



MARX, ENGELS, AND MARXISMS

# Marx, Marxism and the Question of Eurocentrism



Kolja Lindner

palgrave  
macmillan

# Marx, Engels, and Marxisms

## Series Editors

Marcello Musto, York University, Toronto, ON, Canada

Terrell Carver, University of Bristol, Bristol, UK

The Marx renaissance is underway on a global scale. Wherever the critique of capitalism re-emerges, there is an intellectual and political demand for new, critical engagements with Marxism. The peer-reviewed series *Marx, Engels and Marxisms* (edited by Marcello Musto & Terrell Carver, with Babak Amini, Francesca Antonini, Paula Rauhala & Kohei Saito as Assistant Editors) publishes monographs, edited volumes, critical editions, reprints of old texts, as well as translations of books already published in other languages. Our volumes come from a wide range of political perspectives, subject matters, academic disciplines and geographical areas, producing an eclectic and informative collection that appeals to a diverse and international audience. Our main areas of focus include: the oeuvre of Marx and Engels, Marxist authors and traditions of the 19th and 20th centuries, labour and social movements, Marxist analyses of contemporary issues, and reception of Marxism in the world.

More information about this series at  
<https://link.springer.com/bookseries/14812>

Kolja Lindner

Marx, Marxism  
and the Question  
of Eurocentrism

palgrave  
macmillan

Kolja Lindner  
Departments of German Studies  
and Political Science  
University Paris 8  
Saint-Denis, France

ISSN 2524-7123

ISSN 2524-7131 (electronic)

Marx, Engels, and Marxisms

ISBN 978-3-030-81822-7

ISBN 978-3-030-81823-4 (eBook)

<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-81823-4>

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2022

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Cover image: © Nuno Almeida/Alamy Stock Photo

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG

The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

## TITLES PUBLISHED

1. Terrell Carver & Daniel Blank, *A Political History of the Editions of Marx and Engels's "German Ideology" Manuscripts*, 2014.
2. Terrell Carver & Daniel Blank, *Marx and Engels's "German Ideology" Manuscripts: Presentation and Analysis of the "Feuerbach Chapter"*, 2014.
3. Alfonso Maurizio Iacono, *The History and Theory of Fetishism*, 2015.
4. Paresh Chattopadhyay, *Marx's Associated Mode of Production: A Critique of Marxism*, 2016.
5. Domenico Losurdo, *Class Struggle: A Political and Philosophical History*, 2016.
6. Frederick Harry Pitts, *Critiquing Capitalism Today: New Ways to Read Marx*, 2017.
7. Ranabir Samaddar, *Karl Marx and the Postcolonial Age*, 2017.
8. George Comninel, *Alienation and Emancipation in the Work of Karl Marx*, 2018.
9. Jean-Numa Ducange & Razmig Keucheyan (Eds.), *The End of the Democratic State: Nicos Poulantzas, a Marxism for the 21st Century*, 2018.
10. Robert X. Ware, *Marx on Emancipation and Socialist Goals: Retrieving Marx for the Future*, 2018.
11. Xavier LaFrance & Charles Post (Eds.), *Case Studies in the Origins of Capitalism*, 2018.

