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**THE DISCUSSION OF MARXISM AND THEORETICAL ANTI-
HUMANISM IN THE LIGHT OF LOUIS ALTHUSSER'S THOUGHTS**

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Louis Althusser's Thoughts**

**Louis Althusser'in Düşünceleri Işığında Marksizm ve Teorik Anti-hümanizm
Tartışması**

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I state that anti-humanism and theoretical anti-humanism are different things and that not every criticism of humanism means theoretical anti-humanism. I also emphasize that every philosophical critique of the subject and every anti-humanist reading that lacks a theory of history cannot be equated with Marxism. I focus on the ruptures in Marx's thought by problematizing Marx's expressions such as 'species being' (*Gattungswesen*) and *alienation* in his early texts, and I invite the reader to reflect on what it means to take the theoretical anti-humanist position in Marx's later texts.

Althusser not only made a theoretical intervention in the conjuncture with his theoretical discussion of anti-humanism, but also emphasized that the human is a generalization subject not only in bourgeois economy but also in all concepts modeling the bourgeois age, and that modern philosophy puts the concept of human and subject in its center in a hereditary way, and embraces it with all his arms.

For Althusser, the categories of man, human essence, or human species played a fundamental theoretical role in pre-Marxist classical philosophies. Later, this role was transferred to classical political economy, included by it, and it became functional in hiding the logic of exploitation by the capitalist system of production. As a universalized category the idea of man, as the conscious subject of his acts is isolated from its concrete-historical conditions, together with humanism, we are witnessing that people are no longer their relational existence in the production process, but are equated with their quality of being human, and that they become the subject of law and the subject of their needs by the power.

This discussion reflected in Marxism in the claim human history begins with humans, that history should be considered within the scope of human subjects, that we should read the history of class struggles as the history of the human being and his alienation from himself. Thus, the debates have been postponed, such as that concrete man and history in his relational existence conditioned in the social

production of material life do not have a final goal of bringing the human essence to man.

By emphasizing that both knowledge and history are based on a material process, that is, without subject, Althusser made a head-on opposition to both humanism and its way of knowing. Althusser criticized the application of humanist epistemology, which has come under different names (integral, scientific) to Marxism.

Again, Marxism, which does not take into account the material production process and material conditions or does not read it as an activity consisting of subjects, has loudly objected to the understanding that finds its source in Classical Political Economy, German Philosophy and French socialism, that is, in human philosophies.

Those who do not take into account the material production process and material conditions, or who read it as an activity with a have historical subject, have found the source of Marxism unfiltered in English Political Economy, German Philosophy and French Socialism, i.e. in human philosophies. Althusser loudly objected to this understanding. According to Althusser, this genesis reading of the three sources of Marxism is at best a critical reading.

For Althusser, historical-social practices do not mean that their agents are necessarily thought of as subject nor does it mean that history has a telos as its subject and purpose. With the theoretical anti-humanism discussion, Althusser emphasized that Marxism had to break with the idealist category of “subject”, which treats the “subject” as the beginning (origin,), essence, cause.

Neither in Marx's Scientific revolution (conditioned in the social production of material life) nor in Marx's philosophical revolution (philosophy is the class struggle carried out in the theoretical field), the concept of man can be considered as a starting principle. However, this does not mean that the subjects are not established in the process and a subjectivity within the practice-politics are not produced.

In order to make this discussion clear, Althusser focused on the evolutions and breaks in Marx's thought, or to put it more accurately, after observing the conceptual changes in Marx's texts, Althusser stated that Marx's theory was not yet mature in his youth and even though he started to distance himself from these understandings. Marx did not yet have a conceptual break and he couldn't open a new field with the concept of epistemological break by tracing the texts one by one.

When Marxism is read in the conditions of its formation, we have to go from the end to the beginning. In this sense, Marxism is neither a historicism nor a theoretical-humanism. As a result, Marxism is a new science (historical materialism) and new philosophical practice that broke away from philosophies of consciousness and philosophical anthropologies, that is, from the category of subject whose unity is provided by consciousness.

Keywords: Young Marx, Alienation, Epistemological Break, Theoretical Anti-humanism, Historical Materialism.

ÖZET

Bu tez çalışmasında anti hümanizm ile teorik anti-hümanizmin birbirinden farklı şeyler olduğunu her hümanizm eleştirisinin teorik anti-hümanizm anlamına gelmediğini yine aynı ölçüde tarih teorisinden yoksun her felsefi özne eleştirisinin ve her anti-hümanist okumanın da Marksizmle eşitlenemeyeceğini vurguluyorum. Yine “benim analitik yöntemim insandan değil verili bir dönemin ekonomik-toplumsal ilişkilerinden yola çıkar” diyen Marx’ın teorik anti-hümanizmini belirgin kılan bir filozof olarak Louis Althusser’in Marx okumaları ışığında Marx’ın erken dönem metinlerindeki türsel varlık, yabancılaşma gibi ifadelerini problematize ederek Marx’ın fikriyatındaki kopuşlara odaklanıyor ve Marx’ın geç dönem metinlerindeki teorik anti-hümanist pozisyon alışı ne anlama geldiği üzerine okuru düşünmeye davet ediyorum.

Althusser teorik anti-hümanizm tartışmasıyla sadece konjoktüre teorik bir müdahalede bulunmamış, insanın yalnızca burjuva iktisadında değil, burjuva çağını modelleyen bütün kavramlarda bir genelleme konusu da olduğunu, modern felsefenin de kalıtımsal bir biçimde insan ve özne kavramını merkezine oturttuğunu, ona dört elle sarıldığını vurgulamıştır.

Althusser açısından insan, insan özü veya insan türü kategorisi, Marksizm öncesi klasik felsefelerde temel bir teorik rol oynamış, sonrasında bu rol klasik ekonomi politiğe taşınmış, onun tarafından içerilmiş ve kapitalist üretim sistemi tarafından da sömürü mantığını gizlenmesinde iş görür olmuştur.

Evrenselleştirilmiş bir kategori olarak edimlerinin bilinçli öznesi olarak insan fikri kendi somut-tarihsel koşullarından yalıtılmış, hümanizmle birlikte artık insanların üretim süreci içindeki ilişkisel varlıklarına değil, insan olma vasfıyla eşitlenmesine ve iktidar tarafından hukuk öznesi, ihtiyaçlarının öznesi olmasına tanık olmaktayız.

Bu tartışma Marksizme insan tarihinin insanla başladığı, tarihin insan öznelerinin ereği içinde düşünülmesi, sınıf mücadeleleri tarihini insan ve onun kendine yabancılaşması olarak okumamız gerektiği şeklinde yansımıştır. Böylelikle maddi

yaşamın toplumsal üretimi içinde koşullanan ilişkisel varlığı içindeki somut insan ve tarihin insan öznün insana kazandırılması gibi nihai bir ereği olmadığı gibi tartışmalar ötelenmiştir.

Althusser ise gerek bilginin gerekse de tarihin öznesiz yani maddi bir sürece dayandığını vurgulayarak gerek hümanizme ve onun bilme biçimine gerekse de hümanizmin sosyalist, bilimsel ve farklı adlar adı altında savunusuna cepheden bir karşı koyuş sergilemiştir.

Maddi üretim sürecini, maddi yaşamın toplumsal üretimini ve maddi koşulları gözetmeyen ya da onu özneli bir etkinlik olarak okuyanlar Marksizmin kaynağını filtresiz bir şekilde Klasik Ekonomi Politikte, Alman Felsefesi'nde ve Fransız sosyalizminde yani insan felsefelerinde bulmuşlardır. Althusser ise bu anlayışa anlayışa gür sesle itiraz etmiştir. Althusser'e göre Marksizmin üç kaynağı olarak nitelenen bu kökensel okuma Marx açısından olsa olsa eleştirel bir okumadır.

Althusser açısından toplumsal tarihi pratikler eyleycilerinin, ne zorunlu olarak özne olduğunu ne de tarihin bir öznesi ve ereği olduğunu bize söyler. Althusser teorik-antihümanizm tartışmasıyla Marksizmin "özneyi" başlangıç (köken, orjin), öz (cevher, essence), neden (illet, cause) olarak ele alan idealist "özne" kategorisinden kopmak zorunda olduğunu vurgulamıştır.

Ne Marx'ın Bilimsel devriminde (maddi yaşamın toplumsal üretimi içinde koşullanan), ne de Marx'ın felsefi devriminde (felsefe teorik alanda yürütülen sınıf mücadelesidir) insan kavramı bir başlangıç ilkesi olarak ele alınamaz. Fakat bu durum, sürecin içinde kurulmuş öznelerin ve pratik-politika içinde bir öznelliğin üretilmediği anlamına gelmez.

Bu tartışmayı seçik kılmak için Marx'ın fikriyatındaki evrimlere ve kopuşlara odaklanan Althusser, ya da daha doğru bir ifadeyle söyleyecek olursam Marx'ın metinlerindeki kavramsal değişimleri gözlemledikten sonra Althusser Marx'ın gençlik dönemlerinde henüz teorisinin erginleşmediğini ve bu anlayışlarla mesafelenmeye başlasa bile henüz kavramsal bir kopuş ve yeni bir alan açmadığını tek tek metinlerin izini sürerek epistemolojik kopuş kavramıyla anlatmıştır.

Marksizm oluřum kořulları iinde okunduęunda sondan bařa gitmek zorundayız. Bu anlamıyla Marksizm ne bir tarihselciliktir ne de bir teorik-hümanizm. Marksizm bilin felsefeselerinin ve felsefi antropolojinin eleřtirel bir edinime tabii tutulduęu yeni bir bilim ve yeni bir felsefi pratiktir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Genç marx, Yabancılařma, Epistemolojik Kopuř, Teorik anti-Hümanizm, Tarihsel Materyalizm

INTRODUCTION

Throughout this thesis, I hope not to make a general philosophical discussion of humanism, but to draw attention to the problems of reading Marx's discussion of the general discussion, the critique of political economy, and the concepts he borrowed from his philosophy of history: the economic subject, alienation, injustice, justice, spirit, and freedom.

However, it is reductive to see the theoretical anti-humanism debate as a discussion between the concept pair of ideology and science. The theoretical discussion of anti-humanism is one that covers all philosophical, political and historiographical fields, taking into account Marx's proposition that history is the history of class struggles. My starting point is Althusser's article titled "Marxism and Humanism," which started with his correspondence with Jean Lacroix in 1950, and his 1964 article titled "Marxism and Humanism" and the "Fight for Humanism" texts he wrote in 1967.

According to Althusser, in order to understand the humanist theme in Marx's early works and to see Marx's theoretical humanism, it is necessary to be aware of Feuerbach. Feuerbach will emerge as he digs under the debates that are supposed to have started with Marx. For Althusser, Feuerbach's influence in Marx's theory of alienation in his expression of humanism as complete naturalism is no secret.

Althusser speaks of these Feuerbachian themes in Marx's *1844 Manuscripts*:

"It is a very specific thesis to speak of Marx's break with theoretical humanism: if Marx broke with this ideology because he was united with it. After all, he was united with it (and it was not a false union), it was because this ideology existed. There are never imaginary partners in the mergers sanctified by the history of theories, even in certain theoretical domains such as the imaginary field of ideologies." (Althusser: 2012: 193)

According to Althusser, the theoretical humanism with which Marx was associated was that of Feuerbach. Althusser argues that Feuerbach also took on the

philosophical problems posed by German idealism. First of all, it deals with problems of Pure Reason and Practical Reason, problems of Nature and Freedom, problems of knowledge (what can I know?), morality (what should I do?), and religion (what can I hope for?)

In Feuerbach, the only, original and fundamental concept to do anything with is Man: Man replaces the Hegelian Idea just as he replaces the Kantian Transcendental Subject, the Noumenal Subject, the Empirical Subject and the Idea. Hence its appeal to the concrete, the “thing itself, the real, the sensible,” against the forms of alienation (abstraction is for Feuerbach the ultimate essence of these forms.)

This is the meaning of the “reversal” of Hegel, to which Marx, as the true critique of Hegel, has long adhered to whereas this critique is wholly immersed in empiricism for which Hegel only makes a glorified theory: reversing the predicate in the subject, reversing the Idea in sensible reality, concrete inverting the abstract, etc. All these are evaluated under the category of human beings who are real, sensible and concrete. This is the theoretical humanism with which Marx was concerned.

Likewise, although the discussion of alienation is considered from within the relations of production, the theory of alienation has to assume an unalienated self.

In the *1844 Manuscripts* Man objectifies his essence (“essential powers”, “genus specific powers”). This essence manifests itself in the form of products of human labor. Of course, we are dealing here with the production of real and material objects, not spiritual objects such as God or the state. But the principle of alienation remains the same.

For Marx the concrete is concrete because it is the unity of many determinations, and hence of diversity. While the method of progressing from the abstract to the concrete is the method of understanding the concrete, the method of reproducing it as an intellectual concreteness, Hegel grasped the truth as a result of thought. The concrete is the real starting point in Marx. For Hegel, on the other hand, the concrete is the result of the thought that moves from itself.

Althusser opposes all readings of Marx in his conjuncture in a single discussion: theoretical anti-humanism. From those who call Marxism a scientific humanism (Lucien Sève), to analytical Marxists, from Analytical Marxists to the Budapest school that thinks Marxism around the problem of needs/needs, from the Budapest school to the Marxist Humanists, from the Marxist Humanists to existentialism, from those who say existentialism is a humanism to those who say that socialism is a humanism.

On the other hand, he opposes a whole corpus that thinks in terms of alienation and characterizes this concept as a segment in Marx's economic development (Ernest Mandel et al.)

Althusser, who does not read humanism under a single title, emphasizes the difference of the types of humanism he polemics about. He distinguishes Garaudy's "integral" humanism from the pure humanism of John Lewis, "veritable" humanism from the "real" humanism of others, and the "scientific" humanism of figures like Lucien Sève. In his *Reply to John Lewis* he says: "Between these different varieties of the philosophy of human liberty, each philosopher can of course freely take his choice! All that is perfectly normal." (Althusser: 1976a: 76) In this sense, it can be said that the history of Marxism is to some extent also the history of questioning the position of humanism.

Althusser characterizes the concept of humanism as an ideological concept. It is ostensibly presented as a concept: it played an ideological role, an integral part of a given conjuncture. It shows the tensions of thinking about a particular event with a concept whose object comes from outside that theoretical field, a concept that does not grasp itself theoretically.

By 'ideological' here, it is meant to expand the scope of use of the concept and to move away from materialism, not from pre-scientific or imaginary/matter relations with reality.

The tensions of defending materialism only as the independence of matter from consciousness will also need to be addressed. We must think of materialism beyond

the matter-consciousness dichotomy. Emphasizing that consciousness is something that does not contain any substance and is constituted, it will be necessary to consider that there is also a discussion about the use of the concept in a discussion of materialism.

Materialism is the determination of the place of the use of the concept. For example, we understand the difference between the notion of man in speculative anthropology and the discussion of Marx, who said that “I started not from man but from the economic agents of a particular period.” It is a similar tension to talk about the anthropological history of value against Marx, who substitutes real historical people for “human” in the *German Ideology* and it is a similar tension to not understand the place of the of the concept of value. Of course, value can also be read before capitalist social formations, but what Marx is interested in is how commodity production of wage labor produces value and how value in the process points to surplus value as unpaid labor, rather than making an anthropological history of value. Likewise, the discussion of power or discipline can only be engaged for Marx after Capitalism assumes free labor. Well, when Althusser says that he owes the concept of History as a process without a subject to Marx, against the proposition that man is the subject of history, a question can be asked whether the two discussions are intertwined. By the materialist use of the concept here, I do not mean whether the concept is philosophical or not, but rather its use in a delimited debate (the concept's regional location, that is, its specific rationality).

For Hegel, of course, History is a process of alienation, but the subject of this process (unlike Feuerbach's) is not Man. First of all, it is Mind, not Man, that is at issue in Hegelian history, and if a ‘subject’ is desired in History at all costs (which is already wrong with regard to ‘subject’), it is ‘peoples’ or more are precisely (and we are approaching the truth) moments of the development of the Idea transformed into Mind. History is not the alienation of Man, it is the alienation of the Mind, that is, the last moment of the alienation of the Idea.

For Hegel, the process of alienation does not begin with History (with the History of humanity), for History itself is nothing but the alienation of Nature, which is nothing but the alienation of logic.

FIRST CHAPTER: THEORETICAL HUMANISM

1.1. THE CONCEPT OF HUMANISM: A GENEALOGICAL DISCUSSION

We are faced with an obvious anachronism in the debates on the etymology of the concept of humanism. Those who look for the origin of the concept in Ancient Greek even call Plato, who points out the limits of bodily existence, a humanist. So they talk about a kind of Socratic Humanism. Again, reflecting the perspectivism of Pythagoras, the motto “man is the measure of all things” is considered as a humanist statement. However, this phrase is not a reference to a universal individual idea or ideology, but an expression of perspectivism. The idea of a self-sufficient individual independent of community and site life was unthinkable from the point of view of Ancient Greek. Likewise, the “subject” that haunts the problem of freedom and the individual [personne] is not an ontological figure related to the objective [object] or hypokeimenon, but a political, theological, and moral figure, and the notion of hypokeimenon in Aristotle's metaphysics means “bottom” in Greek. It means “what lies behind”, and Aristotle defines it as that which “everything is attributed to but not itself to anything else”. The Latin equivalent of this word is *subjektum*, today's subject. In this context, neither Socrates, nor Plato, nor Aristotle, nor any other name can be qualified as a humanist. On the other hand, although it is possible to find a discussion of anti-humanism in Plato, there are equally some tensions in calling Plato an anti-humanist by going back from today. This tension is a tension about how we treat philosophy. In other words, characterizing philosophy as a class struggle carried out in the field of theory prevents both theoretical humanism and theoretical anti-humanism discussions with reference to Ancient Greek. For those who describe philosophy as a love of wisdom or human wisdom, Plato or Socrates is not a humanist figure, on the contrary, they are at the level of philosophers who problematize this knowledge (human knowledge). Socrates and Plato criticized the limits of embodied existence and their unwavering belief in human knowledge.

As someone who does not read philosophy through a problem of origin and purpose, the discussions on the origin of the concept are not functional in terms of the subject I will discuss in the thesis, and there is no consensus on this issue either. From those who started humanism with Socrates to those who said it was first mentioned in Cicero's text, from those who started the concept with Petrarch and thought that the concept took its true nature with the Renaissance to those who looked for the roots of Renaissance humanism in Ancient Greek or ancient utopias, there are a number of inconsistent readings.

