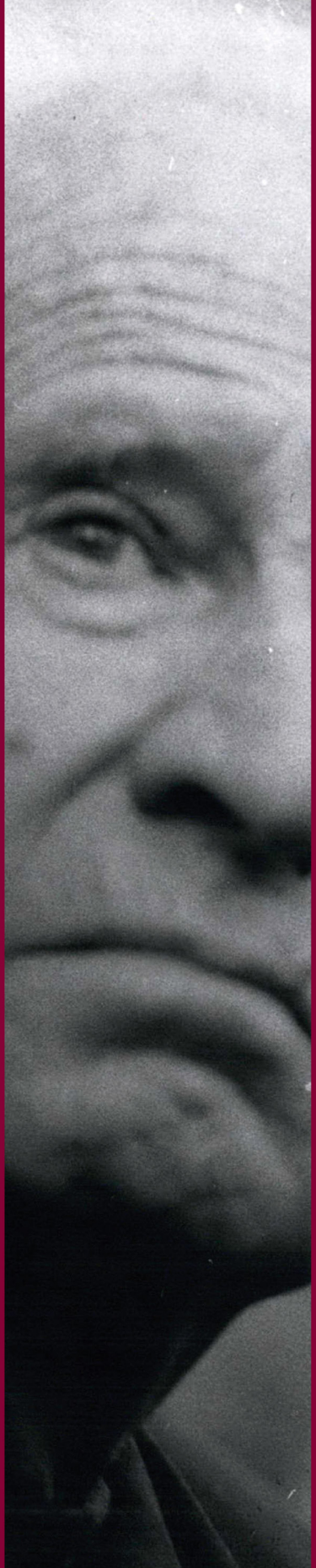

ROUTLEDGE

THE **MARCUSEAN** MIND

EDITED BY EDUARDO ALTHEMAN C. SANTOS,
JINA FAST, NICOLE K. MAYBERRY,
AND SID SIMPSON

ROUTLEDGE PHILOSOPHICAL MINDS

CONTENTS

1

WHAT IS IMMANENT CRITIQUE? MARCUSE'S CRITICAL THEORY OF SOCIETY

Jeta Mulaj

It has become a truism for radical contemporary scholars that theory *is* praxis. This position does not allege the immediate unity of theory and praxis but theory's instrumentality: theory is a strategic tool for action. Theodor Adorno astutely characterizes the reduction of theory to utility as a misuse of the "antithesis between theory and praxis" to "denounce theory."[1] Indeed, theoretical interventions that do not offer immediate fuel for praxis are dismissed or regarded suspiciously. Hans Magnus Enzensberger aptly captures this position when, discussing theory and practice in the post-1960s era, he writes, "the only person beyond suspicion is the one who has got hold of the microphone and who represents, at the moment of speaking, a higher reality of which, alas, he himself is not a part."[2] Conversely, those who engage in theory and refrain from action, Adorno argues, are pronounced traitors.[3]

Caught up in strategic thinking, theory risks terminating into a program or culminating in the very society it purports to critique.[4] Theory that is solely catered to practical applicability, Adorno warns, is hostile to both theory and transformation; it announces the end of thought.[5] "Immediate action," he writes, "which always evokes taking a swing, is incomparably closer to oppression than the thought that catches its breath."[6] Adorno, who represents, in academia, *the one who called the cops*, has been memorialized as the symbol of anti-praxis and resignation. But he is not alone in this position. Herbert Marcuse, often seen as a symbol of praxis and hope, and thus an alternative to Adorno, also cautions against denouncing theory for immediate action.

In 1969, Marcuse critiqued the "rebellious young intelligentsia" for their "contempt for theoretical preoccupation" and "derogation of thought in favor of immediate and direct action."[7] This militant position, Marcuse argues, in demanding that knowledge be immediately relevant to life insists "on the absorption of thought in reality."[8] Such (false) unity of thought and reality announces the triumph of reality over thought and, consequently, both the termination of critique and the possibility of transformation. This absorption proclaims not thought's ability to grasp reality but its resignation to reality. In losing its relative freedom from existing society, thought renounces its critical capacity and merely reflects that which is.[9] Thought becomes reality's representative.

DOI: 10.4324/9781003381020-3

Against this prevailing tendency, Marcuse insists that theory, despite being part of and emerging from society, is not identical to it. The distance of theory from reality holds the promise of critique. Marcuse examines how reality threatens thought all the while upholding the need for critical thinking. Thus, unlike readings of Marcuse that portray him as failing to "achieve genuine critical theory" understood as theory guided by the principle of the unity of theory and praxis, I show that Marcuse does not understand critical theory as the unity of theory and praxis.[10] Though theory and praxis are related they are neither identical nor necessarily and immediately unified. Thought's critical and transformative capacity is conditioned on its distance from reality as well as its independence from immediate action.

Marcuse's reflections on the relationship between thought and reality, critique and transformation, challenge contemporary tendencies to reduce theory to practice or to announce their unity too hastily. To show this, this chapter focuses on Marcuse's account of a critical theory of society and immanent critique.

Immanent critique often circulates as a shorthand for criticism that reveals society's failure to live up to its own standards, norms, or ideals.[11] However, for Marcuse, ideals do not represent a non-capitalist moment that can be used to critique capitalism; rather, the ideals and norms used to critique society are themselves historically specific. Therefore, critiquing society from its values and norms amounts to "accepting the basic premises of the criticized society," a mistake Marcuse once attributed to the neo-Freudians.[12] Critique, for Marcuse, does not proceed from abstract norms, transhistorical ideals, or society's existing norms. Such criticism is not *critical* of society but *terminates* in it by unwittingly dragging the premises of the society it critiques into itself.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss the various forms and accounts of immanent critique. The goal of this chapter is to glean the features of Marcuse's immanent critique from his account of critical theory. A critical theory of society is immanent to the objects of its investigation. It does not proceed from immanent *norms* but traces the *object's* own development. Immanent critique aims at transformation – not by way of prescribing immediate, strategic action but rather by illuminating the movement of society, which, in pointing beyond itself, exposes possibilities immanent to the present yet unrealizable within it. I argue that, for Marcuse, immanent critique forms the basis of a critical theory of society that aims beyond capitalist society. His account of critical theory clarifies the movement, categories, and aim of immanent critique, thereby illuminating theory's role in denouncing existing society for the sake of emancipation.

To develop this account, I focus on his 1941 work, *Reason and Revolution*. A reinterpretation of Hegel's philosophy in light of the rise of Fascism, the book argues that Hegel's basic concepts are "hostile to the tendencies" that lead to "Fascist theory and practice."[13] Marcuse praises Hegel's insistence that philosophy does not accept the already given. The separation of thought and reality at the heart of Hegel's method, he maintains, renders his philosophy *critical* of existing society. However, Marcuse critiques Hegel's eventual renunciation of this separation as conformity with existing society. Surveying Hegel's system with attention to how his theory initially opposes prevailing reality but eventually "subordinate[s] reason to the authority of established fact," Marcuse traces Hegelian philosophy's fate after Hegel's death.[14] Among its trajectories is the integration of Hegel's dialectic into Marxist theory, the central focus of this chapter. The critical tendencies of Hegel's philosophy, though eventually abandoned by him, Marcuse argues, were integrated into Marxist critical theory.[15] Unlike Hegel's philosophy, Marx's critical theory does not

renounce itself to reality but stubbornly clings to the negation of philosophy as the negation of society.

