissident or, if one prefers, any reinterpretation of Marx's theory, offered a potentially viable "post-Communist" alternative (for either East or West). Imagine--putting aside for a moment the certain distortions of vision resulting from the knowledge we have in the present which was precisely what we lacked in the moment under consideration--that Habermas's intuition was that the question of Marxism (or an alternative Marxism) possessed an immediate practical dimension in the late 1980s (while his PI interlocutors had developed a tone-deafness on the whole subject). What might that indicate about what I have argued was among Habermas's most forceful and focused political interventions? In this intervention (a major motivation for which was his newly developed critique of left Marxism) he wanted to make effective a notion of critical social theory which has changed from monological to a dialogical paradigm.

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In a sense, given the role Habermas had assigned to Critical Theory--the philosophy which mediates expert cultures and the lifeworld--and the paradigm shift defined in part in its change to a dialogical from a monological approach to theory, Habermas's intentions would have been sorely disappointed. For example in his discussion of "The Rectifying Revolution", Habermas experienced considerable difficulties explaining the spontaneous mass revolt against Communism, in no way connecting it to his analysis of the "new social movements" he describes in TCA (Habermas 1989); at the same time, he over-emphasizes the role of the state, principally Gorbachev's reform policies. Also, it can be argued that Habermas's presentation in PDM takes (however reluctantly) the ground defined by the discussions of "postmodernity". He seems to only hope that development of these discussions might proceed on the basis of his long-sought recognition of (and take into account) his particular critique of Marx and Marxism; evidence emerged in the event that the participants really had no pressing interest in the latter. Hence, at most it might be concluded that interpretation of Marx's theory, rather than having been conceded to Habermas, was simply abandoned. If this were the case, it should be expected that Marx's critique of capitalism will again move to the center of attention, as many questions were left untended. Though Habermas failed to stimulate much discussion of his fully developed critique of Marx and Marxism (particularly of the "praxis philosophy", attributed to what has often been referred to as Marxist Humanism), the more general aim I have argued was integral to Habermas's theory formation--the replacement of Marx's theory with a "critical theory" which could dispense with Marx--seems to have succeeded. For example, consider two prominent represenatives of the type of "Left" Marxism Habermas brought into focus as he developed his social theory, increasingly understanding the latter to be the only viable critical theory

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alternative in the 1980s and 1990s. He took issue with Agnes Heller (Habermas 1981), associated with the Budapest School, inspired by the work of Lukács. He then continued his criticism of her theory in PDM ("On the Obsolescence of the Production Paradigm"). However, several years later he noticed a significant shift in her position, along with Andrew Arato's; Habermas pointed out that the two of them had adopted the central features of his theory in their recent work (Habermas 1992a).

In a more graphic negative example, Mihailo Markovic, one of the principal theorists of dissident Marxist humanism in the Communist party-dominated European countries (and the one who leveled the most explicit critique of Habermas's theory in PI in the 1980s) joined the Serbian nationalist movement of Slobodan Milosevic, serving in the Yugoslav government during the genocidal war initiated by Serbia in Bosnia in the 1990s.

These examples both point backward (to the beginnings of Habermas's challenge to dissident, non-Communist Marxism) and forward (to the collapse of an important strand of Marxism which critiqued Communism philosophically and politically, but collapsed along with it--its ostensible opposite). The late 1980s unexpected collapse of Communism, the perhaps even more shocking collapse of the dissident Marxism which opposed it, followed by a "barbarism in the heart of Europe"--the 1990s war in the former Yugoslavia while the "triumphant" West and NATO stood by passively for several years-- made more problematic than ever the question of a theoretical and practical alternative to "private" capitalism or "state socialism". These observations form the background for the following brief consideration of the "Excursus" in PDM (Habermas 1990a, 75-82).

The "Overcoming" of Western Marxism

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"The Obsolescence of the Production Paradigm" might be conceived as Habermas's "great divide", separating his historical *situation* of the postmodern problematic from his discussion of those thinkers from whom its adherents draw their inspiration. This "great divide" essentially argues that the failure of Marxism is pivotal to a crisis in social theory which is assumed to require a critical dimension at the same time there is, a) the self-understanding of postmodern social theory that Marx and Marxism is hardly relevant to more pressing concerns; and, b) a persistence of Marxism even when it implicitly concedes the "obsolescence of the production paradigm".

Recall that in a little noticed footnote which appeared as early as in his discussion of Marx in *Knowledge and Human Interests* Habermas dismissively referred to the theories of Marcuse and Karel Kosik, asserting that their "phenomenological Marxism", "governed the interpretation of Marx in several socialist [sic] countries" (Habermas 1972, 29). Earlier, when I referred to this I questioned what seemed to be a rather pointed attempt to, at the least, play down the serious political transgression, and veritable threat, a philosophic, dissident Marxism represented in the Communist countries (which Habermas calls "socialist", "peoples democracies", or later, "state socialist"). Recall that (in addition to a philosophical, active dissident Marxism) these countries had experienced spontaneous mass revolts practically from the moment of Stalin's death in 1953.

In any case, at the moment of publication of *Knowledge and Human Interests*, the Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia, overseeing the dismantling of "socialism with a human face". The humanist Marxism of dissident intellectuals like Kosik, who was imprisoned in the wake of the invasion, was integral to this somewhat neglected 1960s freedom movement. In retrospect, it is difficult to find in Habermas's voluminous writings criticisms of

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the Soviet Union and East European Communist regimes, or much recognition of those dissident Marxists who developed critical concepts from a re-interpretation of Marx in those countries before 1989. Moreover, it is only in the post-1989 period that the dissident Marxism, that is, contemporary Marxism to the left of established Communism, really becomes a focus of Habermas's *critical* attention.

"The Obsolescence of the Production Paradigm" includes a remarkably compressed summary of Habermas's understanding of the aporias of Western Marxism unseparated from the solution he believes his own theory--especially TCA--offers. In line with an assumption of "praxis philosophy's" interpretation of Marx, which serves as the foil throughout PDM, Habermas proposes to complete his earlier analysis of Western Marxism by extending his critique from the "Weberian Marxism" of Lukács (and its development in Horkeimer and Adorno) to that strand of Marxism initially derived from the way Marcuse appropriated the concept of the lifeworld in his, "dissertation on the philosophical concept of labor" (Habermas 1990a, 76).

Two rather dramatic points remain relatively undeveloped in this "Excursus". Habermas begins by offering a thesis which states that Marx's "theory of value", when compared to the "philosophy of reflection" with which Hegel attempted to link an idea of rationality or reason with a theory of modernity,

> still intermesh[es]...the normative contents of the notions of practice and reason, productive activity and rationality...though not in a wholly perspicuous fashion (Habermas 1990a, 74).

Underlying this lack of clarity, Habermas writes, is that,

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> As long as the theory of modernity takes its orientation from the basic concepts of the philosophy of reflection--from ideas of knowledge, conscious awareness, self-consciousness--the intrinsic connection with the concept of reason or rationality is obvious. This is not as evident with the basic concepts of the philosophy of praxis, such as action, self-generation and labor (Habermas 1990a, 74).

With this thesis Habermas grounds the 1920s inception of Western Marxism, which,

> brought the originally practical meaning of the critique of reification to bear against the economism and historical objectivism of the Second International (Habermas 1990a, 74).

Habermas's idea is that Western Marxism's (primarily Lukács's) critique of reification was qualitatively different than the "original"--that what Habermas believed to be Marx's original *practical* intention (to bring back into the horizon of the lifeworld through revolution that part of societal integration which had been systematized) was overlaid (and thus perhaps forgotten) with Western Marxism's *theoretical* challenge to established Marxism's hegemony.

Habermas's account leaves out a crucial (if academically marginal) consideration. Recall that the Second International, in which the German Social Democratic Party predominated, already collapsed in all but name when the latter supported war credits to the Kaiser, opening the door for World War I. Lenin, preceding Lukács, was ironically perhaps the first "Western Marxist" (Anderson 1995). Already, in 1914, Lenin broke *philosophically* with Second International Marxism, which he himself had previously supported uncritically.

Lenin's 1914 *Conspectus on* Hegel's Science of Logic (Lenin 1961, 85-237) provides evidence of this philosophic break. It consists of a sometimes detailed analysis of the three sections of Hegel's *Logic*--Being, Essence and Notion. Lenin's consideration of the Notion (which culminates in Absolute Idea)

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makes up the greater part of his notes and commentaries. With observations such as, "Consciousness not only reflects the objective world, but creates it" (Lenin 1961, 212) he is clearly breaking with his own philosophic past, as well as from the "economism and historical objectivism" of established Marxism.

Lenin's 1917 *State and Revolution* (completed in the hours immediately prior to the beginning of the Russian Revolution) then returns to Marx (primarily the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*) with new, Hegelian eyes. This is seen most clearly in how Lenin, in the spirit of Hegel's concept of negativity (despite Hegel's own accomodation to the state), posits the abolition of the state to be the goal of the Russian Revoluton. However, curiously enough, Lenin's new look at what is essentially *Critique of the Gotha Programme's* uncompromising critique of LaSalle's mode of politicization of secular, philosophical ideas in their relationship to social organization and the state--or more precisely Marx's warning of the implications of an institutionalization in (socialist) party form of ideas which retrogress below Hegel's concept of second negativity--does not bring to Lenin's attention in his *State and Revolution* even a glimmer of a philosophy/organization *problematic*. This is difficult to explain in respect to someone previously so closely associated with the thesis of the revolutionary party as had been Lenin, and the particular, controversial subject matter of Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme*.

