

*Kant, Hegel, and
Marx*



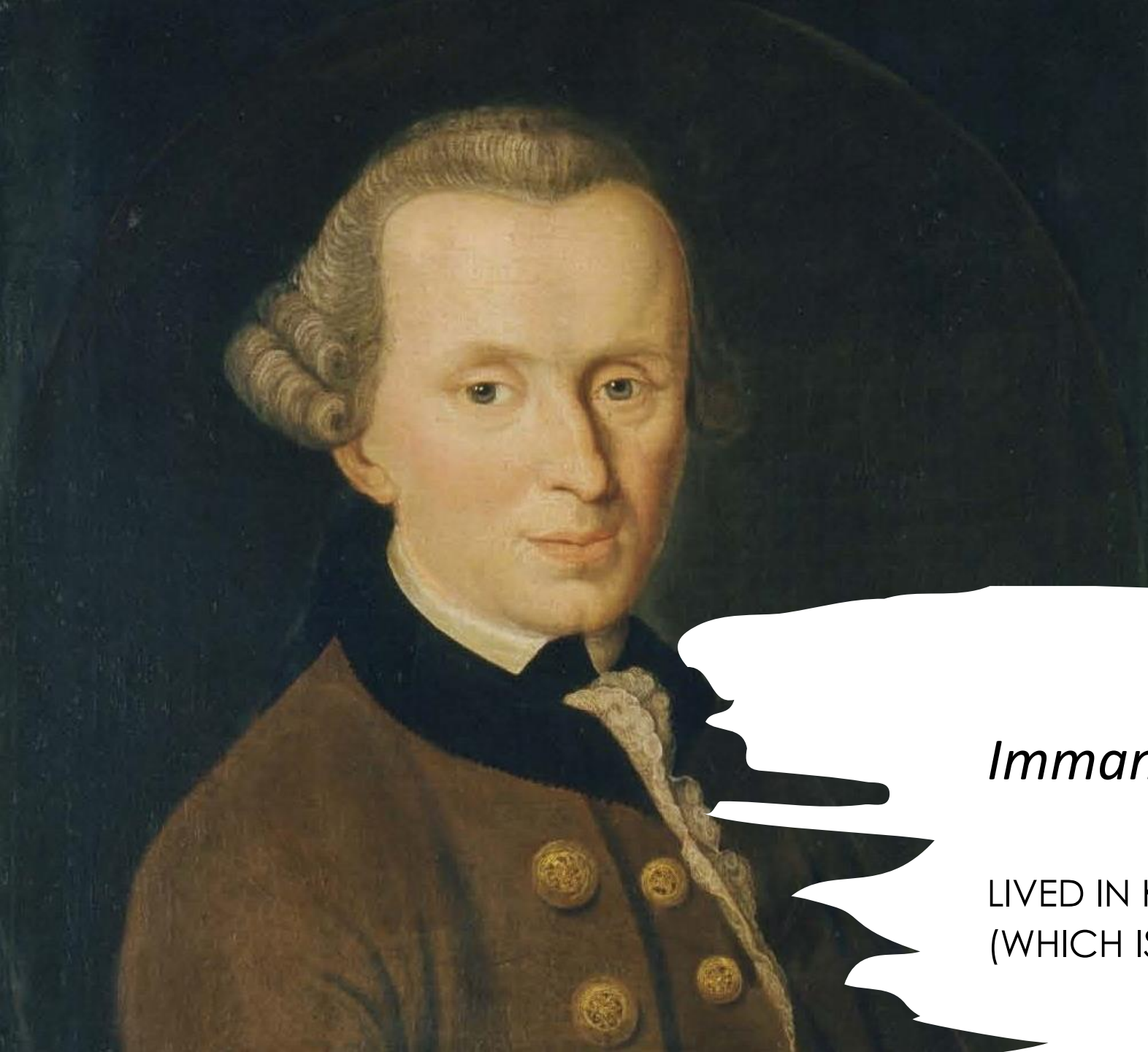
Review: Empiricism and Rationalism



The *empiricists* (Locke, Berkeley, Hume) held we that we are *limited to our experiences*.