In what follows, section one explains Marcuse's account of the transition from philosophy to critical theory. Section two develops an account of immanent critique through Marcuse's reading of Marx, particularly his 1844–46 writings. The third section excavates six main features of Marcuse's immanent critique.

I Critical Theory

In *Reason and Revolution*, Marcuse contrasts the realization of reason and freedom *in* and *through* social and political institutions with transformation *beyond* the existing order. The latter position is attributed to Marx's critical theory; the former to Hegel's system, which contains a beyond that is subsequently betrayed.

The transition of Hegel's philosophy to Marx's critical theory, on which this section focuses, is crucial for explaining Marcuse's immanent critique because it represents the movement by which critical theory holds fast to the betrayed beyond. That is, this transition sustains the beyond in its obstruction – as an unrealized possibility – not as a theoretical but as a socio-historical task.

Hegel's dialectic, Marcuse writes, in bringing "philosophy to grips with social reality" dissolved "the harmonious world of fixed objects posited by common sense" and recognized that the truth philosophy seeks is "a totality of pervasive contradictions."[16] His philosophical concepts came to reflect reality's movement. However, since these concepts were themselves "patterned on its social content," Marcuse argues, they "stopped where the content stopped," namely with "the state that governed civil society."[17] Consequently, the ideals that pointed beyond existing society "were stowed away in the realm of the absolute mind, in the system of dialectical philosophy."[18]

Hegel's method, however, Marcuse argues, reached beyond the concepts that brought it to a conclusion.[19] For the dialectic of philosophy itself demanded the movement from Hegel's philosophy to Marx's critical theory. The dialectic made history part of the content of reason, demonstrating that society has reached a point where the realization of reason is possible. Patterned on society's dynamic – including its oppressive and transformative features – philosophy's commitment to transcend reality drove its conversion into social theory and practice as "its legitimate heir."[20] The progress beyond Hegel's philosophy, for Marcuse, is an advance beyond philosophy and the society to which it "had tied its fate."[21]

Marcuse understands the shift from Hegel's philosophy to Marx's critical theory as a transition to a new "order of truth" and new categories that cannot be "interpreted in terms of philosophy."[22] Hegel's "social and economic categories are *all philosophical concepts*," he argues, while Marx's philosophical concepts are "*social* and *economic* categories."[23] Though Marx's writings express the negation of philosophy in philosophical language, Marcuse contends that they are not strictly philosophical.[24] This means, for Marcuse, that once the role of economic conditions in society was recognized, philosophy, as an independent discipline, became superfluous to grasp existing society. The truths that philosophy articulates, which do not refer to what exists but what can be attained, are preserved in the economic and political concepts of critical theory. The latter retains philosophy within its concepts, which are neither merely philosophy nor economic ones for they seek to explain the totality of the world and human beings as social beings. Critical theory demonstrates the possibility of realizing reason through society's transformation.[25]

According to Marcuse, the Hegelian concepts in Marx's writings are not mere "metamorphoses of old philosophical categories."[26] In fact, all of Marx's concepts have "a new conceptual structure and framework that cannot be derived from preceding theories."[27] This is most strongly demonstrated for Marcuse by the fact that in Hegel's system "all categories terminate in the existing order" while in Marx "all the categories refer to the negation of this order."[28] The latter indict the totality of existing society and "aim at a new form of society even when describing its current form."[29] Marx's categories contain a beyond and thus render his theory *critical*.

The transition to critical theory bears the marks of the loss of the critical capacities of Hegel's philosophy. Marcuse argues that Hegel's philosophy "unfolded and completed 'in thought' all those bourgeois principles (completed 'in reality' in other Western nations) that were not yet a social reality."[30] His conceptions of labor, reification, alienation, and the possibility of their abolition are his great achievements and central to Marx's theory. And yet, for Marcuse, Hegel ends up affirming that social and political forms have become adequate to reason, allowing for the fulfillment of humans' highest potentialities through the development of existing social forms, which implies the consummation of "the unity of subject and object," the overcoming of reification, the resolution of the "antagonisms of civil society" in the monarchic state, and the reconciliation of contradiction "in the realm of thought or absolute mind."[31] This does not mean that Hegel declared that everything that exists is rational, but that philosophy recognized that the conditions for the realization of reason and freedom had blossomed.

While Hegel's categories terminate in civil society, Marx's categories "address themselves to a truth to be had only through the abolition of civil society."[32] This, Marcuse adds, marks a change in theory's relation to reality. For in hailing facts as "conforming to reason" Hegel announced reality "to coincide with theory."[33]

Did " 'the truth,' " however, "actually coincide with the given social and political order? Had history discharged theory of any need to transcend the given system of life in society?" Marcuse asks.[34] Contrasting Hegel's affirmative stance, he highlights that Marx reveals that the proletariat's existence "contradicts the alleged reality of reason."[35] For Hegel, Marcuse maintains, the truth is a whole present in every single element such that any element lacking connection to the process of reason destroys the truth of the whole. Marx identifies this as the proletariat, whose lot is the reverse of the fulfillment of reason and human potentialities, proving "the very negation of reason."[36] Marcuse writes:

> If property constitutes the first endowment of a free person, the proletarian is neither free nor a person, for he possesses no property. If the exercises of the absolute mind, art, religion, and philosophy, constitute man's essence, the proletarian is forever severed from his essence, for his existence permits him no time to indulge in these activities.[37]

The proletariat spoils not only Hegel's rational society but also "the whole of bourgeois society."[38] If, as Hegel demonstrates, labor determines one's essence and its social form, then the proletariat attests to " 'the complete loss of man,' " which results from the "mode of labor on which civil society is founded."[39] In proving that truth remains unrealized, the proletariat demonstrates that "history and social reality negate philosophy."[40] This implies that philosophical doctrine cannot carry out a critique of society; the task shifts to socio-historical practice.

Hegel's successors, Marcuse writes, embraced the negation of philosophy in various ways. Amongst them, Marx views it as the realization of philosophy, and an emancipated society, that is the negation of society. This negation is articulated by revealing the individual's origin in the labor process as the basis of liberation. Marx attributes the suffering of the proletariat to the historical form of society, which requires "social action for its abolition."[41] By focusing on labor, Marcuse writes, Marx "consummated" Hegel's principle that "the structure of content (reality) determines the structure of the theory."[42] Marx "made the foundations of civil society the foundations of the *theory* of civil society."[43] Through the category of "labor," Marx reveals not only how natural conditions are transformed into social ones but also that universal labor is the guiding principle of bourgeois society – the "*totality* of human existence."[44] This principle implies that society is perpetuated through constant universal exchange of labor products, that the totality of social relations is governed by the immanent laws of capitalist production tying individuals' development and freedom to the labor by which they satisfy social needs.[45] "All men are free," Marcuse writes, "but the mechanisms of the labor process govern the freedom of them all."[46] The analysis of labor is thus "absolutely necessary" to uncover conditions for the realization of reason and freedom.[47] "A critical analysis of that process," Marcuse writes, "yields the final theme of philosophy."[48]

Philosophy's final theme – the realization of reason and freedom – expresses the negation of philosophy as its realization. We can see this argument in Marx as early as in his dissertation, in a section known in English as "To Make the World Philosophical."[49] There, the realization of philosophy as its loss commences through a turnover or metamorphosis. The movement of philosophy is described as the "theoretical mind" that, "once liberated in itself, turns into practical energy," into "*will*," and thus "turns itself against the reality of the world existing without it."[50] Philosophy's realization, Marx writes, occurs according to its inner essence as one "afflicted with contradictions."[51] Philosophy becomes one aspect of the world facing another; it enters into an antagonistic relationship with what exists because the "urge to realize itself" leads it to enter "into tension" against the world, which it seeks to change.[52] That is, philosophy does not affirm but seeks to negate the world.