It is then even more difficult once the depth of Lenin's *philosophic* re-organization is recognized; Lenin alone among the Marxists of the time achieved *that type* of re-organization at such a pivotal point in the gathering crisis of capitalism and its ostensible opposite, socialism. Raya Dunayevskaya attributes both Lenin's originality in re-establishing the dialectic in Marxist thought, and the limitation of it which subsequently became clear, to Lenin's interpretation of Hegel's Notion (Dunayevskaya 1989a; 1991). Lenin believed

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that, in Hegel's constellation (in the Notion) of the practical and theoretical idea, primacy was ultimately granted the former. Dunayevskaya, in contrast, demonstrated that a complete understanding of Hegel's Absolute Idea was contingent upon following Hegel's direction in the final paragraph of the *Logic*. There Hegel, after earlier criticizing the Practical Idea, as while greater than the Theoretical Idea, was still inadequate without the theoretical moment; at that precise point, Hegel insists (Hegel 1976, 843-844) that the reader follow his philosophy through the *Philosophy of Nature* (Hegel 1970) and the *Philosophy of Mind* (Hegel 1973). In fact, the final three syllogisms of *Philosophy of Mind*, which were added to the work only in the last year of Hegel's life, "drop" the *Logic* altogether (Dunayevskaya 1992, 10). Dunayevskaya depicts the movement of the last three syllogisms (of *Philosophy of Mind*) as adequate to a concept of Absolute Idea "as new beginning" (Dunayevskaya 1989a, 3-46). She distills from Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind* a dual movement--from practice and from theory--under Hegel's categories of a "self-bringing forth of liberty", and a "self-thinking idea" (Dunayevskaya 1989b, 13). In these latest of Hegel's concepts Dunayevskaya detects the philosophic precursor of a dialectical social transcendence of capitalism and its political party form, as well as what she terms 'state-capitalism" (in reference to the Communist states Habermas, and most others on the Left, usually referred to as "state socialist").

Lenin, though first among "Western Marxists" in returning to the revolutionary potential of Hegel's dialectic, was unable to break with the *concept* of the vanguard party, or even to pose its problematic nature in terms of the abolition of the specifically capitalist social formation. Though he certainly wanted little to do with the ideas prevalent in the Second International, he continued to share the concept of the Marxist party prevalent within it, a

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veritable fetish not unlike the one Marx described as "attached" to the commodity-form of production.

Habermas overlooks the question of Lenin's 1914 philosophic break with both his own past *and* Second International Marxism (Jay 1984); in doing so, he mistakenly narrows to Lukács's 1919-23 relationship to Max Weber's ideas the scope of the inception of Western Marxism. Following from this, it can be argued (contrary to Habermas's account in the passage which follows) that Western Marxism must be traced to, and can only be understood in the context of, Lenin's pioneering, though incomplete, break from Second International Marxism:

> Two different lines of tradition developed within Western Marxism, one determined by the reception of Max Weber, the other by the reception of Husserl and Heidegger. The early Lukács and Critical Theory conceived of reification as rationalization and developed a ritical concept of rationality on the basis of a materialistic appropriation of Hegel, but without appealing to the production paradigm *for this purpose*...
>
> On the other hand, reading the Marx of the *Early Writings* in the light of Husserlian phenomenology and developing a concept of practice with normative content, the early Marcuse and later Sartre renewed the production paradigm, which had been washed out in the meantime, but without appealing to a concept of rationality *for this purpose* (Habermas 1990a, 75).

This development of Habermas's conceptualization through disassemblement of the Western Marxist and Critical Theory tradition is remarkable. I pointed to its significance in his earlier work (Habermas 1985), where the idea seemed to first emerge. One major implication, noticeable as well in the earlier piece, is the removal of Marcuse (at least his "early" work) from the Critical Theory (though not the Western Marxist) tradition. Habermas's abrupt claim for his own mature critical theory is even more dramatic:

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> These two traditions start to converge only with the paradigm shift from productive activity to communicative action and the reformulation of the concept of the lifeworld in terms of communications theory--a concept that had been connected in various ways with Marx's concept of practice ever since Marcuse's dissertation on the philosophical concept of labor. That is to say, the theory of communicative action establishes an internal relation between practice and rationality (Habermas 1990a, 76).

Before I comment further on this claim, Habermas's other significant point must be mentioned. While Critical Theory developed from the *early* Lukács's relationship to the ideas of Max Weber, "praxis philosophy" attempts to "stay alive", or gain new life, from the ideas of the *later* Lukács. The detailed account of Lukács's work an assessment of this observation would require is beyond the scope of this study; what is crucial here is that, according to Habermas, all Hegelian, Western Marxism is indebted in one way or another to Lukács. This, of course, ignores Lenin's philosophic re-organization. Again, Habermas continues,

> This paradigm shift [from productive activity to communicative action] is motivated by...the fact that the normative foundations of critical social theory could not be demonstrated along either of the traditional lines I have analyzed the aporias of Weberian Marxism elsewhere. Here I would like to discuss the difficulties of a Marxism that renews the production paradigm while depending on phenomenology in connection with two works that have come out of the Budapest School. Ironically enough, the late Lukács already paved the way for an anthropological turn and a rehabilitation of the concept of practice in terms of the "world of everyday life" (Habermas 1990a, 76).

It should immediately be noted that Habermas implies here that the difficulty present in contemporary Marxism is identical with social theory as a whole. Elsewhere, Habermas has argued for the utility of a bilevel concept of society on the basis of the inadequacies of either system or action-oriented

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approaches in modern social theory. Later, Habermas develops this implication--that his social theory is significantly different, compared to traditional ("bourgeois") ideas, Marx's critique of the latter, and the "unflinching critique" (defined by the trajectory of Western Marxism) of Marx's theory (Habermas 1990b, 11).

More specifically, there appeared (from the 1920s) two principal strands of (Hegelian) Western Marxism Lukács and Marcuse seemed to have moved between. On the one hand, the early Lukács--concerned with Weber's rationalization thesis--represents the genesis of Critical Theory, while the late Lukács kept alive the "praxis philosophy". On the other hand, early Marcuse opened the door for "praxis philosophy", while the late Marcuse (with his acceptance of the thesis of instrumental reason and one-dimensionality) carried forward Critical Theory's (Weberian) Western Marxism. Again, an investigation of the relationship of the ideas of Lukács and Marcuse (particularly an attempt to explain the role of their interpretations of Hegel and the young Marx in the peculiar mirror-image reversals of their utilization of the concept of the lifeworld) would take this study beyond its necessary focus on Habermas's relationship to Marx's ideas. I intend to continue to trace what I have conceived to be Habermas's attempt to shape the history of Critical Theory such that his own social theory is seen to emerge solely available for contemporary development; here I can only indicate that what is centrally at issue, even for Habermas in the mid-1980s, is discussion of the Practical Idea, and the relationship of Marx to Hegel, particularly an idea of a "materialist appropriation" (Habermas 1990a, 75) of the latter by the former. In Chapter Four, I considered in some detail how an alternative interpretation (though not without its own limitations) of Marx's *social* appropriation of Hegel's dialectic is not only superior to Habermas's

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imputation to Marx of a materialistic appropriation, but points to serious difficulties of important elements of Habermas's justification of his own theory.

Meaning of Socialism Today

"What does socialism mean today?: The rectifying revolution and the need for rethinking on the Left" (Habermas 1990b) contains, on the one hand, what appears to be a mere recapitulation of Habermas's various critiques of Marx and, on the other hand, an attempt to provide a new dimension to that critique in light of the collapse of Communism in Eastern and Central Europe. Thus, in the contingency of historical events, the article argues for an essential consistency of successful development of Habermas's critique of Marx. It affirms the soundness of Habermas's approach to Marx's theory over the course of several decades, but also suggests that events in Eastern and Central Europe (and perhaps Russia) pointed specifically to his own theory, the only available alternative for a Marxism (now either Eastern or Western) facing total political annihilation. The new dimension of Habermas's approach contains a thesis that the difference between his own theory and others is more basic (and emancipatory) than that which can be found, a) between Marx's theory and those typical of the "bourgeoisie" he criticized; b) between traditional Marxism and Marx's theory and, c) within Marxism, eg; between East and West.

If this an accurate assessment of Habermas's intentions in the article, then the crucial next step for him would be to demonstrate, in addition to the significant distinction of his theory, its own relevance for the constitution of a new beginning in any effort to alter the stubborn preponderance of certain features of modern societies Habermas holds are socially destructive but alterable.

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Hence, after considering his preliminary comments on Marx's *Communist Manifesto*, I will turn to the content of a list of theoretical arguments Habermas presents which he insists "form the sole basis on which impulses from the Marxist tradition can be taken up today" (Habermas 1990b, 14). In conjunction with this point, I intend to show that Habermas, in lifting points, virtually unchanged, from his 1960 article, "Between Philosophy and Science: Marxism as Critique", argues for the future of his theory by prominent reliance on a retrospective view. This view presupposes a design for the replacement of Marx's theory and of Marxism at the very inception of his own theory. This is perhaps the closest Habermas comes to actually offering for consideration such an intention. I have argued throughout this study that the replacement of Marx's theory and of Marxism was a consistently motivating factor in the constitution of Habermas's theory from its inception. Finally, I will assess Habermas's most difficult task. Putting aside the question of the success or failure of the two previous tasks, Habermas must attempt to demonstrate the immanence of the liberating features of his own theory in current political events.

In a sense, the opening paragraph of "Rectifying Revoluton" already includes the conclusion to Habermas's analysis of the unfolding events in areas of Europe dominated by the Soviet Union. Yet, this opening paragraph contains an interesting ambiguity. Habermas begins,

> The revolutionary changes in the Soviet bloc have taken many different forms. In the land of the Bolshevik revolution itself, a reform process is underway that was introduced from the top, from the upper echelons of the Communist Party (Habermas 1990b, 4).

