THE MAKING AND RE-MAKING OF THE IDEA: THE SEARCH FOR POLITICS IN HEGEL, MARX, AND BADIOU

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ABSTRACT

THE MAKING AND RE-MAKING OF THE IDEA: THE SEARCH FOR POLITICS IN HEGEL, MARX, AND BADIOU

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The main aim of this thesis is to try to look at the crisis and debate of radical politics after the collapse of the Soviet Union from a different perspective. This study is guided by the idea that the cause of the crisis of radical emancipatory politics is neither the changing conditions of capitalism, increasing authoritarianism, or the vanishing subject, but rather the lack of an idea to bind radical politics. Therefore, this thesis is an attempt to discuss how Hegel, Marx, and Badiou construct the relationship between ideas and politics. In discussing the relationship between ideas and radical politics, the thesis focuses on how the two are intertwined, conceptualized, and, ultimately, manifested. To do so, three key concepts, dialectic, history, and finally, the concept of the subject, are examined in detail to demonstrate how and why these three strands play a critical role in constructing ideas and politics. For this reason, this study aims to rethink this crisis of politics and the concept of idea and while trying to underline the necessity for repairing the broken link between politics and the idea.

Keywords: Idea, Politics, Dialectic, History, Subject

ÖZ

İDEANIN KURULMASI VE YENİDEN KURULMASI: HEGEL, MARX VE BADIOU'DA SİYASET ARAYIŞI

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Bu tezin temel amacı, Sovyetler Birliği'nin çöküşünden sonra radikal siyasetin krizine ve tartışmalarına farklı bir perspektiften bakmaya çalışmaktır. Bu çalışma, radikal özgürleştirici siyasetin krizinin nedeninin ne kapitalizmin değişen koşulları ne artan otoriterleşme ne de kayıp özne olmadığını iddia ederken bağlanacak bir ideanın yokluğunda radikal siyasetin krizde olduğu fikrinden hareket etmektedir. Dolayısıyla bu tez, Hegel, Marx ve Badiou'nun idea ve siyaset arasındaki ilişkiyi nasıl kurduklarını tartışmaya yönelik bir girişimdir. İdea ve radikal siyaset arasındaki ilişkiyi tartışırken, bu ikisinin nasıl iç içe geçtiğine, kavramsallaştırıldığına ve nihayetinde nasıl tezahür ettiğine odaklanmaktadır. Bunu yapmak için, üç anahtar kavram, diyalektik, tarih ve son olarak özne kavramlarının idea ve siyasetin inşasında nasıl ve neden kritik bir rol oynadığı ayrıntılı olarak tartışılmaktadır. Bu nedenle bu çalışma, siyaset ve idea kavramının krizini yeniden düşünmeyi amaçlarken, siyaset ve idea arasındaki kopuk bağın onarılması gerekliliğinin altını çizmeye çalışmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İdea, Siyaset, Diyalektik, Tarih, Özne

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CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

"The crisis through which we are living forces us to
change something in our relation to Marxism, and
in consequence, to change something in Marxism itself" (Althusser 1978, p. 218).

1.1. Context

The concept of crisis is etymologically derived from the Ancient Greek word "krisis." The verb form of "krisis" is "krinō", which means to decide or to distinguish. This indicates that situations have reached a turning point, necessitating action. The term "krisis" in Ancient Greek can be viewed as a call to action. It signified that something needed to be done urgently and required a decision. It can be argued that the concept of crisis has a connection, albeit indirect, with the concept of idea. If we think of the concept of the idea as a guideline for how we act and how we decide, the crisis of the concept of the idea, that is, the crisis of the decision itself, will lead us to a relative and formal equality between all decisions. This is one side of the problem of nihilism that we face in contemporary capitalism (Critchley, 2013). This thesis therefore, focuses on the crisis of the concept of the idea and argues that we can make it part of politics again.

Today, we use the concept of crisis to address that things, objects, and people are no longer governable. It can be said that the period we are living in is an age of crises. The crisis of capitalism, the climate crisis, the refugee crisis, the crisis of politics, and so on. We are surrounded by crises, which are becoming a part of everyday life. While the definitions of crisis here always refer to the ungovernable state of things and human relations in our world, we can say that there is a to-do list to get out of this situation. However, as these receipts become unfeasible in the current network of power and social relations, the political oppositions shift from macro solutions - such as ending

capitalism - to micro solutions - such as emphasizing recycling or reducing the use of plastic. Instead of the existence of a collective subject of politics, the individual is now called the subject of politics, and here, the forms of participation in politics are reduced to forms of consumption and individual behavior. If politics is the collective organization of a conflict, then there is neither conflict nor collective organization in the name of politics. Although the crisis has been seen throughout modernity as a moment of political possibility from which the 'new' can emerge, today, crisis and crisis intervention are part of depoliticization.

Thus, it is possible to talk about the existence of a larger crisis that determines the action and intellectual field of politics. And this is the crisis of the idea. What I mean by the concept of idea is the existence of a political ideal that gives direction and purpose to politics. The crisis of the idea should be understood as the fact that these aims and goals are no longer seen as goals but lose their power as determining political relations and thought. Therefore, by political idea here I mean the intellectual and practical accumulation of Marxism because it can be said that Marxism is the dominant political doctrine in modernity that can develop an alternative to the crises of capitalism.

Marxism was the theoretical reference point, the unifying element of a radical emancipatory political practice throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. From the anti-colonial liberation movements of the Third World countries to the Chinese Communist Party and the establishment of the Soviet Revolution, the reference point was the unity of theory and practice symbolized by Marxism. One expected outcome of any crisis is a disruption of the reproduction of an idea and, along with it, the reference points that brought it into being. In the case of Marxism, those reference points, the party, the socialist state, and the revolution, forming the basis of its egalitarian emancipatory politics no longer promised salvation. Moreover, this also meant that any crisis of practice should refer to a crisis of theory, and vice versa.

Althusser (1978) said that the crisis of Marxism is specific to the period we are in and that Marxism itself enters and adapts to these crises under changing world and

historical conditions. The concept of crisis here means neither collapse nor death in the sense of the end of theory. The collapse of the Second International and the class solidarity it produced was one of the crisis moments that forced Marxism to rethink its theory and practice. However, the impact of Marxism was not comparable in scale with the case of Second International. It was no longer the struggle of the underground Marxist organizations fighting for revolution with working-class trade unions. Instead, by the end of the twentieth century, the Marxist movement was in power in many countries, and Marxism had a broad mass base. In other words, as opposed to a crisis within Marxism, the crisis of the late 1980s had a historical impact on a world scale. Althusser (1978, p. 215) argues that this crisis of Marxism is

> A phenomenon which must be grasped at the historical and world level, and which concerns the difficulties, contradictions and dilemmas in which the revolutionary organisations of struggle based on the Marxist tradition are now involved. Not only is the unity of the International Communist Movement affected, and its old forms of organisation destroyed, but its own history is put in question, together with its traditional strategies and practices.

The impact of this crisis on Marxist movements has led to a failure to connect the past with the future and the present moment under the name of emancipation with the reference to Marxism. Again Althusser (1978, p. 215) says, “these same comrades said that if it is no longer possible, as it used to be, to hold the past and present together, it is because there no longer exists in the minds of the masses any ‘achieved ideal’, any really living reference for socialism”. The crisis that Althusser pointed out cannot be solved by revising the party or changing the leader. The interesting thing is that Althusser referred to the crisis of Marxism, which found its roots in the 1930s before the collapse of the USSR. For him, what we encounter again today are the reflections of a long-term crisis that began in the 1930s and brought back to the agenda the question of the concepts of theory and praxis, party, state, and revolution suppressed by Stalin. However, the collapse of the USSR, as unexpected as it was, shocked Marxists around the world. It was not only the collapse of a state but also the end of the embodiment of an idea. In other words, it was the end of “dreaming of another world” (Buck-Morss, 2000).

Wendy Brown (1999) and Enzo Traverso (2017) argue the prevailing attitude in Marxist theory and practice after the collapse of the USSR expressed itself as melancholia. The concept of melancholia is an interesting choice to describe the crisis of Marxism. In his article *Mourning and Melancholia,* Freud (1957) tries to clarify the psychoanalytic distinction between the two forms. Freud first says that the subject loses an object of desire in both cases. However, in the case of mourning, while the subject experiences the loss of this object of desire, over time, another loved one replaces this object of desire. On the other hand, in the case of melancholia, though the subject is not conscious of what was lost, she experiences it without being able to replace the lost object of desire with another one due to the lack of a counterpart at the level of consciousness. The use of melancholy to define Marxism and political practice, in particular, makes the situation interesting because mourning has a significant function for the concept of political practice after the collapse of the USSR at the level of consciousness. However, the idea of melancholia implies that there is more to the situation. If melancholia, unlike mourning, is the uncertainty of the object of loss, it can be said that what Marxism does not acknowledge as lost is the concept of idea that gives it the power to determine and hope for the future.

Thatcher's[1] famous dictum "there is no alternative" meant more than the impossibility of pursuing a form of politics other than the New Right in the UK. It also suggested that there was no alternative to capitalism and that hoping or expecting anything else was futile. David Graeber (2014, p. 43) argues that despair is not a natural state for human beings; it has to be produced. To put it bluntly, hopelessness implies the absence of a political idea to fight for. It would not be wrong to say that since Marx, emancipatory political movements have had an idea for which they have been striving.

[1] Balibar (2017b) states about the relationship between neoliberalism and the idea of revolution: "neo-liberalism clearly lives on a permanent paradox, of which it is able to make use, but which also contains certain basic political and social risks: while promoting a discourse that hammers the formula "There is No Alternative", it is articulated with a capitalist practice that operates a "permanent revolution" (for the third time we encounter this oxymoronic syntagm) of existing social relations, and particularly the institutional forms of social conflict, which open for the alternative possibilities of regulation or destabilization of capitalism. As my master Althusser could have said, "a counter-revolution is also, still, a revolution" – a revolution from above". The oxymoronic character of neoliberalism points to the fact that the social and political risk it creates while destroying the institutions and structures that brought it into existence to the point that nothing is left behind actually creates a potential for emancipatory political movements".

