THE INFLUENCE OF FEUERBACH'S PHILOSOPHY ON MARXIST PHILOSOPHY¹

A INFLUÊNCIA DA FILOSOFIA DE FEUERBACH NA FILOSOFIA MARXISTA

NGUYEN DUY CUONG

Doctor of Philosophy, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Hanoi, Vietnam. duycuong02029191@gmail.com

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Corresponding author: duycuong02029191@gmail.com



Abstract: Marxist philosophical thought was deeply influenced by the philosophical thought of Ludwig Feuerbach, a German classical philosopher who lived at the same time as Marx. This was a period when Europe was undergoing dramatic changes, with the remarkable development of capitalism. This context has pushed the working class into a deadlock and dissatisfaction due to poor working conditions and increasing social inequality. With his theory of labor and religious discord, Feuerbach pointed out that religion is a product of people reflecting their aspirations and pain in the real world. He emphasized that people corrupt themselves through religion, turning human values into supernatural entities, thereby creating an estrangement between people and their true nature. Feuerbach also analyzed labor discord, arguing that the division of labor and exploitation were the sources of social conflict. Marx absorbed and developed Feuerbach's ideas through the materialist dialectical method. He rejected Feuerbach's metaphysical materialism and created dialectical materialism, a theoretical system that views the development of history

and society as the result of class conflicts and struggles. Marx's historical materialism explains that all social forms are built on an economic basis and that the development of productive forces leads to changes in production relations, thereby changing the entire social structure

Keywords: Natureza humana. Feuerbach. Marx. Materialismo Histórico.

Resumo: O pensamento filosófico marxista foi profundamente influenciado pelo pensamento filosófico de Ludwig Feuerbach, um filósofo clássico alemão que viveu na mesma época que Marx. Este foi um período em que a Europa passava por mudanças dramáticas, com o notável desenvolvimento do capitalismo. Este contexto empurrou a classe trabalhadora para um impasse e insatisfação devido às más condições de trabalho e ao aumento da desigualdade social. Com a sua teoria do trabalho e da discórdia religiosa, Feuerbach apontou que a religião é um produto de pessoas que refletem as suas aspirações e dores no mundo real. Ele enfatizou que as pessoas se corrompem através da religião, transformando os valores humanos em entidades sobrenaturais, criando assim um distanciamento entre as pessoas e a sua verdadeira natureza. Feuerbach também analisou a discórdia laboral, argumentando que a divisão do trabalho e a exploração eram as fontes do conflito social. Marx absorveu e desenvolveu as ideias de Feuerbach através do método dialético, um sistema teórico que vê o desenvolvemento da história e da sociedade como resultado de conflitos e lutas de classes. O materialismo histórico de Marx explica que todas as formas sociais

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são construídas numa base económica e que o desenvolvimento das forças produtivas leva a mudanças nas relações de produção, mudando assim toda a estrutura social.

Palavras-chave: Feuerbach. Marx. Materialismo histórico. Essência humana.

1. Introduction

Karl Marx and Ludwig Feuerbach's theoretical frameworks have inheritance and development. Marx's theory is taken from Feuerbach's theoretical foundation of materialism. Feuerbach clarifies his arguments about critical economic, social, and religious structures. These frameworks facilitate the identification and confrontation of modern injustices and alienation. On that basis, Marx developed Feuerbach's theories. Marx clarifies the content about class struggle and religion. At the same time, Marx explained the role and power of the working class in the cause of mastering the revolution. Workers are the only people who can liberate themselves by joining together and uniting against injustice in the era of capitalist production methods. Therefore, Ludwig Feuerbach's significant ideas are the basis for shaping Marx's theoretical propositions. As the culmination of German classical philosophy, Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-1872) was a notable German philosopher who symbolized the end of this philosophical era. This study employs Marx's materialist dialectical method to elucidate its fundamental concepts of Marx. Marx drew from Feuerbach's critiques of religion and emphasis on humanistic principles. However, Marx advanced beyond Feuerbach by developing dialectical materialism and historical materialism, viewing conflicts and class struggles as primary drivers of social and historical evolution. Feuerbach's philosophical reformation began after completing his doctorate in 1829 and teaching logic and metaphysics in Erlangen. Following the death of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel in 1831, Feuerbach published "Contributions to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy" in 1839, repudiating Hegelian idealism in favor of materialism. Feuerbach's theories profoundly shaped Marx's ideology, especially his materialist worldview and criticism of the religion of Marx. Feuerbach posited that human foundations and material needs should be the focus of political and social philosophy, asserting that humans are products of their environment and that sensory interactions with the external world form the basis of perception. Marx agreed that while our conception of the material world is shaped by experience, the actual material world exists independently (Ruben, 1979). He distinguished between appearance and reality, as Hegel and other philosophers did, but he contended that particular historical and social ideologies obscure