Prior to this turnover, philosophy does not face the world but is *in* and *of* the world; limited by it, it merely reflects it. Before emerging as will, philosophy lacks distance from reality and, consequently, cannot express the possibility of transformation. Marx refers to this stage as one of inner completeness or self-sufficiency [*Selbstgenügsamkeit*], which is shattered when philosophy enters into tension with existing reality. In the attempt to realize itself, philosophy exhibits the possibilities that the world holds but does not immediately realize. This reveals that the world is not self-sufficient or whole, but riddled with contradictions, and not fully actualized, for it can be otherwise. Philosophy thus measures "existence by the essence, the particular reality by the Idea."[53] It establishes itself as critique.[54]

On Marx's account, the world becomes philosophical through a movement immanent to philosophy, wherein the latter becomes critical by distancing itself from the world from which it emerges. It is driven to affirm the truth of the world. In Marx's words, "what was inner light" becomes "consuming flame turning outwards."[55] Philosophy's drive, thus, announces the possibility of terminating existing society. The flame seeks to consummate a new state by devouring the old world. "The result" of this process, Marx writes, is the simultaneous "realization" and "loss" of philosophy: "the world becomes philosophical, philosophy becomes worldly."[56] For him, the "liberation of the world from un-philosophy"

is simultaneously the liberation from philosophy.[57] This demonstrates that theory and reality do not coincide; reality and philosophy reveal each other's untruthful sides.

This exposition of philosophy's relation to transformation reflects the (dis)unity of thought and reality. The critical capacity of thought is not expressed through complete separation from reality or immediate unity with practice; rather, it is the distance between thought and reality, as emphasized by Hegel and Marx, that enables critique. To be critical, thought cannot remain identical to the world from which it emerges. Thought's turnover reveals what was not immediately evident.

This relation of theory to reality is central to Marcuse's account of the transition from Hegel to Marx. Marcuse shows how Hegel understands philosophy to be a symptom of the loss of freedom and unity.[58] Philosophy accounts for the world of contradictions, from which it emerges, and for their possible unification.[59] Indeed, for Marcuse, the promise of Hegel's "speculative thinking," which abandons common sense and mere understanding, is the possibility of overcoming the state of affairs.[60] He denounces the traditional separation of thought and reality, understood as thought's withdrawal from its task of bringing reality in harmony with truth, as conformity with the world. For Marcuse, the negative moment of Hegel's philosophy announces reality's untrue character and reveals that thought which does not correspond to reality is not untrue. Speculative thinking exhibits, for Marcuse, Hegel's earliest presentation of the dialectical method.[61] It showcases distrust for matter-of-fact authority to an extent that the "immediately given" reality is not the "final reality," which would indicate the resolution of all antagonisms – the absolute.[62] For Marcuse, this immanent critique does not affirm reality because it does not terminate in immediate facts even if it proceeds from them.

Marcuse views this negative aspect of dialectics as the critical kernel of Hegel's philosophy. In Hegel, "the dialectical pattern," Marcuse writes, is " 'the truth of' a world permeated by negativity, a world in which everything is something other than it *really* is, and in which opposition and contradiction constitute the laws of progress."[63] That things develop their potentialities through perishing – as the consummation of possibilities – is significant for Marcuse for at least two reasons, which will be elaborated later: it urges that "the ought" be realized in this world;[64] it outlines "the historical law that a social system can set free its productive forces only by perishing and passing into another form of social organization."[65]

However, Marcuse portrays negativity as becoming truly emancipatory in Marx's critical theory of society. For even Hegel's philosophy, which proceeds from an understanding of the non-identity of thought and reality, terminates in the existing order. The overtaking of philosophy by reality, for Marcuse, renders thought impotent.[66] Consequently, thought can do nothing but affirm existing society.

The "slow death of the critical moments" in Hegel's philosophy, for Marcuse, is evident in his account of the state.[67] This death is indeed slow, for as Marcuse highlights, Hegel's early work is critical towards the state. Yet, Marcuse shows, the unity of individual and common interests, understood by Hegel as the state's aim, culminates in an authoritarian state suppressing the antagonisms of individualistic society.[68] Hegel's demand for a strong state, Marcuse argues, derives from Hegel's "insight into the irreconcilable contradictions of modern society" and thus the realization that existing society and its economic system prevents "the establishment of a true common interest."[69] When Hegel's analysis revealed that civil society is incapable of establishing reason and freedom on its own accord, Marcuse writes, he "put forward a strong state to achieve this end" and sought to

reconcile this state "with the idea of freedom by giving a strong constitutional flavoring to monarchy."[70]

For Marcuse's Hegel, civil society lays the material basis for the realization of freedom and reason.[71] It contains elements for a free and rational association, but also upholds a reason "distorted by the blind necessity of the economic process and a freedom perverted through competition of conflicting private interests."[72] To liberate these elements from private interests, Marcuse argues, Hegel subjects civil society to an autonomous power: the state. For Marcuse, the state does not "displace" civil society but shields its interests "without changing its content."[73] That is, Hegel's authoritarian state, necessitated by civil society's antagonistic structure, "preserves" society's material content.[74]

Marcuse's analysis does not regurgitate criticisms of Hegel for justifying the Prussian state. "Hegel is guilty not so much of being servile," he writes, "as of betraying his highest philosophical ideas."[75] For him, this means that Hegel's political doctrine mirrors the fate of society, which, in pursuing "its freedom," descends "into a state of nature far below reason."[76] Marcuse shows this by situating Hegel's concept of the state in the socio-historical setting that Hegel "himself implied" in describing civil society and concludes that Hegel's analysis of the state captures the structure of modern society.[77] What Hegel saw as "the very essence of the state" was in reality a description of "the historical type of the state that corresponded to civil society."[78]

In Marcuse's view, Hegel's political philosophy ultimately "bears the mark of resignation."[79] This is evident in Hegel's declaration of the "state's right to be the right of reason itself" and his elevation of the state above society.[80] When fashioning reality according to reason threatened "the very society that originally hailed this as man's privilege," Marcuse writes, "Hegel preferred to maintain the prevailing order under all circumstances."[81] That individual freedom is overshadowed by the universal's authority and that the rational purports to be the given order is not an "inconsistency in Hegel's system" but reflects the historical development of society's antagonisms that "turn freedom into necessity and reason into authority."[82] The concepts of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, he writes, absorb and consciously retain "the contradictions of this society and follow them to the bitter end."[83] Thus, Marcuse writes, the *Philosophy of Right* is "reactionary in so far as the social order it reflects is so, and progressive in so far as it is progressive."[84]