Badiou (2010a, pp. 235–236) argues that “for about two centuries (from Babeufs' community of equals' to the 1980s), the word 'communism' was the most important name of an Idea located in the field of emancipatory, or revolutionary, politics”. Therefore, in a way to iterate its cruciality, he (2010a, p. 258) suspects that “lacking the Idea, the popular masses's confusion is inescapable”. The crisis of Marxism, both practical and theoretical, has brought with it the collapse of the idea of communism with which it was identified. Even though emancipatory political movements have continued to struggle in the absence of this idea, it is difficult to talk about the existence of a lasting political success or an idea.

No matter how abstract and inaccessible ideas are, they are a means of thinking about material life. Therefore, beyond the abstractness, they are also a means of determining ethics and politics (Yücefer, 2023, p. 33). The idea's existence is the basis for thinking about the social and the distinction between what is and what could be. For this reason, the idea provides the political and ethical means to get from the given to the possible. Therefore, without the idea of what is right or wrong or what is good or evil, we lack the tools to define these concepts. At a higher level of abstraction, the concept of idea itself can be seen as a means of politically thinking social order in a way that encompasses the good and the true. There is, therefore, a connection between the concept of idea and politics. If politics is the idea of establishing a change and order beyond the relationship of things and realizing it in an egalitarian and just way, the theoretical and practical construction of politics depends on the idea.

This brings us to the focus and research question of this thesis. How can an idea continue to exist if its historical and theoretical foundations have disappeared? This thesis will try to answer this question through the historical and theoretical foundations that constitute an idea and give it life. Therefore, we can say that the concept of the idea needs to be constructed, projected upon history, and owned by an agent to realize in this world. These points, respectively, are the construction, projection, and realization of the concept of idea. In this trilogy, which gives meaning to the concept of the idea, I will discuss the concept of dialectic for construction, the concept of history for projection, and the concept of the subject for the problem of realization. I

argue that the saturation of the idea of communism today is due to the saturation of the pillars of thought that brought it into being. I will examine three critical philosophers of modern philosophy: Hegel, Marx, and Badiou.

This study is a methodological intervention. Although it focuses on the concept of the idea, specifically the concept of the communist idea, it does not aim to examine these two concepts directly. Instead, it focuses on how the concept of idea can be thought of, its historical and theoretical foundations, and how these foundations function in determining politics. For this reason, it aims to show that the attachment of the concept of idea to politics differs depending on the methodology. It aims to explain that the thinking of the concept of idea depends on theoretical and sociological change.

1.2. Putting the Idea

As a method, philosophy's problematization of politics is based on separating the world we live from the designed world, the design established as an idea. The question of what is right or just is considered regarding the ideal. At least we know that Plato's *Republic* is based on this method and influenced the history of philosophy that followed. “From the beginning then, philosophy explores the conceptual spaces beyond the positivity of the given world and attempts to make sense of the relation between the ideal of the revolutionary vision and the essentially lifeless reality of the polis” (Nicolacopoulos & Vassilacopoulos, 2006, p. 212). Since Plato, the concept of the idea is that which is not embodied in reality, non-materialized, and therefore non-sensible and non-intelligible. In Plato, it represents the perfect form of things, while the ideal life is considered true and just.

Following Plato, the concept of idea appears in Hegel with a different conceptualization in a different context (absolute idea). At the same time, Badiou's return to Plato refers to the concept of idea again, yet with a different content. Between these two, we can say that Marx does not explicitly apply the concept of idea but that Marx's political conceptualization produces the communist idea. Here, the difference in theorizing the concept of idea by these three philosophers is shaped within the

framework of the political and economic events of the era in which they all lived. In this sense, Hegel witnessed the French Revolution of 1789, while Marx lived through the revolts 1848. Although Badiou saw the uprising of '68 or the Cultural Revolution, these events did not bring about a lasting transformation, nor did they prevent the rightward drift of the Chinese Revolution and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Thus, while for Hegel, the French Revolution meant, among other things, excesses; for Marx, the uprisings of 1848 meant the birth of a new social order. On the other hand, Badiou developed his thoughts under the influence of defeat. In this sense, for Hegel, political and philosophical fiction aims to present the idea of an organic society that can prevent excesses. For Marx, it becomes a question of rebellion in this new social order and how to reach another social order. Badiou seeks to resurrect the idea after the defeat and to realize that politics has lost its meaning and direction without the idea.

It would not be wrong to say that Hegel rose on the accumulation of Enlightenment philosophy and the problems it posed in the history of philosophy. It can be said that he constructed his philosophy with the criticism of the Enlightenment's approach to metaphysics and that he attributed meaning to the concept of the idea within this framework. As Kreines (2017, p. 314) states,

> The project concluding at the end of the Logic will neither be a version of Spinoza's rationalism, nor of Kant's positive project in the Transcendental Analytic. It is more distinctively Hegel's own: it is to use the supposedly negative or destructive considerations of Kant's Dialectic critique of metaphysics for the purposes of reconstruction— to rebuild metaphysics on the grounds of the strongest criticism of it.

Hegel thinks that Kantian philosophy is dogmatic because his predecessor does not confront the "metaphysics of reason of the world". For this reason, his construction of metaphysics is based on associating everything with the "reason of the world," the concept of the idea. According to Hegel, the concept of the idea is what is unconditioned. In other words, the nature or knowledge of the idea cannot be understood through its relation to something else. Kreines (2017, p. 325) defines the concept of idea based on Hegel's *Science of Logic* as follows: "The idea = a reciprocal process of concept and individual instances sufficient to establish the concept as the

substance of an individual, and thereby some inner purpose". We can say that the concept of teleology in Hegel points to the concept of inner purposiveness. In this sense, it is possible to speak of a conceptual topology that connects the conceptualization of idea (reason of the World), teleology, and life. When Hegel says in *Science of Logic* that "the idea is, first of all, life", he points out that life cannot be devoid of a purpose. This does not mean that life is dependent on the idea or that life itself is a reflection of the idea. On the contrary, for Hegel, life is the non-idea, and he tries to lament it. As Kreines argues (2017, pp. 326–327) "we find the idea where we have an inner purpose, and so a normative standard, set by a concept so intimately related to particular individuals that it gives them their substance; 'truth' is agreement of an object with its own immanent standard". So, in short, the concept of the idea is indispensable for Hegel to make sense of both metaphysics and life. For this reason, Hegel looks for reason in the history of the world and sets the realization of this reason as the goal of politics. He turns to the concept of dialectic to think about the conceptual triadic topology mentioned above, to the concept of history to trace the reason of the word (or idea), and to the concept of the subject as its agent.

On the other hand, Marx found much to fascinate and criticize in this Hegelian scheme. As he noted in the preface to *Capital*, while Hegel was treated as a "dead dog," he did not hesitate to use Hegelian dialectic and logic. On the other hand, it is also possible to find him sharply criticizing Hegel in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* or *On the Jewish Question*. Instead of thinking of Marx in terms of a distinction between young and mature Marx, as Althusser does, I believe that there is a relationship of continuity in Marx's intellectual adventure. I argue in this study that Marx remained within the intellectual topology that Hegel determined within modern philosophy and carried that topology to another plane.

Marx's relation to the concept of idea is more about how it is used or how it determines reality than the concept itself. As we said above, while Hegelian metaphysics relies on the concept of the idea, it separates the given material world and the concept of the idea as two separate planes. Idea, as the unconditioned, has the power to determine reality. For Marx, on the other hand, the relation between the idea and reality can only

be derived from the material rather than from an idea that determines reality. However, the concept of the idea and reason of the world, both referring to the same thing in Hegel, will be differentiated in Marx. Thus, while the reason of the world will define the inner purpose of political struggles, the idea will be the telos to be achieved at the end of these political struggles. In other words, while the reason for the world is the class struggle, the endpoint of the current political struggles to be achieved is the idea of communism. However, it should be noted that for Marx, the idea of communism is different from the Platonic idea; it is not external to reality but internal to it, and it emerges within the struggle of the proletariat. To clarify, as in Hegel, there is neither an unconditioned idea nor the power to determine reality. However, while the idea of communism is intrinsic to reality since it is derived from material relations, it is extrinsic to it because it is a goal to be achieved, that is, an end to be reached that is not here and now. It is in this relationality that the idea of communism is constructed. In other words, if politics was subordinated to philosophy from Plato to Hegel, then with Marx, philosophy would be subordinated to politics. Marx conceptualizes the idea concerning dialectic as a method of construction, history as a plane of projection, and the subject as an agent to realize it.

In short, Marx establishes an active relationship between political struggles and the idea. The two are now connected. As a result, the power of the idea has become measurable, and the knowledge of the idea has become attainable. This both strengthens the idea and makes it vulnerable. The relationship between the Idea and reality puts the former in a position that draws strength from the latter. In other words, to the extent that political struggles and history flow in a direction that strengthens the Idea, it remains a strong center of political orientation. However, when political struggles and historical conjecture flow in a direction that undermines the Idea instead of strengthening it, we are faced with its crisis. The Idea loses its capacity to speak about the historical flow. What we referred to above as the crisis of Marxism was, in a way, the crisis of the relationship between Idea and politics.