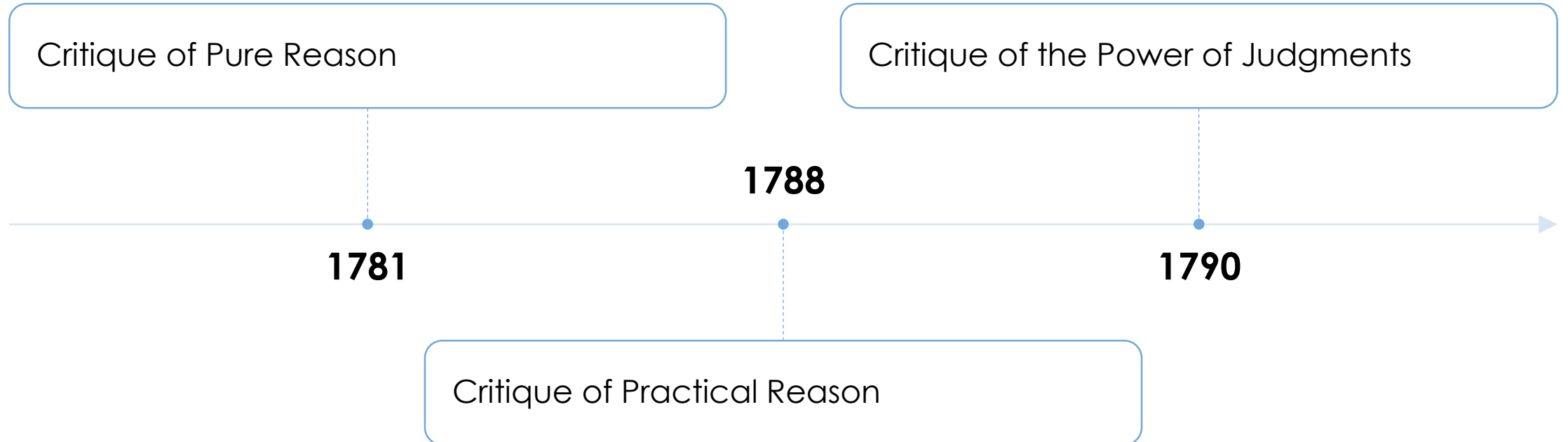
The *rationalists* (Spinoza, Leibniz) held that we can figure out the nature of the world through *rational introspection*.



Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)

LIVED IN KÖNIGSBERG, ON THE BALTIC SEA
(WHICH IS NOW CALLED KALININGRAD)

Three Critiques



The Critique of Pure Reason

“Thus metaphysics for Kant concerns a priori knowledge, or knowledge whose justification does not depend on experience; and he associates a priori knowledge with reason. The project of the Critique is to examine whether, how, and to what extent human reason is capable of a priori knowledge.” Rohlf 2016.

“Transcendental Idealism”

“What may be the case with objects in themselves and abstracted from all this receptivity of our sensibility remains entirely unknown to us. We are acquainted with nothing except our way of perceiving them, which is peculiar to us, and which therefore does not necessarily pertain to every being, though to be sure it pertains to every human being. We are concerned solely with this.” (First Critique)



Space and Time

Space and time are the *subjective forms of human sensible intuition*.

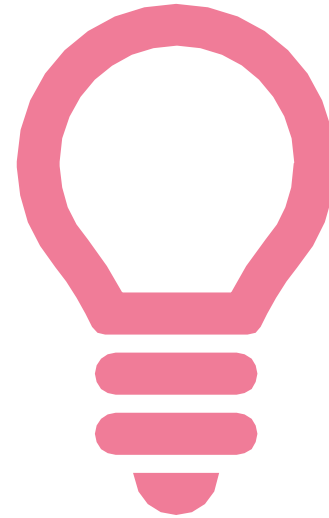
-Space: the “exterior” form of our understanding of the world


-Time: the “interior” form of our understanding of the world

The “Transcendental Deduction”

The transcendental deduction aims to show the legitimacy of our *a priori* concepts-- as Kant claims that without such concepts (combined with the “forms of experience” of space and time), we couldn’t have experiences.

These concepts include categories like *possibility, reality, and cause*.





The *“Transcendental Deduction,” cont.*

“[T]he objective validity of the categories, as a priori concepts, rests on the fact that through them alone is experience possible (as far as the form of thinking is concerned). For they then are related necessarily and a priori to objects of experience, since only by means of them can any object of experience be thought at all.” (First Critique)

The phenomenal and the noumenal



THE **NOUMENAL REALM** (THE “THINGS IN THEMSELVES”) IS FOREVER INACCESSIBLE TO US.



NONETHELESS, WE CAN HAVE A PRIORI KNOWLEDGE BECAUSE, **THE PHENOMENAL REALM** (THE WORLD OF OUR EXPERIENCE) NECESSARILY HAS CERTAIN FEATURES



G.W.F. Hegel *(1770-1831)*

- The German idealists: Fichte, Schelling, Hegel
- Try to go beyond Kant-- to remove the limitation on what we can know.



Hegel's Critique of Kant

1. There are more *a priori* concepts than Kant gives.
2. The concepts are *objectively real*.
3. All of these concepts must be about some actually existing thing.