The *Philosophy of Right*, for Marcuse, has a materialist approach and reveals the socio-economic foundations of Hegel's philosophical concepts.[85] However, although Hegel "derives all the social and economic realities from the idea," he argues, the idea itself is conceived in terms of those realities and "bears their mark in all its moments."[86] Consider Marcuse's claim regarding Hegel's argument that the state rules civil society in the name of free individuals and their interests. "The historical contradiction inherent in Hegel's political philosophy," he writes, "determines its fate."[87] For Marcuse, "the individual who knows and wishes his true interests in the common interests" does not exist; individuals exist "only as private owners, subjects of the fierce processes of civil society, cut off from the common interest."[88] "As far as civil society reaches," Marcuse adds, "none is free of its toils."[89]

Thus, for Marcuse, *Philosophy of Right*'s modern philosophical concepts "share the fate of the society they explain" and "lose their progressive character, their promising tone, their critical impact, and assume the form of defeat and frustration."[90] They become a "metaphysical justification of private property" insofar as private property is ontologized and "the ontological idea of reason" is adjusted to commodity-producing society.[91] This is evident for Marcuse in Hegel's identification of laws of nature with laws of competitive

society. His account of free will, Marcuse argues, actually refers to a historically specific form of the will: "that of the individual as a private owner," with private property as the initial realization of freedom.[92]

Ultimately, for Marcuse, Hegel betrays his philosophy for his society. By declaring the rationality of the given order, Hegel denies political philosophy's ability to critique the state, which is "rational and this is the end."[93] The "end" does not pertain to the state – which is not the end of Hegel's system – but to philosophy's relation to reality, including the state. "Philosophy reaches its end" when it formulates "a view of the world in which reason is realized."[94] Upon proclaiming the state to be the reality of reason's realization, Marcuse contends that Hegel's understanding of theory's task – to reveal the untruth and inadequacy of reality – "impel[s]" him "to renounce theory."[95] Political philosophy cannot dictate the state's form or continue applying theory to politics, lest it becomes utopian.[96] Therefore, philosophy's task of revealing reality's untruth and the potential for the realization of reason and freedom becomes a historical and practical one delegated to the state. Consequently, philosophy is demoted to "reconciling men to the actual."[97]

This "strange reconciliation," Marcuse thinks, demonstrates that the *Philosophy of Right* reveals or "perversely" acquiesces to the "irreconcilable contradictions of modern society."[98] The very Preface where "Hegel renounces critical theory" seems to call for it "by stressing 'the conflict between what is and what ought to be'."[99] This renunciation, Marcuse writes, "marks the resignation of a man who knows that the truth he represents has drawn to its close and that it can no longer invigorate the world."[100]

In turn, this renunciation returns us to philosophy's final theme: the realization of reason and freedom. Observe philosophy's fate in the *Philosophy of Right*: it meets its death through its negation into the state. While Hegel initially theorized the negation of philosophy as the liberation of the world from unphilosophy, Marx preserves and develops this as the negation of capitalist society. In Hegel, the negation of philosophy is its *renunciation*, while in Marx's critical theory of society, the negation of philosophy as its realization is the negation of society.

This means, for Marcuse, that agonistic civil society implies not only an authoritarian state but also its negation. The concepts of reason and freedom, which "point to this negation," are at the root of the Hegelian system."[101] However, "conceived as genuine dialectical concepts," Marcuse adds, they cannot be realized in "the prevailing system of civil society."[102] In fact, he finds elements in Hegel's account of the state that are "incompatible" with civil society and "outline the picture of a future social organization of humankind."[103] This outline becomes clear in Marx's critical theory, as his categories do not terminate in existing society but elucidate its negation.

Marx demonstrates that when society is viewed in light of reason and freedom, it appears as a set of contradictions that engender an irrational and oppressive order. The very existence of classes contradicts and transforms freedom "into an abstract idea."[104] If each is free to the extent that their class is free, then individual development is constrained by one's class. Establishing a universal order is possible solely through the negation of the individual, which Marx understands as a historical product of class society rooted in the organization of labor, not the state.[105] Thus, through the category of labor, Marcuse argues, Marx simultaneously reveals that laboring individuals are denied free universal development, which requires the negation of labor.[106] That is, capitalism hinders the realization of reason and freedom, which require its negation.[107] This analysis of labor anticipates its negation in a free society, thereby outlining a future society as an association of free

individuals; a "rational society" organized around "the universal satisfaction of all individual potentialities," and not the universality of labor.[108]

Marcuse's account of the transition from philosophy to a critical theory of society, developed here, addresses theory's transformative capacity. "Who will realize philosophy?"[109] And what becomes of theory when reality holds the necessary conditions to materialize reason? As seen in Marcuse's reading of Hegel, when philosophy relinquishes its preoccupation with the ideal, its "critical task" passes "to another agency."[110] Philosophy's culmination is "its abdication."[111] In Marx's views, when philosophy is released from the ideal and stops opposing reality it "ceases to be philosophy."[112] Critical theory, however, does not itself vanish but "assumes a new form" as reason's efforts pass to social theory and practice.[113] Marx's critical theory of society, Marcuse maintains, reveals that universal suffering, rooted in our society's historical form, is not a philosophical problem or a problem philosophy can solve. It is a socio-historical task that requires the abolition of commodity-producing labor for the realization of an emancipated society. Thus, for Marcuse, the transition to a critical theory of society marks the emergence of a "new philosophy," which realizes Hegel's philosophy by negating it.[114] While Hegel "stuck to idealism" even when a materialist solution existed, Marcuse writes, this new philosophy is not idealist; it acknowledges, develops, and aims at the possibilities of realizing "a free human existence by liberation in fact."[115] Its goal is concrete emancipation.

A critical theory of society that points to a beyond develops through immanent critique. To show this, let us turn to Marcuse's reading of Marx's analysis of alienation as exemplary of immanent critique.[116]

II Immanent Critique

Marx's analysis of alienated labor exhibits immanent critique in motion. This is evident in Marcuse's reading of this analysis, which highlights how it proceeds from the "premises of political economy" and through them shows that workers become more impoverished the more they produce.[117] Treating capitalist labor as constituting the total alienation of human begins, Marcuse argues, Marx shows that the social division of labor operates according to the laws of capitalist production and that the product of labor determines the nature and goal of human activity.

Marx's analysis, he writes, precedes with a "materialistic proposition" that states a "*historical fact*."[118] This fact exposes the materialist character of society that legislates over humans and their relations. This proposition, for Marcuse, is also a "*critical* one": it implies that the prevailing relation between consciousness and social existence is false and must be overcome for the true relation to be realized.[119] "The truth of the materialist thesis," Marcuse argues, "is to be fulfilled in its negation."[120]

Marx's materialist starting point, Marcuse writes, is "forced upon" him by the quality of the society he analyzes.[121] Marx begins with an economic fact recognized by classical political economy: that the more wealth the worker produces the poorer he becomes; that "the impoverishment of workers is a product of" their labor.[122] But significantly, for Marcuse, Marx's analysis does not terminate in merely disclosing that poverty springs from capitalism and is thus rooted in modern society's essence.

Beginning with a fact, Marx then *asks about the significance of this mode of labor for human development*. With this question, Marcuse argues, Marx leaves the plane of political economy.[123] This departure, he maintains, allows Marx to treat the totality of economic

relations, laws, and institutions not as isolated objective clusters of facts, but as constituting a historical form within which humans live their lives.