While Marx challenges Hegel in the political scene. Badiou returns to the philosophical scene. One could liken his relationship with the concept of the idea to

his views on Marx. Although Badiou thinks that Marx was intellectually right and admits that he is in line with the same political ideas, he does not attach the idea to material relations. And yet, Badiou affirms that only the communist idea is valid for politics. Badiou, first of all, detaches the Idea from the material reality and historical connection that makes it vulnerable, which is also the starting point of the criticisms of idealism directed at Badiou.[2] For example, Badiou (2010b, p. 241) writes,

> The long-term effects of the Hegelian origins of Marxism are evident in this short-circuiting. For Hegel in fact, the historical exposure of politics was not an imaginary subjectivation, it was the real as such. This was because the crucial axiom of the dialectic as he conceived of it was: 'The True is the process of its own becoming' or - what amounts to the same - 'Time is the being-there of the concept'. As a result, in line with the Hegelian philosophical heritage, we are justified in thinking that, under the name of 'communism', the historical inscription of revolutionary political sequences or of the disparate fragments of collective emancipation reveals their truth: to move forward according to the meaning of History.

For Badiou, if we are to talk about an idea, we need to abandon the triadic schema I mentioned above because the communist Idea has been a constant part of egalitarian libertarian movements since Ancient Greece from Spartacus to Cultural Revolution. For Badiou, in this sense, the idea of communism is not a state form to be reached but a mediation between truth and the subject. The idea does not have the power to determine reality and vice versa, neither in the Hegelian sense nor as conceptualized by Marx. The concept of idea means that there are political truths and that political action is to take the side of what is just against what is wrong, reminiscent of Plato's idea of right living. Truth, therefore, means “the collective presentation of humanity as such (the communal of communism)” (Badiou, 2012, p. 87). This conceptualization of the idea also differentiates Badiou from Hegel and Marx regarding what to do against the state, which is an essential political problem. While Hegel needs the state for the idea to concretize itself, in Marx, the existence of the idea is the seizure of power and the state; in Badiou, the idea remains outside of power and the state. While the emergence of the idea has social and historical grounds, it needs a subjective

[2] Negri (2010) criticizes Badiou for relying on the idea of cutting ties with history and social relations in terms of thinking about politics.

intervention. This is precisely to prevent the transition from the crisis of the state to the crisis of the idea that leads to the crisis of Marxism.

Here, Badiou goes beyond the tripartite schema established by Hegel. For Badiou, there is neither dialectic of negation as the operative of the idea, the idea of a history in which the communist Idea projects itself, nor the idea of a fixed subject. Instead, dialectic appears as subtraction, history as a modality of politics concerning truth, and the subject as a militant of truth. Badiou (2010b, p. 235) formally defines the concept of Idea: "… an Idea is the subjectivation of an interplay between the singularity of a truth procedure and a representation of History". In other words, the operation of the idea of communism requires one political, one historical and one subjective element. This triad neither empowers the Idea itself nor seeks to realize it.

With the concept of Idea, Badiou aims to give a political answer to the question of how to live the right life. If political truth is a collective element, this truth calls into question the social order itself. The idea is the mediator that enables the subject to choose between right and wrong, to decide between what is just and what is not. Without it, there is no chance of living a just life.

Marx and Hegel have been widely discussed in the history of philosophy, both individually and in terms of their relationship. To what extent Marx was influenced by Hegel or to what extent he differed from him has always been and is still debated. Although Badiou's relationship with these two philosophers is also debated, the common point in discussing Hegel, Marx, and Badiou together is the relationship that all three thinkers establish their works around the concept of idea. For Hegel, it is unity; for Marx, it is a goal to be reached; for Badiou, it is a mediator for doing the right and just thing as a means of subjectivation. For these philosophers, it can be said that without the idea, it is difficult to say that politics has any meaning. And it would not be wrong to say that this is the problem facing today's politics. For this reason, a political movement or political uprising without an idea cannot achieve a founding elaboration. This thesis, therefore, tries to show why the concept of the idea is essential for politics again today, to show that there is only one idea to which radical politics

can attach itself. It aims to contribute to rethinking the idea of communism after the crisis of Marxism.

1.3. Methodology

This study methodologically focuses on the history of the political as told through ideas (Rosanvallon, 2001). For this reason, while focusing on the thinking of a concept within modernity, it aims to reveal the political rationalities of these philosophers and tries to show how this is reflected in political history. This study is faithful to Koselleck's (2012) idea that concepts have a certain relative autonomy and that they emerge within a certain social context. In this sense, this study is guided by the fact that concepts will outlive the historical conditions in which they are born (Uslu, 2017). For this reason, it differs from the history of ideas, which Skinner (1978) also employs, as his aim is to articulate the history of ideas alongside social history. Although social history is occasionally referenced in this study, it is viewed as the determinant of the historical and intellectual development of the concept. Even though the focus is on how certain thinkers in particular historical periods interpret the concept, changes in social history have also reshaped the concept itself. For this reason, social history is also included in order to show the breaks in the historical development of the concepts themselves. Through this approach, the aim of this study aligns with the goal of the philosophical history of politics developed by Rosanvallon. Thus, both aspire to "rebuild the relationship between intellectual labor and politics along new lines" (Rosanvallon, 2001, p. 199).

I argue that historically and theoretically, these concepts have three main moments in shaping the role of idea in politics: firstly, Hegel, secondly Marx, who reshaped these concepts with a revolutionary content, and finally, Badiou, who refuses a discussion on the theoretical and practical grounds of these concepts given by Hegel and Marx and reshapes it. For this reason, I reconstruct the three concepts -dialectic, history, and subject- that are the tools for thinking the idea in the works of these three philosophers through textual reading. While focusing on the use and relationship of these concepts in primary texts as the main source, I aim to reveal the idea and its relationship with

politics. As a secondary source, I consulted texts and comparative studies that discuss how these concepts were read in these historical periods and philosophers. Since these concepts are widely used in modern political theory, I have to exclude approaches other than these three philosophers to the extent that it was not necessary for the text. The reason for this was both that the text would be unnecessarily long and that the subject would be too diffuse. For this reason, for example, in the discussion of Marx, I have left out many thinkers who have made very important contributions to the corpus behind Marx and Marxism. Because my aim is to analyze neither Hegel, Marx nor Badiou and the philosophical traditions they left behind. Methodologically, this study attempts to read these three philosophers comparatively around a specific concept.

I start each chapter with Hegel because he gave their meaning to these three fundamental concepts of modern politics. Moreover, one could argue that modern philosophy, including Marxism, has not been free of Hegel's ghost. By effectively creating the topology of modern philosophy, he transformed all subsequent schools of thought whether willingly or unwillingly. In this sense, Hegel is the center of the concepts considered in this study for modern politics. It is only with Marx, who revolutionized the conceptual and theoretical perspective created by Hegel, the idea of communism finds it political reality. Thus, it only makes sense to continue with Marx. Finally, I discuss Badiou's relation to the pillars that form the idea of communism on the path opened by these two thinkers. Badiou rejects this philosophical system that was opened up in modern philosophy and approaches the problem neither with nor without Hegel. He makes a new beginning. Badiou tries to reconstruct a new philosophical topology with the idea of communism.

When trying to discuss the relationship between radical politics and the idea, it may seem contradictory to start with Hegel because Hegel was the philosopher of the authoritarian Prussian state, and his philosophy excluded radical politics rather than including it. However, Hegel stands there as a philosopher who cannot be overcome because of his function as a bridge between Enlightenment and Modernity in modern philosophy. Hegel can, therefore, be seen as the philosopher who gave us the tools of thinking. At least we know that this was the case for Marx.

Hegel built his system by critiquing the Enlightenment, German Idealism, and German Romanticism. Here, critique does not simply mean opposing or criticizing; it also refers to construct. In other words, presenting a critique means building. Similarly, the claim that Hegel's stamp on philosophy and politics became permanent does not mean the Hegelian line of thought was accepted without criticism. Nevertheless, to present a different perspective on philosophy and politics, Hegel's phantom was needed to be overcome. Marx was the first thinker who truly faced Hegel in that regard, and he succeeded in presenting another perspective through the critique of Hegel. So, this is the reason that I present Marx after Hegel. Following that, I will delve into Badiou's philosophy since he is the only one who rejects staying in the realm predetermined by Hegel and Marx and tries to present the ground of philosophy and politics again. Thus, I will follow this order of thought through the concept of critique because their critiques are foundational.

1.4. Thesis Structure

In the first chapter of the thesis, I focus on the dialectic of negation. In this chapter, I aim to explain the emergence of the new and change in relation to the concept of the dialectic of negation. For this, I start by discussing Hegel because Hegel tries to do something similar when he tries to explain the emergence of being, that is, becoming, with the concepts of dialectic and contradiction. However, Hegel's appeal to the concept of dialectic offers more than these two concepts. It allows us to consider the relation between the particular and the universal, the unity between the subjective and the objective at the same time, and to arrive at the whole. The idea of the whole will also be the key to reaching the idea of the One in modern philosophy. Marx, on the other hand, recognized the ground-breaking character of Hegel's path but saw Hegel's conclusions as problematic. First of all, Hegel's idealism pushed him into a process that reversed the dialectical relationship, but the concepts of contradiction and dialectic played a crucial role in explaining social relations. Marx's aim, in this sense, was to give new meaning to these concepts within a new conceptual framework – that is, capitalism - and to reinterpret them within the processes of revolutionary change. Marx's appeal to the concepts of dialectic and contradiction was twofold. The first was

to analyze existing social relations, namely capitalism, and the second was to try to interpret the possibilities of radical political action based on this. This has been the main line along which radical politics has positioned itself for the last two centuries. Badiou's criticism in this debate is directed at both Hegel and Marx. He criticizes Hegel for bending dialectic toward the idea of the One. His criticism of Marx is also divided into two. One is that Marxism's adaptation of dialectic in the political sphere resulted in the identification of the idea of negation with the idea of destruction. This created the illusion that destruction is sufficient for the emergence of the new. According to Badiou, a dialectic of negation devoid of the affirmative lacks the capacity to create the new. Relatedly, politics derived from this dialectic has been historically saturated. Instead, Badiou proposes the concept of subtractive dialectic. He relates it to the concept of event in the context of his philosophical terminology. For Badiou, subtraction prevents articulation with the state by enabling politics to be established in an autonomous space i.e., free from the state.