the actual conditions of life. Marx asserted that the material world does not conceal the real world but reveals (Ng, 2015).

Research question

- 1. What is the relationship between Marx's and Feuerbach's philosophy?
- 2. What did Marx's philosophy inherit from Feuerbach's philosophy?
- 3. How do philosophy did Marx create and develop Feuerbach's?

2. Literature Review

There has been much discussion regarding the relationship between Feuerbach and Marx. Previous research has emphasized a few of the significant areas where Feuerbach's impact on Marx was particularly evident. Research (Engelman, 2023) contended that Feuerbach's alienation theory significantly influenced Marx's early writings. Similarly, according to (Chrysis, 2022), Feuerbach's humanism gave Marx a framework for criticizing the negative aspects of capitalism. Feuerbach's theory of alienation centers on the notion that religion causes people to become estranged from their actual selves by attributing human characteristics to a god. Although Marx embraced this idea, he expanded it to the economic domain, contending that capitalism drives workers away from their humanity, the outcomes of their labor, and the labor process itself (Chapman, 2023). Marx's critique of capitalism revolved around alienation, as he felt capitalism depleted workers' spiritual and material well-being. Marx was greatly influenced by Feuerbach's understanding of human nature, which he saw as fundamentally social and communal. Feuerbach argues that social and communal interactions rather than solitary individualism are the means of realizing true human nature (Li, 2023). Marx developed this theory further, contending that reducing social relationships to commercial exchanges under capitalism distorts and alienates human nature. According to Marx, alienation has an economic foundation and is a natural social phenomenon(Musto, 2021). According to Marx, We have come from an economic event the alienation of workers and workers' products. We have raised the concept of this reality: labor is corrupted. We have analyzed that concept. That is an analysis of an economic event(Marx, 1902). Moreover, according to Marx, it is impossible to explain and study alienation by using other concepts and self-consciousness or such nonsense. However, it must come from the current mode of production and

communication(Yang, 2021). This mode of production and communication did not depend on pure concepts, nor did the invention of the automatic loom and the use of railways depend on Hegel's philosophy(Stoetzle, 2020).

Marx's theory of alienation is grounded in reality; put another way, the historical materialist definition of alienation has been carefully followed and implemented. Marx's historical materialism was strongly influenced by Feuerbach's materialism, which holds that material circumstances shape human consciousness (Pohlman, 2023). Marx used Feuerbach's criticism of religion as a means of alienation as a model for his ideological critique, which looked at how prevailing ideologies upheld established power hierarchies (Reynolds, 2021). This is mirrored in Marx's summary and justification, which state that alienation from society has occurred in people as individuals for various reasons and under specific circumstances. The transformation of individual relations into its opposite writes Marx- that is, into purely objective relations, the individual's distinction between individuality and contingency, as we have indicated, is a historical process and takes different forms (Cowling, 2024). They are becoming more and more intense and widespread at different stages of development. In the present age, the dominance of objective relations over the individual and the control of randomness over personality has taken on the harshest and most common form, so it has set before the existing individuals an obvious task. That domination has placed before them the following task: to establish the dominance of the individual over randomness and relations as a substitute for the dominance of relations and randomness over the individual (Lockwood, 2022). When criticizing Prudong on this issue, Marx analyzed it more clearly: Prudential has been unable to express his thoughts adequately. Equal possession is a political and economic concept, so it is still a corrupt manifestation of the fact that the object, as the existence of man, as the existence of the object of man, is, at the same time, the existence of man. Others are his human relations with others and his social relations with others (Spanoudis, 2023).