For Marcuse, this reveals something significant about Marx's method: that what are usually dismissed as mere "economic categories" in his work (e.g., labor, commodity, value) do not merely denote an objective economic fact, separate from the rest of human existence, but describe an "existential activity" of human beings.[124] Labor, Marcuse writes, is not a mere economic category but always also a human activity. Marx's categories, once freed from "specialized science" – or, once they leave the plane of political economy – are no longer simply economic categories; rather, the economic categories "are seen to be determining factors for human existence (*Daseinsformen, Existenzbestimmungen*), even if they denote objective economic facts."[125]

Here, Marcuse is not merely clarifying the nature of Marx's categories but also their relation to emancipation. He highlights that for Marx human self-realization is at stake, which requires the abolition of the prevailing mode of labor.[126] Abolition is a task philosophy cannot itself deliver, and yet, Marcuse maintains, critique proceeds in philosophical terms because the enslavement of labor and its liberation are conditions that exceed the framework of political economy. They affect the foundation of human existence and thus of philosophy as well. Although Marx describes human self-realization in Hegelian terms, the problem is "no longer a philosophical one" for it requires the abolition of commodity-producing labor.[127]

That is, what is key for Marcuse is that Marx begins in philosophical terms but departs from them once his theory is elaborated.[128] Marcuse maintains that the "critical and transcendental character" of Marx's economic categories, as expressed by philosophical concepts in his 1844–46 writings and later in *Capital*, is "demonstrated by the economic categories themselves."[129] He shows this by turning to Marx's analysis of labor in capitalism, which exceeds the structure of economic relationships to touch upon their "actual human content."[130] Marx's account of alienated labor reveals how in capitalism the realization of labor appears as its opposite; labor, the medium of self-fulfillment, cripples human faculties. Here, Marcuse insists, the relation between capital and labor, capital and commodity, and commodity and labor, are treated as human relations, or as relations in man's social existence. This persists throughout Marx's analysis such that even private property is revealed to be the product, result, and consequence of the alienated mode of production. Marx's deployment of "labor," according to Marcuse, describes society – revealing the historical particularity of capitalism – while simultaneously pointing beyond it – showing that the division of labor cannot be overcome *in* capitalism by proclaiming abstract freedom of individuals, thus, enforcing the necessity of a beyond.

Marx's theory, Marcuse maintains, rests on the premise that "the labor process determines the totality of human existence and thus gives society its basic pattern."[131] Marcuse regards Marx's analysis of labor in capitalism as simultaneously "an analysis of the premises of its abolition."[132] That Marx views existing conditions of labor with "an eye to their negation in an actually free society" shows, for Marcuse, that his categories are positive and negative – revealing the existing situation as "the prelude to its passing into a new form."[133] This implies, for Marcuse, that Marx's labor theory of value is not a "theorem" but a "theoretical conception of a historical process."[134]

Marx's analysis, which shows how labor and freedom in capitalism produce their opposites, presents for Marcuse "an immanent critique of individual freedom as it originated in capitalist society and as it develops *pari passu* the development of capitalism."[135] This

reveals something that Hegel's philosophy concealed: the falsity of the alleged reality of reason. Recall, the proletariat spoils the entirety of bourgeois society and expresses total negativity: universal suffering and universal injustice.[136] Thus, as we stated earlier, if the principle of universal suffering is not a natural condition but rooted in *our* society, its abolition requires social action; philosophy cannot effect this transformation.

Marx's analysis, for Marcuse, can reveal this precisely because it is not merely an economic analysis. Rather, Marx treats the relation between capital, labor, and commodity as a social relation, even though social relations take the form of objective relations between things, as he famously develops in *Capital*. This reification [*Verdinglichung*] sets social relations amongst humans as a totality of objective relations, concealing their origins and the possibility of their transformation. He attributes this mystification to commodity-producing labor as a process that conceals its human element and content.[137] Reification expresses the relation between labor and capital as freed from exploitation and oppression.

However, Marcuse warns, if we stopped here, this relation would seem to be "purely objective" and the economic process would appear as a natural one to be studied by "economic theory" as its proper science.[138] The strength of Marx's analysis for Marcuse lies in its rejection of such crude economic theory for an interpretation of economic relations as existential social relations.[139] Marx does not arrive at this interpretation through a kind of humanism but rather through "the actual content of the economy itself."[140] Marx's categories, Marcuse argues, expose the human content concealed in economic categories: they show that economic relations appear objective, explain that this form of appearance results from the character of commodity production itself, and reveal economic relations to be in actually historically specific social relations. Only theory that can expose this content, Marcuse maintains, turns into "*critical* theory."[141]

Critical theory, for Marcuse, reveals capitalism's mystification as the transformation of social relations between humans into qualities of things themselves. Once this mystification is uncovered, he argues, "economic conditions appear as the complete negation of humanity."[142] This means for Marcuse that "objective facts" come alive as "indictment[s] of society."[143] Thus, he argues that critical theory's task is to show that economic realities "exhibit their own negativity."[144] In completing this task, theory becomes *critical*.

Critical theory then, on Marcuse's account, grasps what bourgeois thought fails to: that human beings are the subject of labor and foundation of economic activity. He argues that Marx targets alienated labor, which is covered over by bourgeois political economy, precisely because it is the basis of human alienation.[145] For Marcuse, this critique lays the foundation for a new science and a theory of transformation.

This reading leads Marcuse to what he calls the "origins" of Marx's dialectical method. Marx, like Hegel, takes note of the negation inherent in reality as its moving principle. This dialectic recognizes that "[e]very fact is more than a mere fact"; it is also a "negation and restriction of real possibilities."[146] For example, Marcuse writes, wage labor is a fact, but also a restraint on free work; private property is a fact, but also a negation of humans' collective appropriation of nature.[147]

This is significant for Marcuse because analyses that are confined to the forms in which reality *appears* cannot grasp the essential structure from which these forms and their inadequacy originate. But, if reality and facts, as immediately given, do not hold authority, then what is revealed is that human social practice embodies negativity and its overcoming. "The negativity of capitalist society lies in its abolition of labor; the negation of this negativity will come with the abolition of alienated labor."[148]

The movement of unveiling the natural and exposing the historical is crucial here. Take, for example, Marcuse's claim that it is of "utmost importance" that Marx does not consider the abolition of private property to be an end in itself but the means for abolishing alienated labor.[149] This means that Marx gives Hegel's alienation a concrete material foundation in capitalism. Only once alienation is treated as historical can it identify, not just an indictment of present society, but also the abolition of alienated labor as the transformation of present society. That is, in turning a transhistorical category into a historical one, Marx shows, on the one hand, that alienation is a necessary, immanent development of labor in capitalism and consequently that private property is a product of alienated labor, and, on the other, that the abolition of capitalist labor, and not of private property, constitutes the overcoming of capitalism.

If critical theory's task is to reveal the negativity of economic realities, then, on Marcuse's account, it must deploy adequate categories. Hegel's totality was "a universal ontological one" wherein "history was patterned on the metaphysical process of being."[150] But, once philosophical ideas are scrutinized by critical theory, they "cast off their philosophical forms" and "express material historical conditions."[151] This reveals the contradictions beneath Hegel's philosophy to be "historical contradictions rooted in the antagonisms of class society."[152] Marx's dialectic begins precisely with human existence in class society.[153] The totality of Marx's dialectic is "the totality of class society" and "the negativity that underlies its contradictions and shapes its every content is the negativity of class relations."[154] Marx's dialectics, Marcuse argues, reveals that the dialectical movement that Hegel generalizes pertains only to a specific phase of our history.[155] Marx's dialectical analysis is a historical method that deals with a particular stage of historical development.

