



## **A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism (Contemporary Social Theory S)**

*By Anthony Giddens*

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What, if anything, is valid in Marx's work today, following the events of 1989 and after in Eastern Europe? The second edition of this highly regarded critical encounter with historical materialism and other major perspectives in social thought, shows how a critical theory of the advanced societies can still draw on marxism - if only sparingly - and remains an endeavour of fundamental importance in the social sciences at the present time.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

'Giddens is, in the British context, remarkable for more than his industry. He is that rarest of birds, a home reared 'grand theorist', whose aim is nothing less than a reconstruction of the theoretical foundations of social theory ... *The Nation State and Violence* is the latest, well-argued and researched stage in his attempt to show how the reality we now inhabit has been formed in recent history.'

*David J. Levy, Times Higher Education Supplement*

#### From the Back Cover

The social sciences have long been based upon contrasts drawn between the 'militaristic' societies of the past, and the 'capitalist' or 'industrial' societies of the present. But how valid are such contrasts, given that the current era is one stamped by the impact of war and by the intensive development of sophisticated weaponry?

In setting out to address this and similar questions, this book investigates issues that have been substantially neglected by those working in sociology and social theory. Anthony Giddens offers a sociological analysis of the nature of the modern nation-state and its association with the means of waging war. His analysis is connected in a detailed way to problems that have traditionally preoccupied sociologists - the impact of capitalism and industrialism upon social development in the modern period. The result is a theory both of the institutional parameters of modernity and of the nature of international relations.

The book is a sequel to the author's much discussed *Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism*. The framework of social theory outlined in that work is here elucidated in a systematic and thorough-going fashion. The novel and provocative ideas which the author develops will interest those working in a wide variety of disciplines: sociology, politics, geography and international affairs.

#### About the Author

ANTHONY GIDDENS is Professor of Sociology at King's College, Cambridge. He is the author of numerous books on social theory

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