Thus, initially, Habermas seems to propose to highlight a variety of actual and potential oppositions to the Communist status quo, the form which

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originates from above merely one of several. Yet, the paragraph's concluding sentence asserts,

> It [the reform process introduced from the top of the Communist Party] created the preconditions for the changes in eastern Central Europe (including the Baltic states' declaration of independence) and in East Germany (Habermas 1990b, 4).

Then, in briefly considering each country in turn, Habermas begins with a description of Poland: there, "the revolutionary changes were the result of the sustained resistance of Solidarity supported by the Catholic Church" (Habermas 1990b, 4).

What is somewhat inconvenient, then, for the structure of Habermas's argument, is that the Polish Solidarity movement began a full decade before the revolutionary events he is describing. Empirically, a more telling argument is that the Polish Solidarity movement "created the preconditions" for Mikhail Gorbachev's turn to *glasnost* and *perestroika*. The East European dissident movements often including tendencies of Marxist Humanism antithetical to the the ruling Communist parties, were an important feature of the Left in the post-World War II period. With Solidarity at its height, and 20 million workers on strike, the Communist Party in Russia (as well as in Poland) calculated it had perhaps its last chance to reform--or else perish. As it turned out, of course, while it attempted the former, the latter was, in effect, its fate anyway.

Habermas, when he refers to Solidarity, describes it as "solidarity supported by the Catholic Church" with an apparent intention that the phrase should practically be pronounced as a single word, thus obscuring the Polish revolt's basic continuity with the history of East European dissidence from under Communism, with and without the Catholic Church. The curious fact is, throughout the 1960s and 1970s, at least, one would be hard-pressed to find in

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Habermas's theoretical writings any positive recognition of East European dissident Marxist thinkers, or reference to the rather full history of workers' revolt against the Communist status quo. In contrast, the interior of the opening paragraph already puts Habermas's own theory at the center of what Habermas presents as revolutionary events, though only immediately, with no reference to their own history.

Contrasted to the opposing pulls of administrative political modernization from above (Russia), and the impulse for a return to pre-Communism from below (Poland), Habermas writes of the reform process that,

> Its results, and, more importantly other unintended consequences, condense to form a process of revolutionary *development*, to the degree that changes occur not just at the level of general social and political orientation, but in essential elements of the power structure tself (of particular importance are changes in the mode of legitimation as the result of the birth of a political public sphere) (Habermas 1990b, 4).

As will become clear in my consideration of Habermas's theses on Marx and Marxism, he argues that a clear perspective on the meaning of the overthrow of Communism, including the prospects for what happens after, is seriously compromised due to fundamental asssumptions of Marx and Marxism, among not only the more Stalinist or Leninist Marxists, but among what he characterizes as the non-Communist Left; the latter, wittingly or not, share fundamental asssumptions of Marx and Marxism. Habermas believes that his theory is uniquely situated to expose those assumptions, the first step, at least, toward the needed adoption of his own theory. In fact, Habermas's central intention is to demonstrate both the urgency of his theory, *and* its historical vindication *vis a vis* its critique of Marx and Marxism in the analysis of immediate events. The events themselves afforded a unique opportunity for

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such a demonstration. All forms of Marxism (as well as the full spectrum of other theoretical and political tendencies) could hardly avoid accounting for themselves in the epocal changes so rapidly unfolding.

Habermas's theoretical and practical critique centers on the "non-Communist Left". This is perhaps because, among those guided (wittingly or unwittingly) by Marxist assumptions, they are the most likely to be salvagable for the continuation and development of his own theory. In line with his most general thesis (that his theory *vis a vis* its critique of Marx and Marxism has been vindicated and is the latter's only viable, critical alternative) he makes an initial claim that, at least in the case of East Germany,

> ...voters here have definitely not ratified what the opposition had in mind when it overthrew the Stasi-oligarchy with the slogan "We are the people"; but the vote they cast will have profound historical effects as it interprets this overthrow--as a rectifying revolution. They want to make up for all the things that have divided the Western half of Germany from the Eastern for forty years--its politically happier, and economically more successful development (Habermas 1990b, 5).

This claim emphasizes that the vanguard (the opposition which took to the streets and overthrew the stasi-oligarchy) of "revolutionary changes" which gather force and become "revolutionary events", had a different orientation, perhaps to their surprise, than the East German masses afterall. Consequently, only the distinctiveness of Habermas's theory and the spontaneous expression of the masses eager to trade Communism for the "form of an affluent Western society with a democratic constitution" (Habermas 1990b, 5) remains after the overthrow of Stalinist Marxism, and the very feeble interpretations offered by other tendencies, both socialist (characterized by Habermas as Leninist and reform-communist) and anti-socialist (post-modern, anti-communist and liberal) (Habermas 1990b, 5-8).

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Next, Habermas prefaces his explicit enumeration of the "errors and defects" (Habermas 1990b, 11) of Marx and Marxism with a critique of Marx's *Communist Manifesto*. A novelty of this critique consists in its implication of Marx in an assessment of other recent political phenomena--disintegration of totalitarianism in Spain and Portugal which preceded the East and Central European events. This was accompanied by "development of a market economy independent of the political system", suggesting a, "surge in the modernization process reaching out towards Central and Eastern Europe" (Habermas 1990b, 9).

The implication of Marx in this is established by attributing to a passage in the *Communist Manifesto* a "triumphalist variation" (Habermas 1990b, 9) of interpretation of this process of modernization--Habermas's explanatory variable--superseding any question how analyses in the CM fits into Marx's theory. Habermas presents the following passages as proof that Marx and Engels, "hymn the revolutionary role of the bourgeoisie". In doing so, Habermas takes the liberty of moving the concluding sentence of Marx's prior paragraph to the end of the paragraph he quotes. Below, the sentences in bold, following the ellipsis, actually appear as the concluding sentences of Marx's *prior* paragraph in the text of the CM.

> The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communications, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilization. The cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters down all Chinese walls, with which it forces the barbarians' intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, that is, to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image...**And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrowmindedness become more and more impossible, and**

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> **from the numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature.**(Habermas 1990b, 9).

In response, Habermas writes,

> It would be hard to arrive at a better characterization of the mood indicated by the replies that capitalists, eager for investment opportunities, gave to the last questionnaire circulated by the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce. Only the phrase "what it calls", qualifying the term "civilization", betrays reservations (Habermas 1990b, 9).

First, and most important for my current focus, this presentation and interpretation of the passage serves to support the dominant theme of Habermas's article--that Marx and Marxism share more with their object of criticism than Habermas's theory shares with any of the three. (The presentation itself consists in moving several sentences of the original text from the end of one paragraph to the end of the one which follows).

Second, in view of Marx's fundamental critique of the "bourgeois mode of production" generally, and of the *Communist Manifesto*'s specific intent, which was to hasten its abolition, an alternative interpretation seems far more plausible. This would not take Marx's "so-called" as indicating a subordinate "reservation" within a triumphalist hymn. Rather than suggesting a mere reservation, the "so-called" indicts not only "Western" society, which is dominated by capital, but the prevailing self-understanding of that society.

Marx's description here of social form, and corresponding forms of thought, is both reminiscent of his 1844 "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic" (where he criticized Hegel's dialectical phrase, "at one with itself in its other as such") and anticipatory of his "fetishism of the commodity" section of *Capital.* Previously (Chapter Three) I argued that as early as in his 1844 "Critique of

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Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General" Marx's examination of the *Phenomenology* chapter on Absolute Knowledge, Marx saw in the *greatness* of philosophy's achievement its *deepest alienation.* Thinking was separated from the subject and, even more intriguingly, from the thinker (philosopher) himself. "At one with itself in its other as such"--absent any further development--left the philosopher "solitary and alone". Finally, I pointed out that--though Marx did not say so--Hegel *himself* had already been aware of this implication and prospect; Hegel uses the same phrase ("solitary and alone") in the *Phenomenology*'s final paragaraph.

Four years after "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", in the passage of the *Communist Manifesto* Habermas quotes, it is not difficult to see that Marx's phrase, "creates a world after its own image", develops the earlier insight in a new field, or context, that of the unleashing of a powerful world historical force, apparently not necessarily accessible to the understanding of its "agents". While Habermas (in this instance) is not concerned to read Marx's analysis philosophically, he clearly endorses a primarily economic approach to interpretation of its meaning for today. In fact, in taking the liberty to move Marx's description of what Habermas would regard as Marx's understanding of bourgeois "superstructure" so that it *follows* Marx's analysis of the role of cheap commodities battering down all Chinese walls, Habermas falsely renders Marx's approach as the type of economic determinism he consistently attributed to it

However, in view of my earlier reading of Marx's "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic", the *Communist Manifesto* can be seen, in addition to its economic and politcal aspects, primarily as an attempt to work out the dialectical relation of philosophy and organization (or the social organization of philosophy) necessary for the abolition of capitalism. For *this* revolution, conceived as

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opposite to, not constitutive of, bourgeois universality, Marx was no "left opposition" (as Habermas seems to want to place him for the purposes of his present argument) serving as "civilization's" social conscience.

To look into this, it is necessary to examine more closely the section Habermas heads, "Marx on the logic of "civilization" (Habermas, 1990b, 9). First, consider the expression, "...Marx and Engels hymn the revolutionary role of the bourgeoisie". The passage from the *Communist Manifesto* Habermas quotes (which I reproduced on p.330 above) follows several paragraphs after Marx's introductory sentence of his argument concerning the bourgeoisie's "revolutionary part". From the very beginning of Marx's description, it is clear that Marx neither affirms nor condemns this "part". Perhaps even more critically, Marx seems to imply that the playing of the part is at the same time its destruction. Hence, an interpretation which acknowledges only "reservations", or "doubts" (Habermas 1990b, 9, 10) within an overall "hymn" is simply implausible. Marx begins ironically:

> The bourgeoisie, historically, has played a most revolutionary part.