3. Methods

The article uses Marx's materialist dialectical method to clarify that Marx's philosophy inherits many vital elements from Ludwig Feuerbach's thought, especially the materialist perspective and criticism of religion. Feuerbach emphasized that religion is a product of people and reflects their aspirations and pain in the real world. The article uses

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the principle of comprehensiveness to clarify Marx's adoption of Feuerbach's perspective and propose a materialist dialectical method based on analyzing internal contradictions in society and history to understand their development. Them. Marx used specific historical principles by collecting empirical data from economic and social phenomena to explore and clarify class conflicts, exploitation, and injustice in capitalist society. The objective principle of Marx's materialist dialectical method considers social change and development through class conflicts and struggles, considering it the main driving force driving history forward. This shows that, by combining elements from Feuerbach with the materialist dialectical research method, Marx built a solid theoretical system to analyze and solve social problems, laying the foundation for many modern social and political movements. This helps to understand social structures better and provides tools to fight for social justice and progress.

4. Results and Discussion

The impact of Feuerbach on Marx is evident in several important areas of Marxist philosophy: (1) Feuerbach's materialism, which maintained that material conditions determine consciousness, served as the basis for Marx's historical materialism (Marx & Engels, 1984); (2) Feuerbach's emphasis on human nature and alienation is evident in Marx's early works, such as the "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844" (Marx & Engels, 1982), where Marx both accepts and expands on Feuerbach's ideas to critique the alienating effects of capitalism.

Labor Dissonance

Feuerbach's materialist philosophy, which emphasized the importance of material conditions and human relationships in forming society and history, also significantly impacted Marx. Feuerbach's emphasis on the material world and the importance of human activity in social transformation laid the foundation for Marx's materialist conception of history. In his "Economic and Philosophical Manuscript of 1844", Marx used Feuerbach's concept of alienation to analyze the conditions of workers under capitalism. Marx argued that workers are alienated from the products of their labor and the labor process, their human potential, and each other (Marx & Engels, 1982). This comprehensive theory of alienation builds on Feuerbach's insights but applies them to the economic structure of society. As (Chandra, 2024) this extension of alienation to the economic sphere was an

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essential step in the critical development of Marx's capitalism. Marx's early writings also reflected Feuerbach's influence in their humanistic emphasis. Feuerbach argues that humans are essentially social beings whose essence is recognized through their relationships with others (Tunderman, 2023). Marx accepted this view, arguing that the development of human potential is essentially a social process hampered by the alienating conditions of capitalism. The focus on human nature and its realization through social relationships is a central theme in Marx's work, from his early manuscripts to his later works. Feuerbach's criticism of religion gave Marx a model for critiquing his ideology. Feuerbach argues that religion alienates individuals by projecting their qualities onto a divine being, thus separating them from their true essence (Tunderman, 2023). Marx accepted the concept but extended it to the ideological realm, arguing that dominant ideas serve to maintain existing power structures (Marx & Engels, 1982). This ideological critique is central to Marx's analysis of capitalism, as it reveals how the superstructure forms and underpins the economic base.