Today, we cannot understand a cultural movement from humanism, an understanding based on keeping classical culture alive. Moreover, the word classic is also subject of debate. Of course, the etymology of the concept can be looked at and a theme can be created from here. But as I have mentioned, this theme is either in the form of a reference to Greece or to the Italy of the 14th and 15th century. This discussion cannot be considered independently of the social construction of the period, the social production of material life, by destroying its context. Talking about renaissance humanism is not the same as looking for the origins of theoretical humanism debates in the Renaissance or Ancient Greek. The theoretical humanism debate is a discussion specific to capitalism.

To speak of class struggle in Ancient Greek with a Marxist methodology is an anachronism. (This does not mean, of course, that there were no conflicting powers, oppressor-oppressed, dominant groups, disadvantaged groups relationship in Ancient Greek.) But the formation of the class as wage workers is specific to a particular historical period. Similarly, it is an anachronism to return to Ancient Greek from the concepts of human culture, cultural values and accumulation of the Renaissance and to seek humanism there.

Discussions must be specific to a specific date. Here we must ask how episteme is constructed rather than seeking a conceptual origin. The fact that there is a concept called '*humanismus*' in Latin, the derivation of this concept from the adjective *humanus* gives us information only about the form of knowing of that period. A worldview statement whose center is the human has different meanings in different

social and historical sections. We cannot go back by considering the discussion of humanism under different headings such as philanthropy, pedagogy or anthropocentrism, nor can we read theoretic-humanism, which finds its theoretical nature in the capitalist social formation, going backwards from today.

Although its philosophical roots go back much further, Althusser has specified the theoretical humanism discussion to an era and thought within capitalism. As mentioned above, there are understandable reasons for this. Because theoretical humanism ultimately corresponds to a way of thinking in which man is elevated to the position of a subject, depriving him of conflict, treating him as a species as a human being and universalizing it. Is where the class struggle is determined: where free labor becomes wage labor, where generalized commodity production is revealed. The situation that makes Marx say that history is the history of class struggles can be determined within capitalism. Therefore, the theoretical humanism and theoretical anti-humanism debate, which is the concept put forward as a theoretical intervention to it, also appeared before us in this conjuncture.

However, Althusser is well aware that the philosophy of consciousness and philosophies that we can call 'anthropologism' form the basis of theoretical humanism, and especially the philosophy of consciousness - although in Althusser's second definition, philosophy is the class struggle carried out in the theoretical field, that is, it is specific to capitalism- finds its philosophical roots before capitalism. In this sense, the definition of philosophy as the theoretical execution of the class struggle, with Althusser's definition, should not be understood as the philosophical positions that eliminate the distinctions within the class struggle belong to the 19th or 20th century. In short, a genealogy of theoretical humanism can be made not only about the discipline of philosophy but also about the crisis of the societies in which it is located and the crisis of philosophy itself. Althusser does not provide us with data on where he determined the history of theoretical humanism. Neither does he make historiography of philosophy. But he does not hesitate to underline this.

After identifying Feuerbach's anthropological humanism, Althusser tells us about Feuerbachian themes on the Young Marx that the Young Marx still thinks through

Feuerbach's distinctions. The fact that Althusser leaves the discussion of the conditions of formation of theoretical humanism empty is a matter of his priorities and, on the other hand, his mastery of the language of philosophy and its discussions. However, in line with this discussion, I would like to emphasize and make clear that when Althusser says theoretical humanism, he emphasizes not only philosophical anthropology, but also philosophies of consciousness with which there are no insurmountable walls. The consciousness discovered by Locke is the source of the theories of consciousness in Western philosophy, starting with Leibniz and Condillac, and extending through Kant and Hegel to Bergson and Husserl. Some of them admit this source, some hide it, because there is an important innovation in terms of consciousness and self. This innovation also includes the concept of identity/identity that forms a framework for them. This proposition may come as a surprise when we consider the prestige of the Cartesian cogito and the derivatives, if not of the word consciousness, of the adjective conscious in the Latin versions of the *Meditations and Responses* (an important detail here: Conscious is often paraphrased into French: being “recognizing”, having “up-to-date knowledge”, being or “experiencing”). But the grammatical subject of the cogito is not the self, but an exemplary ego.

It is quite possible to talk about a thinking subject defined by its interiority in Cartesian thought. But ultimately, Descartes founds identity on a substance, the carrier of consciousness on a substance independent of matter. Locke, unlike Descartes, founds identity on consciousness. Again, Descartes' discussion, which takes thinking as the object of thinking, is actually an epistemology debate. The argument of “cogito ergo sum” tells us about a subject who has declared his epistemological autonomy, which connects the "condition" of his existence to the fact that he is thinking and that he is thinking a substance. In this sense, the argument of doubt can be traced back to the Christian tradition of doubting the truth value of what is being considered. Descartes says that even if the representations in our minds are misleading, he says I am sure that these representations are in my mind. And Descartes makes this whole discussion by founding his epistemological autonomy on substance with the motive of seeking ontological evidence for God.

This is undoubtedly different from Locke's discussion. Etienne Balibar describes this situation as follows:

“Neither in Descartes nor even in Leibniz will you find the category 'subject' as an equivalent for an autonomous self-consciousness (a category which itself was invented only by John Locke), a reflexive center of the world and therefore a concentrate of the essence of man.” (Balibar: 1994: 6)

In this sense, Balibar also objects to Heidegger's starting the discussion about Descartes. And he continues as follows:

“As a matter of fact, the only 'subject' that the 'classical' metaphysicians knew was that contained in the scholastic notion of *subjectum*, coming from the Aristotelian tradition, i.e. an individual bearer of the formal properties of the 'substance. Therefore, the more they rejected the substantialist ontology, the less they spoke of the 'subject'. If this is the case, you will ask, when should we locate the invention of the subject in the modern philosophical sense, at what place in history and in which truly revolutionary work? On this point there can no doubt the 'subject' was invented by Kant through a process that took place in the three *Critiques*. These three major works (1781, 1786, 1791) are immediately disposed around the great revolutionary event, this time in the political sense of the term. I will return to this point. It is Kant, and nobody else, who calls properly 'subject' (*Subjekt*) that universal aspect of human consciousness and conscience (or rather the common ground of 'consciousness' and 'conscience') which provides any philosophy with its foundation and measure.” (Balibar: 1994: 6)

In summary, if we start the discussion with Kant, we see that his philosophical anthropology and philosophies of consciousness are intertwined in Kant's person. One can look back in time to see not the etymology and historical origin of the concept of humanism, but the conditions of its formation, only the philosophy of

consciousness and philosophical anthropology's relevance to this discussion. In this sense, if we examine the concept of humanism,

“Both the classical enthusiasms of Paduan lawyers and notaries and the literary works of Florentines like Brunetto Latini and Dante show that about 1300 the prosperous educated laymen in the Italian cities were groping their way towards a new culture distinct from both the chivalric culture of the medieval nobility and the scholastic culture of the clergy. This was a natural response to the conditions of their life. Since the nineteenth century, historians have labelled this new culture ‘*humanism*’, though that abstract term was coined by a German scholar in 1808 and appears nowhere in the writings of the Renaissance itself. The term that did exist then was humanistic studies (*studia humanitatis*), used to designate a cluster of academic subjects much favoured by humanists. By the first half of the fifteenth century, the term *humanistâs* (in Latin, *humanista*) had come into use, originally as student slang used to designate masters who taught the following particular academic subjects: grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history, and moral philosophy. Humanism, the bundle of subjects taught by humanists in the Latin grammar schools and university faculties of liberal arts, made no claim to embrace the totality of human learning, nor even all of the traditional seven liberal arts (embracing the trivium, or grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic, and the quadrivium, or arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music) that in theory were studied by all who received the bachelor and master of arts degrees from a university. The *studia humanitatis* did not include the subjects taught in the three higher faculties of medieval universities: law, medicine, and theology. To our own era, which has cast aside most of its classical heritage, it may seem odd that an educational and literary movement that embraced only grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history, and moral philosophy could have become quite literally epoch-making. Since the eighteenth century, efforts have been made to equate humanism with something broader and more obviously significant, the rise of a new philosophy that was generally defined as a glorification of

human nature and an exaltation of this-worldly goals in place of the otherworldly values that supposedly dominated life in the Middle Ages. But this way of thinking about humanism ran up against irrefutable evidence that leading humanists (beginning with Petrarch himself) were still deeply moved by otherworldly religious values. In the Renaissance itself, humanism was never defined as a philosophy or taught as an academic subject. All serious study of philosophy throughout the Renaissance was founded on one or another of the rival forms of medieval Aristotelian scholasticism. Although humanist scholarship eventually diffused knowledge about other ancient philosophical traditions besides the Peripatetic or Aristotelian, only Aristotelian philosophy was taught in the schools. This scholastic philosophy remained dominant until the rise of the new physical science in the seventeenth century demolished the credibility of Aristotelian natural philosophy. Outside the academy, Platonism or Stoicism or some other ancient system may have been a philosophical rival to scholasticism for certain individuals. But humanism never was, because it was not any kind of philosophy at all. (Nauert: 1995: 20-21)

As it is seen, humanism is not even considered as a type of philosophy or a way of philosophizing. Another source addresses the issue as follows: “When we look at its history, the word “humanist” was used for the first time in the 16th century, according to one claim, and in the 19th century, according to another claim. In the 19th century, a German pedagogue named Niethammer distinguished two main tendencies in human education in his work *The Conflict of Philanthropinismus and Humanism: Humanitarianism and Humanism*. According to him, these represent two different education systems.” (Zekiyan: 1982: 15). “The term *Humanismus*, which was born in the German cultural environment, acquired a more specific meaning in the 19th century, later in Georg Voight. For him, this term is an expression of an age of history, the Renaissance and its spiritual attitude. As such, it actually expresses an attitude towards the Middle Ages. If one asks what the main element of the *Humanismus* spirit of the Renaissance or the attitude that determines that spirit is, the answer is generally a new human type and a new understanding of

life that emerged with the Renaissance. The most important feature of this new mentality is that it focuses on values of *humanitas* (humanity) over the examples in Ancient Greek and Rome.” (Zekiyan: 1982: 16)

Although I did make a distinction between humanism and theoretical-humanism at the beginning, it may be asked why I included such discussions about the history of Humanism and how it was received. I did this for two reasons. Firstly, there is no common judgment in the debates under the name of the concept of Humanism nor in the nature and dating of the concept. Another and the main reason for our discussion is as follows: Some of the thinkers who describe Marxism as theoretical-humanism emphasize that it is the carrier of the universal values of humanism today and that these human values are the real owners of the theoretical idea of humanity and that Marxism has common roots with humanism.

For example, Eric Fromm, in his article titled “Humanism as the Universal Philosophy of Man”, allows the concept of Humanism from Buddhism to the Old Testament, from the Old Testament to the Christian teaching, to Latin and Greek. Aside from all the differences, a common definition of Humanism can be given from the point of view of Fromm. Fromm says in his related article:

“What are the main principles of humanism? The main features of humanistic philosophy are: First, the belief in the unity of the human race, which does not contain any human qualities that are not found in each of us; second, the value of human dignity; third, the importance of the human capacity for self-development and perfection: fourth, the importance of reason, objectivity, and peace.” (Fromm: 1987: 57)

Explaining Marxism with a false premise, starting from man and describing it as a universal philosophy of man and the value of human dignity, Fromm thus subordinates Marxism’s analysis of social relations. Fromm sees no mistake in associating Marxism with what he sees as the main principles of humanism such as values, reason, peace. Later, Fromm reminds his readers of Schaff’s definition by referring to the Polish thinker Adam Schaff’s book *Marxism and the Human Individual*: “Schaff defines humanism as “a system of thought that perceives human

as a superior value and, in practice, creates the best conditions for human happiness” he says. Fromm continues his words by saying he will try to give an idea of how this philosophy of humanity is defined in different cultural phases and touches upon the different types of humanism that he describes as humanist.

First, Buddhist humanism. Classical Buddhism is a system of thought that can be called existential philosophy today, which starts with the analysis of the real situation of human existence, comes to the idea that human existence is necessarily based on suffering, argues that there is only one way to get rid of this suffering, and believes that this is getting rid of greed. In this point of view, there is a human concept, a human model in general. At the same time, it contains a response to human suffering, which according to Buddhism is the main problem of man. Another insight of his humanistic philosophy can be found in the *Old Testament*. Isaiah 19:23-25 reads: “On that day a road will be established from Egypt to Assyria... In that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, and there will be a blessing in the midst of this land: Egypt, my people. The God of your servants will bless, saying Assyria, the product of my hands, and Israel, my inheritance.” This idiom is an example of the concept of universality and the concept of the human being the focus of thought. In the *Old Testament*, there is a concept that has the characteristic of especially humanistic thought; that is, to love one's neighbors (a difficult enough concept as we all know), and another concept that is even more transcendent than that, to love someone who is not related to us by any family or blood ties, a stranger. The Old Testament says: “Love the stranger. For you were once a foreigner in Egypt, so only you can know the spirit of the foreigner.” (Exodus 23.9) What is meant here is that one can understand another human being as he or she lived. The point is that we all share the same human experiences. That's why we understand each other.” (Fromm: 1987: 58-59)

Fromm describes sharing the same human experiences and being in common conditions as humanism. He further says:

“The same thought is maintained in the Christian teaching with the command to love your enemy, (Matthew, 644) Was the thought of Jesus in

the Christian religion itself a narrative of the humanistic spirit? Cusali Nicolas, one of the greatest Renaissance religious scholars, says: - Jesus' understanding of humanity binds people to each other, and this is the most important proof of the interdependence of human beings. Again, what is emphasized here is the inner unity of human beings existing in the form of all humanistic thought.” (Fromm: 1987: 59)

Later, Fromm captures the concept of unity in Christian teaching and does not hesitate to describe it as Humanism. Fromm, who passed to Greece after Buddhism, Old Testament and Christianity, reads even the Greek Tragedies within the concept of Humanism and says; “In Greek humanism, in Sophocles' Antigone, which is one of the great humanist games, Antigone symbolizes humanism and Creon symbolizes the inhuman laws of man.” (Fromm: 1987: 59)

Fromm comes to Renaissance humanism, naming the name of Cicero, whom he saw as the great Latin humanist and who said that one should conceive the universe as a single nation with gods and humans as members.

“The great names of Renaissance humanism Erasmus, Picco della Mirandola, Postel and many others have directed humanism to a concept in which the whole and the whole of man is emphasized, whose task is to develop all his possibilities. With this Renaissance thought, a new humanist view begins. This was not alien to earlier humanism, but it emphasized one more point, that for the humanist thinkers of the Renaissance it was still important to mention reason, especially peace. At that time, they witnessed the fanatical atmosphere formed between two groups such as Protestants and Catholics, they saw the irrationality of confused feelings, they tried to prevent the war but they failed, the Thirty Years' War, which was both material and spiritual destruction for Europe, was the frenzy of humanist thinkers who tried to prevent it by creating an objective atmosphere. despite his efforts. I should mention a few names of Enlightenment philosophy between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries: Spinoza, Locke, Lessing, Freud, and Marx. [...] One of the great humanists of the last century was

Marx. In his *Philosophical Writings* he wrote: “Man cannot consider himself independent unless he is his own master, and can become his own master only when he owes his own existence to himself. A person who lives with the support of another sees himself as a dependent being.” Man perceives himself as whole and independent only if he is able to use his diverse existence for himself in comprehensive ways. At this point, he is closely related to Marx, Goethe and Renaissance thinkers. But what Marx stresses here, perhaps more than anyone else, is independence. Not to owe anyone one's existence, or in other words, self-activity as he often uses it. Here, activity does not include the meaning of doing something, being busy, it includes the process of inner productivity, which is very close to the concept of Aristotle and Spinoza” (Fromm: 1987: 60)

Trying to emphasize Marx's importance by associating Marx with Renaissance thinkers through a concept such as self-activity, Fromm does not realize that by doing so he draws Marx's thought and connects it to the episteme of the previous period. Moreover, reading Marx in vague terms such as self-activity and independence, far from telling us his level of abstraction, invalidates arguments for Marx's originality.

“In general, humanism emerged as a response to threats to humanity. The period we live in today is the period in which the extent of the threat to human existence is the most serious. It is clear that the new humanist movement has been reborn in the last decade as an action against such dangers. And it is interesting that it has become widespread in all kinds of ideological groups. “In the Catholic Church, on a large scale, XXIII. We see a new understanding of humanism promoted by John. It is enough to mention thinkers like Chardin or the Catholic theologian Karl Rahner to describe the vitality of the humanist movement. There is a similar movement in the Protestant Church. Albert Schweitzer was one of the greatest representatives of Protestant humanism. Little known, we can see the same rebirth in Marxism. But it is not possible to observe it in the Soviet Union,

or in other words, it is difficult to say that it exists because it is not known or published. However, it is more known in smaller socialist countries such as Yugoslavia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary. Adam Schaff and Georg Lukacs are just two of the many people who have described the rebirth of humanism in the context of Marxism in Western Europe. It is a fact that the concepts of Catholic, Protestant and Marxist humanists (even among themselves) differ. But they also have a lot in common, first of all, the common emphasis that it is not just a concept of thought that matters - the human experience behind the concept of thought is also important. For the same notions of thought can reveal or hide the most contradictory human truths. Contrasting notions of thought can also describe the same human realities. In other words, it is important that the concept of thought finds a philosophical, political or theological definition of a behavior. Because it only makes sense if you put the concept of thought into the reality of the experience of the person speaking about it.” (Fromm: 1987: 63)

As can be seen, Fromm, despite all its differences, favors reading humanism as an attitude shaped within the field of experience. In this sense, from his point of view, although humanism varies in different historical periods and different schools, a kind of self-activity can be described as the effort of human existence to self-preservation. Fromm puts Marxism in the context that he calls the Universal Philosophy of Man as a cutaway in which historical humanism is resurrected.