Marcuse thus locates the key difference between Hegel's and Marx's dialectics in their accounts of totality. Both view reality as a negative totality, but what appears as a universal ontological law in Hegel is revealed to be a historical development in Marx.[156] That is, Marx "detached dialectic from this ontological base."[157] Reality's negativity thus ceased to be metaphysical and became historical: "a social condition, associated with a particular historical form of society."[158] Thus in Marx, Marcuse argues, the dialectical method becomes a historical method.[159]

Dialectics as a historical method, Marcuse argues, reveals both the negative totality and its negation as concrete moments of totality.[160] The historical character of Marx's dialectic is expressed in two ways. First, it engages a particular stage of historical development.[161] Marx's analysis begins with class society and analyzes social reality through its inherent contradictions. Second, it "embraces the prevailing negativity and its negation."[162] The analysis therefore elaborates "the abstract relations that determine commodity world (such as commodity, exchange, value, money, wage) and returns from them to the fully developed content of capitalism," including capitalism's structural tendencies that "lead to its destruction."[163]

III The Main Features of Immanent Critique

Following Marcuse's account of critical theory and reading of Marx's analysis of alienated labor, we can glean key features of immanent critique. In this section, I list six such features, which are intended not as an exhaustive list but rather as an attempt to highlight central, distinctive characteristics of immanent critique.

One: the Standpoint of Critique Is Immanent to Its Object. It is grounded on the contradictory character of the object, which points to the possibility of its negation. Critique does not take a standpoint outside of its object but unfolds its structure and possibilities. This is the case even when capitalism itself is the object of critique.

Two: critique Is Immanent to Its Historical Moment. For Marcuse, that human beings are socially constituted is a central premise of critical theory. To remain consistent with this fact, theory cannot proceed from a standpoint outside of its own social universe but must view itself as embedded within its context. Critique must proceed from *within* society. In our case, this means that critique must view itself as embedded in and emerging from capitalist society; it reveals its historical character and possibilities of transformation. Analysis can take up any object but, to be critical, it must lead into the structure of the socio-historical processes, revealing it to be constitutive of the facts under analysis. For Marcuse, we recall, such facts are elements in a definite historical totality.[164]

Three: the Categories of Critique Are Two-Sided, Simultaneously Representing "A Negative State of Affairs in Light of Its Positive Solution".[165] If critique reveals society's historical specificity, then critical theory also signals a shift from transhistorical to historical categories. For Marcuse, Marx's categories are two-sided because they are historical. They reveal the condition of existing society – illuminating the complexity of given social relations – and show that the "complex of elements inherent in the social reality" makes its transformation into a free social order possible.[166] Adequate categories capture the specificity of our society – grasping its movement, contradictions, and the possibilities of its negation – and the determinate grounds of unfreedom such that the historical abolition of what they express implies the possibility of social and historical freedom.

Four: the Categories of Immanent Critique Do Not Terminate in the Existing Order but Refer to Its Negation. Immanent critique aims at the abolition of the object of analysis. This is the case, for Marcuse, because the categories of critique are an indictment of the totality of the existing order and consequently refer to a beyond.[167]

Five: the Ultimate, Even If Not the Immediate, Goal of Immanent Critique Is Emancipation. For Marcuse, immanent critique aims at a new form of society even when describing its current form. This is the case for him because the indictment of society is to be found, not in moralistic language, but in methods and categories that "address themselves to a truth to be had only through the abolition of civil society."[168]

It is for this reason that the first feature of immanent critique – that its standpoint is immanent to the object of investigation – is crucial for its transformative capacity, its ability to point to a beyond. Consider Marx's analysis of capitalism's historical development as an immanent drive toward surplus-value which simultaneously reveals the possibilities of a new social order immanent to society. Transformation, here, is articulated through immanent possibilities. It is not attached to such "strategies" as thinking otherwise, finding cracks within the system, or resistance: praxes on which so much of contemporary theory turns today.

Beginning from the society from which it emerges and denounces, critique cannot, if it is to be consistent, adopt a normative position external to what it investigates but must point to the immanent possibility of its historical negation. Marcuse calls this negation the "positive" side of critique."[169] That this side of critique, which carries emancipatory potential, reveals unrealized immanent possibilities means, for Marcuse, that it does not propose alternative worlds or new principles for reorganizing society. This is the case even when capitalism – the context of critique – is the object of critique. What "is" is not judged from

a conceptual position external to it (e.g., the world *ought* to conform to *x* principle); rather, for Marcuse, the " 'ought' is implied in the 'is.' "[170] This is a crucial aspect of the historical character of critique. Its categories are adequate if they grasp the society's immanent movement that generates the possibility of its negation – the "ought" immanent in the "is." That is, immanent critique locates the "ought" as a historical possibility immanent to existing society.

Thus, critique reveals that the social context in which it operates and which it critiques generates the possibility of a critical stance toward itself. Moreover, in showing that the social context immanently generates its own possibility, critique reveals society's contradictory nature: a negative totality. Grounded in capitalism's contradictory character, the possibility and the theoretical basis of immanent critique are the contradictory social relations in capitalism that point beyond themselves. Social contradictions are not to be understood as strictly class antagonisms. Rather, for Marcuse "capitalist society is a union of contradictions"; it progresses, he notes, through "the development of contradictions inherent in it" for its very nature is a dialectical one where "every form and institution of the economic process begets its determinate negation."[171]

Progress, as the development of inherent contradictions, was already present in Hegel. As Marcuse notes, for Hegel, "the possible is the given reality conceived as the 'condition' for another reality."[172] On this account, a new system is possible if the contradictions present in the old possess a content that tends toward a new system and its realization. This "leading beyond," Marcuse notes, is an "objective tendency immanent in the fact as given."[173] This is not an activity in thought but in reality, which "contains a duality in itself."[174] It is the destruction of existing forms, Marcuse writes, that "liberates their content and permits them to win their actual state."[175] That "the content of a given reality bears the seeds of its transformation into a new form" is carried through in critical theory.[176]

The dialectical method, for Marcuse, derives all concrete determinations from the principle of the actual development of the subject matter itself.[177] Nothing is added from the outside; states, qualities, conditions, must all appear as the subject's own positive unfolding. The most "adequate" example of this method, Marcuse argues, is Marx's account of capitalism as the "totality of the capitalist process . . . comprehended in the 'principle' by which it progresses."[178] Capitalism is an "objective totality" wherein each moment "contains, as its very content, the whole, and must be interpreted as the whole."[179] Marx's "capitalism," Marcuse writes, starts with the separation of producers from their means of production, results in free labor and the appropriation of surplus-value, which due to technological development brings about the accumulation and centralization of capital, the tendency of the rate of profit to fall, and the "breakdown of the entire system."[180] This means, for Marcuse, that capitalism is a negative totality evolving "only by virtue of its contradictory forces."[181] These negative aspects are less disturbances than they are conditions that lay bare reality's structure and tendencies; they expose the existing state of affairs, the principal movement of society, and the possibility of its negation.