Feuerbach's materialism, which emphasized the superiority of material conditions in shaping human consciousness, was an essential precursor to Marx's historical materialism. Marx argued that the physical basis of society (the economic structure) fundamentally determines its superstructure (political, legal, and ideological systems) (Marx & Engels, 1998). This materialist approach allowed Marx to critique how ideology served to consolidate and maintain existing power relations. Feuerbach's criticism of religion, which he saw as a projection of human qualities onto a god, provided Marx with a model for critiquing his ideology. Marx extended this critique to the political and economic sphere, arguing that the dominant ideas of any society are those of the ruling class (Marx &; Engels, 1970). This ideological critique is central to Marx's analysis of capitalism, as it reveals how the superstructure forms and underpins the economic base. Feuerbach's emphasis on humanism also influenced Marx's conception of socialism. Feuerbach realizes human nature through community and social relationships, not individualism (Badger, 2023). Marx accepted this idea and argued that socialism would be a society where people could realize their full potential through cooperative labor, not alienation. This vision of socialism contrasts sharply with the alienated conditions of capitalism, where individuals are estranged from their labor, their products, and with each other. Feuerbach's critique of idealism and his materialist approach provided Marx with a powerful tool for analyzing and critiquing the socio-economic conditions of his time. Marx expanded Feuerbach's critique

of religion to include all forms of ideology, arguing that they legitimize and reinforce existing power structures (Marx & Engels, 1975b). This materialist approach allowed Marx to develop a comprehensive critique of capitalism, revealing how economic structures are shaped by social and ideological relations.

Criticism of religion

Marx was influenced by Feuerbach's view that religion was a social institution that reflected and perpetuated human alienation and oppression. Feuerbach is well-known for his criticism of religion, particularly in his work The Nature of Christianity, where he claimed that religious belief is the projection of human ideals and desires onto a divine being. Feuerbach is famous for saying that God is the reflection of man(Marx & Engels, 1975a).

Feuerbach focused on a philosophical approach called "true, radical, and rationalized theology". In his program of philosophical reform, he criticized concepts that distanced philosophy from real human needs. These include pantheism, philosophical thought, "rationalized" theology, and natural theism. The German Idealists, such as Immanuel Kant, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, posited that our understanding of the world is shaped by sensory input and reflection of our thoughts and ideas(Baur & Dahlstrom, 1999). For example, when one sees a beautiful flower, the eyes recognize its beauty and the mind appreciates it. Hegel's philosophy is the concept of the "Absolute," an ultimate reality that encompasses all existence, including thought and perception, suggesting the interconnectedness of all things(Hegel, 1896). Besides, Immanuel Kant published his influential work, "Critique of Pure Reason," in 1781 and emphasized that our understanding of reality is shaped by consciousness, and Our thoughts, not just our sensory experiences, emphasize the importance of consciousness in explaining the world (Kant, 1953). Feuerbach criticized Hegel's idealism, arguing that truth does not lie in abstract thinking and knowledge but must be constantly renewed and adjusted to the material conditions of life(Deranty, 2014). Feuerbach viewed reality through the lens of human needs, asserting that philosophy must serve humanity, harmonizing human existence with nature(Carrillo, 2008). Feuerbach emphasized that philosophy must be the comprehensive science of practice, in which every practice is understood in its most universal sense(Deranty, 2014). Therefore, he identified the task of philosophy as

understanding the nature of things as they are and contemplating what they will become. He asserts that natural freedom opposes paranoia but not rational freedom.

Should philosophy remain confined within "school philosophy," specifically Hegelian-style neo-scholasticism, its proposed reforms would amount to mere intellectual fabrications(O'Regan, 2018). Feuerbach concurred with Kant regarding cognition's complexity and "paradox" but criticized Kant's theory of the impossibility of perceiving "the thing itself." Each era can only address tasks that align with its current capabilities, but this does not create an insurmountable gap between practical abilities and human aspirations. Feuerbach asserted that what remains unknown to us will be realized by future generations. His epistemological reasoning was influenced by seventeenth- and eighteenthcentury materialist sentimentalism, emphasizing that cognition begins with simple, direct sensations(Wartofsky, 1982). Sensation, though subjective, is grounded in objective reality, serving as the starting point of awareness and connecting individuals to the world. While Kant explored the unity of emotional perception and rational thinking, Feuerbach rejected the absolutization of cognitive fallacies and innate abilities. Feuerbach also critiqued Philip's subjective idealism for its emphasis on the Self, even in its nationalistic form, arguing that true humanism, or anthropology, acknowledges humans as beings of flesh and blood rather than mere machines or rational entities. This misinterpretation of philosophical reform can be traced back to the intellectual developments in France and Germany during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and the shortcomings of mechanical materialism and metaphysics(Coşkun, 2023).