Hegelian Logic

(1) Thesis

(2) Antithesis

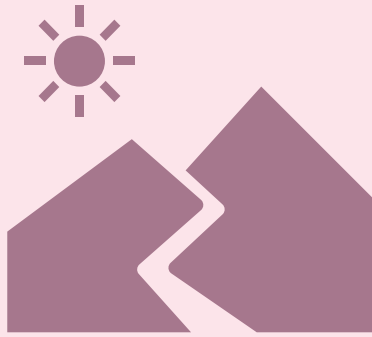
(3) Synthesis (The reconciliation of opposites)

Dialectical Necessity

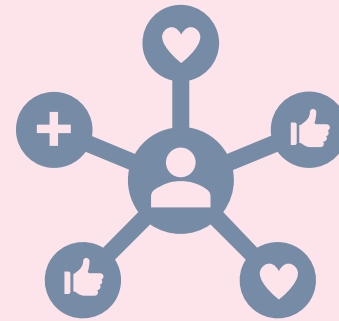
This movement (from thesis through synthesis) is *necessary*.

Example: The rationalists → The empiricists → Kant

This happens in the world of “Spirit”



Obviously, things don't “*tend towards unity*” in the material world.



But in the world of the *ideas*, they do.

Aufhebung

As one philosophical system replaces another, three things happen:



Abolishing- The old system is destroyed



Preserving- The “truth” of the old system is saved



Elevating- The old system is becomes better

Each time had its own “spirit.”

History is the processes by which “Spirit” becomes self-aware.

History, then is a story of progress, and it has, as its end, an understanding of *Absolute Idea*.

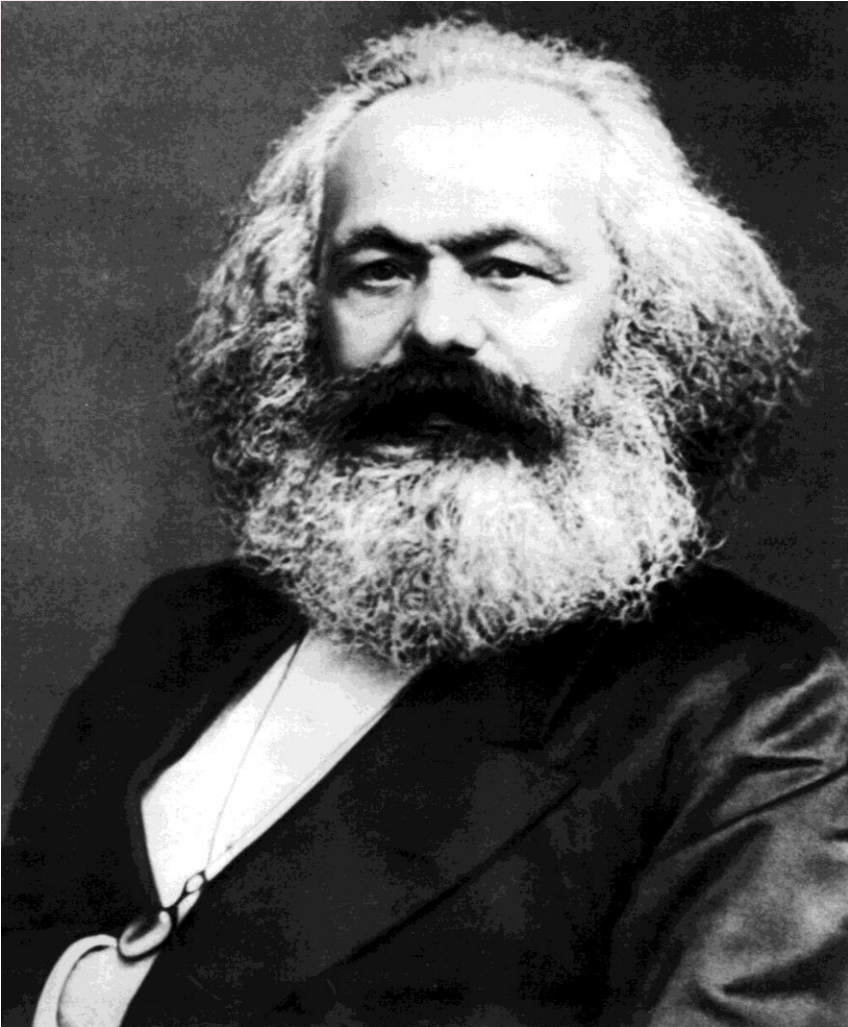
A Historical Story

Some Responses to Hegel

Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855)- Hegel ignores the limitations on human understanding. (Existentialism)