He then continues,

> The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his "natural superiors", and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous "cash payment". It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervor, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation. It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single unconscionable freedom--free trade. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation (Marx 1964, 62).

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At least one more thing is immediately clear from the foregoing. Marx has no transhistorical, positive bias for revolution *as such*. Marx seems interested in assessing the bourgeiosie (and its connection to social revolution) only in so far as knowledge of it might assist in the transcendence of the virtually asocial (or dehumanized) "civilization" its predominance implies. Moreover, Marx not only qualifies bourgeois civilization with "what it calls". A few paragraphs after that "qualification" Marx indicates that there is no actual strict division between "civilization" and "barbarism", given capital's growing predominance. He writes,

> It is enough to mention the commercial crises that by their periodical return put on trial, each time more threateningly, the existence of the entire bourgeois society...Society suddenly finds itself put back into a state of momentary barbarism; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation had cut off the supply of every means of subsistence...(Marx 1964,.67).

Finally, in respect to the passages Habermas quotes from Marx's *CM*, I have noted that, though appearing in close proximity in Marx's text, Habermas (using an ellipsis) reverses their order.

The conclusion of Marx's original paragraph suggests that the universal quality of the agency the bourgeoisie (in so far as it is essentially the personification of capital) represents is illusory. In the destruction of national and traditional characteristics, what appears is not a potential inhering in them. What appears is not even the result of a "synthesis" of the foreign and the indigenous; rather, the bourgeoisie, "creates a world after its own image", which implies that what appears is not even a world after its actual substance--or that its self-image is essentially constitutive of its "substance".

Habermas, in his moving the concluding sentence from the *previous* paragraph, attaching it instead to the end of the one following so that it succeeds the phrase, "after its own image", alters the sense of Marx's critique,

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and does not grasp its depth. In Habermas's reconstructed version of the *CM* Marx is made to appear to endorse an idea of the *autonomy* of a sphere of bourgeois sociality and culture, perhaps potentially as "universal", "revolutionary" and effective as capital (or the economy) itself. To the contrary, Marx's conclusion--"creating a world after its own image"--incorporates this dimension of the capitalist social formation from the start, pointing to the particularism, and primarily self-referential (not alone self-serving) character of an only apparently limitless expansiveness which carries along in its wake the bourgeoise.

Habermas connects his analysis of Marx's *Communist Manifesto* to contemporaneity with an argument which suggests that even what Habermas has identified to be the remaining critical element in Marx's exposition, while arguably adequate in terms of what should be opposed even today, is no longer sufficient (or has lost its relevance) for posing (and answering) questions about what one should be *for*. He offers two observations in support of this.

First, implicitly appealing to his own critical appropriation of systems theory and expanding his interpretation of Marx's modifier, "so-called", he writes that the latter refers to a,

> fundamental doubt as to whether a civilization can afford to surrender itself *entirely* to the malestrom of the driving force of just one of its subsystems--namely the pull of a dynamic, or, as we would say today, recursively closed, economic system which can only function and remain stable by taking all relevant information, translating it into, and processing it in, the language of economic value. Marx believed that any civilization that subjects itself to the imperatives of the accumulation of capital bears the seeds of its own destruction, because it thereby blinds itself to anything, however important, that cannot be expressed as a price (Habermas 1990b, 9).

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This recasts Habermas's consistent position that labor and interaction or system and lifeworld were quasi-ontologically separate societal dimensions, which Marx (despite his wishes) was never successful in theoretically unifying.

Next, Habermas then rapidly undermines the relevance for today of what he has designated to had been, at bottom, Marx's concern. Marx, in his time, "put so squarely on the map...the *agent* (my emphais, RR) of expansion...the bourgeoisie of 1848" (Habermas 1990b, 9). But, Habermas writes, today the agent is, "an anonymous, internationally operating economic system that has ostensibly severed any ties it might once have had with an identifiable class structure" (Habermas 1990b, 9).

The implication is that Marx's (now generally outmoded) critique assumed the centrality of class; Marx's critique, then, was of a moment (now passed) of "civilization" and, strictly immanent, appealed to a potential intrinsic to it. In this interpretation, Marx's critical intention was to reverse the places of the universal (morality) and particular (the economy) by unmasking the latter's appearance as the former. Moreover, according to Habermas's interpretation, Marx's solution required the assumption of a clearly identifiable historical "agency" (or subject). Marx, when Habermas mistakenly attributes to his economic theory a transhistorical view of labor, could be interpreted to have believed, quite simply, that the bourgeoisie's opposite, the proletariat, could assume the former's role, and "complete" the historical Enlightenment project. Much of my analysis of Habermas's approach to Marx has been concerned with demonstrating that Marx's critique of capitalism penetrated structures at a deeper level than an analysis of social classes alone would permit.

Keeping in mind the range of texts (both Habermas's and Marx's), and their periodicity, I have already taken up in this respect, it is clearly not the case that in this 1990 article I am considering now Habermas is restricting his

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characterization of Marx's argument to a specific phase (1848) in his (Marx's) theoretical development. Moreover, I shall show, while Habermas on occasion granted (in fact, even insisted) that Marx did historically restrict his own theory, Habermas usually follows this with criticism of how it was appropriated transhistorically, not without reasons for which Marx could, or should, himself be held responsible. Before I take up that argument in the article's section on Marx's and Marxism's "errors and defects", it is necessary to note Habermas's second observation directed at demonstrating that the critical element in Marx's description of modernity has lost its relevance.

Habermas, after pointing out that today's international economy seems to have uncoupled from class structure, argues that not only have western societies, in terms of distribution of material wealth, made Engels's description of "Manchester misery" obsolete (Habermas 1990b, 9), but that it is precisely Marx's critical "piece" of description of modernity which is *constitutive* of the "welfare state compromise" characteristic of those "western" societies. The "welfare state compromise" is the "answer" to the "stark words of the *Communist Manifesto*..." (Habermas 1990b, 10).

Even so, Habermas next observes, in the collapse of Communism, there arises,

> the ironic circumstance that Marx should still offer us the quotation [in the *Communist Manifesto*] that most aptly describes the situation in which captial scrambles into markets corroded by state socialism, in search of investment opportunities...(Habermas 1990b, 10).

(Contemporary "state socialism" has "paved the way" for capitalism--or least its revitalization).

> ...just as thought-provoking as the fact that Marx's doubts have themselves been incorporated in the structures of the most advanced

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> capitalist societies...Does this mean that "Marxism as critique"...is as exhausted as "actually existing socialism?"(Habermas 1990b, 10).

Here Habermas refers to his own "Between Philosophy and Science: Marxism as Critique", first published in the German in 1960, and writes in a footnote, "This is the title of an essay in which I dealt with Marxism systematically for the first time" (Habermas 1990b, 10).

Recall that a central feature of that essay was consideration of a "law of value", which was not a refutation but a proposal for revision. It argued that the extension of state intervention to spheres previously guarded and thought to be justly "self-regulating" (and immune to social deliberation) had, ironically, preserved captialism, despite its own self-destructive tendencies. Habermas attributed this, despite the orthodox Marxist denial of its possibility due to an assumption of the crisis tendencies following from a fall in the rate of profit, to a defect in Marx's analysis of a labor theory of value. Essentially, Habermas argued that Marx ignored as "unproductive" that type of labor (technical, scientific) which, while not productive in terms of material objects, allowed for the modern explosion of the productivity of the labor which was so productive.

Moreover, in referring to passages in the *Grundrisse*, Habermas suggested that Marx had recognized the decreasing role of direct labor in the production of wealth, as well as the increasing role of the application of science in increasing economic productivity, suggesting a need to revise the orthodox law wherein value depended on direct labor alone. Marx is said to have retained the latter position in his final theory (contrary to theoretical advances in his prior *Grundrisse*).

The development of social democracy--which Habermas advocates politically in what is otherwise a highly technical presentation--is said to permit

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a rational distribution of a sufficiently growing mass of surplus value which, under the presuppositions of Marx's original labor theory of value, would have plunged the economy into crisis. Marx's central mistake, in not appreciating the real potential of social democracy, was to give up the practical side of critique; Marx succumbs to a "scientistic" tendency when he understands his economic theory as the discovery of "laws" which underly its (self-destructive) dynamic. Marx's theory represents a replacement of the potential of philosophy with science, instead of their mediation, which Habermas at this point (beginning of the 1960s) assigns to a revised Marxism, one which picks up a path Marx himself unfortunately abandoned. Habermas, then, through a proposed revision of the law of value, intends to restore to critical theory its "practical" potential. This, he makes clear, is only possible through the consolidation and strengthening of the social-democratic welfare state. Against this background the question Habermas now asks is whether the resurgence of an "unbridled capitalism" in the wake of Communism's dissolution, and the fact that Marx's *Communist Manifesto*, ironically, seems best to explain it, makes obsolete his much earlier analysis in "Marxism as Critique". Perhaps Marx's "law of value" in what Habermas understands in its unrevised form, anticipates and best explains, contemporary developments, at least from the perspective of the potential consequences for the masses in the formerly Communist countries.

The section which follows in Habermas's article, "Errors and Defects", is a strong warning against any prospective utility in a return to Marx's theory. The critical substance of Marx's theory has already been "incorporated in the structure" of those countries which have reached the "economic summit" of the system. The revolutionary masses (in central and east Europe, perhaps including Russia) want to catch up. In addition, certain other features of modernity preclude the application of Marx's theory, despite other contemporary

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empirical features which might suggest the return of its relevance in the wake of Communism's collapse.