Following this account of Marx's analysis, it becomes evident that, for Marcuse, critique must demonstrate that the structure of society immanently develops a movement that points beyond itself. This means, for Marcuse, that we are dealing with *historical* critique. Marx, he insists, does not project the logic of capitalist development on all human history but preserves its social particularity. By treating capitalism as a "historical totality," Marcuse shows, Marx can reveal the overcoming of alienated labor as a condition for human emancipation.[182]

Six: the Goal of Immanent Critique Is to Liberate Truths Within the Old Society That Do Not Develop Automatically. This feature, a slight modification of the fifth, clarifies that Marcuse's notion that transformation is the goal of critique refers to the liberation of possibilities immanent in the present.[183] "The given state of affairs," he writes, "is negative and can be rendered positive only by liberating the possibilities immanent in it."[184] This new state, for him, is the truth of the old.[185]

IV Conclusion

These six features show that Marcuse reads Marx's analysis of labor in capitalism as an example of immanent critique. He highlights how Marx begins with the terms of political economy; that he develops a critique that is not external to its object but rests on the unfolding of the categories and their contradictions; that the categories of Marx's critique grasp the forms of social relations and are at once the categories of social objectivity, subjectivity, and reality; and that his categories are neither merely descriptive, external, nor contingent to the object of analysis.

These features demonstrate that immanent critique is the method of a critical theory of society that elucidates society's movement beyond itself. They show that immanent critique does not oppose ideals to reality, seeking to unmask bourgeois ideology in order to reveal the wretched reality they disguise. Nonetheless, opposing reality to its own ideals is the dominant form of so-called immanent critiques today. Most commonly, those who believe themselves to be engaging in immanent critique proceed from a principle, such as that of equality, show that reality is not equal, and thus demand that equality be made a concrete reality. For Marcuse, this is a mode of argumentation that proceeds externally, ignores the realization of equality in capitalism as exchange-value, and posits liberation as the full realization of bourgeois principles. Following Marx's critical theory, Marcuse does not treat equality as a principle waiting to be realized, for the realization of equality in capitalism necessarily capitulates into its opposite. Indeed, ideals do not present a non-capitalist moment in capitalism that can be used to critique the latter. Rather, they are a moment of capitalism themselves. Critique, thus, does not merely unveil reality – though it does do this as well, for example, in showing that free labor is alienated and exploited labor – but reveals the historical specificity of capitalism and critiques bourgeois ideals, such as those of liberty and equality, that have traditionally been the standpoint of critique.

The possibility of immanent critique, thus, cannot be understood to emerge from the gap between reality and ideals – the fact that reality does not resemble its ideals. It emerges, rather, from the contradictory nature of society. This implies that immanent critique locates the driving force of capitalism's movement *immanently* and that it treats capitalism as *our* society and not a mere feature – say, the mode of production – of a society. This engagement and understanding of capitalism sets immanent critique apart from other forms of critique. Indeed, an understanding of capitalism as the form of society is the critical proposition for immanent critique without which theory would cease to be critical and collapse into an account of an economic sphere, as one among many, with corresponding economic categories. Marx's *critical* method, as Marcuse shows, relies on its categories as not merely economic but *Daseinsformen*.

Ultimately, the critical and transformative character of immanent critique lies in its refusal to affirm existing society and insistence on the possibility of its negation. Here, the analysis of the labor process is crucial for Marcuse, not merely for articulating this negation

but also for understanding the separation and possible unification of theory and practice. This is the case, Marcuse argues, because the labor process underlies all branches of theory and practice.[186] "[A]n economic analysis that shatters the capitalist camouflage and breaks through its 'reification,'" he argues, reveals that capitalism exercises a "totalitarian influence over all theory and all practice."[187] Marxist theory, he contends, acknowledges that disciplines, including philosophy, sociology, and the sciences, do not retain an independent existence – science becomes either a leisurely pursuit or capital's servant, while philosophy becomes "the sanctuary of true theory" seeking to "guard the solutions to man's problems of needs, fears, and desires" through abstract thought.[188]

By contrast, Marcuse finds Marx's theory to be firmly grounded in definite, historical forms of practice and thus negates philosophy and sociology. The social facts it analyzes – e.g., alienated labor, surplus-value – are not typical sociological facts; they are beyond the reach of any discipline that seeks to describe and organize objective phenomena in society. "They will appear as facts only to a theory that takes them in the preview of their negation."[189] Thus, "the correct theory" according to Marx, Marcuse writes, "is the consciousness of a practice that aims at changing the world."[190]

Theory, for Marcuse, has demonstrated the truth that society can realize such that the aim of practice becomes "the abolition of labor, the employment of the socialized means of production for the free development of all individuals. The rest is the task of man's own liberated activity."[191] Theory is the "ultimate guardian" of this truth, which remains constant even if the conditions for its realization change.[192] At every moment, "theory accompanies the practice," analyzes "the changing situation," and formulates "its concepts accordingly."[193] Because theory "preserves the truth" even if revolutionary practice strays from its path, Marcuse argues, "[p]ractice follows the truth, not vice versa."[194] It is this "absolutism of truth" that, for Marcuse, "completes the philosophical heritage of the Marxian theory," definitively distinguishing it from both positivism and relativism.[195]

Marcuse's analysis of the relationship between critique and transformation posits immanent critique as an endeavor whose central task is not strategy and resistance but truth and emancipation. For, as he warns, uncritical theory exhibits the triumph of reality over thought and, therefore, over us.[196] At stake is the question of whether reality has the final world.

Notes

1 Theodor Adorno, "Marginalia to Theory and Praxis," *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 263.
2 Hans Magnus Enzensberger, "Second Thoughts on Consistency," *Political Crumbs* (London: Verso, 1990), 3.
3 Adorno, "Resignation," *Critical Models*, 290.
4 Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), 261.
5 Adorno, "Marginalia," 262–3.
6 Adorno, "Marginalia," 274.
7 Marcuse, "The Relevance of Reality," *Philosophy, Psychoanalysis, and Emancipation* edited by Douglas Kellner and Clayton Pierce (New York: Routledge, 2011), 178. For Marcuse's reflections on theory and practice see also "Affirmative Culture," *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory* (London: MayFly Books, 2009).
8 Marcuse, "The Relevance of Reality," 178.
9 Ibid., 178.
10 Richard T. Bernstein "Herbert Marcuse: An Immanent Critique," *Social Theory and Practice* 1, no. 4 (1971), 101.

