

# Late Capitalism and Crisis: Reconsidering Habermas's Critique of Marx

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## Abstract

Elucidating the relationship between capitalism and crisis has been a pivotal concern for social theory. Yet since the 1960s and 1970s, and more persistently after the collapse of Communism, the formulation of crisis theories has been the object of harsh criticisms to the extent that the very concept of crisis has lost validity as a sociological category. In this paper I challenge this scepticism by means of discussing Jürgen Habermas' defence of sociology as 'the science of crisis per excellence' and his reconstruction of the tradition of crisis theory. However, I argue that Habermas relies upon a critique that underestimates the 'rich phenomenology' of Marx's conceptualisation of crisis. In response to this impasse, I reconsider Marx's *18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* as an exemplary resource—overlooked by Habermas—for an enriched understanding of contemporary crises.

*\* Paper presented at the BSA Theory Study Group Annual Conference, 17-18th September 2009, University of Warwick, UK*