In the second chapter, I focus on the relationship between the concepts of history and politics. Here, I examine how the Enlightenment's progressive idea of history is constructed within modern philosophy. In this chapter, where I begin the discussion with Hegel, I explain that the idea of history is a constitutive element of modern thought and politics. In Hegel, history is the temporal conception of the embodiment of an idea. Marx is highly critical of Hegel's reading of history as an uninterrupted process in which an idea is embodied. However, he would reinterpret the Hegelian idea of history as a powerful legitimizing idea for politics and reinterpret it for communist politics. For his first critique, Marx reinterprets the Hegelian conception of history to give it a materialist meaning to the extent that he finds it idealist and reinterprets history in the context of class relations and social transformations. In this sense, capitalism appears for Marx not as something given but as a social system that emerges from social struggles and relations. Thus, for Marx, it is not only eternal but also a temporary mode of production. In this sense, I discuss in this chapter how Marx reconfigures Hegel's interpretation of history and bends it towards the idea of communism. I continue this section by arguing that Badiou begins by rejecting the intellectual debate configured around the idea of history. There is no history for him,

but we can only speak of the history of truths. Therefore, beyond the idea of history and how social relations emerge, Badiou is interested in the historicity of truths. In this sense, I try to explain what he means by the history of truths. Interpreting the idea of mode of politics, which he also attributes to Sylvain Lazarus, together with the history of truths, I argue that the idea of communism re-emerges in certain historical periods and truths that emerge in different historical time periods are interconnected.

In the third chapter, I open the concept of the subject related to the idea of praxis as the self-realization of the subject to discussion. In this chapter, I first express that the idea of the subject is conceptualized with a determination different from the individual. I discuss that the determining principle of the subject in Kant is reason, while in Hegel it is will. I show that Hegel's idea of the subject arises from his criticism of Kant's idea of the subject, which is formed within the framework of knowledge and realized through moral law. In this sense, I show that while the Kantian subject is formed around knowledge and reason, Hegel's subject is formed around ethical life and freedom. In this debate, Marx, on the other hand, argues that the subject is determined by political action rather than knowledge and derives it from class roles in social relations of production. In this sense, he argues that the idea of freedom that emerged in the Enlightenment and later in Hegel is political freedom, but that generique freedom can only be realized through praxis. In this section, I discuss the shift of the subject from the class to the party in the Marxist political line over time and the party's shaping of its own subjectivity through the concept of history. Then, I continue with Badiou's critique that the *a priori* link established around the subject and praxis is metaphysical. In this sense, for Badiou, the subject becomes a relation that is constantly established rather than an entity that always exists. Badiou establishes this relation of determination through the idea of decision. The decision here is about the idea of fidelity to the truth-event. I argue that Badiou's interpretation brings subjective responsibility that reconstitutes itself within the framework of the event.

In the conclusion, I will discuss how Badiou formulates communism within these critiques and reconceptualization. The relevance of the idea of communism for today, how it can exist, and Badiou's approach to these questions is the main axis of this

chapter. By the end of this thesis, I aim to have discussed the dilemmas of the theory of radical politics. In addition to that, I also want to argue how Badiou constructs his idea of communism.

CHAPTER 2

2. DIALECTIC OF NEGATION AND POLITICS

2.1. Introduction

For Badiou, the question in today's politics is to find a new dialectical framework to propose a new political action and a subjective body whose principles are equality and justice. Badiou (A. Badiou, 2013, p. 1) remarks

> The fundamental problem in the philosophical field today is to find something like a new logic. … We must first describe a new logic, or more precisely, a new dialectics. This is the way of Plato, but after all, it is also the way Karl Marx proposed. The work of Marx is not first a new historical vision, a new theory of class struggle, and so on, but from its very beginning a new general logic in the wake of Hegelian dialectics. … We have the same problem today. ... But we also have to find a new logic, a new philosophical proposition adequate to all forms or creative novelty.

According to Badiou, dialectic has two beginnings. One begins with Plato against the Sophists and the second with Marx. The novelty of Marx arises from the fact that he "associates the negation for which a decadent capitalism is ripe with a particular social force: the proletariat." (Coole, 2000, p 68) However, after two centuries of struggles, victories, and defeats, Badiou accepts that a new beginning is necessary, as Marx did after Hegel. For Badiou, Marx's accomplishment is not just a philosophical but a political repositioning of philosophy against the Hegelian stance by suturing dialectic to politics. Thus, Badiou (2013, pp. 1–2) writes

> What I try to do in all of my work is propose a new dialectical framework which is not a return to the young Karl Marx or to Georg F. W. Hegel, but that is neither the negative dialectics of Adorno, which is like the aesthetics of human rights, nor the affirmative construction of Negri, which destroys

> all forms of dialecticity and is like a Nietzschean ‘Gay Science’ of History. I think the problem today is to find a way of reversing the classical dialectical logic inside itself so that the affirmation, or the positive proposition, comes before the negation instead of after it. In some sense, my attempt is to find a dialectical framework where something or the future comes before the negative present.

Working through the dialectic, however, requires and implies working with Marx, and as Frank Ruda (2012, p. 308) says: "repeating Marx means working through negativity. 'Working through Marx' then means to think about contemporary adequate forms of a materialist understanding, a materialist theory, and practice of the notion of negativity". Furthermore, any discussion on Marx's dialectic requires a detour via Hegel. Thus, in this chapter, I will focus on the idea of dialectic and negativity for emancipatory politics by following the discussion on the problems associated with the concept of negation in politics. I will then return to examine what Badiou means by "a new logic, a new dialectic" in the final part.

2.2. What do Dialectic and the Concept of Negation Stand for?

This part will focus on discussing what dialectic and negation mean and how both are conceptualized in the philosophies of Hegel and Marx. The goal is to examine the logic of dialectic and the reasoning behind Hegel's and Marx's theories that aim to explain change in the social and political sphere. In doing so, we will see how they perceive historical change within the framework of singularity and totality through the dialectic of quantity and quality in explaining historical changes and what they led. This inevitably requires a new epistemology that simultaneously guides Hegel and Marx in reformulating social theory and practice with a different perspective. As Oliver Feltham (2008, pp. 50–51) discusses, in the history of philosophy, we give each wave of thought a label based on how we understand the relationship between thinking and being. In other words, each philosophy offers its topology of knowledge. In Berkeley's subjective idealism, for example, there is no externality to thought, so that truth becomes thought itself. In Kant's objective idealism, there is still no externality to thought, but there is an unknowable. However, truth is conceived as coherence, as in the case of subjective idealism. In Hegel's dialectical idealism, on the other hand, there

is a circuit between thinking and being, and truth unfolds into the whole. Hegel breaks through the way of thinking of idealism and sets up the contradiction between being and thinking. Moreover, dialectic becomes to the method to overcome these contradictions for arriving at the whole; thinking once again becomes the truth. Dialectical materialism, on the other hand, follows Hegel and uses dialectic as a method of thinking but does not start from thinking. It starts from being, involves repetition, and achieves something new. In this train of thought, Hegel, like Marx, symbolizes a break, a caesura. Both philosophers rely on dialectic but arrive at different conclusions.

To put it simply, for both philosophers, dialectic primarily stands for finding the subjective in the objective or the particular in the universal. In this way, dialectic as a way of thinking represents the possibility of uncovering a specific object's relations and where this object takes its place in reality so that truth is revealed. As we will discuss below, this feature of dialectic is not only a problem of epistemology but also a problem of praxis, i.e., the invention of politics and intervention in politics. For example, the genesis of the rule of governance was (and is) a crucial problem for the 17th and 18th-century political philosophers, as they are generally named social contract theorists. So, for these thinkers, the goal was to explain the conditions and sources to rule. For Hobbes, the reason for the social contract was fear, or freedom, as with Rousseau. However, social contract theorists discovered that the general will is the accumulation of the individual will for the same end. Rousseau came closer to the Hegelian solution but could not formulate his social contract theory regarding subjectivity and objectivity or particularity and universality. Hegel and Marx state that to rule is, in a way, reflecting and representing the whole. However, how can one contain the whole? In order to overcome this problem, Hegelian philosophy establishes the dialectical relationship between the particular and the universal. Since the universal is represented in the particular and the particular belongs to the universal, it does not require the individual's consent to realize the social whole because the individual already exists. In other words, what Hegel brings to modern politics and then Marx revolutionizes the way in which thinking politics through particularity and universal through dialectic provides the possibility to overcome the distinction of the ruler and

the ruled. In other words, in social contract theory, what happens is the realization of the distinction between these two while the ruled give their consent in exchange for freedom or security, as we see in Hobbes or Locke. To put it bluntly, social contract theory depends on this distinction. However, Hegel aimed to erase this distinction and replace unification with distinction.

The second thing that constitutes the idea of dialectic and negation is change and transition. In other words, through the dialectic, both Hegel and Marx conceptualize and theorize the course of history in their own words. Both can explain how the new emerges through the dialectic since the new is never ex nihilo. As Diana Coole (2000, p. 45) notes, "dialectical negativity is for Hegel both a process of becoming and an explanation, which is also an exemplification, of the internal dynamism of that process. It delineates both a choreography and a generative force". These are the two main logics underlying these philosophers' ideas of dialectic. In this respect, the nineteenth century was the century of dialectic, thanks to Hegel and then Marx, as Badiou says (Badiou & Hallward, 2003, p. 123).