Returning to yet another discussion of the concept is Heidegger's 1946 text “On Humanism” (*Über den Humanismus*), which polemicized with Sartre’s text. There, Heidegger first makes a determination about the etymology and history of the concept. And he argues:

“It was in the time of the Roman Empire that the name *Humanitas* was clearly thought about and aimed for the first time. *Homo humanus* is pitted against *homo barbarus*. *Homo humanus* is here Roman who exalts the Roman *virtus* and is ennobled by the “assimilation” of *padeia* (παιδεία) taken from the Greeks. The Greeks here are the late Greeks who studied in

philosophy schools. This study includes *eruditio et institutio in bonas artes*. *Padeia* understood in this way translates as “*humanitas*”. The original *romanitas* of *Homo romanus* is found in such a *humanitas*. We find the first humanism in Rome. Therefore, humanism is essentially Roman and consists in meeting Romanism with late Greek teaching. It is a *renascentia romanitatis* called Rebirth in Italy of the 14th and 15th centuries.” (Heidegger: 2013: 13)

According to a discussion on the term *padeia*, which is the root of today's pedagogy, Heidegger says that the concept of Humanism is of Greek origin, the expression corresponding to its later translation is *humanitas*, and today *humanitas* means Rome. Then, starting from this etymology, he refers to the modern meaning of the concept and continues his words as follows:

When “humanism” refers to the efforts made for the freedom and self-worth of human beings in general, humanism will also be different depending on what is understood from the “freedom” and “nature” of the human being. Likewise, the paths to the realization of humanism are different from each other. Marx's humanism need not look back at the ancient world; So is Sartre, who sees existentialism as humanism. Seen in this broad sense, Christianity is also a humanism because according to his teaching everything depends on the salvation of the human soul (*salus aeterna*) and the history of humanity manifests itself in the history of salvation. These modes of humanism, however different they may be in their aims and foundations, the form and means of their realization, the form of their teachings, overlap in the *humanitas* of *homo humanus*; which is determined by a certain nature, history, world, world-based, that is, an already fixed interpretation of all that is. Every humanism either finds its basis in a Metaphysics or makes itself the foundation of Metaphysics. Without asking the question of the Truth of Being, every determination of the essence of man that accepts an interpretation of Being, knowingly or unknowingly, is a metaphysical determination.” (Heidegger: 2013: 13)

As can be seen, Heidegger also favors a flexible use of the concept of Humanism. According to him, when the concept is viewed from a broad point of view, although the form of the teachings varies, both Marxism and Christianity can be easily read under the name of humanism. According to the philosopher, humanism, which is reached by omitting the truth of existence and cannot go beyond just an interpretation of the existing, and as a determination regarding the essence of man, will mean to be positioned in metaphysics. It is interesting that Heidegger, who describes the determination of the idea of essence as a metaphysical position, talks about reaching the essence of history in the same text, and puts Marx, who he thinks has reached this dimension, by referring to the concept of alienation, against names such as Sartre and Ponty, whom he thinks do not see the importance of historicity. In his own words:

“The Marxist view of history is superior to other views because Marx attained a substantive dimension to history by experiencing alienation. But because Husserl and - as far as I can see - Sartre fail to see the importance of historicity in Being, neither phenomenology nor Existentialism can reach a dimension in which a fruitful dialogue with Marxism can take place.”
(Heidegger: 2013: 32)

While making this discussion more comprehensive in the following section, the VI of the theses on Feuerbach, states that human essence is not an abstraction inherent in each individual, but a set of social relations. While emphasizing historicity, i.e. changing nature, it still retains the self-discussion and draws it into the social community, just as Feuerbach did. On the other hand, Marx takes alienation from a discussion of the self and draws it into another generic discussion, namely the discussion of a self in the production process, self-realization, realization of human capacity under the category of alienated labor. In other words, since Marx is based on an idea of salvation in Christian teaching, he cannot be evaluated within humanism, but the section where Heidegger finds historical Marx is still the period in which Marx defended Feuerbachian collectivist humanism and kept

Feuerbachian concepts and transferred them to other discussions without changing the ground.

In his article titled “The Death of Man” Michel Foucault argues that humanism is believed to be an ancient notion that goes back to Montaigne and far beyond. However, Littré says that there is not even the word humanism. Littré is the most comprehensive lexical study of French to date, prepared by the philosopher Emile Littré and published in 1863-77. In Foucault's article, we believe that what distinguishes the West from the Eastern culture is humanism. We are satisfied when we seek the humanism we presume to be peculiar to the West, whereas when we "came across" the same concept in an Arab or Chinese writer, he says, the mechanism does not work. However, says Foucault, don't look for humanism and you will not find it. You can find it neither in the East nor in the West. In the West you can only find it on the plane of raw imagination. In other words, he ridicules the process by saying that the concept does not find its object, by looking for an imaginary concept pre-contained by its object (the West).

“We learn in high school that the sixteenth century was the age of humanism, that classicism developed the great themes of human nature, that the eighteenth century created the positive sciences, and finally, together with biology, psychology and sociology, we began to know man in a positive, scientific and rational way. We imagine that humanism is both the great force that animates our historical development and ultimately the reward for that development, that is, both principle and purpose. What amazes us in our current culture is that the main concern of this culture can be human.” (Foucault: 2011: 31)

Foucault objects to considering the basic concern of a culture under the concept of human and creating a narrative from it. He says that official education presents us with a sequential picture through humanism, human nature and positive sciences by making a date of its own and applying cause and effect relation. In summary, official education, in its fictionality, was busy making us believe that humanism is a force that ensures our historical development by drawing us into its narrative. And

although he objected to this dating at first, he used the following words that would dazzle the whole narrative;

“First, the history of the humanist movement is the end of the nineteenth century. Second, if we take a closer look at the cultures of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, we realize that there was literally no place for man in these cultures. Culture at that time was preoccupied with God, the world, the likeness of things, the laws of space, of course the body, the passions, the imagination. But the man himself certainly did not exist. In *The Order of Things*, I wanted to show what parts man consists of at the end of the eighteenth century and at the beginning of the nineteenth century. I tried to point out the modernity of this figure, what was important to me was to show that the idea of knowing man scientifically is not because it is a moral concern for human existence, but because human existence is constructed as an object of possible knowledge, then all the moral themes of contemporary humanism developed. Such are the themes to be found in soft Marxisms, in Saint-Exupery and Camus, in Teilhard de Chardin, in short, in all these pale figures of our culture.” (Foucault: 2011: 32)

Again, in *The Order of Things*, Foucault emphasizes that the idea of human is an invention of recent history:

“As things become increasingly reflexive, seeking the principle of their intelligibility only in their own development, and abandoning the space of representation, man enters in his turn, and for the first time, the field of Western knowledge. Strangely enough, man – the study of whom is supposed by the naïve to be the oldest investigation since Socrates – is probably no more than a kind of rift in the order of things, or, in any case, a configuration whose outlines are determined by the new position he has so recently taken up in the field of knowledge. Whence all the chimeras of the new humanisms, all the facile solutions of an ‘anthropology’ understood as a universal reflection on man, half empirical, half-philosophical. It is comforting, however, and a source of profound relief to think that man is

only a recent invention, a figure not yet two centuries old, a new wrinkle in our knowledge, and that he will disappear again as soon as that knowledge has discovered a new form.” (Foucault: 2002a: 25)

Foucault guides us in the dating of the concept by asking when the idea of human came into the Western sphere of interest, and again by saying that the idea of human entered the Western domain of knowledge at a certain historical moment. The understanding, which considers people as the main subject of their actions and acts with a purpose, and reads history in an idealistic way, has to both ascribe a continuity to history and think of history as the product of the actions of the subject. Foucault expresses this process in his own words:

“Making historical analysis the discourse of the continuous and making human consciousness the original subject of all historical development and all action are the two sides of the same system of thought. In this system, time is conceived in terms of totalization and revolutions are never more than moments of consciousness. In various forms, this theme has played a constant role since the nineteenth century: to preserve, against all decentrings, the sovereignty of the subject, and the twin figures of anthropology and humanism.” (Foucault: 2002b: 13-14)

Reducing historical analysis to discourse about continuity; Foucault mentions that the system of thought, which does not think about leaps, interruptions and ruptures, institutionalized itself in the 19th century and dominates our way of knowing, and that this system preserves the twin figures of anthropology and humanism. In this sense, it is not surprising that this anthropological/humanist discourse highlights the form of consciousness as the essential subject of all its actions. Philosophies of consciousness and anthropology work together, and this system, which emphasizes the form of consciousness and asserts the myth of the free autonomous subject, is none other than theoretical-humanism. Undoubtedly, a certain Marxism, which calls itself scientific humanist, integral humanist, and various names, also positioned its system within this theoretical-humanism within this totalizing discourse.

1.2. THE HUMANIST/IDEOLOGICAL CHARACTER OF THE CONCEPT OF ALIENATION: *THE 1844 MANUSCRIPTS*

*“The feverish excitement over the reading of the young Marx in France grew, to a large degree, from the revelation of this “humanist passion” in Marx, rooted in an anthropological theory of man as “conscious, free, activity.”” (Luc Sommerhausen, *L’Humanisme agissant de Karl Marx* (Paris, 1946), quoted by Poster: 1975: 54)*

“The concept of alienation relied heavily on a philosophical anthropology that came very close to the abstract anthropology of bourgeois thought.” (Mark Poster: 1975:71)

The text in which the notion of alienation is mentioned for the first time is the *1844 Manuscripts*. In this text, which was published in 1932 due to the various internal censorship of the Marxist tradition, Marx talks about the concept of alienation, which he sees as a result of private property, and he describes the four different phases it went through in the production

1. Man's alienation from the product and nature of his own labor.
2. Alienation of man from his own action and production process.
3. Man's alienation from his species being (his alienation from his own being as a member of the human species).
4. Alienation of man from other people.

The general trend has characterized this text of Marx as a critique of the Hegelian concept of alienation or, like George Novack, the incorporation of Hegel's concept

into Marx's own discussion. On the other hand, this text has been shown as proof of Marx's Hegelianism and Hegel's influence on Marx.

Emile Bottigelli emphasizes the Feuerbachian origins of the concept: "Marx uses the Feuerbachian term *Entfremdung*, but with almost equal frequency the term *Entäußerung* (deprivation)" (Bottigelli: 1976), while Lukacs uses Hegel's concept in *Young Hegel* as deprivation/externalization (*Entäußerung*) concept. Lukacs says that alienation is not *Entfremdung* (Lukacs, 1975: 537-569) Lucien Seve describes this process as follows:

"Translation is difficult. Translating a philosophical text often means having twice as much difficulty. Translating philosophical articles on the concept of "*Entfremdung*", from French to German means dealing with the extraordinary difficulties that require meaningful introductory explanations. First, let's explain the linguistic problem. To translate the German concept of "*Entfremdung*" into French as "alienation", as it has become commonplace, in no way implies a simple and clear semantic coherence between the respective problem plans in German and French, but rather, from the very first moment, it overshadows the deep differences between the concepts. It means covering up and gives rise to the most unpleasant misunderstandings. Here is a simple example: in "*Grundrisse*", which references Marx's original writing: "*The emphasis is not on being objectified, but on being alienated, alienated, externalized.*" A French reader who encounters this sentence and believes that he can understand Marx's theory only with the French concept of "alienation" will be completely surprised. This reader first realizes that the problematic of "alienation" in Marx is developed with a very broad and complex terminology, especially within the concepts of "external" (externalization, alienation) and "alien" (alienated labour) The word "alienation" alone has a poor "limitation and deceptive integrativeness" in the face of this comprehensive set of linguistic tools. Of course, it is possible to refer to

some other French concepts that theoretically can convey a little bit of conceptual versatility in German.” (Lucien Seve: 1987: 99-100)

Undoubtedly, there is a series of debates among Marxists about where the concept of alienation comes from, for what need the concept enters into Marx’s literature, and for what purpose it is used. The supporters of the view, who think that Marx reconstructed the concept of alienation, attribute this to the fact that Marx put this concept on an economic basis and included it in his own logic, in his own plane of abstraction. “It is true that the theoretical system of manuscripts is based on three concepts: human essence - alienation - alienated labor. But it is also important to note that these concepts take on a new meaning that will become increasingly clear to Marx. (Lacroix: 1976)

In other words, according to the owners of this approach it doesn’t matter whether the choice of concept in Marx’s own discussion stems from Feuerbach’s concept of *Entfremdung* (alienation) or whether it is inspired by Hegel’s concept of *Entäußerung*. Or, conversely, they skip the more fundamental discussion about the content, the problem of how the concept was acquired, by saying who came up with the concept. Lukacs avoids the main discussion by saying that the concept does not belong to Hegel, without bothering to ask to whom it belongs. According to some philosophers, this concept is no longer Hegel’s or Feuerbach’s. They say that Marx transformed the concept. They don't even realize that they close the problematic with a short answer by saying that Marx’s usage is different. I'm not just arguing about etymology here. Controversy over a concept, not its ownership; I will focus on whether it is possible to shift a concept to another field and recontextualize it in another discussion. That is, can the concept of alienation, which Marx first considers as the result (the result of the private property regime) and then (*CCPE*, *Capital*) both as a premise and as a condition, operate within the production activity? If it works, it will be necessary to ask questions such as whether this will strengthen the discussion, or will it be the new discussion that is intended to be

made in a discussion that has found its content in philosophy from the very beginning history is withdrawn.

After stating that these essays were Marx's first attempt to analyze capitalism, in *The Marxist Theory of Alienation*, which Geörg Novack wrote with Ernest Mandel, "these essays were Marx's first attempt to analyze capitalism. And Marx applied for the first time the dialectical method borrowed from Hegel to the categories of political economy" (Mandel & Novack: 1973). In other words, Novack is aware that after emphasizing that the concept comes from Hegel, it is necessary to have a discussion about what it means and how the concept works in Marx's theoretical system. On the other hand, Lukacs is contented with emphasizing that the concept does not come from Hegel. However, the concept is mentioned in the section of unhappy consciousness in Hegel's *Phenomenology*. Emile Bottigelli describes this process in an article included in the preface of the Turkish edition of the 1844 Manuscripts:

"In the beginning, the term alienation is an economic and legal term. It was Hegel who raised this term to philosophical prestige. In countries where the young Hegel is better known, it is known that he borrowed the term from the economists and from Rousseau's Social Contract. Beginning with Hegel's Frankfurt period, when he especially read Adam Smith, he replaces the term positivity with the term alienation, which he used to denote what opposes human subjectivity or human practice in a dead objectivity. But this substitution also corresponds to an enrichment of the concept. When the term became the basis of Hegel's thought in the *Phenomenology*, it moved far from its origins and rose to a high level of philosophical generalization. In this work, alienation, for example, is an activity peculiar to the Absolute Idea, which puts the alien nature as a moment of its own being. However, nature is nothing but a phase of self-return of Spirit, which is the identity of subject and object. So that alienation involves its own abolition, its own restoration, and in Hegel it is ultimately identified with objectivity" (Bottigelli: 2005, preface to the 1844 Manuscripts)

Again, in the preface to the French translation of Althusser Feuerbach's "Philosophical Manifesto", he says:

"Feuerbach received the process of alienation from Hegel, but by reversing it. Man objectifies his own nature in objects outside himself. But in revealing itself, it not only creates objects; these objects become independent, alien, oppose and dominate it. Man has externalized his wealth in God, and the more he has enriched God, the more impoverished he has become. The true essence of man is the essence he has conveyed to God. Feuerbach reached the idea of Hegel, in a sense, by saying that man knows himself only with his own objects. The consciousness of the object is the consciousness of man himself." (Althusser: 1960)

Althusser emphasizes that the concept attracted Marx's attention through Hegel. By contrast, Althusser also says that the Young Marx was never a Hegelian, let alone the final text of his ideological-philosophical period. "Young Marx was never strictly speaking a Hegelian, except in the last text of his ideologico-philosophical period; rather, he was first a Kantian Fichtean, then a Feuerbachian. So the thesis that the Young Marx was a Hegelian, though widely believed today, is in general a myth." (Althusser: 1985: 35)

Again, Emile Bottigelli states that the concept of alienation entered Hegel through Rousseau. August Cornu, on the other hand, states that the concept of alienation in the 1844 Manuscripts is Feuerbachian in essence, and says that the Holy Family of 1845 was written without getting rid of the Feuerbachian ideology. But the emphasis of all three names is that this approach finds its roots in Feuerbach when alienation is acquired not as the alienation of the mind, but as the alienation of the species being, the human. Althusser argues that unlike Lukacs and a number of other names, the concept does not come from Hegel, and instead of pulling Hegel out of this discussion in this way, he essentially invites us to think about how the concept works. How does this concept work in its predecessors, Hegel, how does it work in Feuerbach, and finally, how does it work in Marx?

In his text entitled “The Struggle for Humanism”, Althusser says; “Everyone knows that Feuerbach ‘repeats’ Hegel’s concept of alienation. (And, more importantly, Engels makes the striking statement that went unnoticed in his *The Condition of the Working Class in England*: “The Feuerbachian dissolution of Hegelian speculation.” The relevant passage reads: “German socialism and communism arose from rather theoretical premises; we German theorists, this We still knew very little of the real world, to be directly pushed into the reforms of “bad reality” by real relations. At least, almost none of the overt advocates of these reforms reached communism any other way than the Feuerbachian dissolution of Hegelian speculation” (Engels: 2010: 31).

Althusser continues:

“Man and alienation are Feuerbach’s main concepts. But when we reduce History to Man, when we make Man the subject of what replaces history, when we declare man to be the subject of alienation (religious or otherwise), let us embrace the Hegelian word alienation as much as we want, precisely with the understandings that Hegel so bluntly rejected, We would be back a hundred leagues from Hegel. It is no wonder that the Feuerbachian concept of alienation is also just a ridiculously constriction and caricature of the Hegelian concept of alienation.” (Althusser: 2012: 202)

Again in the same text, Althusser says;

“There is nothing more alien to Hegel’s thought than this anthropological understanding of History. For Hegel, History is of course a process of alienation, but the subject of this process is not Man. First of all, it is Mind, not Man, that is at issue in Hegelian history, and if a ‘subject’ is desired in History at all costs (which is already wrong with regard to ‘subject’), it is ‘peoples’ or more are precisely (and we are approaching the truth) moments of the development of the Idea transformed into Mind. What about that? What is very simple, but theoretically extraordinary, if ‘interpreted’ well:

History is not the alienation of Man, it is the alienation of the Mind, that is, the final moment of the alienation of the Idea. For Hegel, the alienation process does not begin with History (human History), because History itself is nothing but the alienation of Nature, which is nothing but the alienation of logic” (Althusser: 2012: 199-200).

We have to understand Hegel’s problematic and his intervention correctly. Hegel’s problematic is the problem of unity between thought and being. The unity of mind and existence in the history of philosophy is never a problem of conflict according to Hegel who will argue that if there is a purpose of all philosophy, it is to establish this unity. In this sense, Hegel’s critique of Spinoza is that Spinoza does not establish unity (being, thought) in the subject but leaves it in the substance, while Kant’s problem is that he establishes this unity only in the subject. In Hegel, unlike Spinoza and Kant, this unity is possible only through the transition from substance to subject. In this context, where Hegel positions himself is the effort to unite Spinoza’s Substance and Kant’s subject. That is why there is no subject in Hegel, but this is because the becoming of substance, as the completed process of the negation of negation, is the subject of the process itself. In other words, Hegel talks about the theory of history as a process. It is for this reason, says Althusser, that we owe the category of process without a subject to Hegel.