Marx found a foundation for his ideological criticism in Feuerbach's criticism of religion as a means of alienation. Feuerbach contends that religion causes people to become estranged from their selves because it causes them to transfer their characteristics onto a divine person (Wartofsky, 1977). While acknowledging the premise, Marx expanded its application to the field of ideology, contending that prevailing viewpoints uphold the status quo of power relations (Marx & Engels, 1975b). Marx's explanation of capitalism revolves around this ideological critique, highlighting how the superstructure shapes and supports the economic foundation. Marx's understanding of socialism was also impacted by Feuerbach's emphasis on humanism. Feuerbach believed that social interactions and community, not individuality, are how human nature is realized (Li, 2023). Marx acknowledged this viewpoint and contended that, under socialism, individuals can reach their full potential via cooperative work rather than estrangement. The detached conditions

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of capitalism, where people are cut off from their labor, their products, and one other, stand in stark contrast to this image of socialism. Feuerbach's materialist methodology and critique of idealism gave Marx a valuable instrument for examining and evaluating the socioeconomic circumstances of his era. Marx extended Feuerbach's criticism of religion to encompass all ideologies, contending that they uphold and justify the current power systems (Marx & Engels, 1975b). Marx's development of a thorough critique of capitalism was made possible by his materialist method, revealing how social and ideological interactions impact economic institutions. Feuerbach significantly influenced Marx's understanding of religion, which viewed religious belief as delusional awareness. Marx claimed that religion functioned as the opium of the masses, offering a false sense of security and hiding the harsh reality of oppression and exploitation. Thanks to this insight, Marx could define alienation inside the framework of capitalist society and critique it outside the boundaries of religion (Li, 2023).

Humanism

Marx was influenced by Feuerbach's notion of the "nature of the species" of the human race, which he felt had been perverted and alienated in philosophical and religious systems about human nature and the possibility of human liberation. Marx developed his thesis on alienated work in capitalist civilizations based on Feuerbach's concept of alienation. Feuerbach's humanism lacks a clear plan for social transformation, even though it offers a valuable foundation. Marx, however, aimed to convert philosophical critique into revolutionary action. He contends that only comprehending the material causes of alienation is insufficient and that revolutionary action is required to change these causes actively (Marx & Engels, 1975b). Marx's reading of historical materialism strongly emphasizes how the class struggle propels historical development. He maintained that a communist society would eventually emerge, and the capitalist modes of production would eventually collapse due to their inherent contradictions. Marx's ideas were dynamic and revolutionary, which set them apart from Feuerbach's more static humanism. Marx's conception of practice, the unification of theory and practice, directly reacted to what he perceived as Feuerbach's philosophical shortcomings. Feuerbach provided an insightful analysis of human nature and a forceful critique of religion. However, he did not wholly appreciate the necessity of revolutionary action to alter the material conditions of society.



In order to close this gap, Marx strongly emphasized practice, emphasizing the necessity of revolutionary and hands-on efforts to change society (Nineham, 2023).

According to Feuerbach, man is the culmination of all human ideals, expressed in the ideas of great logical individuals (philosophers) and amassed during the pursuit of freedom. To ascertain man's presence in all of his deterministic characteristics, these species-specific properties of the bowman must be united. The new philosophy is harmful and unified; it rejects the one-sidedness of each doctrine and unites the truths; although they are opposite, they play a positive role both in the past and present. Feuerbach wrote: Man is the existence of freedom, the existence of personality, the existence of the rule of law. Only in man exists the Self of Philip, the singular of Lenin, the absolute(Li, 2023). The philosophy of the future is the theory of humanism (anthropology) with a practical orientation, supporting the highest authentic relationship and overcoming the duality of human nature rather than the addition or eclecticism of yesterday's thoughts. Feuerbach view love as a genuine relationship, attributing jealousy and animosity to an untrue and estranged relationship, and view love as the outcome and expression of marriage and family bonds and human love (universal love)(Marx & Engels, 1992).