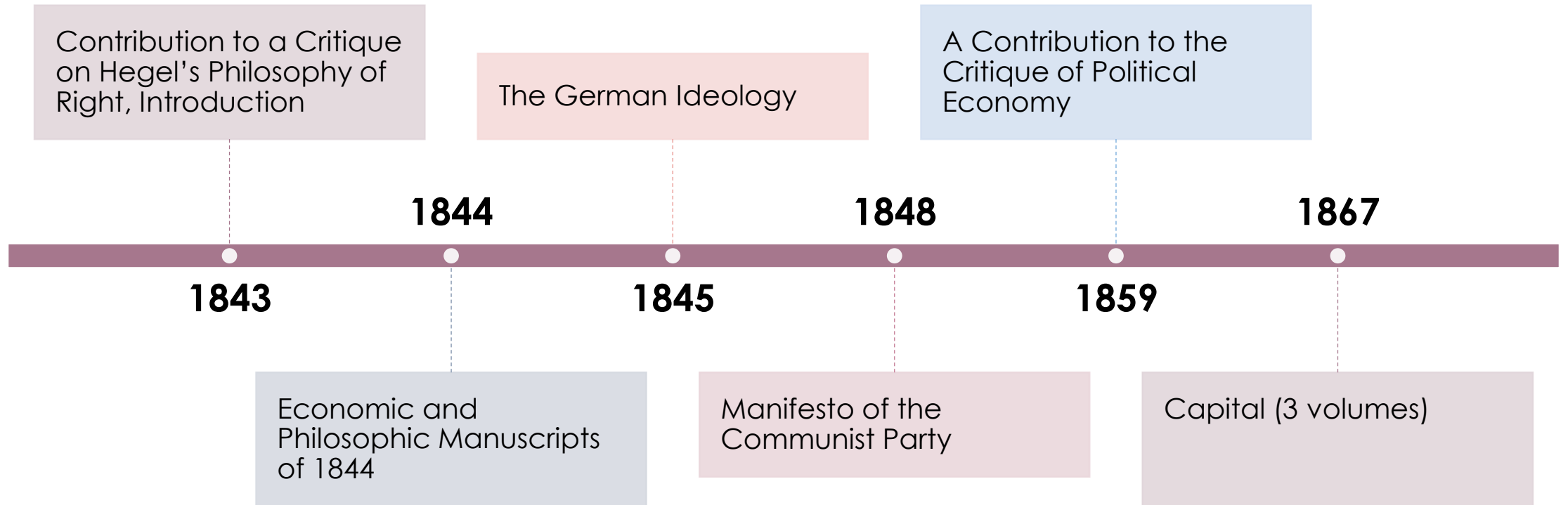
Karl Marx (1818-1883)- Hegel ignores the material reality of human existence. (Marxism)

Karl Marx (1818-1883)



- . Born in Trier
- . Studies in Berlin, joins the *Young Hegelians*-- who accept Hegel's idea of dialectical progress, but reject Hegel's metaphysics.
- . Meets Fredrich Engels, becomes convinced that the working class will be the agent of historical change.

Some Important Works



Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844



Alienation under capitalism:



1) From the product



2) From the activity of work



3) From one's humanity



4) From other humans

Analysis of Capitalism

Use value vs. exchange value

Labor theory of value

Capitalism will eventually collapse due to *overproduction*-unemployment and underemployment are *built in* the capitalist system.

“In the first thesis, Marx states his objections to ‘all hitherto existing’ materialism and idealism. Materialism is complimented for understanding the physical reality of the world, but is criticized for ignoring the active role of the human subject in creating the world we perceive. Idealism, at least as developed by Hegel, understands the active nature of the human subject, but confines it to thought or contemplation: the world is created through the categories we impose upon it. Marx combines the insights of both traditions to propose a view in which human beings do indeed create — or at least transform — the world they find themselves in, but this transformation happens not in thought but through actual material activity; not through the imposition of sublime concepts but through the sweat of their brow, with picks and shovels. This historical version of materialism, which transcends and thus rejects all existing philosophical thought, is the foundation of Marx’s later theory of history” (Wolff 2017)

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*Beyond Idealism
and Materialism*

“In *The German Ideology* Marx and Engels contrast their new materialist method with the idealism that had characterized previous German thought. Accordingly, they take pains to set out the ‘premises of the materialist method’. They start, they say, from ‘real human beings’, emphasizing that human beings are essentially productive, in that they must produce their means of subsistence in order to satisfy their material needs. “ (Wolff 2017)

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*The German
Ideology-Marx's
Theory of History*

Historical Materialism

“The satisfaction of needs engenders new needs of both a material and social kind, and forms of society arise corresponding to the state of development of human productive forces. Material life determines, or at least ‘conditions’ social life, and so the primary direction of social explanation is from material production to social forms, and thence to forms of consciousness.” (Wolff 2017)