According to Althusser, “In Feuerbach, there is no theory of history as a process, so there is no dialectic, no theory of process without a subject. What replaces history in Feuerbach is reduced to the flattest level of anthropology. There is only Human alienation...” (Althusser: 2012: 203)

And finally, Althusser makes the striking move:

“The projective relation characteristic of Feuerbachian Humanism dominates the whole theory of alienated labor. In labor Man objectifies his essence (“essential powers”, “genus specific powers”). This essence manifests itself in the form of products of human labor. Of course, we are dealing here with the production of real and material objects, not spiritual objects such as God or the state. But the principle of alienation remains the

same. He plays his role at the heart of the projective relationship: worker (Subject) = his products (Objects) or Man = world of his objects. The conclusions Marx draws from the extension-application of Feuerbachian theory to the objects of economic production and to the categories of the Economists (Marx does not yet question them, he accepts them as categories of the economy, which he will question later in *Capital*) are, of course, new to previous discourses on religion and politics. But these conclusions do not touch the principles of the Feuerbachian theory of Man and alienation, of the genus essence of man (for example, Marx “finds” this essence in the division of labor ...), and for good reason: they are the direct and necessary product of Feuerbach’s theory.” (Althusser: 2012: 210-211)

Moreover, according to Althusser, the widely accepted critique of Marx as a critique of Hegel is woven with a Feuerbachian problematic. In fact, Marx's critiques of Hegel in his early texts are merely a reconsideration and extension of the Feuerbachian problematic. In other words, what Marx did is an expansion move made without touching the general principles of Feuerbach's criticisms. Feuerbach’s critique of Hegel is still a critique on behalf of the principles of the anthropological alienation problematic. In other words, according to Althusser, when we take over Feuerbach’s critique of Hegel, we still cannot go beyond a critique that ultimately serves the idealist problematic.

Althusser describes this process as follows:

“The Young Marx, on the contrary, was haunted first by politics and then by that for which politics is merely the ‘heaven’: the concrete life of alienated men. But in *On the Jewish Question*, *Hegel's Philosophy of the State*, etc., and even usually in *The Holy Family*, he is no more than an avant-garde Feuerbachian applying an ethical problematic to the understanding of human history. In other words, we can say that at this time Marx was merely applying the theory of alienation, that is, Feuerbach's theory of ‘human nature’, to politics and the concrete activity of man, before extending it (in large part) to political economy in the *Manuscripts*. It is

important that the real origin of these Feuerbachian concepts should be recognized, not so as to assess everything according to a standard of attribution (this is Marx's, that Feuerbach's, etc.), but so as to avoid attributing to Marx the invention of concepts and a problematic he had only borrowed. It is even more important that it be recognized that these borrowed concepts were not borrowed one by one, in isolation, but en bloc, as a set: this set being precisely Feuerbach's problematic. This is the essential point. For borrowing a concept in isolation may only be of accidental and secondary significance. Borrowing a concept in isolation (from its context) does not bind the borrower vis-à-vis the context from which he extracted it (for example, the borrowings from Smith, Ricardo and Hegel in *Capital*). But borrowing a systematically interrelated set of concepts, borrowing a real problematic, cannot be accidental, it binds the borrower.” (Althusser: 1985: 46)

According to John Lewis, “when Marx first raised the problem of alienation, it can never be said that he started from an idealist, utopian or Hegelian understanding; because he treated alienation as an economic phenomenon.” (Lewis: 1987: 62) Then, Althusser emphasizes that there is a tension in the transfer of the concept of alienation from Hegel or Feuerbach to the field of political economy.

In fact, the whole of the discussion is this: Marx took Feuerbach's method as it is in Hegel's *Critique of the Philosophy of Law*: Substituting the subject instead of the predicate, and the thought/predicate instead of the subject. “We were all Feuerbachians at that time”, writes Engels on Feuerbach's criticisms of Hegel. Again, in Marx's early period, what will lead one to freedom and truth is Feuerbach's thought, the river of fire, not the prejudices of the old speculative philosophy. He claims that Feuerbach is the purgatory of our time.

“In his letter to Feuerbach, dated August 11, 1844, Marx wrote: “You have given socialism a philosophical basis—whether you did it voluntarily or deliberately, I don't know.” (Garaudy: 1969: 41)

Moreover, actually before Marx, Moses Hess had already developed an understanding of communism based on Feuerbach's idea that the most fundamental problem was the destruction of alienation. But for Hess, the leading alienation was not that of religion, but that of the private property regime. In other words, it was Moses Hess, not Marx, who first drew the alienation debate, which Feuerbach transformed from Hegel, from Feuerbach's religious alienation debate to the private property debate.

Moses Hess took Feuerbach's discussion of alienation and brought it to the property debate, while the young Marx, influenced by Hess, added the concept of alienated labor and took over Hess's discussion as a bloc. Afterwards, Marx and Engels wrote the *German Ideology* text of 1845, which he said, referring to the *1844 Manuscripts*, that he said, "we have come to reckon with our own philosophical conscience." Marx and Engels criticizes Hess, a humanist and reformer who sought socialism in the idea of a universal human being, not in the class struggle formed in the historical development of economic conditions.

That is, the first to intervene in the Feuerbachian dissolution of Hegelian speculation and draw it into the discussion of private property was Moses Hess, the representative of the true socialists, to whom Marx and Engels later devoted a critical chapter in *The German Ideology*.

In *German Ideology*, Marx and Engels criticized True Socialists as follows; "True socialism, which claims to be based on "science", is primarily another esoteric science; its theoretical literature is intended only for those who are initiated into the mysteries of the "thinking mind".

"This is all the easier since true socialism, which is no longer concerned with real human beings but with "Man", has lost all revolutionary enthusiasm and proclaims instead the universal love of mankind."
(<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/germanideology/ch04a.htm>)

According to Althusser, who started the discussion from Feuerbach because it was not the subject of direct criticism of Moses Hess, the move (Marx's move to bring the concept into his own discussion) cannot be defined as simply borrowing a

concept. Althusser responds to his criticism of this enterprise with the word ‘regional/general materialism’ in his *For Marx*. He argues that when one takes a concept and takes the whole plane of abstraction to which that concept corresponds and shifts it to another area, when one places it in another discussion, we will loosen materialism and make it regional.

In Althusser's own words,

“It is said that Marx knew how to distinguish Hegel’s method from his content, and that he proceeded to apply the former to history. Or else, that he set the Hegelian system back on to its feet (a statement not without a certain humour if we recall that the Hegelian system was ‘a sphere of spheres’). Or, that Marx extended Feuerbach’s materialism to history, as if a localized materialism was not rather suspect as a materialism; that Marx applied the (Hegelian or Feuerbachian) theory of alienation to the world of social relations, as if this ‘application’ could change the theory's basic meaning.” (Althusser: 1985: 72)

As can be seen, the issue is not the choice of a concept, but whether that concept alone preserves its basic meaning in another specific discussion. In this sense, the concepts that Marx borrowed from Smith, Ricardo or the Physiocrats in his critique of Political Economy cannot be equated with the concepts he took from Feuerbach as a bloc. Because Marx did not take only a concept from Feuerbach, he took block concepts, that is, he remained within his plane of thought.

Michel Foucault’s says that the French biologist Jacob’s text is “the most remarkable history of biology ever written.” In *The Logic of Life* Jacob argued:

“For centuries, from the time of Aristotle and throughout the Scholastic period, the unity of a living group had been based on its ‘essence’, made up of the sum of ‘genus’ and ‘differentiae’. In the Classical period the meaning and role of what was called the essence of living beings became modified, but search for the essential still remained the basis of all attempts at analysis and classification. What mattered in comparing plants were the differences

in essence, not the accidental features due to chance or to variables outside the laws of nature.” (Jacob: 1993: 50)

Althusser, on the other hand, points to the ambiguity between the concept of species and genus in “Humanist Controversy” and says:

“Species and genus: terminological ambiguity, a headache for translators. Should *Gattung* be translated ‘species’ or ‘genus’? An Aristotelian reference, both logical and biological. ‘Species’ if we consider Feuerbach’s transcendental biologism, but ‘genus’ if we consider his theory that the human species is the ‘species of all the species’. ‘Human form cannot be regarded as limited and finite ... [it is] the genus of the manifold animal species; it no longer exists as species in man, but as genus’, - or, as he says somewhere, as ‘nature’s self-consciousness’. At all events, when Feuerbach talks about the essence of man, or about man, he means not the human individual, but the human species. The human essence is the essence of the human species. This is a crucial point, for Marx’s break with Feuerbach will be played out around the theme of the human species. To talk about the human species is, by implication, to talk about individuals. The problem of the nature or the essence of the species implies the problem of the nature of the human individual, and of the relationship between the human individual and the species. All of Feuerbach is contained in this definition: ‘the essence of the species is the absolute essence of the individual’, on condition that we assign the word ‘absolute’ the pertinent meaning.” (Althusser: 2003a: 137)

Let us now turn to *The 1844 Manuscripts* itself, which has been the subject of criticism. There the Young Marx says:

“The proposition that man’s generic character (*Gattungswesen*) is alienated from himself means that one man is alienated from another, and both from man’s essential nature.” (Marx: 2013: 83)

Alienated labor transforms man’s species-being, both nature and his spiritual species-specificity, into a being outside man, a means of individual existence. It

alienates the outside nature and the spiritual essence of man, his human existence, as well as alienates man from his own body. (Marx: 2013: 82)

“The aim of labor is the objectification of man’s species life. Because it creates itself once more, not only rationally as in consciousness, but also actively in reality, so that it can contemplate itself in a world that it has created. Thus, when the object of its own production is snatched from man, alienated labor has snatched man from his species life, from his true species objectivity, and transforms his superiority over animals into the inconvenience of taking away his inorganic body from nature.” (Marx: 2013: 82)

Not only from man as a species being or from man who is alienated from his essence, but above all, Marx clearly stated in *The 1844 Manuscripts* that his philosophical position is humanism as complete naturalism, naturalism as complete humanism. Moreover, when we take into account his later texts and Marx's methodology in general, the problem is that, unlike the concept of alienation used by Marx, the concept of “exploitation denotes an objective reality independent of the subjective opinions of the exploited or beneficiaries of exploitation.” (Ibarrola: 1974: 106) If we think within the concept of epistemological break, the transition from the concept of alienation to the concept of exploitation is the very transition from non-science to science.

Interestingly, even in a text advocating humanism in the Soviets, the following words of a soviet thinker are included:

“Marx, in the *“Economic-Philosophical Drafts of 1844”*, escaped from falling into Feuerbach's abstract anthropology, but still remained loyal to him in general. Marx no longer generally speaks of the abstract man, but of the worker and the capitalist, the two opposite poles of alienation. However, more; it is not freed from any social conception of human essence, the idea of the “immutability of man's essential powers.” For example, when Marx speaks of industry, he says that it is a mirror of man’s true powers.” (Popov: 1979: 22)

But what is the essence of man? In 1844, Marx is not yet able to answer this question. He will have to wait another year to answer this statement. Marx will answer this statement in his famous theses, the 6th thesis on Feuerbach.

It will be seen that “if one reads Feuerbach’s texts from the period 1839-43, there is no doubt about the derivation of concepts that generally justify Marx’s ‘ethical’ interpretations. “Worldization of philosophy”, “transformation of subject and quality”, “man is the slave of man”, “political state is the species life of man”, “transcendence and realization of philosophy”, “philosophy is the head of human liberation, the proletariat is the heart”, etc. Such famous formulations are directly derived from or directly influenced by Feuerbach. All formulations of ‘idealistic humanism’ in Marx are Feuerbachian formulations.” (Althusser: 1960, preface to Feuerbach's “Philosophical Manifesto”)

According to Althusser, The young Marx's argument based on a false concept was not problematized, but rather this move was tried to be disposed of by saying that the old materialists were “inconsistent” and Marx, on the contrary, was consistent. And Althusser says,

“This inconsistency-consistency theory which haunts many a Marxist in ideological history is a little wonder of ideology, constructed for their personal use by the Philosophers of the Enlightenment. Feuerbach inherited and, alas, made good use of it! It deserves a short treatise all to itself, for it is the quintessence of historical idealism: it is indeed obvious that if ideas were self-reproducing, then any historical (or theoretical) aberration could only be a logical error.” (Althusser: 1985: 72)

Alienation is the key concept of those who claim that man has an “essence” between his “essence” and his activity, or more precisely, that his activity is an obstacle to realizing his “essence”, that his activity objectifies the species life of man and injects his consciousness into falsehood! Whether we read alienation as the relationship between human time and capitalist value, or between human essence and activity, the choice of concept will catch up with you, even if the discussion is conducted by changing the content. If wage labor, private property, capitalist value

ate not the result of the concept described as alienation, but rather the cause, if these mechanisms constitute what one thinks of as alienation, whatever one may prefer to call it, the concept of alienation cannot be a premise for the analysis of the wage labor order. In summary, if alienation refers to an origin registered in the anthropological self-discussion and must rely on origin, we must understand that: We must understand that these processes (property, accumulation, value) must be read from within a different field, with a new problematic. Because in his youth works, Marx claims that the alienation arising from the discussion of essence, the self is not a premise but a result. Alienation has to assume an unalienated self.

But alienation creates neither private property nor wage labor. Wage labor changes the relationship that man establishes with life compared to the previous period, the relationship that man establishes with life in the social production of material life.

“When alienation was seen as a result of private property, the source of alienation, (not private property) was determined. The reciprocity of the relationship meant nothing more than a tautology, with the proposition that they were the cause of each other. Marx was quick to see the this stalemate; His scientific adventure, which lasted from the 1850s to the 1870s, was spent in solving this problem and therefore the capitalist mode of production. This scientific adventure means his revolutionary break from philosophy and his establishment of the science of history. For this reason, it is always necessary to be aware of a distinction between the works of the youth period, in which the influence of philosophy is observed, and the works of maturity, in which the scientific foundation was carried out.”
(Sözdinler: 2001)

Whereas in his later works (*The Critique of Political Economy, Capital*) Marx takes the commodity as the cell of capitalism, he here puts forward alienated labor as the central concept. He even views private property as derived from the alienation of labor. It is both the product of estranged labor, he writes, and the means by which labor is estranged from itself. (Novack: 1973: 61)

When we see alienation as the cause and not the result of private property, the whole discussion has to be discussed under the condition of alienation theory.

In fact, the process that structured pre-Marxist classical philosophy - despite all the differences between philosophers - is that these philosophies are based on empiricist ontology. The discussion of alienation as the self, self-actualization, self-consciousness, and deprivation of the possibility of self-realization will always lead us to the pre-alienated state, to a non-alienated self, to a discussion of a subject. Now then, we are asking, can the human subject, that is, the being who consciously represent his existence, be the starting point of Marx's thought? Here, Althusser emphasizes in terms of which text we should talk about this question and says that a general answer cannot be given. When this question is asked of Marx's early texts, our answer must also be considered dependent on the text. This is why, according to Althusser and his followers, Marx's early texts, especially the *1844 Manuscripts*, could not emerge from the empiricist ontology. This discussion, which Marx preferred to leave behind, appears before us as a bloc in the *1844 Manuscripts*, not just as a 'borrowing' of a concept.

In his discussion of alienated labour, Marx started from private property, which articulated the separation between work and the object of work. Taking the analysis further (CCPE, Capital) he concludes that alienated labor is the source of private property. In his work, man creates not only his own self-relation to the object of his work and the act of work. He also creates with this work the relationship of a man alien to him and placed outside himself. "Private property, then, is the product and necessary result of alienated labour, of the worker's external relationship to nature and himself." (Bottigelli: 1976: 163, MEGA I, 3, p. 91.)

Again, Roberto Finelli, in his work titled Hegel and the Young Marx, states that it took a long time for Marx to get rid of the conditional discussions of his early humanist texts:

"It was precisely through him that a long, initial phase of Marx's work and his first theorising of communism were strongly conditioned by a tradition of pantheistic and symbiotic humanism. The entire expanse of Marx's life

was needed for him to be able to attempt to free himself from its impact.”
(Finelli: 2015: 198)

Althusser suggests that Marx did not establish a new philosophical field in his youthful works, Feuerbach's influence is still seen in these works, and to understand this, Marx's early texts - knowing the Feuerbachian problematic - should be followed and scrutinized with Feuerbach's Philosophical Manifesto:

“I believe that a comparison of the Manifestoes and of Marx's early works shows quite clearly that for two or three years Marx literally espoused Feuerbach's problematic, that he profoundly identified himself with it, and that to understand the meaning of most of his statements during this period, even where these bear on the material of later studies (for example, politics, social life, the proletariat, revolution, etc.) and might therefore seem fully Marxist, it is essential to situate oneself at the very heart of this identification, and to explore all its theoretical consequences and inferences.” (Althusser: 1985: 46)

For Althusser, 'problematic' means the specificity of a discursive structure, the organization of concepts within a certain framework that determines the types of questions a theory or text can pose. Its importance therefore lies in the definition of 'absences' and 'silences' as well as in the details (specification) of superficial and literal discourse. For example, what a text cannot 'say' is often more important than what it actually 'says', as an indication of the structure of the concepts that govern it. In this sense, the *1844 Manuscripts* should be read from within a problematic. The problematic of Marx in the *1844 Manuscripts*, the difference between the *1844 Manuscripts* and the *German Ideology* text, the evolutions in Marx's thought can be understood in this sense by noting what he did not say in his previous texts.

Moving from the *1844 Manuscripts* to the criticism of the *German Ideology*, Marx now established his own field and started to make his own specific discussion with his own concepts. With the new concepts he added to his repertoire, Marx added insurmountable walls between his own thought and previous socialist visions.

1.3. THE THEORETICAL CONJUNCTION AND THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT THAT CAUSED THE CRITICISM OF GERMAN IDEOLOGY

“German criticism has, right up to its latest efforts, never quitted the realm of philosophy. Far from examining its general philosophic premises, the whole body of its inquiries has actually sprung from the soil of a definite philosophical system, that of Hegel. Not only in their answers but in their very questions there was a mystification.”(Marx&Engels:1845)

It should be noted that *The German Ideology* is a text written before the Revolutions of 1848. The Germany of the 19th century is a Germany that has not even realized the Bourgeois Revolution yet and is in labor pains. German intellectuals debated within this conjuncture. The criticisms of the Young-Hegelians (Bauer, Stirner et al.) and Genuine Socialists (Hess, Grün), which marked the debates of the period, although they had different tendencies from each other, are still a fictional philosophical criticism for Marx. Marx and his comrade Engels in this text, enter into a theoretical reckoning with those who think that social order will be achieved through philosophical reforms, which see salvation as a philosophical problem, that is, those who believe that thoughts are omnipotent.