12. John Gregson, *Marxism, Ethics, and Politics: The Work of Alasdair MacIntyre*, 2018.
13. Vladimir Puzone & Luis Felipe Miguel (Eds.), *The Brazilian Left in the 21st Century: Conflict and Conciliation in Peripheral Capitalism*, 2019.
14. James Muldoon & Gaard Kets (Eds.), *The German Revolution and Political Theory*, 2019.
15. Michael Brie, *Rediscovering Lenin: Dialectics of Revolution and Metaphysics of Domination*, 2019.
16. August H. Nimtz, *Marxism Versus Liberalism: Comparative Real-Time Political Analysis*, 2019.
17. Gustavo Moura de Cavalcanti Mello and Mauricio de Souza Sabadini (Eds.), *Financial Speculation and Fictitious Profits: A Marxist Analysis*, 2019.
18. Shaibal Gupta, Marcello Musto & Babak Amini (Eds.), *Karl Marx's Life, Ideas, and Influences: A Critical Examination on the Bicentenary*, 2019.
19. Igor Shoikhedbrod, *Revisiting Marx's Critique of Liberalism: Rethinking Justice, Legality, and Rights*, 2019.
20. Juan Pablo Rodríguez, *Resisting Neoliberal Capitalism in Chile: The Possibility of Social Critique*, 2019.
21. Kaan Kangal, *Friedrich Engels and the Dialectics of Nature*, 2020.
22. Victor Wallis, *Socialist Practice: Histories and Theories*, 2020.
23. Alfonso Maurizio Iacono, *The Bourgeois and the Savage: A Marxian Critique of the Image of the Isolated Individual in Defoe, Turgot and Smith*, 2020.
24. Terrell Carver, *Engels Before Marx*, 2020.
25. Jean-Numa Ducange, *Jules Guesde: The Birth of Socialism and Marxism in France*, 2020.
26. Antonio Oliva, Ivan Novara & Angel Oliva (Eds.), *Marx and Contemporary Critical Theory: The Philosophy of Real Abstraction*, 2020.
27. Francesco Biagi, *Henri Lefebvre's Critical Theory of Space*, 2020.
28. Stefano Petrucciani, *The Ideas of Karl Marx: A Critical Introduction*, 2020.
29. Terrell Carver, *The Life and Thought of Friedrich Engels, 30th Anniversary Edition*, 2020.
30. Giuseppe Vacca, *Alternative Modernities: Antonio Gramsci's Twentieth Century*, 2020.

31. Kevin B. Anderson, Kieran Durkin & Heather Brown (Eds.), *Raya Dunayevskaya's Intersectional Marxism: Race, Gender, and the Dialectics of Liberation*, 2020.
32. Marco Di Maggio, *The Rise and Fall of Communist Parties in France and Italy*, 2020.
33. Farhang Rajaei, *Presence and the Political*, 2021.
34. Ryuji Sasaki, *A New Introduction to Karl Marx: New Materialism, Critique of Political Economy, and the Concept of Metabolism*, 2021.
35. Kohei Saito (Ed.), *Reexamining Engels's Legacy in the 21st Century*, 2021.
36. Paresh Chattopadhyay, *Socialism in Marx's Capital: Towards a De-alienated World*, 2021.
37. Marcello Musto, *Karl Marx's Writings on Alienation*, 2021.
38. Michael Brie & Jörn Schüttrumpf, *Rosa Luxemburg: A Revolutionary Marxist at the Limits of Marxism*, 2021.
39. Stefano Petrucciani, *Theodor W. Adorno's Philosophy, Society, and Aesthetics*, 2021.
40. Miguel Vedda, *Siegfried Kracauer, or, The Allegories of Improvisation: Critical Studies*, 2021.
41. Ronaldo Munck, *Rethinking Development: Marxist Perspectives*, 2021.
42. Jean-Numa Ducange & Elisa Marcobelli (Eds.), *Selected Writings of Jean Jaurès: On Socialism, Pacifism and Marxism*, 2021.
43. Elisa Marcobelli, *Internationalism Toward Diplomatic Crisis: The Second International and French, German and Italian Socialists*, 2021.
44. James Steinhoff, *Automation and Autonomy: Labour, Capital and Machines in the Artificial Intelligence Industry*, 2021.
45. Juan Dal Maso, *Hegemony and Class Struggle: Trotsky, Gramsci and Marxism*, 2021.
46. Gianfranco Ragona & Monica Quirico, *Frontier Socialism: Self-organisation and Anti-capitalism*, 2021.
47. Tsuyoshi Yuki, *Socialism, Markets and the Critique of Money: The Theory of "Labour Notes"*, 2021.
48. Gustavo Moura de Cavalcanti Mello & Henrique Pereira Braga (Eds.), *Wealth and Poverty in Contemporary Brazilian Capitalism*, 2021.
49. Paolo Favilli, *Historiography and Marxism: Innovations in Mid-century Italy*, 2021.