In Part II of the article Habermas prefaces his section on the "Errors and Defects" of Marx and Marxism by positing a quandary in which the "non-communist Left in West Germany" finds itself in the wake of the mass overthrow of Communism. On the one side, there is the tendency of some to have preferred "the bird in the hand"; on the other, there stand the "idealists" who treat socialism as an "idea abstractly confronting reality". The latter are rightly "convicted of the impotence of the moral 'ought' (not to mention the total contempt for humanity evident in any attempt at its realization)" (Habermas 1990b, 10). None the less, according to Habermas, neither tendency need let "guilt by association be foisted on it for the bankruptcy of state socialism it has always criticized". They must, however, ask, "how long an idea can hold out against reality" (Habermas 1990b, 10). Among these tendencies (implied to be exhaustive) Habermas seems to find the "idealists" more salvagable. A section of the "non-communist Left" has connected to its "abstract idea confronting reality" the,

> normative intuition of a peaceful coexistence that does not provide for self-realization and autonomy only at the expense of solidarity and justice, but rather along with them (Habermas 1990b, 10).

It is clear that Habermas's approach here recapitulates his critical response to Thomas McCarthy in the *Praxis International* symposium I discussed in detail earlier (see Chapter 5). There Habermas decisively reduced to a "shared intuition" any affinity with Marx's theory his Critical Theory might retain (after TCA). More importantly, now he repeats his admonition of

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McCarthy (thus confirming that his original remarks were anticipatory and directed at a broader theoretical tendency, rather than an individual), that,

> the socialist tradition ought not to explain this intuition by the direct approach of a normative theory, in order to set it up as an ideal opposing an opaque reality (Habermas 1990b, 10).

In addition, Habermas uses the occasion to add the following recommendation, not present (or at least far more implicit in his comment four years earlier):

> It [a normative theory] should instead be the basis of a perspective from which reality can be critically observed and analyzed. During the course of the analysis, the normative intuition should be both developed and corrected, and thus at least indirectly tested against the power of theoretical description to disclose reality and convey empirical content (Habermas 1990b, 11).

While it would be difficult to object to such an injunction, and other aspects are in need of elaboration in these prefatory remarks to the section, "Errors and Defects", one particularly glaring question already arises: why does Habermas choose the descriptive term, "non-communist Left", instead of "non-Marxist Left"? I have already indicated part of the answer. Habermas believes that even those on the Left who are not, in a theoretical sense, Marxists nonetheless share, even if unwittingly, "Marxist" assumptions. Hence, Habermas is suggesting that these assumptions be uncovered, examined, and discarded. "Errors and Defects", then, opens with an introduction to a theoretical tradition which, Habermas indicates, provides something of a model for this task. He writes,

> Western Marxism has used this criterion since the twenties to subject itself to an unflinching critque that has left little of the theory's original form remaining (Habermas 1990b, 11).

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Here, in a second indication of a recapitulation and development of his analysis in the *Praxis International* symposium, Habermas refers to Martin Jay's *Marxism and Totality* (1984). In the introductory remarks to his symposium comments, Habermas had noted his regret that he had not had available to him Jay's just-published work. As it turned out, Jay's contribution (on Habermas's aesthetic theory) was the one among several which did not draw out serious critical reservations in Habermas's response to the symposium participants.

In addition to Habermas's notification that he will only "go over a few of the ways" it has become apparent the Marxist tradition, "remained rooted in the original context and limited scale of early industrialism", the major point to hold in mind in assessing the six "errors and defects" is the specification that here his critique is directed not at generations which followed Marx's, but at, "Marx and his immediate successors" (Habermas 1990b, 11). In many of Habermas's previous analyses it has not always been clear what, if any, distinctions should be drawn between Marx and Marxism. In some contexts, aspects of Marx's original theory were vital, eg; in the sense all classical theory might serve as a source for re-thinking contemporary problems, while much, or all, of the Marxist tradition which followed failed to keep up with either "reality" or developments in other areas, or disciplines, concerned with social theory. In different contexts, the neo-Marxist tradition, eg; some moments of Critical Theory itself, where Habermas sometimes places his own work, was especially qualified to adjudicate among all theories--including a judgement of Marx's own as specially (and objectionably) materialist (Rockmore 1989). The confidence with which Habermas assumed this role was primarily on the basis of a modern concept of rationality, which he had brought into its own. Since, in the several chapters preceding this one, I have treated in detail the substance of the six "errors and defects" Habermas proposes to "go over" here, I will merely indicate

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the central theme of each point, and briefly issue reminders about the problems I find with his positions.

The first three "errors and defects" are identified as a result of Habermas's critique of the notions (attributed to Marx) that, a) industrial labor, and its social organization, provides the model for a future (socialist) society, superior to the existing one, which has superimposed on it an exploiting class; b) Hegel's basic concepts can be reformulated in a "scientific spirit", and with their application constituting a critique of political economy, the process of capital accumulation, thus exposed as an illusion, can be dispelled, opening the way for society's rational re-organization; and, c) conflict rooted in opposing social classes, in a concrete sense, are usable for analysis upon which theory bases its calculations. Habermas holds that the latter notion is no longer viable, since in increasingly complex societies there are, "no straightforward connections between the social, subcultural, and regional surface structures, on the one hand, and the abstract deep structures of a differentiated economic system (intertwined with complementary state intevention) on the other..." (Habermas 1990b, 12).

In respect to a): I have argued that intrinsic to Marx's theory was the notion that "industrial labor" belonged to, was specific to, capitalist society. Marx's capital aimed to demonstrate that "proletarian" labor could, and should, be abolished, opposite in conception to Habermas's attribution to Marx of an idea of industrial labor serving as a "model" for the kind of society which might follow the capitalist; b) After Moishe Postone, I have recognized a perspective which finds in Marx a sociohistorical epistemology. Hegel's dialectic philosophy, explained such that while society *per se* is not grasped as a totality, capitalist society alone is so structured, on the basis of social relations mediated by labor; c) More specifically, the relation between abstract and concrete labor

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constitutes the deep, abstract structure of the capitalist social formation, compared to the concrete expression of social classes, property ownership and the market.

Habermas draws a sharp distinction between, on the one hand, the three criticisms listed above, and the three which follow. The fourth (e) in particular holds that Marx's,

> restricted and functionalist analysis of constitutional democracy has had far more serious practical consequences than the defects discussed so far...he retained a purely instrumental attitude to its institutions. *The Critique of the Gotha Program* tells us in no uncertain terms that Marx understood a communist society to be the only possible realization of democracy (Habermas 1990b, 12).

In the context of Habermas's article, an analysis of the collapse of Communism with attention alternately focused on the practical and theoretical dimensions characterizing it, there is little room for any other interpretation of the statement just quoted than that Habermas believes that the Communist governments just overthrown not only represented a practice that legitimated itself with reference to Marx's theory, but did so on the basis of a substantially *correct* interpretation of that theory. This seems due to Habermas's consistent position that the efficacy for social revolution of the abolition of private property in the means of production represented the core of Marx's theory.

Recall that in his *Critique of the Gotha Programme* Marx severly criticized two competing tendencies whom proposed to unite in an historically first German Social Democratic party. His critique of the proposed unity program of the Lasalleans (after Ferdinand Lasalle) and Eisenachers (the ostensible Marxists) was written in the form of marginal notes to the draft party programme. Much of the severity of Marx's criticism of the program was directed at Lasalle's not-so-subtle attempt to re-write Marx's theories such that they appeared

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relatively innocuous, not only for the powers that be, but to party activists with varying theoretical orientations. Lasalle's apparent goal was to insinuate the incipient revolutionary organization into a niche in Bismark's 'social state".

In this, Marx, far from "instrumentalizing" constitutional democracy, recommended that the two tendencies, rather than compromise (just to achieve "unity") on the conceptual breakthroughs represented in his recently completed *Capital*, simply agree upon a common strategy for practical reforms. Among the principles Marx did not want compromised for immediate political expediency was the concept of labor I have discussed at length in the preceding chapters, as well as the very concept of revolutionary organization itself.

In a word, Marx was willing to dispense with socialist "unity", if it meant the institutionalization of an organization uncoupled from the conceptual achievement *Capital* represented. Compared to Habermas's strong criticism of Marx for instrumentalizing constitutional democracy, it seems more accurate to say that the thrust of Marx's marginal notes to a proposed instrumentalization of constitutional democracy was to warn of the lack of utility in such a course, *and* to resist the "instrumentalization" of theory (his own).

Habermas's fifth point (e), similar to Albrecht Wellmer's approach I described in Chapter Five, proposes to critique Marx's theory by, in addition to pointing out specific defects in its content, attempting to demonstrate basic "errors" in theoretical strategy as well.

These "errors" are meant to be understood as theoretical "presuppositions" unconsciously held, or insufficiently examined, by the theoretical founders and compounded in their impact by his or her followers whose stake becomes a matter of faith in and/or commitment to dogma. In this case, Habermas holds, Hegel's teleology of "Being" is replaced with that of "History": "The secretly normative presuppositions of theories of history are

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naturalized in the form of evolutionary concepts of progress". The "secretly normative presuppositions" result in a concealment of the "margin of contingency within which any theoretically guided practice is bound to move" (Habermas 1990b, 12). Habermas explains this point by concluding:

> By abolishing any sense of risk in those who will have to bear the consequences of action, it also encourages a questionable type of vanguardism. On the other hand, a totalizing knowledge of this sort feels in a position to make clinical evaluations of the degree of alienation, or success, of particular forms of life in their entirety. This explains the tendency to see socialism as a historically priviliged concrete ethical practice, even though the *most* a theory can do is describe the conditions necessary for emancipated forms of life. What concrete shape these take is something for those eventually involved to decide amongst themselves (Habermas 1990b, 12).

As is clear from the conclusion to this point, Habermas understands Hegel's dialectic, Marx's critical social theory, and the development of Marxism such that, at a sufficient level of abstraction, they can all be grasped in their limitations with a single concept: with the maturation of Habermas's critical social theory, the negative implications of a "monological" theory can be fully appreciated such that a "dialogical" theory of communicative action and reason would be thought to be irresistible.