They express this clearly when criticizing the German Ideological-Philosophy in the illusion that ideas are omnipotent:

“The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material

relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas; hence of the relationships which make the one class the ruling one, therefore, the ideas of its dominance. The individuals composing the ruling class possess among other things consciousness, and therefore think. Insofar, therefore, as they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an epoch, it is self-evident that they do this in its whole range, hence among other things rule also as thinkers, as producers of ideas, and regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age: thus their ideas are the ruling ideas of the epoch.” (Marx&Engels:1845)

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/germanideology/ch01b.htm>)

If the class that owns the material mode of production also determines mental production, it must be fought in its own field. Material power can only be overcome by material power. We cannot unify the material mode of production and class domination by starting from mental production and philosophical criticism. For the dominant ideas are only the intellectual expression of the dominant material relations. This is the meaning of the sentence that is now used as “philosophy should be put aside”. The statement that it is necessary to leave the philosophy aside should now be read as it is necessary to leave aside philosophical criticism. As a matter of fact, in his critique of *Hegel's Philosophy of Law*, Marx argues that “the weapon of criticism cannot, of course, replace criticism of the weapon, material force must be overthrown by material force; but theory also becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses” (Marx: 1970: 8)

Another point that should be emphasized here is that the German Ideology text written by Marx and Engels is not only a philosophical work in the last instance that does not set out with philosophical premises, but also that Marx and Engels describe German Philosophy as an ideology.

“In The German Ideology, Marx always uses philosophy to mean ideology pure and simple. And Engels writes, in the earlier preface to his *Anti-Dühring*, ‘If theoreticians are semi-initiates in the sphere of natural science,

then natural scientists today are actually just as much so in the sphere of theory, in the sphere of what hitherto was called philosophy' (English translation, Moscow, 1959, p. 454). This remark proves that Engels felt the need to encapsulate the difference between ideological philosophies and Marx's absolutely new philosophical project in a terminological distinction. He proposed to register this difference by designating Marxist philosophy by the term theory." (Althusser: 1985:162)

Althusser describes the theoretical conjuncture of the period as follows:

"At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Germany emerged from the gigantic upheaval of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars deeply marked by its historical inability either to realize national unity or bourgeois revolution. And this 'fatality' was to dominate the history of Germany throughout the nineteenth century and even to be felt distantly much later. This situation whose origins can be traced back to the period of the Peasants' War, made Germany both object and spectator of the real history which was going on around it. It was this German inability that constituted and deeply marked the German ideology which was formed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was this inability which obliged German intellectuals to 'think what the others had done ' and to think it in precisely the conditions implied by their inability: in the hopeful, nostalgic, idealized forms characteristic of the aspirations of their social circle: the petty bourgeoisie of functionaries, teachers, writers, etc. -- and with the immediate objects of their own servitude as starting-point: in particular, religion. The result of this set of historical conditions and demands was precisely a prodigious development of the 'German idealist philosophy' whereby German intellectuals thought their conditions, their hopes and even their 'activity'.

It was not the attraction of a witty turn of phrase that led Marx to declare that the French have political minds, the English economic minds, while the Germans have theoretical minds. The counterpart to Germany's historical

underdevelopment was an ideological and theoretical ‘over-development’ incomparable with anything offered by other European nations. But the crucial point is that this theoretical development was an alienated ideological development, without concrete relation to the real problems and the real objects which were reflected in it. From the viewpoint we have adopted, that is Hegel’s tragedy. His philosophy was truly the encyclopedia of the eighteenth century, the sum of all knowledge then acquired, and even of history. But all the objects of its reflection have been ‘assimilated’ in their reflection, that is, by the particular form of ideological reflection which was the tyrant of all Germany’s intelligence. So it is easy to imagine what could be and what had to be the basic precondition for the liberation of a German youth who started to think between 1830 and 1840 in Germany itself.

This precondition was the rediscovery of real history, of real objects, beyond the enormous layer of ideology that had hemmed them in and deformed them, not being content with reducing them to their shades. Hence the paradoxical conclusion: to free himself from this ideology, Marx was inevitably obliged to realize that Germany’s ideological overdevelopment was at the same time in fact an expression of her historical underdevelopment and that therefore it was necessary to retreat from this ideological flight forwards in order to reach the things themselves, to touch real history and at last come face to face with the beings that haunted the mists of German consciousness. Without this retreat, the story of the Young Marx’s liberation is incomprehensible...” (Althusser: 1985: 75-76)

“German intellect had served as a propaedeutic for the Young Marx, in two ways: both through the necessity it imposed on him to criticize his whole ideology in order to reach that point beneath (en-deça) his myths; and through the training it gave him in the manipulation of the abstract structure of its systems, independently of their validity. And if we are willing to retreat in the face of Marx’s discovery, if we accept that he founded a new scientific discipline, if we accept that this emergence itself is identical to all

the great scientific discoveries of history; it must be admitted, then, that no great discovery can be made without introducing a new object or a new field, a new horizon of meaning, a new land where old images and old myths have been removed—but at the same time, this new world explorer, the old he must also have used his intelligence in forms, learned and applied them and enjoyed criticizing them, learned the art of manipulating abstract forms in general; He could not have devised new ways of thinking about his new object if he had not come to terms with them.” (Althusser: 1985: 85)

In summary, these interactions and transitions tell us the evolution of Marx’s thought as an explorer. Marx’s contact with German philosophy as a stop allows us to more closely follow the formation conditions of Marx’s thought and to understand his next critical move. It is precisely in a relational relationship that Marx creates his new object that directs his thought.

SECOND CHAPTER: THEORETICAL ANTI-HUMANISM

2.1. THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN SCIENCE AND IDEOLOGY: THE “EPISTEMOLOGICAL BREAK” FROM IDEOLOGY AND SCIENCE

“A science begins to emerge when it breaks with its pre-scientific past and rejects it as ideological. Epistemological breaks, which can in some respects be likened to Kuhn’s paradigm shifts, are not brought about by empirical discoveries but by conceptual displacements.” (Macey: 2004: 33)

Althusser’s distinction between science and ideology should not be understood as an emphasis that philosophy of history is ideology-laden, whereas political economy is scientific. On the other hand, Marx’s move to criticize political economy should not be read as an attempt to establish a new economic policy. If we think through the distinction between science and ideology, according to Althusser, for Marx, turning only from German Ideological philosophy to political economy is not an epistemological break from ideology to science; Because, in classical political economy (although it includes exceptions that make structural analyses like those of Ricardo), it ultimately works on concepts such as economic subjects. Marx did not turn from philosophy to political economy, but from the critique of ideological philosophies to the critique of political economy. In other words, it has similar ideological problematics in political economy, just like German philosophy, and epistemological obstacles in terms of Marx’s discussion. By including the concept of labor power, which classical political economy does not mention, Marx attempts to produce a new question that classical political economy does not ask. This is why Marx’s move is not simply a displacement, he criticizes political economy within its own concepts and categories. Let’s unpack what we said about this a little bit: In the third volume of Marx’s *Capital*, “Ricardo

is reproached for examining in capitalist production without taking into account ‘people’ ... that is precisely what matters in him...” ” (Capital vol. III, quoted by Gerard Bensussan, Bensussan: 2012: 484)

Again, Marx thinks that Ricardo “clearly lays down the principle that the value of the commodity is determined by labor time”. But the point is not only what Ricardo said but also what he did not say. With labor as the substance of value, Ricardo grasps the issue of the magnitude of the value measured by labor-time, but Ricardo is not concerned with either the nature or form of value. Classical political economy pondered only on the difference between the daily prices and the value of labor. He preferred to deal with the relationship of this value with the value of the commodity and the rate of profit.

By contrast, Marx's central question is why the content of value takes the form of value. In other words, the main issue for Marx, unlike classical political economy, is not to explore the quantitative relationship between the amount of labor and the amount of value. The critique that Marx brought to the labor theory of value is not the relationship between cost of production and value. Marx criticizes Ricardo for treating the cost of production as the sole factor in determining value. For Marx, Ricardo is not concerned with the conditions for the formation of surplus value. Even when Ricardo speaks of the productivity of labour, he does not look for the reason for the existence of surplus-value in it, but rather the reason that determines the magnitude of the surplus-value

Foucault describes this change in his own language in *The Archeology of Knowledge*:

“Concepts like those of surplus value or falling rate of profit, as found in Marx, may be described on the basis of the system of positivity that is already in operation in the work of Ricardo; but these concepts (which are new, but whose rules of formation are not) appear – in Marx himself – as belonging at the same time to a quite different discursive practice: they are formed in that discursive practice in accordance with specific laws, they occupy in it a different position, they do not figure in the same sequences:

this new positivity is not a transformation of Ricardo's analyses; it is not a new political economy; it is a discourse that occurred around the derivation of certain economic concepts, but which, in turn, defines the conditions in which the discourse of economists takes place, and may therefore be valid as a theory and a critique of political economy." (Foucault: 2002: 194)

Althusser does not call Marx's method scientific because he criticizes classical political economy. He speaks of Marx's scientific revolution because this critique of Marx means the displacement of classical political economy. Marx destroyed the myth of the economic subject. In this sense, Althusser identified the idea of epistemological rupture in Marx's texts and wanted to make clear that Marx's philosophies of history came to terms with their own concepts, leaving aside thinking through categories, concepts and distinctions. This move calls itself the scientific revolution. In short, Althusser tries to show the nature of the formation of a new science as a result of his symptomatic reading, and to think about what this expression means.

In other words, by emphasizing what Foucault calls the change of discursive formations, the difference between this new discourse and the old discourse by leaning on the concept of break in historical epistemology, and taking Marx's emphasis on science, he tries to reveal the new discursive setup itself, and calls this difference itself a epistemological break. Here, although the concept of science carries a series of tensions, we need to think about Marx's emphasis that he knows only one science and that is the science of history. As a matter of fact, Balibar, in the preface to the 96 edition he wrote years later for *For Marx*, states: "Reforming the concept of science from the singular practice of knowledge is not the same as introducing an existing model of scientificity into the Marxist debate." (Balibar: 1996)

<https://www.cairn.info/pour-marx--9782707147141-page-5.htm>

Why did Marx, abandon certain concepts of his philosophy of history? Why did the abandonment of certain concepts allow us to make a distinction between ideology

and science, to move from ideology to science? A series of questions can be asked, such as whether we call the texts in which we find these concepts scientific?

While Althusser himself expresses the tensions of this distinction in his late text, "Elements of Self-criticism," says "I have never disowned my essays: there was no good reason to do so." (Althusser: 1976b: 105). However, he says that in 1967, two years after they were published in *Reading Capital's* Italian edition (as well as other foreign editions), he admits that these works were under the influence of an erroneous trend.

"I pointed out the existence of this error, and I gave it a name: theoreticism. Today, I think I can go further, and define the special "object" of the error, its essential forms and its reverberations. I should add that instead of talking about an error it would be better to talk about a deviation. A theoreticist deviation. You will see why I am suggesting a change of terminology -- that is, in this case, a change of category -- and what is at stake philosophically and politically when I stress this nuance. The whole thing can be summed up in a few words. I wanted to defend Marxism against the real dangers of bourgeois ideology: it was necessary to stress its revolutionary new character; it was therefore necessary to "prove" that there is an antagonism between Marxism and bourgeois ideology, that Marxism could not have developed in Marx or in the labour movement except given a radical and unremitting break with bourgeois ideology, an unceasing struggle against the assaults of this ideology. This thesis was correct. It still is correct. But instead of explaining this historical fact in all its dimensions -- social, political, ideological and theoretical -- I reduced it to a simple theoretical fact: to the epistemological "break " which can be observed in Marx's works from 1845 onwards. As a consequence I was led to give a rationalist explanation of the "break", contrasting truth and error in the form of the speculative distinction between science and ideology, in the singular and in general." (Althusser: 1976b: 105-106)

When Althusser says ‘science’ here, what is meant is not a classification move like science or sub-scientific, in which different types of knowledge or ways of knowing are eliminated or disqualified. The term science is essentially a concept borrowed from the French tradition of historical epistemology. If we recall the main problematic areas of the French historical epistemology tradition, two of them in particular are essential for us to understand the implications of the discussion. While one of them is discontinuities/breaks in the History of Science, the other is the priority of Science over Philosophy, which forms the basis of this discussion. It is a priority, just as Galileo's physics laid the groundwork for the Cartesian philosophy of Bacon and Descartes. Althusser emphasizes that science prioritized philosophy by following the historical epistemology tradition in the first period when he defended the theory of philosophy theoretical practice. According to Althusser, behind every philosophy is a scientific revolution and breakthrough. Althusser's criticism of Lukacs the Younger and Gramsci is also inspired by this. In his critique of Young Lukacs and Gramsci, which he describes as historicists, Althusser says: “They put the birth of Marxist philosophy before the birth of Marxist science - to prove this to themselves that every science is a 'superstructure' anyway, so that every existing science is basically positivist because it is bourgeois, therefore Marxist ‘science’ is inevitably philosophical, and Marxism is too. In summary, they argued that Marxism is a philosophy, a post-Hegelian philosophy, or a “philosophy of praxis”.” (Althusser: 2003b) But for the French Epistemological Tradition, science is more than just a rationalist choice or orientation between wrong and right to determine the place and function of a concept in a particular discussion and to show how that concept works within that structure. In short, science here refers not only to the natural sciences or to the legal and temperamental propositions of political economy, but also to the construction of concepts in their historicity, the materialist acquisition of a concept in its private sphere in a non-public sphere. According to the French tradition of historical epistemology, the first task of the history of sciences is to reveal the historicity of the idea of universality, to confront the mental forms that are accepted as an anthropological constant with the breaks in the forms. In this sense, truth cannot be accepted as knowledge acquired in the

history of sciences. It is not to find the verification mechanism between the true-false concept pair that gives this history its originality and importance, but to find the conditions for the formation of these discourses that reorganize the history of the discourses working on themselves.

Indeed, in his main text, *The Making of the Cognitive Mind*, Bachelard states: "...an epistemological barrier is complex and polymorphic in nature. It is very difficult to follow a sequence to establish a hierarchy of error and to describe the perturbations of thought." (Bachelard: 2013: 32) By detecting the object of science, it works through objects and the object itself allows the production of a concept, not the other way around.

However, it is Althusser who says in his work *Lenin and Philosophy*: Marx founded a new science: the science of history.

"Let me use an image. The sciences we are familiar with have been installed in a number of great 'continents'. Before Marx, two such continents had been opened up to scientific knowledge: the continent of Mathematics and the continent of Physics. The first by the Greeks (Thales), the second by Galileo. Marx opened up a third continent to scientific knowledge: the continent of History." (Althusser: 1971: 15)

"Marx opened up a new third scientific continent an epistemological break with in *The German Ideology* to scientific knowledge. The epistemological rupture, which is obvious as a unique event, is not an instantaneous event. It is also possible for one to accept this as a premonition of the past, due to its reversibility and some details. This rupture, whose symptoms also show the beginning of a history without an end, has gained a completely visible situation starting from its first symptoms. As with all ruptures, it is a continuous rupture in which complex rearrangements are observed." (Althusser: 2003b: 166)

Despite all this tension, I am in favor of seeing the problematized area. The fact that History as a process without a subject is scientific is also its separation from the

concepts that pull us back into the subject discussion. In other words, Althusser wanted to make Marx's proposition that he founded a new science or that he knows a single science, the science of history, clear through the discussion of science, in which the category of the subject signifying the individual ideology is bypassed. In Althusser's own words; "Marx never believed that an ideology might be dissipated by a knowledge of it: for the knowledge of this ideology, as the knowledge of its conditions of possibility, of its structure, of its specific logic and of its practical role, within a given society, is simultaneously knowledge of the conditions of its necessity." (Althusser: 1985: 230)

On the other hand, Althusser's paradox is not in his search for an epistemological break between science and ideology, but in describing Marxism, which he sees as a new scientific continent/qualifies as a new science, as a philosophical revolution in the same text. However, for the thinker, the distinction between science and ideology corresponds to the utterance of the theory of the theoretical practice of philosophy, while the philosophical revolution is expressed not in the first definition, which the philosopher later abandoned, but in the second definition, namely the class struggle carried out in the theoretical field. Althusser implicitly expressed this tension in his Answer to John Lewis. Talking about Marx's philosophical revolution and saying that Marx opened a new continent of history with his scientific revolution are two different things. The difference comes from here. Between the view that philosophy precedes science and the historical epistemology's approach that science precedes philosophy. Althusser thought to eclectically dissolve these two approaches, which he separated with sharp boundaries, in the same discussion in his work called *Lenin and Philosophy*. While talking about Marx's scientific continent, on the other hand, describing the discovery of the scientific continent as a philosophical revolution. Although Althusser never put the discussion of the epistemological break on the shelf, in the "Philosophy Course for Scientists" lectures that he wrote in the mid-60s (*Reading Capital* and *For Marx*) and in the École Normale Supérieure between October and November 1967, and later on. In his text, which will be published as "Philosophy and the Spontaneous Philosophy of the Scientists", he defends the concept of

epistemological break. He tries to explain this by presenting philosophical propositions as theses. He later reduced his emphasis on *For Marx*, *Reading Capital* and *Philosophy and the Spontaneous Philosophy of Scientists*, or rather, changed his philosophical definition in the preface to the Italian edition of *Reading Capital*, making a self-criticism. In own words:

“I did not separate Marx’s philosophical revolution from the “epistemological break”, and I therefore talked about philosophy as if it were science, and quite logically wrote that in 1845 Marx made a double break, scientific and philosophical. That was a mistake. It is an example of the theoretician (= rationalist-speculative) deviation which I denounced in the brief self-criticism contained in the Preface to the Italian edition of *Reading Capital* (1967), reproduced in the English edition. Very schematically, this mistake consists in thinking that philosophy is a science, and that, like every science, it has: (1) an object; (2) a beginning (the “epistemological break” occurs at the moment when it looms up in the pre-scientific, ideological cultural universe); and (3) a history (comparable to the history of a science). This theoretician error found its clearest and purest expression in my formula: Philosophy is “Theory of theoretical practice”.” (Althusser: 1976b: 67-68) He explained this discussion in his Answer to John Lewis, which he called class struggles in the theoretical field of philosophy and philosophy, and finally, he said that he fell into theorism in *Essays in Self-Criticism*. While criticizing his position in his historical polemic with John Lewis, he says: “When I said that it was the “epistemological break” which was primary, and when I said that it was at the same time a philosophical “break”, I therefore made two mistakes. In the case of Marx it is the philosophical revolution which is primary—and this revolution is not a “break”. The theoretical terminology itself is important here: if one can legitimately keep the term “break” to denote the beginning of the science of history, the clear effect of its irruption in the cultural universe, the point of no return, one cannot employ the same term in talking about philosophy. In the history of philosophy, as in very long

periods of the class struggle, one cannot really talk about a point of no return. So I shall use the term: philosophical “revolution” (in the strong sense in Marx’s case). This expression is more correct: for—to evoke once again the experiences and terms of the class struggle—we all know that a revolution is always open to attacks, to retreats and reverses, and even to the risk of counter-revolution. Nothing in philosophy is radically new, for the old Theses, taken up again in new form, survive and return in a new philosophy.” (Althusser: 1976a: 71-72)

However, what Althusser observes in *The German Ideology* and later in the *Preface to the Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* is not only a conceptual break, but also the creation of a new field. The field that determines itself simultaneously with the choice of its concepts.