50. Levy del Aguila Marchena, *Communism, Political Power and Personal Freedom in Marx*, 2021.
51. V. Geetha, *Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar and the Question of Socialism in India*, 2021.
52. Satoshi Matsui, *Normative Theories of Liberalism and Socialism: Marxist Analysis of Values*, 2022.
53. Kei Ehara (Ed.), *Japanese Discourse on the Marxian Theory of Finance*, 2022.
54. Achim Szepanski, *Financial Capital in the 21st Century*, 2022.

## TITLES FORTHCOMING

- Vesa Oittinen, *Marx's Russian Moment*
- Adriana Petra, *Intellectuals and Communist Culture: Itineraries, Problems and Debates in Post-war Argentina*
- George C. Comninel, *The Feudal Foundations of Modern Europe*
- Spencer A. Leonard, *Marx, the India Question, and the Crisis of Cosmopolitanism*
- Joe Collins, *Applying Marx's Capital to the 21st century*
- Jeong Seongjin, *Korean Capitalism in the 21st Century: Marxist Analysis and Alternatives*
- Marcello Mustè, *Marxism and Philosophy of Praxis: An Italian Perspective from Labriola to Gramsci*
- Shannon Brincat, *Dialectical Dialogues in Contemporary World Politics: A Meeting of Traditions in Global Comparative Philosophy*
- Francesca Antonini, *Reassessing Marx's Eighteenth Brumaire: Dictatorship, State, and Revolution*
- Thomas Kemple, *Capital After Classical Sociology: The Faustian Lives of Social Theory*
- Xavier Vigna, *A Political History of Factories in France: The Workers' Insubordination of 1968*
- Attila Melegh, *Anti-migrant Populism in Eastern Europe and Hungary: A Marxist Analysis*
- Marie-Cecile Bouju, *A Political History of the Publishing Houses of the French Communist Party*

- Peter McMylor, Graeme Kirkpatrick & Simin Fadaee (Eds.), *Marxism, Religion, and Emancipatory Politics*
- Mauro Buccheri, *Radical Humanism for the Left: The Quest for Meaning in Late Capitalism*
- Rémy Herrera, *Confronting Mainstream Economics to Overcome Capitalism*
- Tamás Krausz, Eszter Bartha (Eds.), *Socialist Experiences in Eastern Europe: A Hungarian Perspective*
- Martin Cortés, *Marxism, Time and Politics: On the Autonomy of the Political*
- João Antonio de Paula, Huga da Gama Cerqueira, Eduardo da Motta e Albuquerque & Leonardo de Deus, *Marxian Economics for the 21st Century: Revaluating Marx's Critique of Political Economy*
- Zhi Li, *The Concept of the Individual in the Thought of Karl Marx*
- Lelio Demichelis, *Marx, Alienation and Techno-capitalism*
- Dong-Min Rieu, *A Mathematical Approach to Marxian Value Theory: Time, Money, and Labor Productivity*
- Salvatore Prinzi, *Representation, Expression, and Institution: The Philosophy of Merleau-Ponty and Castoriadis*
- Agon Hamza, *Slavoj Žižek and the Reconstruction of Marxism*
- Éric Aunoble, *French Views on the Russian Revolution*
- Terrell Carver, Smail Rasic (Eds.), *Friedrich Engels for the 21st Century: Perspectives and Problems*
- Patrizia Dogliani, *A Political History of the International Union of Socialist Youth*
- Alexandros Chrysis, *The Marx of Communism: Setting Limits in the Realm of Communism*
- Stephen Maher, *Corporate Capitalism and the Integral State: General Electric and a Century of American Power*
- Paul Raekstad, *Karl Marx's Realist Critique of Capitalism: Freedom, Alienation, and Socialism*
- Alexis Cukier, *Democratic Work: Radical Democracy and the Future of Labour*
- Christoph Henning, *Theories of Alienation: From Rousseau to the Present*
- Daniel Egan, *Capitalism, War, and Revolution: A Marxist Analysis*
- Genevieve Ritchie, Sara Carpenter & Shahrzad Mojab (Eds.), *Marxism and Migration*
- Emanuela Conversano, *Capital from Afar: Anthropology and Critique of Political Economy in the Late Marx*