2.2.1. Dialectic in Hegel

Adorno (1973, p. xix) claims that "Negative Dialectics is a phrase that flouts tradition. As early as in Plato, dialectic meant to achieve something positive by means of negation; the thought figure of a 'negation of negation' later became the succinct term". For him, dialectic is a symptom of contradiction - the incompatibility between thought and reality – as well as a method of uncovering this contradiction. As he (1973, p. 11) claims: "… dialectics is the ontology of the false state of things. The right state of things would be free of it: neither a system nor a contradiction". This is, however, in the words of Wood (1993, p. 416), the most "un-Hegelian idea" of dialectic, since dialectic is not "external agency of subjective thinking, but the private soul of the content" (Hegel, 2001, p. 47). As if Hegel had already heard Adorno's statements, he (2001, p. 47) wrote: "Dialectic is not that process in which an object or proposition presented to feeling or immediate consciousness is analyzed, entangled, led back and forth until at last its opposite emerges. Such a merely negative method occurs

frequently in Plato". Hegel's philosophy aims "to explain 'truth,' i.e., the inner relations of the world or object, including nature, human society, and human thought, from the development of the subject called 'spirit'" (Likitkijsomboon, 1992, p. 405).

Hegel understands dialectic as a process inherent in thought and content and, at the same time, as the bond that connects objectivity with subjectivity, the particular with the universal, and the subject with history. For Hegel, the logical starting point for constructing the relationship between the particular and the universal is the *begriff* (concept). The concept explains the particular, which in Hegel's logic presupposes the essence of the universal. He begins with the concept of defining a simple relationship, which becomes increasingly differentiated and complex at each level of abstraction as the existence of the universal continues to keep its existence in particular. In other words, the linear progress of dialectical thinking proceeds from a simpler to a more complex logic. Since this logic contains a dialectic of objectivity and subjectivity, it has an inner relationship between objectivity and subjectivity, unlike Kant's dialectic, in the end, a priori logical concepts become indissoluble. As Hegel (2010, p. 577) writes, “consequently, the Notion has substance for its immediate presupposition; what is implicit in substance is manifested in the Notion. Thus, the dialectical movement of substance through causality and reciprocity is the immediate genesis of the Notion, the exposition of the process of its becoming”. Hegel means here that the concept and its substance are connected so that if a sufficient number of changes occur in matter, the object eventually changes qualitatively.

For Hegel, the logic behind the dialectic is change. In other words, dialectic is not an epistemological concern for the German philosopher as it appears in the Socratic dialogs. For him, it is also the basic principle of the conditions of things, how they exist, and how they become. In other words, dialectic is the principle of movement, and any existence that embodies a contradiction in itself must move, be in flux, and change. Thus, through dialectical thinking, the contradiction becomes the cause that drives the movement. At every level of the dialectical relation, Hegel sees contradiction as the central bond between related objects.

In contrast to Kant's antinomies, which are unresolved antagonisms, Hegel sees that every contradiction sustains itself in the higher level of contradictions through *Aufhebung* (sublation) and holds the contradictory entities within itself. As Bonefeld (2011, p. 389) asserts, "in Hegelian language, *Aufhebung* denotes a dialectical process of determinate negation. That is, the determination of a concept negates it, while at the same time, the concept thus negated transforms itself into a new concept. In this process, the negated term loses its independent existence at the same time that its essence is retained in the new term - the new term is informed by the negated term." In this way, the new can emerge by containing and sublimating the old. However, the new is not entirely independent of the old, for this requires a further negation, namely the negation of the negation.

In other words, contradictory unity can be defined as "a dialectical union of positive and negative elements" (Kowalczyk, 1979, p. 378) and in Hegel's own words (2010, p. 746) "the negative of the negative, is immediately the positive, the identical, the universal". In this sense, Hegelian dialectic operates through the logic of two fuses into one till to reach the Absolute. Hegelian dialectic sutures contradictory multiplicities to each other and, through negation, reaches the whole. Hegel (1977, p. 69) writes "negation is inherent in a property as a determinateness which is immediately one with the immediacy of being, an immediacy which, through this unity with negation, is universality. As a One, however, the determinateness is set free from this unity with its opposite, and exists in and for itself". Similarly, Kojéve (1980, p. 181) comments that dialectic contains a negating element: "Dialectic is but a method of philosophic research and exposition. And we see, by the way, that the method is dialectical only because it implies a negative or negating element: namely, the antithesis which opposes the thesis..." To put it bluntly, dialectic is the exposition of the past as it is and the future in the form of becoming. What is negated belongs to the past, and what emerges represents the future, but it should be noted that what is seen as new cannot be foreseen or predicted. In this way, negation is the harbinger of the new. Only through negation can the new be embodied in this world.

Since, for Hegel, everything exists with its opposite and the opposites negate each other, one can say that "within everything there is negativity" (Taylor, 1999, p. 110). Hegel (1977, p. 19) speaks of the "tremendous power of the negative," similarly, negativity exists as the fundamental cause of motion. Put, negation always has a specific content or purpose. For this reason, each negation's result is broader since it contains the content of the preceding negation (1993, p. 112). Hegel's idea of negation, however, includes a second level of negation, which is defined as the negation of negation. As Hegel writes in *The Science of Logic* (2010, p. 89), "in all this, however, care must be taken to distinguish the first negation, negation as negation in general, from the second negation, the negation of negation, which is concrete, absolute negativity, just as the first is on the contrary only abstract negativity." The dialectic appears in Hegel as a process of construction through the negation of thought. Reconstruction here differs from deduction in that it follows the understanding of content "by placing the content in an immanence of thought" (Hartmann, 1976, p. 109). Negation is a positive concept for Hegel despite its negative sound.

In short, the concept of negation takes its place between "that which was and that which will be" by designating its ontological status. The historical status of the dialectic of negation refers to its generativity, i.e., to what will "emerge anew" as a result of negation. In other words, Hegel's terminology of the dialectic of negation refers not only to abstraction but to how social reality could be grasped. Thus, it serves not only to gain knowledge but also to understand political practice and history. As Coole (2000, p. 43) notes, "broadly speaking, the first question has arisen for those who would try to sustain dialectic as a critical method and mode of political practice". Since the dialectical acts as a mediator between the abstract and the concrete, the concept of negativity and the dialectic of negation are relevant not only for philosophy but also for political-practical problems by linking the question of how to think with the question of how to act. As Likitkijsomboon (1992, p. 406) writes, "... the Mind travels from its sense- perception of the outside world at the most concrete level, sense-data, to abstract thought. ... This is the first logical trip from the concrete to the abstract. Hegel's second task is to show that the Idea logically gives rise to the world, step by

step from the abstract Idea to Nature and the human mind. This is the second trip from the concrete to the abstract".

However, the problem with Hegel's dialectic is that it consistently links the dialectic to the One and explains historical change through the great simple contradiction that the universal is not embodied in the particular. The subject does not emerge as the agent of transformation, so historical change takes place as a subjectless process in which the Spirit appears as the subject of change and returns to itself. This is why Badiou states (2009b, p. 44) in *Theory of Subject*, “let us return to this trait whereby the materialist dialectic sets itself apart from the Hegelian dialectic: it periodizes, while the other one makes circles.” Furthermore, "the aim of Hegel's philosophy is to explain the 'truth,' i.e., the inner connections, of the world or the Object, including Nature, human society, and human thought, in terms of the development of the Subject, called 'the Spirit,'" (Likitkijsomboon, 1992, p. 405). In other words, the trip from concrete to abstract becomes the trip of Spirit, which finds its embodiment in concrete. The human individual becomes merely a carrier of it. The truth becomes absolute as much as it belongs to the Spirit. As Badiou (2022, p. 461) “For Hegel, it is the capacity of creative negativity that constitutes the index of every dialectical work geared toward the absolute. Indeed, the absolute, as Hegel says, is “with us from the start,” because it is the history of itself, or, in other words, the intrinsic unfolding of the successive stages by which the interiority of the negative—the “work” of the negative—eventually reaches absolute knowledge”.

Last but not least, the dialectic of negation is the journey of the Spirit that culminates in the modern bourgeois state, in which contradictions are formed. In the negation and sublation of contradictions, Hegel understands the change not as a historical event but as a historical necessity. In other words, Hegelian philosophy is unaware of the historical rupture since all changes are becoming and returning to the Spirit. The only difference in change is reflected only in the quantity of its effect, regardless of whether it is global and foundational, like the French Revolution. In this sense, Hegelian philosophy measures change by appearance and not by essence since essence always returns to Spirit. This makes Hegelian philosophy blind when conceptualizing

historical change, even though Hegel introduced negation into philosophy to understand transformation and change, simply because every historical transformation is a return to Spirit.

It is only with Marx who adapted Hegelian dialectic but would use them in a different context. In this respect, Marx would take up where Hegel had stopped in the modern bourgeois state and enter the political and philosophical scene with a different perspective.

2.3. Hegelian Legacy in Marx's Dialectic

The relationship between Marx and Hegel is the subject of an ongoing debate in the philosophical scene. While some, such as Lenin, Lukacs, and Zizek, see Hegel as an inspiring philosopher for understanding Marx and Marxism, several thinkers, among whom Eduard Bernstein or Althusser and Balibar stand out, argue that Hegel represents bourgeois currents in Marxism. Setting this aside, this section will discuss how Marx incorporated Hegelian logic into his philosophy and used it in politics while ultimately identifying negation with destruction.

Marx's thoughts against Hegel varied over time. As a young philosophy graduate, he was influenced by the Young Hegelians, especially Feuerbach and Bruno Bauer. In his early writings, such as the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* and the *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, Marx focused his criticism of Hegel on the themes of bourgeois society, the state, and private property. Though not fully developed, the tone in these books is argumentative, and thus, it might be argued that the political results Marx wished to achieve could be found in his later books. However, as Marx deepened his research on political economy, he began to incorporate Hegelian dialectic into his studies. Marx (1976, p. 103) writes in the preface to *Capital*: "In its mystified form, the dialectic ... seemed to transfigure and glorify the existing state of things. In its rational form it is ... critical and revolutionary in its essence". He

returned to Hegel when the latter was treated like a "dead dog[3]" to emphasize the revolutionary characteristic of dialectic. According to Hyppolite (2010, p. 139), Marx's method in *Capital* is neither a continuation of the critical investigation of political economy nor the Hegelian logic but a unification of these two.