11 Rahel Jaeggi, *Critique of Forms of Life* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018); Jaeggi, "Rethinking Ideology," New Waves in Political Philosophy (London Palgrave-Macmillan, 2009); Seyla Benhabib, *Critique, Norm and Utopia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986). Axel Honneth, *Pathologies of the Reason* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009). For a comprehensive account of this position, and its limits, see Justin Evans, "On the Very Idea of Normative Foundations in Critical Social Theory," *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 2023, Vol. 49(4), 385–408. Unlike Jaeggi, Honneth, and Benhabib, Marcuse does not understand immanent critique as proceeding from immanent norms but as expressing the unfolding of the object's movement.
12 Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization*, 261. Here the philosopher accepts and proceeds from values and norms in their "idealized form – on the terms of the established reality principle," 262. If the values of society are to amount to anything more than the conditions and traits of alienated society, they must, Marcuse argues, "pertain to a consciousness that has broken through the alienation as well as its values. But to such consciousness these values themselves becomes intolerable because it recognizes them as accessories to the enslavement of man," 262.
13 Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution* (London: Woolf Haus, 2020), vii.
14 Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution*, vii.
15 Ibid., 190.
16 Ibid., 189.
17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
22 Ibid., 191. For an account of his understanding of philosophy versus a critical theory of society, see Marcuse's 1937 "Philosophy and Critical Theory," *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory* (London: MayFly Books, 2009).
23 Ibid. Emphases added.
24 Ibid.
25 Marcuse's 1937 "Philosophy and Critical Theory."
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid., 191–2.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid., 191.
33 Ibid., 193.
34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid, 200.
42 Ibid., 201.
43 Ibid. Emphasis added.
44 Ibid. Emphasis original.
45 Ibid.
46 Ibid., 202.
47 Ibid.
48 Ibid.
49 Karl Marx, "To Make the World Philosophical," *The Marx-Engels Reader*, edited by Robert C. Tucker (London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1978), 9.
50 Marx, "To Make the World Philosophical," 9.
51 Ibid., 10.

52 Ibid.
53 Ibid.
54 Reason as a philosophical category is, for Marcuse, related to the idea that "what exists is not immediately and already rational but must rather be brought to reason." The conviction that the irrational must be overcome made philosophy critical philosophy. Marcuse, "Philosophy and Critical Theory," 100.
55 Marx, "To Make the World Philosophical," 10.
56 Ibid, 10. Marx adds that philosophy struggles "on the outside" against what are its "own inner deficiencies," which it overcomes or sublimates [*Aufhebt*] precisely by falling prey to them. "That which opposes it and that which it fights is always the same as itself, only with factors inverted." That is, philosophy's inadequacy is not inherent to it but the word such that it is the world's inadequacy that must be made philosophical. Ibid., 10–11.
57 Ibid.
58 Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution*, 27.
59 Ibid., 27.
60 Ibid., 35.
61 Ibid.
62 Ibid.
63 Ibid., 37. Emphasis original.
64 Ibid., 103.
65 Ibid., 101.
66 Marcuse, "The Relevance of Reality," 175.
67 Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution*.
68 Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution,* 45.
69 Ibid. 45.
70 Ibid., 159.
71 Ibid., 133–134.
72 Ibid., 156.
73 Ibid., 147.
74 Ibid.
75 Ibid., 218.
76 Ibid.
77 Ibid., 157.
78 Ibid.
79 Ibid., 121.
80 Ibid., 126, 128.
81 Ibid., 130.
82 Ibid.
83 Ibid.
84 Ibid. See also 134–5.
85 Ibid., 135.
86 Ibid.
87 Ibid., 157.
88 Ibid., 158.
89 Ibid., 158.
90 Ibid., 135.
91 Ibid., 143.
92 Ibid., 137.
93 Ibid., 134.
94 Ibid., 21.
95 Ibid., 133.
96 Ibid.
97 Ibid.
98 Ibid., 134.
99 Ibid.
100 Ibid.

101 Ibid., 148.
102 Ibid.
103 Ibid.
104 Ibid., 213.
105 Ibid., 214.
106 Ibid., 216.
107 Ibid., 211–2.
108 Ibid., 216.
109 Ibid., 194.
110 Ibid., 21.
111 Ibid.
112 Ibid.
113 Ibid.
114 Ibid., 198.
115 Ibid.
116 Ibid., 202.
117 Ibid.
118 Ibid. Emphasis original.
119 Ibid. Emphasis original.
120 Ibid.
121 Ibid.
122 Ibid., 203.
123 Ibid.
124 Ibid.
125 Ibid.
126 Ibid., 204.
127 Ibid.
128 For a discussion of this, see also Marcuse's "Philosophy and Critical Theory."
129 Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution*, 204.
130 Ibid., 206.
131 Ibid., 217.
132 Ibid., 218.
133 Ibid.
134 Ibid.
135 Ibid., 228.
136 Ibid., 193.
137 Ibid., 206–7.
138 Ibid., 207.
139 Ibid., 208.
140 Ibid.
141 Ibid. Emphasis original.
142 Ibid.
143 Ibid.
144 Ibid.
145 Ibid.
146 Ibid.
147 Ibid.
148 Ibid.
149 Ibid., 98.
150 Ibid., 231.
151 Ibid., 211.
152 Ibid.
153 Ibid., 59.
154 Ibid., 231.
155 Ibid., 59.
156 Ibid., 109, 230.

157 Ibid., 231.
158 Ibid.
159 Ibid. This, for Marcuse, occurs by the very nature of the dialectical method. See, ibid., 231.
160 Ibid., 232.
161 Ibid.
162 Ibid.
163 Ibid., 231.
164 Ibid., 231–232.
165 Ibid., 218.
166 Ibid.
167 The process of "leading beyond" is present in Hegel as an "objective tendency immanent in the facts as given." This leading beyond, Marcuse writes, "is an activity not in thought but in reality, the proper activity of self-realization." This is the case because "the given reality holds the real possibilities as its content, 'contains a duality in itself,' and is in itself 'reality and possibility.' In its totality as well as in its every single aspect and relation, its content is enveloped in an inadequacy such that only its destruction can convert its possibilities into actualities." Ibid., 112–113.
168 Ibid., 191.
169 Ibid., 81.
170 Marcuse, "The Relevance of Reality," 175.
171 Ibid., 229.
172 Ibid., 112.
173 Ibid.
174 Ibid.
175 Ibid., 113.
176 Ibid.
177 Ibid., 116.
178 Ibid., 117.
179 Ibid.
180 Ibid.
181 Ibid.
182 Ibid., 224.
183 Ibid., 315.
184 Ibid.
185 Ibid.
186 Ibid., 235.
187 Ibid., 236.
188 Ibid.
189 Ibid., 237.
190 Ibid.
191 Ibid.
192 Ibid.
193 Ibid.
194 Ibid.
195 Ibid.
196 Marcuse, "The Relevance of Reality."

Bibliography

Adorno, Theodor. "Marginalia to Theory and Praxis." *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.

Benhabib, Seyla. *Critique, Norm and Utopia*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.

Bernstein, Richard T. "Herbert Marcuse: An Immanent Critique." *Social Theory and Practice*, 1(4), 1971.

Enzensberger, Hans Magnus. "Second Thoughts on Consistency." *Political Crumbs*. London: Verso, 1990.

Evans, Justin. "On the Very Idea of Normative Foundations in Critical Social Theory." *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 49(4), 2023: 385–408.
Honneth, Axel. *Pathologies of the Reason*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.
Jaeggi, Rahel. *Critique of Forms of Life*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018.
———. "Rethinking Ideology." *New Waves in Political Philosophy*. London: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2009.
Marcuse, Herbert. "Affirmative Culture." *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory*. London: MayFly Books, 2009.
———. *Eros and Civilization*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1966.
———. "Philosophy and Critical Theory." *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory*. London: MayFly Books, 2009.
———. *Reason and Revolution*. London: Woolf Haus, 2020.
———. "The Relevance of Reality." *Philosophy, Psychoanalysis, and Emancipation*. New York: Routledge, 2011.
Marx, Karl. "To Make the World Philosophical." *The Marx-Engels Reader*. London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1978.