- Marcello Musto, *Rethinking Alternatives with Marx*
- Vincenzo Mele, *City and Modernity in George Simmel and Walter Benjamin: Fragments of Metropolis*
- David Norman Smith, *Self-emancipation: Marx's Unfinished Theory of the Working Class*
- José Ricardo Villanueva Lira, *Marxism and the Origins of International Relations*
- Bertel Nygaard, *Marxism, Labor Movements, and Historiography*
- Fabio Perocco (Ed.), *Racism in and for the Welfare State*
- Marcos Del Roio, *Gramsci and the Emancipation of the Subaltern Classes*
- Marcelo Badaró, *The Working Class from Marx to Our Times*
- Tomonaga Tairako, *A New Perspective on Marx's Philosophy and Political Economy*
- Matthias Bohlender, Anna-Sophie Schönfelder, & Matthias Spekker, *Truth and Revolution in Marx's Critique of Society*
- Mauricio Vieira Martins, *Marx, Spinoza and Darwin on Philosophy: Against Religious Perspectives of Transcendence*
- Jean Vigreux, Roger Martelli, & Serge Wolikow, *One Hundred Years of History of the French Communist Party*
- Aditya Nigam, *Border-Marxisms and Historical Materialism*
- Fred Moseley, *Marx's Theory of Value in Chapter I of Capital: A Critique of Heinrich's Value-Form Interpretation*
- Armando Boito, *The State, Politics, and Social Classes: Theory and History*
- Anjan Chakrabarti & Anup Dhar, *World of the Third and Hegemonic Capital: Between Marx and Freud*
- Hira Singh, *Annihilation of Caste in India: Ambedkar, Ghandi, and Marx*
- Salvatore Engel-Di Mauro, *An Introduction to Ecosocialism*

# INTRODUCTION

The issue this book deals with is controversial. The way I have chosen to address it is as well. In the ten years that followed my first engagement with Marx's Eurocentrism (see Lindner, 2011; see Chapter 1 for the first complete English translation of the work), I cannot say that I made much friends in the fields where this problem is addressed. Or, to say it more accurately, my engagement was welcomed neither in orthodox Marxism, nor in dogmatic Postcolonialism. Interestingly, recognition came from the milieu of Marx editorship as well as from Marx-inspired historians, philosophers and political scientists that keep themselves distanced from Marxist mudslinging. I am more than happy with these rather unexpected friends but still struggle to understand a certain hostility. Contention from Marxists was surprising as I concluded that Marx finally overcame Eurocentrism. Rejection from Postcolonialism was equally astonishing as I argued that the discussion of Marx's Eurocentrism needs to engage with the findings in this field. Building on my past observations, I want to suggest four theses for this polarized situation.

A first cause of this hostility is institutional. The academic establishment of Postcolonialism in its early forms of literary criticism 'coincided with the institutionalization in the early 1980s of an extensive platform of research initiatives, including gender, feminist, African American, "ethnic," and gay studies' (Barry, 2004, pp. 67–68). This formation was

paralleled by the end of ‘academic Marxism’s brief summer’ (Altvater, 2007), i.e. the roll-back of Marxism that was precariously established in Western higher education after the social movements of the late 1960s and under attack following the political and economical triumph of neoliberalism from the late 1970s onwards (see Hall, 1988). Marxists therefore often argue that critiques of Eurocentrism occupy in some academic settings a position formerly held by Marxism (see Chibber, 2013, pp. 1–4). Naturally, this assertion calls for immediate contextualization and relativization. Postcolonialism seems to have embodied a powerful position especially in some segments of anglophone academia. Whereas in France, for instance—where it is ostracized by members of the government as ‘islamo-leftist’ ideology (see Alouane, 2021; Fassin, 2021)—it occupies a marginal position. However, there is, in at least some parts of Marxist research, the idea of ‘stolen’ positions in institutional settings and, consequently, the feeling of not only theoretical, but institutional competition. Irrespective of disagreement and necessary controversy over an adequate analysis of the ongoing influence of colonial domination, of asymmetric interaction between different regions of the world and of the place occupied by the Global South today, this attitude does not foster a differentiated understanding.