Marx preferred to speak with his own concepts within his own field, and these concepts operate within a general structure that cannot be reduced to the consciousness forms or choices of individual subjects, with abstractions appropriate to the problematics of that structure. In this sense, what enables us to characterize not the Political Economy itself but its Marxist critique as a new science; Marx’s critique displaces his way of knowing, interpreting, making sense, and explaining. The critic tells us not the human being who is the subject of his needs anymore, but the general logic of the capitalist production process, the relational position of those whose labor is waged as wage laborers whose labor power is bought, not as isolated individuals, in the production process, and the forms of relations formed according to their positions. (And only after this scientific break could Marx's philosophical revolution take place, and the expression of Marx’s philosophy was abandoned and Marxism was adopted as a new philosophical practice.) According to Althusser, it is not possible for us to characterize the Marxist critique of Political Economy as Marx's scientific revolution as a new science. What gives rise to the problem is that Marx, who finds what the classical political economy does not say, refrain from saying, and the general way of interpretation problematic, opens a new field, a continent. And determining the regional location of a concept in this continent is

positioning that concept within the discussion specific to that structure. In this sense, when we say science of history text, we mean the text of Capital, which finds its own concepts such as surplus value, commodity, labor power and production relations. Or the masses that make history, and the Grundrisse text, “which says that the masses cannot be considered as the sum of individuals” and that individuals who were subordinate to each other in the past are now governed by abstractions, is a history-scientific.

Here we need to open another parenthesis. While discussing science and ideology, Althusser thinks within his first definition of philosophy. In other words, according to Althusser, philosophy is the theory of theoretical practice. For the philosopher, who has not yet said philosophy is class struggle in the field of theoretic area, the main discussion is theoretical practice and political practice, the use of theory is the distinctions between theory and practice.

Althusser of the epistemological break characterizes philosophy first as a theory of theoretical practice. And in accordance with this definition, while talking about Marx's philosophy, he simultaneously talks about Marx's philosophical revolution with the statement that philosophy is nothing but the class struggle in the field of theory. (Of course, this definition is a reduction, but without forgetting that it is derived from an intervention in a conjuncture)

Again, he sees Marx's scientific revolution as a displacement of political economy, not economic politics peculiar to Marx. After Marx's philosophical revolution, we can no longer talk about Marx's philosophy. However, we can talk about Marxism as a new philosophical practice or a philosophy for Marxism. Likewise, from Marx's expression of scientific revolution, we should understand not the critique of Political Economy, but the displacement of classical Political Economy's ways of knowing, a political economy for Marxism. There is tension in the expression of Marx's philosophy or Marx's political economy. These expressions are namings made by preserving the old structure through the historicist dilemma. However, after the idea of epistemological break, Althusser used the term Marx's philosophy until the end of the 70s. Althusser would openly admit that it was wrong to try to

establish a Marxist philosophy, and that what needed to be done was to create a philosophy for Marxism only towards the end of the 70s. Fernando Navarro expresses this tension as follows:

“He argued; It will not be a Marxist philosophy. It will be one that belongs to the history of philosophy, a philosophy for Marxism, but not a Marxist philosophy.” (Navarro: 1998: 94)

Undertaking the problematic of epistemological rupture, Balibar describes this situation as follows: “Whatever has been thought, there is no Marxist philosophy and never will be. On the other hand, Marx’s importance to philosophy is greater than it has ever been.” (Balibar: 2007:7)

For Althusser, a discussion within Marxism, whether this is science or philosophy, must result in a revolution and open a new field or continent. Marx’s scientific revolution means a Marxist displacement of political economy, not of political economy peculiar to Marx. Marx’s philosophical revolution does not mean a Marxist critique of anthropology and philosophies of consciousness, it means a displacement of anthropologism and philosophies of consciousness. (Of course, there are also names that Marx’s philosophical revolution will take with him with a retrospective move. Such as; Epicurus, Machiavelli, Pascal, Spinoza.)

If I need to explain with an example, just as it is not possible to return to classical psychoanalysis after Freud, if Freud changed the question, it is not possible to return to the traditional discussions of philosophy with and after Marx. But for Althusser, Marx’s philosophical revolution cannot be limited to changing the question while remaining within philosophy. Thinking philosophy in tradition, reading it as a cumulative process, ignoring its deviations and reading it as a normed process with its own history are peculiar to philosophies of history.

For example, Marx’s move to shift Feuerbach’s religious alienation to the economic field, which passed normative anthropology against speculative anthropology, for Althusser, it was simply a field shift move. Therefore this initiative here does not fully meet the discussion of the epistemological break, which he sees as the break

between ideology. Here, in the 1844 Manuscripts, there is no epistemological break yet.

Althusser not only takes the concept of the epistemological break, but also intervenes in its acquisition. Jean-Baptiste Vuillerod, *Actual Marx*, vol. 66, no. 2, (2019) in his text titled “Epistemological Break and Political Break: A Dialogue Between Althusser and Young Foucault”, he details this situation as follows:

“Like all great concepts, the epistemological break has its own grand narrative. This holds that it originated in French epistemology—a tradition containing figures as diverse as Bachelard, Canguilhem, Cavailles, and Foucault—before entering into Marxism through the intermediary of Louis Althusser. A Marxist translation of Bachelard’s idea of epistemological “rupture,” it was transplanted from its original epistemological soil with the aim of elevating Marxism into a science. For a time, some praised its theoretical power, which helped extricate Marxism from the mire of pragmatism, including both Stalinist dogmatism and post-Stalinist humanism. Others decried its reduction of Marxist philosophy to epistemology, and lamented that it had led Althusser to an aporetic “theoreticism,” divorced from the political reality of struggle. Most agree that the “epistemological” break was, in the final analysis—as its name indicates—epistemological in nature. Like all good stories, there is much truth here. Althusser himself maintained that he borrowed the concept of the epistemological break from Bachelard. At the time, his own students were keen to emphasize its value for any Marxism that wanted to finally liberate itself of ideology, and associated the concept with the French epistemological tradition. Finally, Althusser’s self-criticism regarding his own theoreticism apparently confirms that the only question which the epistemological break posed to Marxism was that of its scientificity, and that only a redefinition of Marxist philosophy as “class struggle in theory” would allow it to move on from the epistemological problematic of 1965. But there is another story, one which remains underground, lurking in the

shadows of the archives, and which suggests a different genealogy of the concept, revealing other issues. This apocryphal gospel goes back to a dialog between Althusser and the young Foucault during the early 1950s about the concept of the break. It shows that, before it was adorned with epistemological finery, this concept was a political and critical gesture aimed at defending Marx against bourgeois reappropriation. This genealogy sheds new light on Althusser's project in the 1960s: his aim was not just to develop a science of Marxism, but to preserve Marx's critical power and political scope. (Vuillerod: 2019) As Étienne Balibar has shown, "Althusser did not just naively adopt Bachelard's concept of epistemological rupture and apply it to Marxism. Rather, he transformed the concept, integrating the history of science and epistemology into a broader history within which political issues remained at the forefront." (Vuillerod: 2019) "A concept of epistemological break which, owes 'something' to Bachelard and which does indeed rest on certain common philosophical presuppositions but which in fact has a quite other object and opens a quite other field of investigation." (Balibar: 1978: 208)

An epistemological break from science to ideology does not mean that there is a truth beyond ideological illusions and that we have discovered it. At issue here is the idea of theoretical relevance. It is the conformity of concepts to their objects. The concept is the practice of reality. For example, his concept of the conscious subject certainly has some truth in the establishment of bourgeois rule, but only in terms of bourgeois domination. Again, the concept of the economic subject has a reality in terms of classical bourgeois political economy. However, according to Althusser, neither social organization and production relations moments nor property relations can be explained through these concepts.

For Althusser, to think is to "problematizing," but to problematize is not simply to question, or to refer to being as a question rather than an object; to criticize the questions themselves. The concept of the problematic is therefore directly related to the concept of "epistemological break".

It is not possible to capture Marx's problematic when a holistic portrait of Marx is drawn without seeing the difference between Marx's early texts, that is, his thought representing the ideological prehistory, and the late texts expressing the disappearance of man as the subject of the historical process. No matter how we call the issue - whether we call it the epistemological break or something else - Marx's statement that his analytical method does not start from man is the most concise statement to summarize this break. If this break or differentiation is not seen, neither what Marx wanted to do (I know only one science and that is the science of history) nor the importance of his scientific discovery (history is the science of subjectless processes) can be grasped.

Is the distinction between ideology and science, emphasized by Althusser as a result of his symptomatic reading of Marx, an axis change within philosophy itself? No. So, is the separation of ideology and science only a change of plane from philosophy to political economy? Our answer is again no. The separation of science and ideology is the general name of Marx's critical movement towards both philosophy and political economy and his break with the understanding he criticizes. In other words, it is a boundary concept that determines the inside and the outside. In this sense, for Althusser, after constructing the science of history, Marx can also talk about a philosophy within Marxism as a new philosophical practice, that is, as a non-ideological philosophical practice. With this discussion, Althusser briefly did not distinguish between a biological young Marx and a mature Marx, but by tracing Marx's texts by showing the epistemological obstacles in Marx's discussion, he emphasized the distinction between the early and late works of the thinker. In other words, the main discussion under these concepts for Althusser and his followers shows us Marx's intellectual leaps and breaks in his thinking.

2.2. THE FIRST STEP TO HISTORICAL MATERIALISM: CRITICISM OF GERMAN IDEOLOGY

“Where the philosophies of History talked about man, the economic subject, need, the system of needs, civil society, alienation, theft, injustice, spirit, liberty -- where they talked about "society" itself -- Marx began to talk about: mode of production, social formation, infrastructure, superstructure, ideologies, classes, class struggle, etc.” (Althusser: 1976b: 153)

The Critique of the German Ideology, published as a joint work of Marx and Engels between 1845 and 1846, differs markedly from their earlier texts. Not only with the birth of new concepts, but also with the emergence of a new ground of criticism. The expression "leaving aside philosophy" in *The German Ideology* is not only a criticism limited to the Young-Hegelians, but also should not be read as a wholesale denial of philosophy. With a new approach, which they now call the science of history, Marx and Engels turn to the critique of existing society and reality.

If we think about the definition that Marx and Engels describe ideology, there are three views within Classical German Philosophy to rebel against the domination of ideologies. The first view advocates changing people's illusions and replacing them with thoughts that fit the human essence; the second view argues that a critical attitude should be taken against these illusions; the third view is to get rid of illusions and dogmas from our minds. The common point of these three views is that they believe that reality can be eliminated with the ‘criticism of ideologies’.

It is useful to recall Stirner’s position here. Stirner wants to eliminate social contradictions but seeks the way to morally educate one’s own ego. On the other hand, Marx and Engels argue that whether individual interests and common interests conflict with each other is not an individual moral problem, on the contrary, it is determined by real social relations and should be sought from within

these social relations. According to Marx and Engels, Communism does not confuse self-sacrifice with egoism, nor does it confuse objective egoism with self-sacrifice. Instead, it struggles to transform social and economic reality by addressing the material foundations of these steels. Philosophies that refer us to the individual, ego and subject, philosophies that seek the material foundations of social relations in the consciousness of individuals are ideological.

According to them, the general tension of the philosophies that prioritizing ideology is that they always presuppose a human subject -as pure consciousness isolated from conditions-. Also, a system of social relations cannot be understood based on the normative concepts of philosophy such as good and evil. For this reason, criticism has now been moved from the moral dimension, which is also included in classical philosophies, to the political economy plane.

This change of plane did not happen all at once, and the evolution and leaps in Marx's thought led him to question his own former position.

“[As a matter of fact] Marx then refers to *The German Ideology* in these terms: 'When in the spring of 1845 [Engels] also settled in Brussels, we resolved to work out in common the opposition of our view to the ideological view of German philosophy, in fact, to settle accounts with our erstwhile 'philosophical conscience' [Marx and Engels, *Selected Works in One Volume*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1968, p. 193]. Marx thus considered all his texts prior to *The German Ideology* to be tainted by a 'philosophical conscience', and he regarded *The German Ideology* as a critique of this influence, which he had by then overcome.” (Althusser: 1997: 243)

There is a general agreement about the *German Ideology* among the Marxists who are interested in the subject. Although these names acquired Marxism through different detours and philosophical formations, a number of thinkers greet *The German Ideology* as the first step of the materialist understanding of history, the founding text of historical materialism, in which the word historical science is embodied. For example Lefebvre said that; “Marx and Engels worked together from

September 1845 to August 1846. They were unable to find a publisher. They abandoned the manuscript to “the gnawing criticism of rats.” *The German Ideology* was rediscovered by David Riazanov and published in full in 1932. Ideologie Allemande is the first exposition of historical materialism.” (Lefebvre: 1968: 183)

Andre Tosel comments on this process in the dialectic article of the *Critical Dictionary of Marxism*, first published in French in 1982:

“*The German Ideology* outlines the materialist dialectic of history as early as 1845. It borrows the concepts and categories of Hegelian dialectics (process, contradiction, alienation, form/content, essence/appearance, logical order/historical order). But these borrowings fuse, albeit dialectically, into a brand -new problematic-political, economic, social sciences—that overturns the old philosophy. This upheaval is based on the materialist inversion that puts all the problems of human nature and existence on the final ground of practice, of the relationship that people establish with nature, in and through production, and of this relationship, which is also the social relationship that people establish among themselves. (Labica & Bensussan: 2012: 243) Another work describes this process as follows: “In *The German Ideology*, Marx is no longer preparing a theory of alienation of a subjective character, but a “theory of modes of production”. First, it analyzes the various forms of production, noting precisely the existence of classes. The great principles of historical materialism are expressed in this work, albeit incompletely, the major phases of development are described and partially explained: The importance of the division of labor - as a factor of increasing productivity - is clearly demonstrated. Likewise, communism is no longer defined in abstract and temporal terms, but in abstract and practical terms.” (Ibarrola: 1974: 90)

The German Ideology, as the herald of new concepts, does not allow a relative reading in this context to a certain extent. In *The German Ideology*, for the first time, Marx adds concepts such as relations of production, productive forces, modes of production, unproductive labor and division of labor to his repertoire. Although

Althusser reads this text within the context of the foundation of historical materialism, he is in favor of reading it as an essentially unfinished project.

Macherey, on the other hand, lays out this process as follows:

“Marx and Engels became materialists in a clear historical conjuncture in 1844-1845, when they wrote *The Holy Family* and *The German Ideology*: the problem for them at that time was the pure thought in which they were trapped. It was to save philosophy from the “heaven to earth” by following the path of historical materialism, the scientific study of history, which allows evaluating the formations of consciousness objectively by associating them with their real and social foundations. (*Dialectical Materialism*, Pierre Macherey, Labica & Bensussan: 2012:250)

In the system of the young Hegelians, it is the ideas, thoughts and concepts that constitute and determine the real life, material world, and real relations of people. In this sense, it can be said that knowledge is perceived not as a production process, but as a mental activity of a subject. On the other hand, the understanding of knowledge as a social practice does not mean that it is the product of the dreams and dreams of a subject or individuals, it means that knowledge is sought within the material life process. Ideas lose their arbitrariness as soon as they have a material basis. The reality of thought cannot be sought in thought, in thought isolated from practice. In this sense, social practice is not the singular knowledge that the empirical subject acquires through his own experience, but the praxis within the mode of production of material life. Here we can talk about subjects, not their way of knowing and consciousness, but their position of existence.

For Marx, the first historical action is the production of the means to meet the needs, in other words, the production of material life itself. In this sense, the materialist conception of history is to reflect on the actual production of social life. On the other hand, Young-Hegelians did not worry about the connection between German philosophy and German reality, and they did not establish a connection with material reality because they did not leave the field of speculative philosophy. It is therefore not surprising, says Marx, that they do not have a historian. For Marx,

ideas, representations and consciousness are based on the social mode of production. In other words, Marx does not think about consciousness as a priori in the narrow sense, but on the production of consciousness, the conditions that allow consciousness to be produced. Marx differs from all idealist political philosophy by never adopting any illusions that “thoughts are omnipotent,” including his own.

“In direct contrast to German philosophy which descends from heaven to earth, here we ascend from earth to heaven. That is to say, we do not set out from what men say, imagine, conceive, nor from men as narrated, thought of, imagined, conceived, in order to arrive at men in the flesh. We set out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life-process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process. The phantoms formed in the human brain are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material life-process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises. Morality, religion, metaphysics, all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development; but men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter, along with this their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking. Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life. In the first method of approach the starting-point is consciousness taken as the living individual; in the second method, which conforms to real life, it is the real living individuals themselves, and consciousness is considered solely as their consciousness. This method of approach is not devoid of premises. It starts out from the real premises and does not abandon them for a moment. Its premises are men, not in any fantastic isolation and rigidity, but in their actual, empirically perceptible process of development under definite conditions. As soon as this active life-process is described, history ceases to be a collection of dead facts as it is with the empiricists (themselves still abstract), or an imagined activity of imagined subjects, as with the idealists. Where speculation ends – in real life – there real, positive science begins: the representation of the practical

activity, of the practical process of development of men.” (Marx&Engels: 1845)

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/germanideology/ch01a.htm>

Here Marx and Engels provide a summary of their approach to history. History longer ceases to be dead facts, as with the empiricists, nor the imaginary activity of imaginary objects, as with the idealists. Undoubtedly, what allowed this determination was the fact that Marx and Engels did not seek pure materialism and pure idealism. What allowed this determination was their emphasis on the concrete historical “man” versus the idea of a fixed “man” in imaginary isolation. What was new here was that Marx and Engels rejected the idea of “man” as a myth invented by bourgeois ideology, pointing to the concrete historical “man”.