The final point (f) makes virtually irrelevant any remaining question of whether further examination of Habermas's previous research might yield productive insight into any positive relevance of Marx's theory for contemporaneity. In another reconnection to 1960 of the present article's theoretical summation of the status of Marx's theory, Habermas argues for a credible conceptual continuity from "Marx and Engels" (apparently a single perspective) to "codification by Stalin" (Habermas 1990b, 12). Recall that in the article, 'some Difficulties in the Attempt to Link Theory and Practice" (Habermas 1973, 1-40)--which served as the introduction to the English version of *Theory*

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and Practice (the collection where "Marxism as Critique" first appeared in book form)--Habermas linked Marx to Stalin through a concept of organization, said to have been "introduced" by Lenin politically, then later justified philosophically by Lukács. Here, in respect to this issue, Habermas refers to Marcuse's *Soviet Marxism* (1961). This reference is designed to both ameliorate the implications of the continuity he has just proposed to establish, and to tie together the threads of this part of his analysis. Recall that he had introduced this section with the comment that Western Marxism (since the twenties) had subjected itself to an, "unflinching critique that has left little of the theory's original form remaining" (Habermas 1990b, 11).

Soviet Marxism, while certainly distinguishing between Marx's theory and Stalin's, nonetheless does not account for Stalin's theory as a transformation of Marx's theory into its opposite (Dunayevskaya 1992, 109). Thus, Habermas is able to reference *Soviet Marxism* as documentation of his claim that, at least with the passage of time, and the development of practice, nearly as much affinity as difference can be found in the theories of Marx, on the one hand and post-Stalin Soviet Marxism on the other. In view of the foregoing, and in return to the question I posed at the beginning, on what grounds can Habermas justify his conceptualization of a salvagable "non-communist" Left, relevant and appropriate to his intention, instead of a "non-Marxist" Left?

It is clear Habermas considers it crucial that at least one major neo-Marxist theoretical tradition--Critical Theory--the one, in fact, with which he has himself identified, has since the twenties, "left little of the theory's original form remaining" (Habermas 1990b, 11). As I have already noted, Habermas believes that the relevant critical element still traceable to Marx, has already been incorporated in the structure of Western capitalism. (For now I will put aside a major contention of my analyis preceding this chapter, that it has been

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far from decided whether, even as late as the present decade, Western Marxism, or Critical Theory in particular has, in the first place, ever--prior to Moishe Postone (1993)--satisfactorily grasped and presented Marx's "mature critical theory").

In order to refine a view of Habermas's estimation of the status of Marx in the 1990s, it is necessary to consider in greater detail why Habermas--even after the implications of his theoretical critique of Marx and Marxism, which goes so far as to ask, in so many words, how fundamental a theoretical difference there is between Marx and Stalin--does not focus on the existence, possibility or prospects of a non-*Marxist* Left, which he might hope his theory would infuse with a new vitality, instead of a non-*communist* Left.

In "The Price of Social Democracy", the section which follows "Errors and Defects", Habermas notes that though Marxists achieved "indisputably their main success" in their contribution to instituting a "welfare state compromise" (Habermas 1990b, 13), and, it was not the welfare state that proved to be an illusion, a problem arose in the, "expectation that one could use administrative means to arrive at an emancipated form of life". Phenomenon such as the absorption of political parties by the state has, "kept a non-communist Left to the Left of the social democrats" (Habermas 1990b, 13).

The "non-communist Left", in reaction to this problem, clings to a concept of a "self-managing socialism". It has a difficulty in, "distancing itself from a holistic conception of society, and giving up the notion of a switch from a market-led to a democratically controlled production process" (Habermas 1990b, 14). Habermas concludes,

> This was the best way of keeping the classical link between theory and practice intact, but also the best way of ensuring that theory became orthodox, and practice sectarian.

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The same fact of institutional differentiation--besides that of the economy and state--makes its presence felt *theoretically* as well.

> Marxism has become one other, more or less marginal, method of research among the many that make up academic life. This process of academicization has brought about long overdue revisions, and cross-fertilization with other theoretical approaches. The fertile combination of Marx and Max Weber shaped the field of sociological discourse as early as the Weimar period. Since then, the self-criticism of Western Marxism has been completed largely in universities, producing a pluralism mediated by academic discussion...As a tradition [Marxism's] perspective benefits from being stereoscopic; it does not concentrate on purely superficial aspects of the process of modernization, and, equally, is not confined to the near side of the mirror of instrumental reason, but is sensitive to the ambiguities in the process of rationalization that plough through society...Many have learnt from Marx, each in his or her own way, how Hegel's dialectic of enlightenment can be translated into a research programme. However, the reservations I enumerated in sections (a) to (e) form the sole basis on which impulses from the Marxist tradition can be taken up today (Habermas 1990b, 14).

The increasing complexity of modern society--in addition to differentiation of the economic and political systems--makes itself felt as well in the form in which Marxism appears today. Political/practical impulses are distinguishable from Marxism's academic mediation, the former apparently in urgent need of infusion from the latter, which is fully explained in TCA. Recall that in that work Habermas explained his approach to social theory, characterizing it as the second attempt from within Western Marxism to appropriate Max Weber. Consequently, the vitality of the "Marxist tradition" is highly abstract, its limited potential recognizable only with a certain type of theoretical mediation of its differentiated social instantiations. At this point, Habermas counts his preceding analysis as an effective historical summation of, "the position in which the non-communist Left found itself when Gorbachev ushered in the beginning of the

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end of state socialism" (Habermas 1990b, 14). Given the events of 1989, he asks, "Must people on the Left now retreat to a purely moral standpoint", is socialism still a goal? (Habermas 1990b, 14). Habermas's answer to the latter question is certainly not,

> if understood in the romantic, speculative sense given it in the "Paris Manuscripts", where the dissolution of private ownership of the means of production signifies "the solution to the riddle of history..."(Habermas 1990b, 15).

What follows in Habermas's text is an abrupt characterization of Marx's *1844 Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, proposing once again that, "the dissolution of private property" represented the core of early Marx's philosophy. Moreover, Habermas links Marx's "romantic socialism" to Stalin's forced labor camps, holding that Marxism's ostensible belief in the controlling effects of an end to private property had already been theoretically discredited before, "recent critiques of the false totalizations of the philosophy of reconciliation ...or...Solzhenitsyn..." (Habermas 1990b, 15). Again, re-stating theses in TCA, Habermas holds that what is relevant in 1844 Marx is evidence of a "romantic socialism" which harks back to by-passed forms of social integration--"the family, the neighborhood and the guild", and "Janus-faced...looks forward to a future dominated by industrial labor" (Habermas 1990b, 15). I have already commented extensively on Habemas's interpretation of Marx's 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts.* What needs to be asked here is what utility Habermas might see in linking the early Marx, in particular, to the Stalinist regimes just overthrown, the object of his present article.

After discrediting what he believes to be Marx's "concretist" interpretation of socialism, Habermas proposes an alternative, an idea of "radical abstraction".

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In the section, "The Presupposition of Rationality", Habermas argues that solidarity

> in the framework of a society with a large-scale political integration...is only available in the form of an *abstract* idea...a legitimate, intersubjectively shared expectation.
>
> Everyone should be justified in expecting that the institutionalization of the process for the non-exclusive formation of public opinion and democratic political will can ratify their assumption that the processes of public communication are being conducted rationally and effectively (Habermas 1990b, 15).

Much of the remainder of Habermas's article argues for the vitalization of public spheres as a counter to, and as vehicles for pressure upon, the other differentiated spheres, the economy and state.

Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere--Revisited

Hence, I will begin to conclude this study with a look at Habermas's contribution to a symposium organized for the occasion of the publication of *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Habermas 1993), the English translation. There he reflects on the development of his theory generally, and that of the public sphere, including their relationship to Marx and Marxism.

A first thing to notice is Habermas's contrasting characterizations of his relationship to Marx and Marxism evident, on the one hand, in his lengthy formal contribution to the conference (thirty-six pages, excluding notes) (Habermas 1992a, 421-461) and, on the other hand, in his participation in the summation of the conference entitled "Concluding Remarks" (Habermas 1992b, 462-479) in the published volume. In "Further Reflections on the Public Sphere" (his formal contribution) Habermas centers self-critical remarks (directed at *STPS*) on what he claims was a mistaken "ideology-critical

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approach" (Habermas 1992a, 430) and, "...the weaknesses of a Hegelian-Marxist style of thought, all wrapped up in notions of totality..." (Habermas 1992a, 435). In the section titled, "A Modified Theoretical Framework", Habermas writes,

> From that time on [since TCA] I have considered state apparatus and economy to be systematically integrated action fields that can no longer be transformed democratically from within, that is, be switched over to a political mode of integration, without damage to their proper systemic logic and therewith their ability to function. The abysmal collapse of state socialism has only confirmed this. Instead, radical democratization now aims for a shifting of forces within a "separation of powers" that is itself to be maintained in principle. The new equilibrium to be attained is not one between state powers but between different resources for societal integration. The goal is no longer to supersede an economic system having a capitalist life of its own and a system of domination having a bureaucratic life of its own but to erect a dam against the colonizing *encroachment* of system imperatives on areas of the lifeworld. Therewith we have bid a farewell to the notion of alienation and appropriation of objectified essentialist powers, whose place is in a philosophy of praxis. A radical democratic change in the process of legitimation aims at a new balance between the forces of societal integration so that the the social-integrative power of solidarity--the "communicative force of production"--can prevail over the powers of the other two control resources, ie; money and administrative power, and therewith successfully assert the practically oriented demands of the lifeworld (Habermas 1992a, 444).