A second cause for the refusal to engage with Marx’s Eurocentrism is theoretical. The latter is indeed inscribed in the philosophy of history which Marx articulated in parts of his work. Historical progress is understood to be guaranteed through the contradiction of productive forces and relations of production, through class struggle, etc. This is also how colonial powers can ultimately be conceived of as an ‘unconscious tool of history’ (Marx, 1853, p. 132), realizing social revolutions in the colonized territories and ultimately pushing indigenous peoples forward in their development. Marxists often do not embrace this global application of Marx’s philosophy of history while dismissing its significance in this context. What is much more common though is the acceptance of the philosophical promise of Marx’s functionalist teleology ‘at home’, i.e. in the West. Communism is seen as ‘the *real* movement which abolishes the present state of things’ (Marx/Engels, 1845/1846, p. 49). Against this backdrop, confronting Marx’s Eurocentrism and his philosophy of history is a costly enterprise as it challenges an imaginary objectivity of social position, political agency and historical purpose.

A third cause is intellectual. It mainly consists of conceptual confusion and a lack of expertise on the text corpus. Take one of the cardinal parts

of Marx's work that illustrates his massively changing view of the social state of India (and other countries in the Global South more broadly). His notes on the book *Communal Land Ownership: The Causes, Processes, and Consequences of Its Disintegration*, by Russian legal historian Maxim M. Kovalevsky. Although available for over 40 years in English and German (see Marx, 1879a, 1879b), their reception has been marginal. Furthermore, only recently have efforts been made to render them accessible in Spanish (see Marx, 2018, pp. 41–148) and French (see Lindner & Éditions de l'Asymétrie, 2019, pp. 157–185). Especially among post-colonial critics of Marx, his later work is at best vaguely known. The critique of Marx having defended a 'Eurocentric model of political emancipation that consistently ignores the experiences of colonised subjects in non-Western societies' (Varela et al., 2015, p. 167) is grounded in aforementioned ignorance. What is more is that the study of Marx's sources is still a completely underdeveloped way of engaging with his thought, due to the huge and unsettling potential for deconstructing old certainties implied by this method (see, for example, Schrader, 1980; Heinrich, 1999 on Marx's reception of Hegel and Smith). Finally, sceptics argue that the critique of Eurocentrism would be a contemporary academic fashion inconsistent with Marx's times. Or as more sophisticated historians would say, it is anachronistic. What this argument fails to consider, however, is that questions of global interactions, of a realist account of non-Western world regions, of paths of historical development, etc., were already present in various ways during Marx's lifetime and that Marx was actually struggling with these problems.

A fourth cause for rejecting the interrogation of Eurocentrism in Marx is political. In this regard, Postcolonialism is seen as a vehicle for suppressing class questions. The 'cultural turn' of the late twentieth century in which postcolonial criticism is inscribed would have replaced the attention afforded to capitalism by that afforded to culture. Hence, the critique of Eurocentrism is dismissed as 'the hallmark of the newer radicalism' (Vanaik, 2017, p. 11). It is certainly true that certain branches of Cultural Studies are trapped in cultural reductionism even though it must be noted that its British original is strongly concerned with class questions (see Hall et al., 1978; Hall, 1988). Reductionism, however—that appertained to class—is also found in certain Marxisms. In this line of thought, not only the critique of Eurocentrism, but also a certain anti-racist feminism are often contested. Intersectionality, for instance, is regularly dismissed as an approach engulfed in identity politics instead of

what it intends to be: a radical critique of structural social inequality (see Crenshaw, 1989). The rejection of postcolonial and intersectional analyses in this kind of Marxism has disastrous political consequences as it pits different forms of emancipatory aspirations against one another. And I would argue that this dismissal also contributes to the male dominance in Marx scholarship.

This book is an invitation to overcome institutional jealousy, theoretical orthodoxy, intellectual bias and political narrow-mindedness.