In Marx, dialectic becomes, to put it simply, a key to gaining access to knowledge about capitalism and to understanding the conditions of its existence and continuation. As Bertell Ollman (2008, p. 14) writes, "The dialectic enters this picture as Marx's way of systematizing and historicizing all the conditions of capitalism, so that they become internally related elements of an organic whole, which is itself but the most visible moment in how they got that way and what they may yet become". In contrast to Hegel, who applies dialectic to uncover the embodiment of Spirit, through the analysis of capitalism, dialectic becomes both ontology, i.e., the conditions of the existence of the unity of contradictions, and epistemology, i.e., how to understand and conceptualize capitalism through the relations of universality and particularity of capital, negation, and negation of negation. Hegel's dialectic is, as described above, the dialectic of the idea. In other words, dialectic is the process in which the idea realizes itself. The idea's movement through the dialectic is a holistic and subjectless process in Hegel's logic. Marx's method for political economy is also dialectical, as he writes in his letters. For example, Marx (1975, pp. 102–103) writes in a letter to Engels "I am getting some nice developments. For instance, I have thrown over the entire doctrine of profit as previously conceived. In the method of treatment the fact that by mere accident I have again glanced through Hegel's Logic has been of great service to me" and, following these words, mentions that he intends to make a study in which he will work through Hegel's dialectic in detail and uncover both its mystified aspects and its rational features. In this respect, the object of Marx's dialectical path is capital, which recalls the holistic nature of Hegel's idea. He writes in *Grundrisse* (1973, p. 107), "Capital is the all-dominating economic power of bourgeois society. It must form both the starting point and the end point...'. As Likitkijsomboon (1992, p. 405) notes,

[3] Marx uses this term for the attitude of Moses Mendellson's against Spinoza in Lessing's time. He thought that Hegel after his death was treated in a similar way and thrown into the corner. He wrote in *Capital* (1976, pp. 103–104): "I therefore openly avowed myself the pupil of that mighty thinker…".

"... the dialectic of capital is, broadly speaking, the logical path of the self-unfolding process of capital from the abstract-simplest category to a fully developed, pure capitalist economy that appears on the surface". The difference between Hegel's and Marx's holistic dialectic, however, is that for Hegel, the end is always the return to the beginning. In contrast, for Marx, completing the circle from commodity to capital represents an expanded form of relations and not the return of the previous ones.

The logical starting point in Marx is the concept as in Hegel. The concept is used to explain the particular that presupposes the existence of the universal. Thus, although it refers to a simple object, it does not exist alone but is structured simultaneously with its conditions. Thus, the term leads us to a more complex concept and a broader network of relations. At each stage of the concept, however, the particular remains. It is well known that Marx's beginning of *Capital* is an ideal example of the development of the concept. Beginning with the concept of the commodity, Marx presents its history so that at each step, the commodity transforms its form into money. The money form splits into new forms of capital and commodity, which he wants to analyze in the first point.[4] This constitutes a typical example of applying Hegel's logic of the particular and the general dialectically. Along the way from commodity to capital, the dialectic becomes the source of change and movement. At each stage of the concept, negation becomes the key to the sublimation of the concept. In other words, a concept comes to the surface "...a certain degree of definiteness or concreteness, and therefore a certain logical relation to other categories, some of which are more and others less concrete-complex" (Likitkijsomboon, 1992, p. 409). The concept thus refers to a certain level of concreteness, and the abstract is simply the complex concrete through the movement of the concept. As Marx (1973, p. 101) says, "The concrete is concrete because it is the concentration of many determinations, that is, the unity of the manifold". For Marx, capital represents the universal, which always makes its presence felt. As Likitkijsomboon (1992, p. 409) notes,

[4] For example, Marx (1973, p. 100) writes in *Grundrisse* on this point: "Thus, if I were to begin with the population, this would be a chaotic conception [Vorstellung] of the whole, and I would then, by means of further determination, move analytically towards ever more simple concepts [Begriff], from the imagined concrete towards ever thinner abstractions until I had arrived at the simplest determinations." In this respect, Marx applies Hegelian dialectic to explain the whole through the particular. In other words, the universal stands above the particular.

> Marx's Capital, as already discussed, forms an organic whole of the dialectical development of capital. Thought moves constantly from the abstract-simple to the ever more concrete-complex, each step marked by contradictions in the definitions (or determinations) of the abstract-simple categories from which the more concrete-complex is generated.

At this point, we can collect three criticisms that Marx addressed to Hegel on this particular subject at different times. These three critiques stem from the same source and are directed at Hegelian idealism. The first dates from the time of the young Marx and can be found in his study of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* (1843). The criticism in this text is that Marx condemns Hegel for identifying being with thinking. As Bellofiore (2014, p. 166) explains, "the empirical realm is transformed into a moment of the Idea, and reason pretends to transform itself into real, particular and corporeal subjects. The abstraction is made substance – hypostatization: the universal becomes an entity existing in its own right". This critique is followed by a second one, which appears in *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. Bellofiore (2014, p. 166) states, the critique against Hegel is the confusion of "the order of knowledge with the order of reality". The final and third critique appears in Marx's Capital to rebuke Hegel's dialectic, which stands over its head. Here, the critique also reveals the relationship between the concrete and thought. As Marx (1976, p. 103) writes in *Capital*, the dialectic is a 'a positive understanding of what exists,' but also a 'simultaneous recognition of its negation, its inevitable destruction".

Marx makes this point very clearly in *Grundrisse*. The critique of Hegel here is based on the distinction between the concrete in the real and the concrete in thought. According to Marx, Hegel built his philosophical progress on the second and believed that the concrete is the production of thought. Marx (1973, p. 101) argues that "... Hegel fell into the illusion of conceiving the real as the product of thought concentrating itself … whereas the method of ascending from the abstract to the concrete is only the way in which thought appropriates the concrete, reproduces it as the concrete in the mind". For Jean Hyppolite (1973, pp. 93–94), based on the letter to Marx's father, Marx's goal is "to lower the Hegelian idea to the level of things, in other words, to replace speculative idealism with a philosophy of action that reconciles life and philosophy in an authentic way - a desire that has been expressed by thinkers of

all times, but which has generally never been fulfilled".[5] To that aim, he applies dialectic to reconcile life and philosophy.

As already mentioned, the theories of Hegel and Marx go in different directions. However, the reason for this difference lies in their approach to contradiction. In Hegel's dialectical and holistic system, contradiction is reconciled through sublimation, and the historical epoch is reduced to a single contradiction. In Marx's understanding of the dialectical process, on the other hand, the contradiction is preserved at all times. In this way, the Hegelian progress of the spirit and the Marxist conceptualization of capital differ from each other and move in different directions.[6] According to Tony Smith (2014, p. 37),

> Marx's theory also 'progresses' in the sense that later determinations allow a more complex and concrete comprehension of generalized commodity-production than earlier ones do. But in Marx's critical dialectic later determinations do not provide explanatory frameworks in which higher-order truths can be articulated in the manner of Hegel's Logic – just the opposite. The most fundamental contradictions and antagonisms examined by Marx at the beginning levels of abstraction are not overcome as the theory progresses. They are instead repeated in more complex and concrete forms.

The opposite direction of interpretation of the concept of contradiction led both philosophers to different conclusions concerning politics. While for Hegel, bourgeois society and the state are the final stages where all contradictions are resolved and reconciled through the unity established by the Spirit, for Marx, on the other hand, the situation is precisely the opposite. Furthermore, there was no reconciliation of contradictions. According to him, the contradictions only change their forms, but the core of the contradictions appears in different relationships. In contrast to the analysis of modern capitalism, Marx attempted to convey the concepts of bourgeois society, the

[5] In the same letter, Marx notes that the contrast between materialism and idealism is very limiting for philosopher. In other words, the philosopher must pass beyond this limitation (Hyppolite, 1973, p. 94).

[6] This difference can be seen in the philosophy of the history of both philosophers. For Hegel, each stage of history, one way or another, is the embodiment of the Spirit; for Marx, a new historical epoch carries the vestige of the old but structures it in a new way but, at the same time, represents a rupture.

state, and the idea of history through contradiction. In this way, Marx's position can be outlined in three points: "… a critique of modern industrial society and its comprehension in (orthodox) political economy; a critique of Hegel; and a rival economic theory of industrial society which depends, as he indicates, on both Hess and Engels" (Rockmore, 2002, p. 55). Moreover, it can be said that all three are interconnected and complement each other to present an alternative political projection.

Marx's analysis of capitalism as a mode of production is initially based on a fundamental contradiction between labor and capital, on which capitalism rises. Subsequent contradictions, such as the contradiction between automation and surplus value or surplus labor and labor time, are formed around this fundamental contradiction. Marx (1976, p. 399) writes, for example,

> It is a law of capital … to create surplus labour, disposable time; it can do this only by setting necessary labour into motion – i.e. entering into exchange with the worker. It is tendency, therefore, to create as much as labor to a minimum. It is therefore equally tendency of capital to increase the laboring population, as well as constantly to posit a part of it is as surplus population – population which is useless until such time as capital can utilize it.