In contrast, in his informal remarks, Habermas states, that in revising the "frame of ideology critique" in the years since STPS, he sees a challenge to,

> especially social theory in the Marxist tradition, which I've quite fiercely decided to defend as a still meaningful enterprise...I mostly feel that I am the last Marxist. I think, in fact, that there is a definite need to counter those imperatives that are still reproduced according to the capitalist mode of accumulation and come from a highly bureaucratized capitalist nation, to cope with and reverse them, at least to modify these imperatives. These should grow from what I would like to call autonomous publics of an *Offentlichkeit* type, so that we can have a lifeworld-system interaction that redirects the imperatives in such a way that we can contain, from the system's perspective, those side effects that not only make us suffer but almost destroy core areas of class and racially specific subcultures. Now let me lay out how it should work

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> (why I think that it could work is even less believable). I don't think that there can be any type of revolution in societies that have such a degree of complexity; we can't go back anyway, in spite of all the romanticist antimovements. For academics, revolution is a notion of the nineteenth century (Habermas 1992b, 464, 469).

> Moishe Postone correctly restated the original intention of the book, which I now see more clearly than at the time. *Structural Transformation* moved totally within the circle of a classical Marxian critique of ideology, at least as it was understood in the Frankfurt environment (Habermas 1992b, 463).

In consideration of these remarks there is a sense of having returned (in the 1990s) to what I pointed out was already evident in the relationship of "Between Philosophy and Science: Marxism as Critique" and *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (in the early 1960s). The "ideological-critical approach", what Habermas apparently considers to be most characteristic of Marx's theory, he claims for STPS as well. Recall that in Chapter Three I had noted that after utilizing a concept of radical democracy in criticizing Marx's and Marxism's labor theory of value in "Between Philosophy and Science: Marxism as Critique", in *Structural Transformation* Habermas, in the reverse, posed Marx's analysis of bourgeois political economy such that it impinged on questions of authentic democracy. In this sense, the two works seemed to aim at a synthesis of two traditions which appeared at the time (the height of the cold war) to be mutually exclusive and, in fact, locked in a battle which could lead to mutual destruction. Here Habermas implies that Marx's "ideology-critical approach" led Habermas to an idea of,

> a society that administers itself, that by means of legal enactment of plans writes the program controlling all spheres of life, including its economic reproduction...integrated through the political will of the sovereign people (Habermas 1992a, 443).

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However, recall (as I showed in Chapter Two) that this theory was presented as an *alternative* to what Habermas held was Marx's notion of the idea of a public sphere left with only the task of an "administration of things". Consequently, Habermas now is *not* criticizing what he regarded to be the specific content of Marx's theory, but rather its "presupposition", primarily the, "holistic notion of a societal totality in which the associated individuals participate like members of an encompassing organization..." (Habermas 1993a, 443).

Conversely, in his informal remarks, where he views himself as the "last Marxist", Habermas focuses upon, "imperatives of a capitalist mode of accumulation" (recognition of which is implied to be *characteristic* of Marx's theory). While the "imperatives" arising out of a capitalist mode of accumulation might be "countered", "redirected", "coped with", "modified", or even "reversed", Habermas does not admit that they might be eliminated, because he has never fully grasped the deep structures of labor which are intrinsic to (value) *production*, and define capitalism's specificity. Marx's theoretical perspective on capitalist accumulation cannot be understood without reference to the specific nature of capitalist labor and production. According to Habermas, the task of revitalized public spheres is the alleviation of suffering due to the *side effects* of systematically integrated action fields (state and economy). In addition, these public spheres are charged with defending against destruction of, "core areas of class and racially specific subcultures".

From the 1960s-1990s, Habermas is generally consistent in an approach to Marx which views the latter's standpoint to be that of accumulation (or distribution), instead of through Marx's concept of labor, the contradictory form it assumes in mediating capitalism's social relations. Moreover, in connection with this, he holds fast to the one-dimensionality thesis of the older Critical

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Theory. In the example just shown, this seems to construct an insuperable barrier between social theory and freedom as when he projects a principal goal of the former to be the defense of "core areas of class".

Conclusion

A close reading of his major works brought to view Habermas's consistent concern with a proper understanding of the status of Marx's theory. From the 1960s through the 1970s his own theory did not develop so much *in addition* to his attention to a description of Marx's theory in the context of social theory generally. Rather, I have characterized Habermas's *critique* of Marx's theory as *constitutive* of his own theory. Moreover, while Habermas's earlier theory formation in the 1960s and 1970s remained importantly motivated by his search for the meaning and potential of a public sphere, a search informed by his understanding that Marx's critique of capitalism was essentially of the limited bourgeois idea of the public sphere, there was a marked shift in the period of TCA and its aftermath. From that point, Habermas, with remarkable persistence, attempted to articulate the public sphere as a vital *concept*, rather than as an historical artifact, or even as a recoverable ideal which was still, in its most important significances, extrinsic to his own theory. The fundamental break effected from the inception of the 1980s decade concerned the question of a constellation of the lifeworld, economy, state, and of Habermas's crystalized theory, itself now viewed as *internal* to the meaning and potential of the public sphere. In this, Habermas attempted to move his theory into the center of *a* public sphere, or in fact to realize his theory as constitutive of such a public sphere. Although understood as only one of a plurality of (existing or potential) public spheres, Habermas clearly viewed this, the one he participated in *shaping* as a fruitful critique of Marx's theory, as the most crucial of all. This has

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wide-ranging implications. In respect to Marx's theory in particular, Habermas's critique, while maintaining a substantial continuity, became more precise and explicit. For example, already in STPS Habermas had indicated that Marx's theory was, at least in one major respect, *inferior* to (or left behind by) the "bourgeois ideology" Marx criticized. According to Habermas, while Marx still held open the potential of the public sphere to replace power with reason, bourgeois theory became "realistic". Instead of continuing to burden the public sphere with the task of such an absolute social transformation (the replacement of power with reason), thinkers such as John Stuart Mill began to view the public sphere as one of several formative social forces, specifically assuming the function of a "check" on state power, instead of as it potential replacement. In 1990, Habermas retains an idea of the regressive character of Marx's theory. But in 1990, compared to 1962, Habermas now has his *own* theory, one which had not been available to Marx or Mill nor, for that matter, to himself. In 1962 Habermas weighed the idea that Marx simply brought an idea of the public sphere to its logical conclusion. In *this* sense, according to Habermas, Marx's critique was *superior* to the mere ideology of the property-owning citizen. By the inception of the 1990s and the availability of an alternative critical social theory adequate to modern society's complexities Habermas, while offering more nuanced arguments in support of a view of the backwardness of Marx's theory, essentially argued that Marx, in "instrumentalizing constitutional democracy", disqualified his theory as where political or social action might today be grounded.

On a deeper level, the above involves a subtle, largely undiscussed, major shift in Habermas's understanding (and presentation) of the coherence of Marx's theory. For example, within STPS, the early Marx (when he was most explicit about his relationship to Hegel and German Idealism generally) is

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represented by Habermas's analyses of his *pre*-1844 writings, while leaving out entirely the 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*. With this approach, the young Marx's work could be presented as the purest expression of the potential of the principle of modern society, authentic democracy and social inclusiveness, adequate however only to early, not "late", capitalism.

The beginning of the 1960s' STPS's inadequate analysis of Marx's theory was already implied in Habermas's own radically different approach to the same theory at the end of the 1960s in KHI. Crucially, analysis of Marx's theory in STPS was *bound* by Habermas's central theme (which he was none the less to retain all the way in to the 1990s). That is, Marx 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, with their detailed discussion of philosophic concepts, labor and social alienation, were not, of course, entered into the public sphere during Marx's lifetime--which covered an important time-span of the period to which Habermas's theoretic concept of the public sphere corresponds historically. The situation changed radically in the 1960s, when it became increasingly evident that Marx's 1844 manuscripts were achieving a major influence on an understanding of Marx's theory, including comprehension of his "mature theory". Even in themselves they represented an important contribution to an explanation of many of modern society's (both Communist and capitalist) pathologies. Furthermore, this turn of theoretic events appeared to be gaining some practical, even political, significance, particularly in Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. In the face of this, and in view of his lack of focus in STPS on Marx's *concept* of labor, Habermas (in KHI) developed the novel argument (which, however was ambiguous) that the "non-public sphere" character of the 1844 manuscripts (especially their fulfillment in the contradictory "unoffical" and "official" versions of Marx's theory of labor in the *Grundrisse*) represented the inception of a failed *strategic*, "narrow

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appropriation" of Hegel's dialectic. Here "strategic" is used in the sense of the application of a monological theory (characteristic of instrumental reason) to intrinsically dialogical social relations (interaction).

Within TCA, and in its aftermath, Habermas (with an approach opposite to his ignoring them in STPS) categorically denounces the young Marx of the 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*. However, new interpretations of Marx's *Capital* still figure in the constitutive process of Habermas's theory. The significant difference is not that he had viewed Marx's 1844 writings favorably in, for example, the KHI chapters, the key point there being that he took them up in some detail. Rather, now he takes the offensive in rejecting wholesale the philosophical basis of these writings in themselves, as well as what he saw as the philosophy embedded in them slipping through the back door into Marx's later writings. What made these 1844 writings vital was their continuing practical, political *potential* --first discovered by Marcuse in the 1930s, and extended in the Marxist humanist tradition in East Europe as a *critique* of Communism, as well as in a different way, and with considerably more consistency, though with less apparent impact, even in the U.S., primarily in the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya.

Habermas's bi-level social theory of modernity salvages as "contemporary" only Marx's *Capital*, in so far as the latter attempts to link what Habermas terms the system and lifeworld levels of modern society. He casts Marx's 1844 manuscripts as at best naive and, at worst, wholly backward and regressive. Habermas conceives Marx's theory of society, which I have argued *is* rooted in these 1844 writings in a different way, as clandestinely based on an "expressive" model of labor, that of a social subject, which in producing objects, "realizes" itself--in the way any artist's self-expression comes about through the

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creation of his or her art. To this unity of objective and subjective, transferred to a notion of society as a whole, Habermas of course objects whole-heartedly.