In Chapter one, “[Marx’s Eurocentrism: Postcolonial Studies and Marx Scholarship](#)”, I show that various efforts in postcolonial studies can provide a meaningful understanding of Eurocentrism. I argue that different dimensions of Eurocentrism need to be distinguished and analysed separately with regard to their relevance for Marx’s work. This seems particularly important as, in the controversy over Marx’s Eurocentrism, we often witness a futile dialogue in which critics and defendants do not operate within the same conceptual parameters. Furthermore, this discussion has to include the whole of Marx’s work and cannot be reduced to his well-known 1853 essays to the *New York Daily Tribune*. In addition, I argue that a critical assessment has to look into Marx’s sources. I separately analyse one important intellectual inspiration for Marx’s view on India—a travel narrative by the French physician François Bernier. My overall argument in this chapter is that Marx becomes progressively aware of his Eurocentrism and eventually overcomes it. The achievement of an appropriate conception of colonialism—not in the context of his writings on India, but on Ireland—is an important milestone in this development. While Marx’s critique of political economy still carries biases against the Global South, a differentiated reflexion on historical development emerges in this part of the work. Hence, Marx argues in the revised French edition of *Capital*, volume one: ‘The country that is more developed industrially only shows, *to those who follow it on an industrial scale*, the image of their own future’ (Marx, 1872–1875, p. 12, emphasis added). He thereby illustrates the rise of his sensibility for path-dependency. I argue that this tendency becomes theoretically more consistent under the influence of realist accounts of non-European world regions that Marx engaged with in the last years of his life (Maxim M. Kovalevsky, Lewis H. Morgan, etc.). And that he drew political conclusions from the aforementioned insights in his exchanges with



Russian social revolutionaries. It is in his writings on Russia, particularly his famous correspondence with Vera Zasulich, that Marx completely overcomes his once-held Eurocentrism.

I pick up and expand on this argument in Chapter two, “[How Marx Got Rid of Historical Materialism](#)”, a paper co-authored with my dear friend and colleague Urs Lindner. We argue that an ensemble of theoretical and political impasses in Marx’s work—not only Eurocentrism, but also philosophy of history, functionalism and the refusal of a proper reflection on ethics—are linked to a theoretical matrix that characterizes Marx’ writings from the mid-1840s to the late 1850s. We call this pattern ‘Historical Materialism’ and claim that Marx has overcome it. This theoretical progress has different stages: the replacement of functionalist teleology by ‘retroductive’ and ‘retroductive’ explanations (see Elder-Vass, 2010) through the elaboration of his critique of political economy; the development of an emphatic conception of radical democracy in his analysis of contemporary political struggles as well as a concept of relational equality (see Anderson, 2012) in his critique of contemporary social democracy; and finally, the increased consciousness of the particularities of colonialism and non-Western societies through the engagement with Ireland and Russia. Our argument strongly relies on a reconstruction of Marx’s concept of history that was elaborated in the tradition of analytical Marxism (see Cohen, 2001) as well as a reinterpretation of Louis Althusser’s famous periodization of Marx’s work (see Althusser, 1965). It is worth noting that the authors embrace all neither of analytical Marxism nor of Althusserianism. The same applies to Postcolonialism. However, all these currents provide tools that might help us to deconstruct often intertwined theoretical and political problems in Marx.

Chapter three, “[Late Marx Beyond Marxism: Contingency, Critique of Domination and Radical Democracy](#)”, focuses on Marx’s later writings—the text corpus that presents the most resources within Marx’s work to break with Eurocentric arguments. I argue first for an evolving conception of history and progress that abandons all philosophy of history. This break is carried out through different findings: a rejection of a global-historical concept of feudalism, a revised concept of social formation, an overcoming of the fetishized development of the productive forces, a pursuing of the ‘French road’ of radical egalitarianism, an awareness of differentiated temporalities and geographies as well as a new conception of history inspired by Darwin’s theory of evolution. My second argument is that these changes ground a consistent analysis of social inequalities

and power relations. The new understandings go beyond earlier ambiguities in the conceptions of both colonialism and gender. Marx later relies on a realist account of colonial structures preventing progressive development of colonized societies and on a differentiated discussion of colonial appropriation. We also see a withering away of a certain naturalization of social relations in Marx's early writings through the deconstruction of the patriarchal family based on ethnological literature. Finally, I argue that Marx's engagement with the Paris Commune and indigenous peoples of North America allowed him to elaborate a 'real-utopic' model of a post-capitalist society in Erik Olin Wright's sense (see Wright, 2010). The chapter closes with a brief critical contextualization of late Marx's new intellectual sources.