Moreover, the driving force of capital is expansion, which, in one direction, requires more labor power but, in the other direction, creates more poverty and more and more pauperism in contrast to the luxury that it creates. Marx sees a political window for revolutionary politics in this contradictory tendency of capitalism. As mentioned, one of the main differences between Hegel and Marx is that while the former reconciles these contradictions, such an attempt is impossible for the latter. According to Hegel, negation entails the possibility of contradiction rising in newer forms to reach a final form, whereas for Marx, negation in the form of revolution is the harbinger of the new, in which contradictions disappear. Moreover, for Hegel, this historical flow takes place without a subject, i.e., there is no place for a subject in this flow of contradictions on the historical level, but Marx gives the subject a clear name and a historical role, which leads Marx to the conclusion: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" (2007, p. 210).

For Marx, capitalism has the tendency to cause economic crises, the impoverishment of the masses, and the exploitation of labor because of its contradictions. The reason behind those outcomes is the expansion of capital, which is necessarily based on the separation of labor from its means. The laborer for Marx (1976, pp. 535–536) "… constantly produces material, objective wealth, but in the form of capital, of an alien power that dominates and exploits [the labourer]: and the capitalist as constantly produces labor-power, but in the form of a subjective source of wealth…". The process is a historical development, i.e., "historical presupposition of capital" (Bonefeld, 2011, p. 388). As Nicolaus (1968, p. 55) explains, "The basis of the process of accumulation, of the process through the forces of production gain in power, is the extraction of surplus value from labour power. The force of production is the force of exploitation". In other words, for Marx, contradiction does not only mean "opposed tendencies as the motive force of social development within a given social order … that an incompatibility has arisen between the productive forces …" (Schaff, 1960, p. 246) so that causes both a crisis and political opportunity at the same time because, contradiction is maladjustment in the social order, the incompatibility to continue in that situation.

In this tendency, however, Marx sees a political opportunity for the newly emerging subject in modern society. The dialectical construction of the growing contradictions in capitalist society allows him to link subjective conditions to objective ones, consciousness to the material being, and theory to practice. These domains are already at hand since the process of capitalist reproduction rises on them. In other words, as Bonefeld (2011, p. 394) says

> Capitalist reproduction thus reproduces the class antagonism by positing capital as the owner of the means of the existence on the one hand, and the doubly free laborer on the other. It posits its own presupposition – a presupposition that transformed from historical presupposition into the constitutive premise of the conceptuality of a capitalistically organized mode of social reproduction.

The contradiction between labor and capitalism and the domination of labor must be socially reproduced for the domination of labor and the expansion of capital to

continue. For Marx, however, as he writes in the preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1904, pp. 11–12)

> At a certain stage of their development, the material forces of production in society come into conflict with the existing relations of production, or-what is only legal expression of the same thing-with the property relations within which they had been at work before. From forms which developed the forces of production, now these relations now turn into their fetters. Then comes the period of the social revolution.[7]

Here, Marx extends his theory beyond capitalism and formulates it as a historical tendency between historical development and the relations of production based on negation. In other words, with this passage Marx presents the relations of production of a society as the key to historical transformation. Thus, the importance of the conflict between the mode of production and the relations of production led to the emergence of the "revolution" or a new mode of production. Here, negation takes place in a large totality, whereas Marx saw one simple big contradiction as the cause of other contradictions in society. What Marx theorizes is, in fact, based on contradiction, which Hegel failed to cover the idea of negation in the form of revolution since, as discussed for him, there is no reconciliation of these contradictions. Furthermore, this would create both a political and theoretical line after Marx. For example, in the Soviet Revolution, this idea of revolution would take the form of destroying the old society and creating new humanity. Diana Coole (2000, p. 4) explains, “Some of Hegel’s successors – Marx, Kojève, Merleau-Ponty, Adorno – would define their task as rescuing negativity from Hegelian positivism, while continuing to insist on its dialectical nature. They explicitly associate such a negative dialectic with political radicalism”.

In the end, the question arises about how the new comes into being and under what conditions. Negation is thus only possible with the destruction of the old for the emergence of the new. In this sense, Marx's idea of revolution encompasses capitalism and other historical epochs such as feudalism or antiquity. Negation here means

[7] These lines are followed by the sentence of “With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed” (Marx, 1904, p. 12).

negating the mode of production and relations of production, such as ideologies, political-legal relations, etc. As Badiou (2008b, p. 1877) says,

> For example, a revolution, conceived by Marx as a political truth, is the affirmative revelation of the hidden laws of society: class struggle, contradictions, economic power. But it is also the destructive transgression of all these laws: collective economy, dictatorship of the proletariat. But how is it possible for a negation, above all, for a destructive one, to be also the most affirmative knowledge of the very essence of society?

For Marx, negation ultimately means the disappearance of the old, and in contrast to Hegel's conception, this process does not proceed smoothly. The difference between Marx and Hegel is that Hegel sees the cohesion of the classes in bourgeois society and the state, whereas Marx does not. According to him, when class antagonism reaches its climax and becomes a revolutionary conflict, it inevitably becomes a life-and-death struggle for one of the two sides. Thus, in times of revolution, negation must stand in between to reveal affirmation and destruction. In other words, negation consists of destruction and affirmation. Badiou (2012a, p. 270) explains, "It is the same thing for Marx in the political context. Marx insists on saying that the destruction of the bourgeois State is not in itself an achievement. The goal is communism, that is the end of the State as such, and the end of social classes, in favor of a purely egalitarian organization of the civil society". In other words, the destruction of the old is not a goal in itself, but the real goal is the creation of the new, and for Marx, this is also the definition of the new. However, as Badiou argues in his book *The Century* (2007b), the dialectic of negation was driven by the "passion of the Real," which led to suffering to identify the dialectic of negation with destruction.[8] Hegel already recognized this situation in the case of the French Revolution. For him, the revolution became a purely destructive mechanism because of the lack of a mediating concept between the negation and the negated, i.e., the old regime. For Hegel, the lack of mediating term in

[8] For example, Hegel (Hegel, 1977, p. 360) wrote for the French Revolution "The relation, then, of these two, since each exists indivisibly and absolutely for itself, and thus cannot dispose of a middle term which would link them together, is one of wholly unmediated pure negation, a negation, moreover, of the individual as a being existing in the universal. The sole work and deed of universal freedom is therefore death, a death too -which has no inner significance or filling, for what is negated is the empty point of the absolutely free self. It is thus the coldest and meanest of all deaths, with no more significance than cutting off a head of cabbage or swallowing a mouthful of water."

the case of negation has serious political consequences that end in destruction, which crippled dialectic in the lack of affirmation, which is for Badiou truth-event. However, the connection between revolutionary politics and the dialectic based on contradiction and negation encounters the practical problem of getting stuck between destruction and the difficulty of creating the new.[9]

For both Hegel and Marx, dialectic, as the beginning of the conceptualization of the surrounding world, is the way to connect the objective with the subjective, the particular with the universal, and the subject with the idea. However, the way in which they practiced dialectic was utterly different. Moreover, Marx links dialectic with radical politics because the contradictions he sees in capitalism simultaneously reinforce the sources of the revolutionary sources, as mentioned above. In this respect, Marx defines a historical tendency in terms of negating the old parallel to the change in the mode of production or the relations of production. However, it was not Marx's intention to reduce radical politics to the negation of capitalist relations of production and their destruction. In the process, the affirmative part of the negation was lost, and the negation became destruction. In the end, one can say that Marx sews dialectic with politics.

2.4. Badiou and Dialectic

2.4.1. Where does Badiou Stand in the Discussion of Dialectic?

The unexpected fall of the socialist regimes led to the need to rethink dialectic again, for as Berardi (2022, p. 52) states, “after the experience of the twentieth century, we understand very well that modern history does not proceed towards a positive exit along a dialectical path, and that there is no dialectical overcoming on the horizon.” The fall of the Berlin Wall and the demise of the USSR led scholars to question

[9] Diana Coole states this problem as a general problem of political theories of negativity. She (2000, p. 10) writes, “A major challenge for political theories of negativity is accordingly to envisage how criticisms of obsolete or oppressive intersubjective systems might also countenance a transformative political process that would perform negativity without itself lapsing into absolute negation or a renewed reification”.

dialectic's role and link dialectic to politics to understand the new political situation. Dialectic is the key to formulating politics and history for theoretical and practical purposes, the link between "objective and subjective conditions, or between the socioeconomic sphere and its concentration as the political act proper" (Bosteels, 2011, p. 9). Moreover, the historical and political developments necessitate rethinking the concept of dialectic.

However, this was a familiar attempt in this respect. For example, Jean-Paul Sartre's *Being and Nothingness and* Althusser's *For Marx* are famous examples of this attempt to think about politics and philosophy in their own way. Mao could also be included in this list, as he contributed to this debate with the articles *On Contradiction and On Practice: On the Relationship between Knowledge and Practice, between Knowing and Doing*. During the 1960s, under the influence of Maoism, it was a question of redefining the dialectic in Marxist politics with Hegel, as in the case of Jean-Paul Sartre, or without Hegel, as in the case of Althusser. It was about redefining the relationship between philosophy and politics against Stalin's one-way interpretation of dialectic materialism. This was to construct the dialectical relationship between economic relations, i.e., the relations of production and politics, as mentioned above. In other words, the direction of these philosophical debates followed Lenin's expression that "… politics is concentrated expression of economics" (1921).[10] Put simply, the debate focused on the dialectical relationship between the relations of production and politics. These attempts show us that in each period of the 20th century, dialectic became the source of rebeginning the reconstruction of the relationship between theory and praxis. During the 1960s, this emerged as an opposition to Stalin's formulation of dialectic and, later on, the effect of the Cultural Revolution.

After the fall of the USSR, however, dialectic has once again become a fundamental point in this debate. With the destruction of the Soviet bloc, the dialectical narrative linking history, politics, and the subject has become more questionable. Under these political conditions, a new search for a concept of dialectic and politics has emerged. As Badiou (2013, p. 2) notes, the classical conception of dialectic, i.e., the Hegelian

[10] https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1921/jan/25.htm

conception, is based on the “revolt against," the "opposition to," the "negation of" something, which leads to[11] “This vision as such cannot be sustained today. We are living through a sort of crisis of the trust in the power of negativity, and we know two forms of this crisis”. The problem, as mentioned above, is finding a new logic.