“The individuals, who are no longer subject to the division of labour, have been conceived by the philosophers as an ideal, under the name “Man”. They have conceived the whole process which we have outlined as the evolutionary process of “Man”, so that at every historical stage “Man” was substituted for the individuals and shown as the motive force of history. The whole process was thus conceived as a process of the self-estrangement of “Man”, and this was essentially due to the fact that the average individual of the later stage was always foisted onto the earlier stage, and the consciousness of a later age on to the individuals of an earlier. Through this inversion, which from the first is an abstract image of the actual conditions, it was possible to transform the whole of history into an evolutionary process of consciousness.” (Marx&Engels:1845)

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/germanideology/ch01d.htm>

From the *Theses on Feuerbach* (1845) and the German Ideology, neither man, nor humanity, nor the human essence can be regarded as fundamental, constitutive concepts of a theory in the ‘strong sense’. VI. While the interpretation of the positive meaning of the Thesis can lead to much debate, the fully intelligible texts

of *The German Ideology* reject the validity of these concepts: Feuerbach says ‘human’ instead of ‘concrete historical people’. it is necessary to analyze the historical process in which they developed: “At every stage of past history, they replaced existing individuals with concrete historical ‘man’ and presented him as the driving force of history.” (Labica & Bensussan: 2012:451)

“Individuals the only connection which still links them with the productive forces and with their own existence — labour — has lost all semblance of self-activity and only sustains their life by stunting it. While in the earlier periods self-activity and the production of material life were separated, in that they devolved on different persons, and while, on account of the narrowness of the individuals themselves, the production of material life was considered as a subordinate mode of self-activity, they now diverge to such an extent that altogether material life appears as the end, and what produces this material life, labour (which is now the only possible but, as we see, negative form of self-activity), as the means. Thus things have now come to such a pass that the individuals must appropriate the existing totality of productive forces, not only to achieve self-activity, but, also, merely to safeguard their very existence. This appropriation is first determined by the object to be appropriated, the productive forces, which have been developed to a totality and which only exist within a universal intercourse. From this aspect alone, therefore, this appropriation must have a universal character corresponding to the productive forces and the intercourse.” (Marx&Engels: 1845)

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01d.htm>

Although concepts such as self-activity are used, *The German Ideology* is a text that does not consider work as an abstract entity, emphasizes the connection of work with productive forces and emphasizes that confiscation should be considered within the productive forces. However, to say that work is external to the worker, as in his early texts, inevitably leads us to a moral critique of capitalism. Work in

capitalism is criticized not because it is alienated, but because this mode of production, after contributing to the revolutionary developments in the productive forces, is now a brake, a serious obstacle to the development of these forces, and moreover, it becomes a factor that destroys wealth.

Again in *The German Ideology*, speaking of the idea of man and humanism, Marx states that the idea of human nature or human essence encompasses a dual value judgment, particularly the human-nonhuman couple; and he writes:

“Speaking of the idea of man and of humanism in *The German Ideology*, Marx commented that the idea of human nature, or of the essence of man, concealed a coupled value judgement, to be precise, the couple human/inhuman; and he wrote: ‘the “inhuman” as much as the “human” is a product of present conditions; it is their negative side’. The couple human/inhuman is the hidden principle of all humanism which is, then, no more than a way of living-sustaining-resolving this contradiction. Bourgeois humanism made man the principle of all theory. This luminous essence of man was the visible counterpart to a shadowy inhumanity. By this part of shade, the content of the human essence, that apparently absolute essence, announced its rebellious birth. The man of freedom-reason denounced the egoistic and divided man of capitalist society. In the two forms of this couple inhuman/human, the bourgeoisie of the eighteenth century lived in ‘rational-liberal’ form, the German left radical intellectuals in ‘communalist’ or ‘communist’ form, the relations between them and their conditions of existence, as a rejection, a demand and a programme.” (Althusser: 1985: 236-237)

In terms of the Marxist conception of history, it will no longer be possible to consider thought separately from the being, activity/activity from matter, and a man from the social production of material life. Along with *The German Ideology*, the humanist question of philosophical anthropology, the question of who is a human being, has also been in vain and has been discussed over the concrete place of humans in material life conditions. Practice, too, will no longer be thought of from

a human essence or individualized under the name of basic human activity, but from its relational position and practices within a social structure.

The most important aspect of the German Ideology is that it changed the axis and subject of philosophy, on which philosophy had been leaning until that day. Philosophy, which previously dealt with subjects such as existence, theory of knowledge, morality and religion, now deals with history, society, production, etc. This is why Althusser describes this work as the first step towards historical materialism, although he describes it as an unfinished project.

2.3. HISTORY AS PROCESS WITHOUT A SUBJECT OR GOAL(S)

“The new philosophy makes man, together with nature as the basis of man, the exclusive, universal, and highest object of philosophy; it makes anthropology, together with physiology, the universal science” (Feuerbach: 1843)

“My analytical method does not start from man but from the economically given social period” (Karl Marx, “Notes on Adolph Wagner's Textbooks”, quoted by Althusser: 1976b: 52)

The subject matter as a philosophical category a series of debates have been made, from dating to how it was formed, and still is. What interests us in the context of our subject is the question of the place of this debate in the Marxist understanding of history. What is the difference between considering history as a subjective activity or as the conscious subject of their actions under the concept of man, that is, as the proposition that “man makes history”, and reading history as a process without a subject and purpose? What historical understandings do these two approaches correspond to?

Undoubtedly, the approach that we can call the philosophy of the subject should be considered together with Descartes and Kant. It will be necessary to consider Descartes separately here. Because we know that there is no concept of consciousness in Descartes as understood by the moderns. When we say the philosophy of consciousness, the philosophers that will come to our eyebrows are Locke and Condillac. However, Descartes' cartesian method also takes us to *res cogitans*, a subject whose existence is registered with the argument of doubt. Descartes intervention is to make the body, which he thinks apart from the thinking substance, an object of thinking at once. Descartes is a philosopher who jumped

from the argument that I am, if I think, to the judgment that I am a thinking being. In Descartes, with the argument of doubt, the substance of thinking attains its meaning from within. In Descartes, “subject” is understood with the substance of “thinking” through doubt, whereas in Kant it is now thought through “consciousness” in the condition of synthesis and experience. In this sense, it would not be wrong to call Kant a post-Kartesian.

If we narrow down the discussion, the philosophers that are of particular interest to us in the context of the discussion are Feuerbach and Hegel, who are the theme of Marx's references and literary adventure. Feuerbach, who abstracted the Hegelian understanding of history from theology, explains the human being as the subject of history and as a process of alienation, which is also the subject of history. Marx takes over this proposition and declares that history is a process of human alienation.

However, things do not work exactly like this with Hegel. For Hegel, History is a process of alienation, but the subject of this process is not human. If a subject is to be sought within the Hegelian understanding of history, this subject is Spirit, not man. To be more precise, this subject is the Historical peoples or the moments of development of the Idea transformed into Spirit. History in Hegel is not the alienation of man, but the alienation of the Idea as the alienation of Spirit. In Hegel, the mind does not appear as a subject, but as an absolute subject that finds expression in the unity of it's process. In Hegel, the process of alienation does not begin with History, because history itself is the alienation in nature of the idea, which is nothing but the alienation of logic. In Hegel, this subjectless alienation process has a subject, but this subject is this process itself. The subjectless process is its subject, that is, the process is the subject. It is this self-alienation process that establishes it as an idea.

In every moment of Hegel's alienation process, there is no subject of the alienation process in nature and logic. No subject can be attributed to this alienation process; neither the being nor the people are the subjects of the process. The only subject of the alienation process is the process itself in it's theology.

Therefore, when Hegel's process of subjectless alienation is dismissed as idealistic and in the name of materialism, this distinction leads us not to Marx's path but to Feuerbach's humanist path. In the name of materialism, when History is reduced to man and man is declared to be the subject, no matter how much Hegelian dialectic is embraced, it will drag us not beyond Feuerbach but get behind Hegel, into Feuerbach's problematic.

However, Hegel's category of process without a subject does not mean that, in Hegel's dialectic, substance is not a subject in the transition to subject. For Hegel, contradiction is the movement of consciousness. The subject, on the other hand, is a practice of cleavage and alienation. Hegel thought of the "subject" as the practice of negation of negation. Consciousness is the subject of thought here. The subject is the immanent being that produces negation, contradiction and opposition. In other words, where there is no subject as consciousness, the Hegelian dialectic does not work, and makes no sense.

For this reason, Althusser summarizes in a single sentence why they went to Spinoza in the *Elements of Self-criticism*: "By its radical criticism of the central category of imaginary illusion, the Subject, it reached into the very heart of bourgeois philosophy" (Althusser: 1976b: 137)

In terms of Althusser, although Hegel criticizes the subjectivity theses, he included the subject not only in the "becoming-subject of substance" but also in the interiority of the subjectless teleological process, which realizes the frame and destiny of the idea through the negation of the negation. If we think in terms of the principle of non-contradiction, for Hegel, contradiction is the logic that establishes identity and subject and is immanent to the "subject".

So, what are the tensions of thinking about the science of history, or in other words, the discussion of historical materialism through the subject or the transition process of substance to subject? What tensions are there for Marxism in entrusting people as subjects who enter into certain necessary relations in the social production of their existence, moreover, entrusting them with the task of making history?

This reading itself is, for Althusser, unwavering theoretical humanism. Because people take place in the production process not as subjects but according to their relational positions. People do not initiate these relationships; they are the carriers of certain relationships. Here, locations should not be considered as structures. This discussion is not the structure and subject debate in structuralism. In the sense of structuralism, structure always has to assume a subject. Althusser, on the other hand, says that there is no central category of subject, and we cannot talk about isolated subjects who have been stripped of their roles in capitalist production, and entities that interact outside of their positions.

In summary, when people interact with each other, they do not establish relationships by stripping off their current positions. They enter into relations within their positions, these positions are shaped in relation to Things. If Things have a social meaning, we think of people's social relations within these positions. That is, he is no longer a subject because he has a relationship within his positions. Their position is their position of existence.

The change of modes of production is not an event that depends on the will of people and will take place through their subject positions. Moreover, even political revolutions cannot read the essential roles of individuals from within the myth of the free autonomous subject. Neither III. Napoleon did make history, nor did Lenin. Revolutions do not happen as a result of the will of individuals. Revolutions take place as a result of class struggle that is not based on individual. In Marx's words, it is the masses who make history, and the masses are not the sum of individuals, but the relational positions of individuals corresponding to their place in the production process, in the property regime.

After such preliminary remarks, we can consider Althusser's polemic with John Lewis.

Undoubtedly, the history of Marxism is a history of polemics and construction within a polemic, starting with the founding Marxists (Marx, Engels). From Marx's polemic with Lasalle, Proudhon, Stirner, Bakunin, to Lenin's polemic with Kautsky, Rosa Luxemburg and Bogdanov, and to the present day... All polemics with and

without answers... From polemics with representatives of non-Marxist movements to internal polemics among Marxists among themselves. Marxism made his boundaries clear in these polemics.

Marx's brief critique of Proudhon in *The 18th Brumaire* is also of fundamental importance for our discussion. As you know, Marx said in *Louis Bonaparte's 18th Brumaire* that man makes history, but he does it not randomly, but by taking into account the conditions he has previously inherited, with the knowledge of those conditions. A number of Marxists cling to the phrase that people make history and fail to think that there is tension in that sentence. If the conditions are so important and dominant, what does it mean for the individual who makes history? If history is a subjective activity, where do the conditions stand? What circumstances tell us? Undoubtedly, this statement is highly eclectic. And a number of Marxists will choose to defend this statement by saying that dialectic is just that. However, in the preface to the same text that he wrote 17 years later, namely in 1869, Marx said . agaisnt Proudhon and Hugo, who showed Napoleon the 3rd as the responsible cause of the coup d'état, "I am showing the opposite of the statement that man makes history." (Marx: 1852)

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1852/18th-brumaire/preface.htm>

Here, Louis Althusser's polemic with John Lewis of the British Communist Party in the 1970s is one of the most important internal polemics within Marxism in recent times. Aside from the question of who is right and who is not, the polemic is equally important in that it shows how two Marxist thinkers interpreted and acquired Marxism in completely different ways.

In fact, it is necessary to look at the fore days of the debates that are in the same context as this polemic, in what conjuncture these debates arose and under the influence of what event. In the Soviet Union, with the 20th Congress of February 1956, it is emphasized that everything done in the name of socialism in the past is a mistake, under the name of the criticism of cult of person, and that Marxism is a human ideology. Marxism, which is described as a scientific and technical progress, will call the myth of man and humanism as a bourgeois ideology to help. To put it

succinctly in Althusser's words: that is, when humanist utterances are circulating, there is always an economism that wins out. It is promised to return to humanism and freedoms instead of the old period, which is accused of not respecting the universal human idea and freedoms. In the same conjuncture, with delays, he would say that after 20 years, the French Communist Party abolished the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and turned its face to democracy, humanitarian ideals and common ideals.

During this interim period, the books and articles of the people who associate Marxism with humanism (John Lewis, Eric Fromm, Adam Schaff, Piamo Pavlovna Gaidenko, Lucien Sève) are published one after the other: *Marxism & Open Mind* (1957), *Marx's Concept of Man* (1961), *Socialism and the Individual* (1961), *Marxism and Existentialism* (1962), *A Philosophy of Man* (1963), *Man in Marxist Theory* (1974). Many texts are circulated and symposiums such as *Socialist Humanism* are organized with the participation of dissident thinkers from different countries. The symposium in New York in 1965, which included names such as Eric Fromm, Adam Schaff, Lucien Goldmann, Raya Dunayevskaya, Karel Kosik, Herbert Marcuse, Mihailo Markovic, Maximilien Rubel, is especially important. Everyone is there, from those who read Marxism within the ideology of the individual, to those who think of Marxism within phenomenology, and to utopian commentators who want to break away from Marx's discussion of productive forces. Marxism, which is thought to have common areas with old humanisms to the extent that it is based on the universal accumulation of humanity and is described as a new humanism with some changes, is 'renewed' by being associated with philosophical anthropology, the idea of utopianism and phenomenology. A mixed idea of renewed socialism emerges. Czech philosopher Ivan Svitak, one of the attendees of this symposium, in his paper entitled "The Sources of Socialist Humanism," feeling shame about the criticism of the lack of humanism directed at Marxists, gives the following exemplary words.

"In the dialogue of ideologies, where reproaches for the absence of humanism are often heard, it is important to remember that Marxism stems

from the same classical sources of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century. An understanding of this common source and link between different humanist ideologies-an understanding of man as the central value of history-has become more important today than the study of the differences among the various types of humanism. Socialist humanism did not develop by the blind mechanism of economic history, but by solving the “eternal” questions of man and his significance in the universe. In spite of the fact that man's development may seem preordained by the solution of the social problems of industrial society, this is in fact an illusion. Reducing the socialist movement and its concept of man to the realization of social reform and revolution means passing over an important dimension of socialism -it's humanistic aim-. The birth of socialist thought was the result of the development of European humanism, a tradition that has its deepest roots in ancient Greece, the Renaissance, and the Enlightenment.” (Fromm: 1965: 17-18)

Again, Eric Fromm states the following in his 1961 text *The Concept of Man*, which preceded the symposium:

“If and when the world returns to the tradition of humanism and overcomes the deterioration of Western culture, both in its Soviet and in its capitalist form, it will see, indeed, that Marx was neither a fanatic nor an opportunist -- that he represented the flowering of Western humanity, that he was a man with an uncompromising sense of truth, penetrating to the very essence of reality, and never taken in by the deceptive surface; that he was of an unquenchable courage and integrity; of a deep concern for man and his future; unselfish, and with little vanity or lust for power; always alive, always stimulating, and bringing to life whatever he touched. He represented the Western tradition in its best features: its faith in reason and in the progress of man.” (Fromm: 1961)
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/fromm/works/1961/man/ch08.htm>

Our main discussion here is not to what extent Russian communists represented, remained faithful to, or revised Marx's thought, subjected it to deviations. Whether the Russian communists defend Marxism despite Marx, or whether they thought the same as Marx, is another matter of debate that needs to be addressed in more detail. Even if we assume for a moment that Eric Fromm is “right” at this point, the characterization of the idea that Marx put forward as human or labor is the highest value is undoubtedly Marx's both in *The German Ideology*, in the criticism of the *Gotha Program* and in a number of late periods. is to overturn the thought expressed in the text. This is also the position of John Lewis, who, in his discussion of theoretical humanism, reiterated his loyalty to Marx. These names tend to obscure fundamental debates such as the relations of production, the social reproduction of material life, by drawing Marx into a discussion of man. Althusser's polemic with John Lewis should also be read from this point. Althusser's intervention is an internal intervention against the theoretical revision, which also has political effects.

John Lewis wrote in the British Communist Party's newspaper *Marxism Today* in 1972, in his own words, to curb Althusser's influence in Britain, but more fundamentally from his reading of Marx, his critiques of theoretical anti-humanism and from young Marx to mature Marx. He wanted to invalidate the idea of rupture. Undoubtedly, he cannot be blamed for this move.

In that case, what we need to do is not to blame John Lewis and similar figures, but to confront Althusser's approach with John Lewis's views and leave the judgment to the reader, and to seek an answer to the question of what kind of Marxism?

John Lewis states in his article entitled “*The Althusser Case*”:

“Nor when we turn back to the Manuscripts do we find “ the high-water mark of Hegelianism”, the “idealism” from which Marx is supposed to free himself, the “total return to Hegel”, which Althusser sees there, in which

“the whole of nature is derived from logical abstraction”. On the contrary, we find the theory of man creating his world himself through his labour, which Marx accepts from Hegel and maintains through all his later work, but treats materialistically as meaning that all history is man’s self-creation.” (Lewis: 1972: 17) In the same article, Lewis said that;

“Althusser’s position is that Marx in 1845 totally abandoned all his early views as Hegelian and idealist, and thereafter they play no part at all in his writings. These Hegelian conceptions include “alienation”, “the negation of the negation” and “supersession” (Aufhebung) Among the idealist notions that he now once and for all abandoned were two others: the Marxist theory of historical development, which Althusser calls “Hegelian-evolutionism”; and Marxist humanism: the concepts of “man” and “humanism”, says Althusser, are terms whereby Marx never again thought reality, after 1845. They must give place to what he calls “Marxist anti-humanism” ” (Lewis: 1972: 17)

In short, John Lewis characterizes Althusser's reading of Marx as a history of negative misunderstandings. As Althusser summarizes in his Answer to John Lewis, he lists the criticisms of Lewis’s own reading in theses and sarcastically states: Let’s see how John Lewis summed up Marx's philosophy in his own mind:

“Thesis no. 1: It is man who makes history.