Whereas the first three chapters of this book represent a philological and theoretical assessment of Marx's Eurocentrism, the following three chapters engage in the scholarly debate evolving around this question. Chapter four, "[Global Challenges: Marxism, Eurocentrism and Pluralism in the 21st Century](#)", shows how challenges carved out by postcolonial approaches on the subject of Marx's Eurocentrism are often disarticulated in Marxist contributions. The chapter's analysis thus focuses on three dimensions: Marx's Orientalist sources, his concept of historical progress and the global entanglements of modernity. The lack of engagement with critical discussions of Eurocentrism in Marxist contributions is ultimately seen as a symptom of the absence of theoretical and political pluralism. Nonetheless, I argue that this is the only way Marx is able to contribute to a comprehensive critical social theory in the twenty-first century.

Chapter five, "[Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Marx: Vivek Chibber's Marxism](#)", engages with Vivek Chibber's *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital* (2013)—probably the most powerful critique of postcolonial studies from a Marxist point of view. In it, the author critically dissects the social theory of Indian Subaltern Studies. However, the very idea of a Marxism that supports Chibber's enterprise remains underdeveloped and therefore inaccessible to fair criticism. This chapter begins by addressing the author's understanding of Postcolonialism. It then discusses the different implications of globalizing capitalism: the 'Conventional Story' of its genesis, the Subalternist idea of 'Dominance without Hegemony' as well as problems connected to labour under capital ('free' and abstract labour). Finally, an attempt at distilling Chibber's controversial conception of Marxism is made, with particular attention devoted to the problem of 'objective' interests.

Chapter six, “Marx, Universalism, and the Global South: A Discussion Between Andrea Komlosy, Elena Louisa Lange, Kolja Lindner, Matthias Middell, and Aditya Nigam”, presents a roundtable discussion among scholars of history and social theory—the Austrian global labour historian Andrea Komlosy, the Swiss scholar of Japanese intellectual history Elena Louisa Lange, the German global historian Matthias Middell, the Indian political theorist Aditya Nigam and myself. This debate evolves around four main points: Eurocentrism in Marx, capitalism in the Global South, labour in a global perspective and Marx’s perspective on colonialism. Contention and disaccord are mainly centred around the political project attached to postcolonial theory, the legitimacy of the category of Eurocentrism in the context of Marx’s oeuvre, his work as a historian and the validity of his categories such as ‘primitive accumulation’, real/formal subsumption as well as abstract and wage labour in the context of the Global South. I wish to hereby thank all of the participants for the time and efforts they dedicated towards explaining their ideas and engaging with each other. As readers will soon discover, this is not always an easy exercise, especially when people hail from different backgrounds—a fortiori when all is taking place online due to the global pandemic of COVID-19, moderated under severe time constraints. Despite these challenges, the following discussion provides an insight into not only the contrast between different theoretical approaches, but also the way people read Marx’s work. Highly antipathetic to hermetic orthodoxy and condescend anti-pluralism, I continue to believe that this kind of exchanges is an achievement as such.

The production of a book is a costly and long process. I therefore want to thank my research unity *Les mondes allemands: histoire des idées et des représentations* at the University Paris 8 for its financial support as well as the series editors and the publishing company staff for their patience with this overdue project. I am also very grateful to G. M. Goshgarian for his extremely conscientious translation of chapter one and Dhouha Djerbi and Ben Gook for their helpful readings. It goes without saying that all the work presented here benefited from various discussions with and advice from colleagues and friends. Among them, I particularly want to mention Urs Lindner and Michael Heinrich, and the reluctant Marxists whose attacks have instilled in me a dedication towards continuing the delicate, albeit important, deconstruction of Marx’s thought. I remain