Habermas's *specific* interpretation notwithstanding, the implication of the analysis in the preceding chapters is that Habermas understood more clearly than others the following: that even if it is granted that the theory of society Habermas developed over several decades constitutes a successful (and progressive) critique of Marx's theory, *and* communicative action an adequate alternative to Marx's expressivist conception of labor, that is far from sufficient. Habermas, beginning in the late 1970s, and especially in the 1980s, seeked to find avenues for communicative action which supported the thesis that unless a critical social theory which retains universalist claims is *grasped socially*, that theory is as effectively inadequate as the one it criticizes. It is at this level of abstraction where the most is to be learned from Habermas. The old bi-polar world of competing state powers has dissolved along with the little credibility which remained that events could be satisfactorily explained, on a one-to-one basis, solely in terms of any existing critical social theory. Even more difficult is the identification of the underlying deep structures of social domination, which seem to remain in place even after immense, epocal political transformations on a global scale, which have been witnessed in the last couple of decades. This is reason enough to take with the utmost seriousness the changed constellation, implied in the preceding chapters of this study, in which the public sphere and theory are aligned (and re-aligned).

While it is suprisingly undetailed and abbreviated, Habermas's analysis of "new social movements" in TCA is a crucial element in his justification of the theory of communicative action as a "progressive" critical social theory, compared to Marx's. There he refers to the women's, youth, Black, and ecological movements. These have come about in tandem with the process of

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the "colonization of the lifeworld". The state as well as the economy have attained a level of systematization, grounded in a logic which no longer admits any prospects of social or political integration. Parallel to what he believes Marx had already perceived in respect to labor, what Habermas characterized as the "monetarization of labor power", the concrete content of social integration and co-ordination was eroding in the face of the strategic logic of political power and capital accumulation.

Along with this diagnosis in the TCA, Habermas proferred advice in the direction of the "new social movements". These movements were symptoms of, reactions to, the "mediatization" of the lifeworld, the role of money and power, constitutive of the differentiated subsystems of economy and state. The latter were separated out from the lifeworld (itself structurally differentiated), and integrated society in a functional sense. In contrast, the other type of societal integration, from the perspective of the lifeworld, was social; that is, it was communicatively achieved. These differentiation processes had their counterpart in a fragmentation of consciousness, suggesting the limits of philosophy which corresponded to it, what Habermas, linking it to labor, terms the "philosophy of consciousness". The "new social movements", which existed at the boundaries of system and lifeworld, were unlike the older, directly political party-forms, exemplified in the social democratic labor movements. The former are intrinsically "defensive" against the encroachment of the system on the autonomy, identity and aspirations of self-realization. These "new social movements" were more about particular "forms of life", which defended against a colonizing system. While explaining the defensive inclinations of these movements as following from the logic of his analyis of modernity generally, Habermas warned against their assuming a "strategic" stance in the face of the political system. These movements should remain "defensive" and "self-

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limiting". The danger of attempting to act otherwise was a pull into the very form of strategic integration against which their own movement arose in the first place.

While Habermas analyzes these new social movements as intrinsic to late capitalism, and how they seem to confirm his diagnosis of the times, what became clearer by the 1990s was the implication that Habermas believed his theory was, in important ways, *intrinsic* to these movements. When he suggested that these "new social movements", though acting defensively, and in a "self-limiting" way, publicly articulate the validity of their existence, despite countervailing systemic imperatives, Habermas implied that his own theory (in so far as it represented a more or less fully worked out communicative reason) was ultimately constitutive of the potential success of *this* public sphere.

What is most valuable in Habermas's approach to critical theory is his development of, and commitment to, the idea that the theoretical success of a social critique does not necessarily lead to an end to social domination, and can even lead to its intensification. Although such a notion can already be found in the older Critical Theory, Habermas made publicly available a detailed analysis of Marx's theory, and suggested precisely where in that theory these consequential defects might be found. He also implied that a grasp of his own theory, while leaving open the question of the current (practical or theoretical) relevance of at least some of Marx's ideas, led beyond them. In any case, close attention to Habermas's own consistent return, over a long period of time, to Marx's theory, even where he is most critical or in his major works focused on elaborating his own theory, yields a view of the full array of issues of social domination in contemporary society.

Even though the view of Marx's theory I have developed (with a large debt to Postone's arguments from *within* a Critical Theory tradition which has

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absorbed Habermas's theory) in a discussion of Habermas's various approaches to it is not compatible with Habermas's assessment, this does not imply a turn to "action" which could supposedly directly abolish labor (as it has shaped capital and, in turn, been shaped by it). I have argued that labor is not exemplary of just one of modern society's modes of societal integration; labor is central to the capitalist formation--both its early and late stages--because, unique to that social formation, it functions as its social mediation. In accord with Habermas's concern with the unique potential of a *social grasp* of an emancipatory critical theory, the need is for the development and enhancement of even newer social movements, which include and deepen those identified by Habermas. Habermas's critique of Marx, in so far as it has contributed, however ironically, to the re-emergence of an idea of the current potential of Marx's theory, needs to be made available to, and infuse, these movements from the start. Recent recognition of the relevance of Marx's "mature critical theory" (especially since it appears after many decades of relative neglect within the Critical Theory tradition itself) might imply the potential for this type of mature *social* movement.

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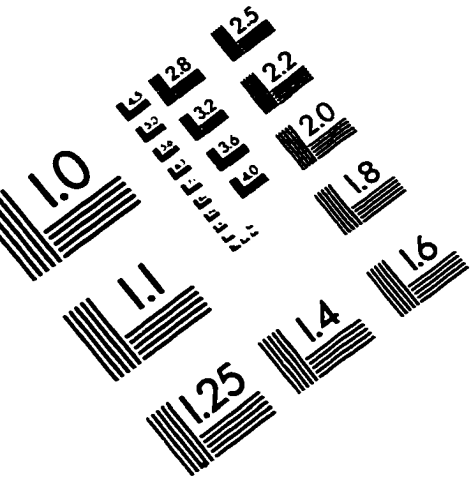

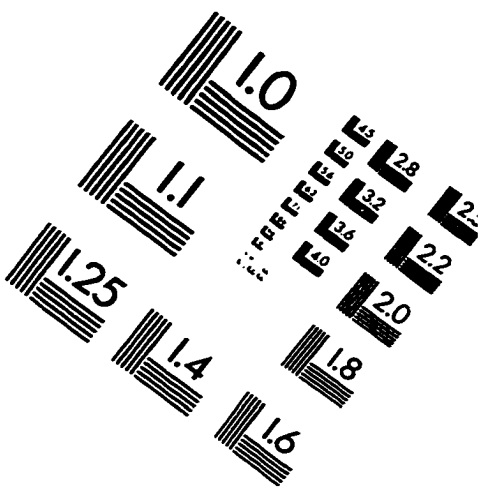

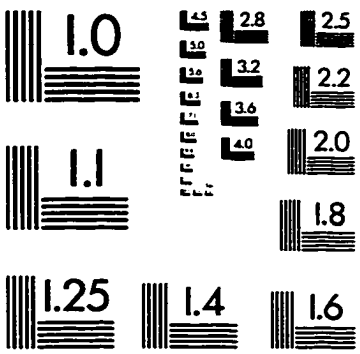

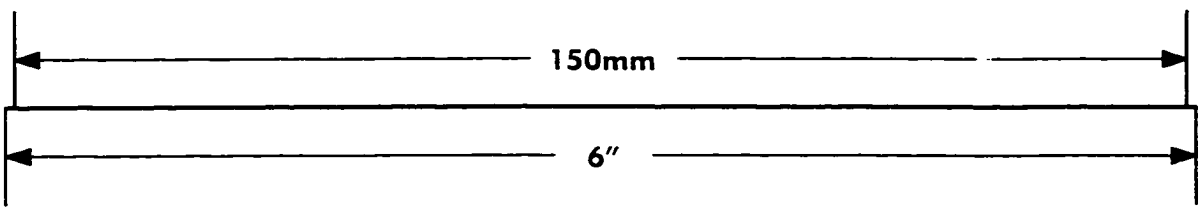

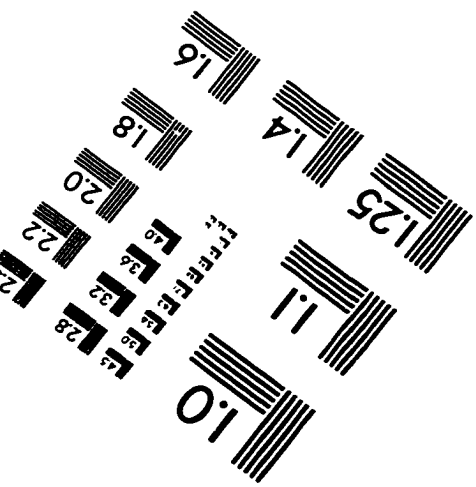

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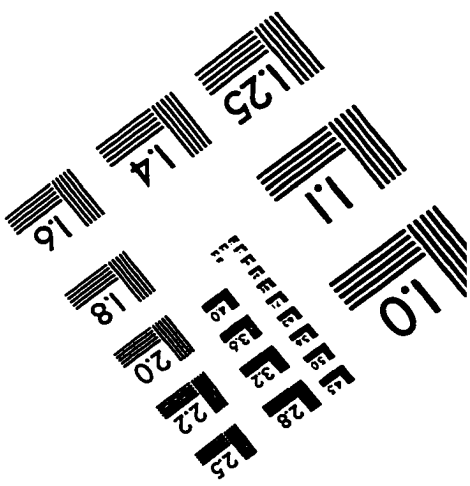

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