John Lewis’s argument: no need of argument, since it is obvious, it is quite evident, everyone knows it.

John Lewis’s example: revolution. It is man who makes revolution.

Thesis no. 2. “Man makes history by remaking existing history, by ‘transcending’, through the ‘negation of the negation’, already made history.”

John Lewis’s argument: since it is man who makes history, it follows that in order to make history man must transform the history which he has already made (since it is man who has made history). To transform what one

has already made is to “transcend” it, to negate what exists. And since what exists is the history which man has already made, it is already negated history. To make history is therefore “to negate the negation”, and so on without end.

John Lewis’s example: revolution. To make revolution, man “transcends” (“negates”) existing history, itself the “negation” of the history which preceded it, etc.

Thesis no. 3. “Man only knows what he himself does.”

John Lewis’s argument: no veridiction, argument, probably because of lack of space. So let us work one out for him. He could have taken the case of science and said that the scientist “only knows what he himself does” because he is the one who has to work out his proof, either by experiment or by demonstration (mathematics). John Lewis’s example: no example. So let us provide one.

John Lewis could have taken history as an example: man’s knowledge of history comes from the fact that he is the one who makes it. This is like the Thesis of Giambattista Vico: *verum factum*.

These then are the three Theses which sum up John Lewis’s idea of Marx’s philosophy:

Thesis no. 1: It is man who makes history.

Thesis no. 2: Man makes history by transcending history.

Thesis no. 3: Man only knows what he himself does.” (Althusser: 1976a: 40-41)

Althusser's answer to the first thesis is as follows: It is the masses, not the man, who make history. So what are these masses that “make history”? In a class society: the exploited masses are the exploited social classes, strata and categories gathered around an exploited class capable of uniting and mobilizing themselves against the ruling classes based on state power. (Althusser: 1976a: 46) In other words, the

masses are not the sum of individual individuals. They are not those who make history with the voluntary effort of the knowing subject, but the forces that carry out their struggles in history. Revolutions are not made, revolutions happen, but revolutions do not happen by themselves. It happens as a result of the contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production within the immanent determination of the forces that wage the struggles. The struggles of the masses also sharpen this contradiction.

Althusser's response to the second thesis is as follows: "When Marx says class struggles are the engine of history, it is no longer a question to make history in this proposition." In other words, Althusser says that the question of the subject of history does not have the value of a question. John Lewis says that he takes history as the result of a subject's action (to do) and falls into idealism.

Althusser's objection and response to the third thesis is as follows: According to J. Lewis, "man" knows only "what he does". According to the Materialist Dialectic and the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism, only "existing" is known. This is the fundamental materialist Thesis: "Being comes before thought." This Thesis is also the Thesis of existence, the Thesis of materiality, the Thesis of objectivity. It shows that only "what is" can be known; the principle of all existence is materiality, he says: and all existence is objective, that is, prior to and independent of "subjectivity".

According to Althusser;

"Bourgeois philosophy clung to the notion of legal-ideological subject and derived a philosophy category, its number one category of philosophy, and the subject of knowledge (cogito's ego, Kantian, or Husserlian transcendent subject etc.) etc. He put the problems of the subject and the subject of history. Of course, this imaginary question raises something, but in terms of it's location and form, it means nothing to materialism. Afterwards, he continues: "In advancing the Thesis of a "process without a Subject or Goal(s)", I want simply but clearly to say this. To be dialectical-materialist, Marxist philosophy must break with the idealist category of the "Subject"

as Origin, Essence and Cause, responsible in its internality for all the determinations of the external “Object”, of which it is said to be the internal “Subject”. For Marxist philosophy there can be no Subject as an Absolute Centre, as a Radical Origin, as a Unique Cause. Nor can one, in order to get out of the problem, rely on a category like that of the “ex-Centration of the Essence” (Lucien Sève), since it is an illusory compromise which—using a fraudulently “radical” term, one whose root is perfectly conformist (ex-centration)—safeguards the umbilical cord between Essence and Centre and therefore remains a prisoner of idealist philosophy: since there is no Centre, every ex-centration is superfluous or a sham.” (Althusser: 1976a: 96)

Althusser argues that the ideology of ‘Man’ serves the bourgeoisie - and the so-called “humanist” tradition - in the struggle against feudalism. But he says that we are no longer in that age and, more importantly, that the proletarian class struggle cannot be thought of within a humanism that neutralizes and equalizes the sides of this struggle. Leaving words such as class humanism behind, it leaves us with the following question: How could one carry on the class struggle on the basis of the philosophical thesis: “it is man who makes history”? He seeks the answer to this question himself through monologue and says:

“It might be said that this Thesis is useful in fighting against a certain conception of “History”: history in submission to the decisions of a Deity or to the Ends of Providence. But, speaking seriously, that is no longer the problem! It might be said that this Thesis serves everyone, without distinction, whether he be a capitalist, a petty-bourgeois or a worker, because these are all “men”. But that is not true. It serves those whose interest it is to talk about “man” and not about the masses, about “man” and not about classes and the class struggle. It serves the bourgeoisie, above all; and it also serves the petty-bourgeoisie.” (Althusser: 1976a: 63)

And he extends his discussion by referring to *The Critique of the Gotha Programme*:

“In his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Marx wrote: “The bourgeois have very good grounds for falsely ascribing supernatural creative power to

[human] labour”. Why? Because by making “men” think that “labour is the source of all wealth and all culture”, the bourgeoisie can keep quiet about the power of “nature”, about the decisive importance of the natural, material conditions of human labour. And why does the bourgeoisie want to keep quiet about the natural-material conditions of labour? Because it controls them. The bourgeoisie knows what it is doing.” (Althusser: 1976a: 63)

In the final analysis, Althusser's fight with humanism and his statement that Marxism is theoretical anti-humanism is a search for a ground without a priori, moral and idealist readings on which Marxist political practice can tread.

CONCLUSION

“Marx is the philosopher of eternal new beginnings, leaving behind him many uncompleted drafts and projects. The content of his thought is not separable from his shifts of position. That is why, in studying him, one cannot abstractly reconstruct his system. One has to retrace his development, with its breaks and bifurcations.” (Balibar: 2007: 13)

“There is no such thing as an innocent reading, we must ask what reading we are guilty of.” (Althusser: 1970: 15)

In my thesis, in which I emphasized Althusser’s motivation and discussion conjuncture of Marxism as theoretical anti-humanism initiated by Althusser, I first critically addressed the original/genesis readings of the concept of humanism. Afterwards, I emphasized that there was no consensus either in the dating of this concept or in the discussions under this name.

Although the concept has undertaken various functions in the modernist reading of history, in the struggle of reason with religion/superstition, or the descent of celestial sovereignty to the earth under the name of humans, the essential question is: “What are we to make of the theoretical discussion of anti-humanism today?”

Today theoretical humanism is a concept specific to capitalism, attached to it and working within it. Of course, apart from Althusser and his school, who made this discussion the subject of only a critical reading, who wanted to include this discussion in their discussions by differentiating it, who wanted to establish a link between Marxism and humanism, who sought the humanist roots of Marxism, other school emphasized that Marxism and humanism have common intellectual roots because he described humanism as progress and enlightenment.

The number of Marxist thinkers advocating humanism is just as large. Just like in the discussions about the nature of humanism, there is no consensus among the people who defend Marxism through humanism, but the approaches that we can call socialist humanism, class humanism, and scientific humanism think that Marxism puts the concept of human in the center and draws it into social relations, that is, to its level of discussion.

However, as Althusser emphasizes in his reading of young Marx's works, the issue that cannot be resolved by shifting a concept to another discussion is whether or not we are responsible for which concepts. A structured concept will not work in a new discussion, and it will act as an epistemological obstacle in that discussion. Just as when the concept of religious alienation is brought to the economic level, the concept of alienation cannot rule out discussions such as self and self, which are subject to its own conceptual setup, in the same way that the concept of humanism does not work as a concept describing the relations of production and class struggle when the adjective 'scientific' or 'socialist' is added in front of it.

After raising various objections to this acquisition of the concept of humanism, I emphasized that the use of the concept of alienation used in Marx's early texts in the *1844 Manuscripts* is also composed of the same problems. The Feuerbachian solution of Hegelian alienation, the desire to bring the Feuerbachian concept of religious alienation into a discussion on the economic field (production process), and the fact that expressions such as Hegel, which many names unquestioningly adopted, did not reach a new structure discussion, that these ideologically loaded concepts coming from the philosophy of history are a Marxist structure discussion. I emphasized that it cannot materialize in it. As a matter of fact, Marx's *1844 Manuscripts* showed us that a new structure discussion was not established with the choice of concept. The concepts of alienation, species existence, human self-concept constituted an epistemological obstacle for young Marx to open a new continent and make a scientific and philosophical revolution.

Let me emphasize the importance of Althusser's symptomatic reading here. Althusser did not make a discussion in his mind and try to verify his own

propositions in the text. On the contrary, he caught Marx's epistemological transformations based on the texts he read as a very careful reader. Without this understanding, the anti-humanism debates defended in this thesis cannot be understood.

The discussion I made throughout the thesis is that Althusser meets the epistemological rupture and epistemological obstacle debate that he took from Bachelard in the French Historical Epistemology tradition with the concept of epistemological break in order to show the transformations in Marx's thought. Althusser did not borrow this concept and simply add it incorrectly to Marx's discussions but realized the epistemological transformation that we will trace in Marx's texts as a result of his symptomatic reading of the difference between Marx's early and late texts and described this difference itself as an epistemological break. Essentially, this discussion is a discussion of materialism as considering the formation conditions of a concept and determining the place of a concept in a specific discussion.

Althusser characterized the difference between Marx's early epistemology and his later epistemology as an epistemological break from ideology to science. What is ideological here is not the philosophies of history itself, but the realist attitude of the philosophies of history in what is known as the realism/nominalism debate, which is based on the concept of genus and essence as a universal concept. According to Althusser, it is such an ideological mistake to think of the property regime itself in terms of alienation, as observed in the young Marx.

In Althusser's *Philosophy and the Spontaneous Philosophy of the Scientists*, it is stated that the object of philosophy is not real objects (3rd thesis), that philosophy does not have an object in the sense that it is the object of science (4th thesis), and that philosophical problems do not constitute a scientific problem, and that the most important function of philosophy is related to the ideologicity of ideologies. emphasized that it is to draw a line between the scientificity of sciences (20. thesis).

Althusser's discussion of science, Marx's expression of the scientific revolution; The distinction between science(s) and philosophy(s), science and ideology is very

different from a positivist defense of science and an understanding of scientism. Althusser characterizes a philosophical thesis as appropriate (*justesse*). He explains what the expression appropriate means as follows: “To give a preliminary idea, the qualification “correct” first of all includes a relationship with theory; If “appropriate” means a relationship with practice (So: an appropriate/appropriate decision, an appropriate/proper war, an appropriate/appropriate line)” (Althusser: 1990: 76)

In this sense, what is ideological is not a rationalist tendency, whose place in the pair of right and wrong is determined as negative, but where generalizing concepts (alienation, human essence, need, community) that do not reach Marx's scientific revolution and his concepts (production relations, productive forces, surplus-value) is the cross section are used. Althusser's reading of Marx here can be characterized as acknowledging Marx's nominalism, a nominalist attitude that shows that universals are historically established, and that the universal is abstracted in this way, but Althusser here thinks of Marx beyond a figure who adopts nominalism within a realist and nominalist distinction. As a matter of fact, Balibar, Althusser's comrade and student, expresses this situation in his work on Marx:

“Marx is to reject both attitudes (the so-called realist and nominalist) into which philosophers have traditionally been divided. “The point is to reject both of the positions (the realist and the nominalist) between which philosophers have generally been divided: the one arguing that the genus or essence precedes the existence of individuals; the other that individuals are the primary reality, from which universals are ‘abstracted’.” (Balibar: 2007: 29)

Again, in the thesis, I discussed *The German Ideology*, which is considered as the starting point of the discussion of the epistemological break between Ideology and Science, between Marx's youth and late texts, and Marx and Engels' criticisms of German Philosophy.

The very important point to be emphasized here is that Marx's *The German Ideology* is an attempt to criticize German Philosophy. There is a deep connection

between Marx's characterization of German philosophy as ideology and Althusser's calling philosophies of history, philosophies of consciousness, and philosophical anthropology ideological. In other words, it is Marx himself, not the innocent selected reading of Althusser, that initiates the epistemological break from traditional philosophy(s). And Marx and Engels put this in the word:

“German criticism, even in their latest effort, has not left the field of philosophy [...] It is necessary to ‘leave philosophy aside’ (...) to step out of it at once and engage in the study of reality as an ordinary person. There is also a huge pile of material – unknown to philosophers, of course – that allows this to happen.” (Marx&Engels: 1845)

Here, it is necessary to read Marx's philosophical revolution that came after the scientific revolution (philosophy is the class struggle carried out in the theoretical field) not as the wholesale annihilation of philosophy, but as a break from traditional humanist philosophies based on this human beings.

As this anti-humanist reading underlines, Marx rejected all kinds of economic human ideas. The subject also rejects the economic version of consciousness ideology. In the economic idea of man, man is defined as the subject who is conscious of his needs and the creator of society. Marx rejects not only what explains society in man, the subject of his needs, but also the explanation of man as subject.

Considering from Althusser's point of view, Marx's statement in the *18th Brumaire* that Man makes history, man is subject of history, but does not make it haphazardly, but with the knowledge of the conditions he has previously inherited, is equally eclectic. Because if history arises from the conflict of productive forces and relations of production, what does the subject have to do with it, on the other hand, if it is a subjective activity, what is the importance of emphasizing the conditions. The subject making history will absorb the conditions here, and the conditions will absorb the emphasis of the subject making history. As Althusser emphasizes in his polemic with John Lewis, the agents of social historical practices are necessarily subjects, that they are neither subjects nor subjects of history. Agent-subjects act in

history only within the determination and forms of production and reproduction relations.

Marx rejected not only what explains society in man, the subject of his needs, but also the explanation of man as subject. To explain man as a subject is to think of him as a being identical with himself and with his consciousness. This is nothing but consciousness of itself by itself. However, what is of fundamental importance for materialism is not to evaluate existence in terms of self-consciousness, because all beings are something more than consciousness about themselves. More importantly, the subject category of the philosophy in question is embodied in the moral understanding of the bourgeoisie.

Although an ideological struggle carried out over the philosophical subject category takes revolutionary forms in politics and practice, it cannot escape being philosophically idealistic. In Althusser's words:

“Rejecting the essence of man on a theoretical basis, Marx also rejects this system of organic postulates. The subject excludes philosophical categories such as empiricism, ideal essence, from any field in which they dominate. Not only from political economy (rejection of the myth of homo economicus, that is, of the individual with defined abilities and needs as the subject of classical economics); not only from history (rejection of social atomism and politico-ethical idealism); not only from morality (rejection of the Kantian idea of morality); it also excludes it from philosophy itself: for, according to Althusser, Marx's materialism rejects the empiricism of the subject (and vice versa: the transcendent subject) and the idealism of the concept (and vice versa: the empiricism of the concept). Subject empiricism (or self-empiricism to the idealism of the subject) always answers the idealism of the self.” (Althusser: 1985: 228)

For Althusser, who problematized philosophies of consciousness and all kinds of philosophical anthropology, theoretical-humanism undoubtedly has a long history. Again, as I claimed before, the critique of theoretical humanism can be traced back to Nietzsche, and Marxism will have its share through Heidegger, one of

Nietzsche's critics. The point is not to criticize Marx's texts. The important thing is to proper a discussion to a date.

As a matter of fact, two anti-communist writers, Luc Ferry and Alain Renault, stated in "French Philosophy of the Sixties: An Essay on Antihumanism":

"The Nietzschean-Heideggerian elements of contemporary thought lead humanism back to Descartes rather than ascension. of capitalism. They deliberately incorporate Marxism itself into the metaphysical project of a subject who positions himself as "the master and owner of nature" and proclaims his claim to make himself transparent and at the same time make reality transparent." (Ferry&Renault: 1990:12)

Only by understanding the difference can we acknowledge the importance of Althusser's theoretical anti-humanism debate. For this reason, we have to understand the conjuncture of the period well. While some thinkers say that Marxism is not anti-humanist but another kind of humanism, in order not to be associated with Nietzsche and Heidegger, some thinkers like Foucault criticized Marx's early texts from within Marxism, not to reconstruct Marxist theory. While some thinkers say that Marxism does not care about man in order to attack it, some Marxists stand on the defensive and say that Marxism can truly defend man. Althusser, on the other hand, did not respect any of these double or triple positions and returned the criticism that worked as this mechanism back to its owners.

In a way, Althusser told his theoretical opponents and comrades that he does not consider the term humanism to be a compliment, nor an accusation of anti-humanism. Althusser, neither understands what you are saying from theoretical humanism, nor what you are saying from theoretical anti-humanism. And most importantly, he conducted this discussion as a Marxist in order to pave the way for a new political practice.

So what does the theoretical-anti-humanism debate tell us today? If this debate has been shaped in a conjuncture, a question may arise as to what benefit it would be to bring the same debate to the agenda again today.

My answer is this: when Marxism does not speak with its own concepts and does not draw distinctions, it will become an ordinary 19th century ideology. The importance of Marxism is that it insists on reading developments in its own arguments and at its own level of abstraction. This is what distinguishes it not only from bourgeois ideology, but also from other socialist currents. Marxism as a real movement is not the adaptation of an idea to reality. In his own words, “Communism is for us not a state of affairs which is to be established, an ideal to which reality [will] have to adjust itself. We call communism the real movement which abolishes the present state of things. The conditions of this movement result from the premises now in existence.” (Marx&Engels: 1845)

Why is this discussion current? Let’s leave the final word to Althusser;

“If I used the phrase Marx’s theoretical anti-humanism (as I also propose to speak of the anti-historicism, anti-evolutionism, and anti-structuralism of Marxist theory), it is in reference to the brutal polemical aspect of the break that Marx had to complete in order to conceive and proclaim his invention. is for emphasis. At the same time, it is to indicate that we are not done with this polemic: even today we must continue the same theoretical struggle against the same ideological biases, without any hope that it will end any time soon. Let’s not deceive ourselves, there are more “good days” ahead of theoretical humanism. Like evolutionist, historicist, and structuralist ideologies, its “calculus” will not be seen tomorrow.” (Althusser: 2012: 192-193)

The critique of theoretical anti-humanism did not close with its own critiques, as Althusser emphasized. For theoretical humanism can reintroduce itself in every new discussion. Theoretical-humanism can also reproduce itself under class humanism, with the idea of a species-specific, genus-specific universality, or, as some Marxists do, by saying that the working class has a common interest in production.

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