Feuerbach attacked the idea of man in the philosophical writings of Hegel and the materialists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The issue is that, despite being the greatest thinkers of their day, philosophers upheld human thought, creativity, and the desire for freedom. However, because of the influence of mechanical principles and the tendency to mathematize thought, these great thinkers occasionally used phrases like "man-machine" or "society-machine combination" to describe the human body(Marx & Engels, 1975b). Not only did Feuerbach hold this opinion, but theologians and idealists also strongly disagreed with it earlier. According to Feuerbach, the materialists of the previous century failed to emphasize the striking picture of a human being, one with flesh and bones.

Marx was greatly influenced by Feuerbach, and this effect may still be seen in modern Marxist theory. Feuerbach established the humanistic and materialist groundwork for contemporary conceptions of Marxism. Humanistic scholars like Herbert Marcuse and Erich Fromm have drawn attention to the humanistic aspects of Marx's ideas, emphasizing how his conception of socialism resulted from realizing human potential and overcoming alienation. Furthermore, the Feuerbachia components of Marx's writings are frequently cited as the philosophical forebears of modern critiques of capitalism, particularly those

that center on questions of exploitation and alienation. The criticisms' lasting significance in examining contemporary capitalist societies highlights Feuerbach's enduring effect on Marx(Marx & Engels, 1992).

5. Conclusion

Despite initially being impacted by Feuerbach's philosophical concepts, Marx created his distinct theory of historical materialism and class conflict. Marx chastised Feuerbach for his excessive concentration on contemplative philosophy at the expense of practical revolutionary activity. Nonetheless, Marx's early writings, like the "Economic and Philosophical Manuscript of 1844," clearly show Feuerbach's impact on his early ideas.

Karl Marx was greatly influenced by Ludwig Feuerbach in many different ways. Marx expanded and adapted key ideas from Feuerbach's humanistic and materialist approach into his theory. Marx created a potent critique of capitalism and ideology by applying Feuerbach's theories about human nature and alienation to the economic domain and using a materialist framework to analyze history and society. The present paper has elucidated important domains of Feuerbach's impact on Marx, underscoring the enduring significance of Feuerbach's ideas in the evolution of Marxist theory. Marx derived a basis for his criticism of capitalism and ideology from Feuerbach's emphasis on humanism and his rejection of religion. Marx expanded his conception of a society based on cooperative, nonalienated labor, where individuals may reach their maximum potential. This is one of the critical tenets of Marx's theory, which illustrates how Feuerbach's concepts were adopted and developed.

Feuerbach's understanding of human nature and the essence of alienation greatly influenced Marx's early writings and his subsequent revolutionary theory. Philosophical thought underwent a significant shift from Feuerbach's humanism to Marx's historical materialism, highlighting the role of the material condition in forming social relations and human awareness. Marx utilized Feuerbach's criticism of religion, which was mainly concerned with the corrupting powers of religion, as a model for his more general criticism of ideologies. Marx extended this criticism to encompass all prevailing ideologies, exposing their role in upholding established power hierarchies. Marxist theory and its examination of capitalist society are still based on this thorough critique. In conclusion, the evolution of historical materialism, theological criticism, and the concept of socialism are clear examples of Ludwig Feuerbach's wide-ranging and significant influence on Karl Marx. Feuerbach's focus on the material world and human nature gave Marx the basic ideas he needed to develop and turn Feuerbach's ideas into a revolutionary critique of capitalism and ideology. The long-lasting influence of Feuerbach's ideas on the evolution of Marxist theory highlights how crucial it is to comprehend Marx's philosophy to comprehend this intellectual link fully.

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