For Badiou, Marx's political novelty, which consists of uniting the negativity of capitalism with the political subject and history, can no longer be sustained today since negation is reduced to a democratic opposition that subtracts the destructive part of negation and is understood as consensus. As Badiou (2015b, p. 36) defines

> I firmly believe that our current historical moment is disoriented. The previous century was essentially the century of negative heroic orientations. It was defined by a terrible will to support, in the name of a humanity to come, all the forms of its immanent inhumanity. The idea was to create at any cost a new world and a new man. Everywhere there was a call for heroic figures, sometimes frightening and sombre. The word ‘revolution’ was the synthesis of this destructive experiment: communist revolution, the artistic destruction of all arts, the scientific and technological revolution, the sexual revolution . . .The figure of the end of the old traditions was the heroism of destruction and the creation ex nihilo of a new real.

So how is it possible, in this disoriented political medium, in the absence of a heroic subject, without the possibility of linking politics with history and philosophy, to think of the idea of radical politics and revolution? In other words, one can no longer rely on classical revolutionary understanding and expressive dialectic for radical politics. The challenge for Badiou is to overcome this problem and open up a new path for politics. In this part, I will discuss Badiou’s approach to the question of dialectic. First, I will present Badiou’s critique of Hegel, which is vital in rescuing dialectic from the dialectic of One and then return to Marx. In the last part, I will explain what Badiou offers when he rejects the classical relationship between dialectic and politics.

[11] A good example of this understanding can be given from the Paris Commune. While Marx sees the problem of the Commune not negating the older state for the defeat of the Commune i.e., the question of power, Badiou in this way Commune is emptied to the question of political power. On the other hand, for Lenin, Paris Commune is a great example of the problem of victory or defeat dialectic.

2.4.2. The Phantom of Hegel in Marxism[12]

The century was a philosophical and practical battleground for the idea of dialectic. It can be said that the Marxist philosophers were divided into two categories on the philosophical battlefield: Holding on to the Hegelian dialectic or leaving it behind. On the battlefield of practice, the question was how to realize the dialectic, and this problem was formulated in the Cultural Revolution with the sentence, "The one divides into two or two unite into one" Badiou (2007b, p. 59) sees "the century is a figure of the nondialectical juxtaposition of the Two and the One. Our question here concerns the century's assessment of dialectical thinking".[13] Ironically, at the center of this argument was Hegel and not Marx because the problem was how to articulate Hegel within Marxism. As Bruno Bosteels ironically notes in his article on Badiou's relationship with Hegel in the collection of articles *Key Concepts: Alain Badiou*, the spirit of Hegel in Marxism in French philosophy: "The sheer fact of this continued interest in Hegel in and of itself deserves some comment in so far as Badiou is formed in a school of thought dominated by the influence of Louis Althusser, for whom Hegel is the philosophical curse that weighs down on Marx and Marxism, threatening both with the temptation to relapse into one form or other of idealism" (Bosteels, 2010, p. 138). To contextualize the debate and understand Badiou's objections to Hegel, however, we must return to Althusser's objections to the Hegelian dialectic.

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[12] Althusser (2015, p. 116) finishes his article *Contradiction and Overdetermination* with these words: "One phantom is more especially crucial than any other today: the shade of Hegel. To drive this phantom back into the night we need a little more light on Marx, or what is the same thing, a little more Marxist light on Hegel himself. We can then escape from the ambiguities and confusions of the ' inversion'. One phantom is more especially crucial than any other today: the shade of Hegel. To drive this phantom back into the night we need a little more light on Marx, or what is the same thing, a little more Marxist light on Hegel himself. We can then escape from the ambiguities and confusions of the ' inversion'".

[13] Bosteels (2010, p. 137) states a similar observation based on Deleuze as he states: "Instead of the more familiar schemes for the sublation of contradiction, much of the twentieth century is said to be dominated by what Gilles Deleuze would have described as "disjunctive syntheses", that is, non-dialectical or even anti- dialectical solutions to the problem of articulating not only the old and the new, the end and the beginning, the instantaneous act and the creative duration, but also truth and semblance, life and the will, historicism and vanguardism. " In addition to that, Badiou also admits that his whole studies can be seen as a challenge against the idea of dialectic. As he (2007b, pp. 31–32) says in his study *The Century,* "You could almost say that my entire enterprise is one giant confrontation with the dialectic".

Althusser came on the scene in the early 1960s with a handful of concepts, such as structural causality, overdetermination, the complex whole, and epistemological rupture, that detach Marxism from Hegelianism and conceptualize it as a science.[14] He turned against the idea of Hegel's general contradiction to explain change, explicitly using the concept of overdetermination to theorize how change is linked to multiple contradictions in a complex whole. In other words, his purpose was to change the Hegelian idea of linear diachronic understanding of history by remaining loyal to Marxism. Althusser conceptualizes historical change as the result of multiple and diverse contradictions, borrowing "overdetermination" from psychoanalysis based on the October Revolution and Mao's article *On Contradiction*.

Althusser deals with the problem of contradiction, determination, and dialectic in Hegel and Marx in his article "Contradiction and Overdetermination" in *For Marx* (2015), published in 1965. This article is the key for us to show the break in Marxist theory in understanding the interpretation of change. In this text, Althusser follows the path taken by Marx in *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, but at the same time takes a different approach to understanding historical transformation.[15]

According to Althusser, the Hegelian idea of contradiction is neither complex nor overdetermined, contrary to its Marxist conceptualization. As we discussed, Hegelian contradiction begins with a simple one, and when it moves on, it gets more complicated. However, for Althusser (2015, p. 101), this contradiction is "not the complexity of an effective overdetermination, but the complexity of a cumulative

[14] Althusser's idea of "epistemological break" developed in *Reading Capital* in a way resembles Badiou's idea of event occurs as a rupture in the form of knowledge.

[15] Althusser's article mainly focuses upon 1917 October Revolution as a practical scene to conceptualize the idea of contradiction and overdetermination. Althusser clearly expresses the contingency and evental nature of the revolution. In this regard, it can be said that Althusser opens the path for evental thinking. My comment of his separation of 1859 Marx's interpretation of revolution which is mentioned above, stands these lines: "How else should we summarize these practical experiences and their theoretical commentaries other than by saying that the whole Marxist revolutionary experience shows that, if the general contradiction (it has already been specified: the contradiction between the forces of production and the relations of production, essentially embodied in the contradiction between two antagonistic classes) is sufficient to define the situation when revolution is the task of the day', it cannot of its own simple, direct power induce a revolutionary situation', nor *a fortiori* a situation of revolutionary rupture and the triumph of the revolution" (Althusser, 2015, p. 99).

internalization which is only apparently an overdetermination". In other words, for Althusser, the Hegelian understanding of contradiction is the reduction of economic, political, and cultural instances into one internal principle, which lacks the principle of overdetermination (Althusser, 2015, pp. 110–112). The crucial point here is that for our discussion, i.e., to understand the connection between dialectic and change, what Hegel offers and Marx takes further is two-layered. The first is that contradiction is conceived as a totalizing contradiction, and each contradiction is a reflection and extension of a totalizing one. In other words, it is difficult to think of the uniqueness of contradiction. The second is to direct history without interruption in a linear diachronic direction, which we will discuss in the next chapter. For Badiou, the path that Althusser opens up is not only the key to escaping the linear understanding of dialectical change or the totalizing effect of contradiction but also to thinking transformation in terms of events.[16] Furthermore, Althusser's approach in this article actually defends that what causes revolution among many contradictions is not knowable. Althusser admits the existence of them, and in particular moments, some of them may be more dominant than others, and the economy always feels its pressure as an "absent cause." However, this is not enough to explain the whole totality in terms of what led to such a rupture. In that regard, Badiou's idea of truth-event is not entirely explicable and cannot be reduced to a part of knowledge, similar to Althusser's interpretation.

2.4.3. Badiou's Two Critiques of Hegel

Althusser's struggle against the Hegelian currents in Marxism defines Badiou's approach not only to Hegel but also to the concept of dialectic in general. In his early studies, *The Concept of the Model* or *Theory of the Subject*, Badiou was critical of the idea of dialectic but not wholly opposed to it. His aim in these studies, particularly in *Theory of the Subject*, was to understand dialectic not as a totality but as a kind of

[16] However, there is one crucial difference exists between Althusser and Badiou. While, Althusser rejects the idea of one totalizing internal contradiction, he still keeps the idea of dialectic and relates it to the objective conditions such as economic, political, ideological spheres and links them through the overdetermination. However, Badiou will mathematicise the dialectic and divorce it from its objective conditions which causes a big deficiency to think politics.

division. The difference between synthesis-oriented dialectic, which strives towards the Whole, and subtraction-oriented dialectic is the result of the "ideological struggle" over the question of whether "one divides into two or two fuses into one." As Badiou explains in an interview to Tzuchien Tao "two fuses into one"—leads to idealism" (quoted in Trott, 2015, p. 63). However, Badiou, in contrast to Althusser, does not turn against Hegelian dialectic in order to purify Marxism of bourgeois-humanist tendencies. His goal is instead to conceive a new logic. In this respect, we can summarize Badiou's critiques under two themes.

The first critique of Hegel's generative dialectic, similar to Althusser's, refers to the characteristic of "looping back" (Bosteels, 2010, p. 142). As we discuss, the Hegelian dialectic ironically has a linear and circular structure. As Bosteels (2010, p. 142) notes, the Hegelian dialectic presupposes the end, which is also the beginning, and leads back to the conclusion that it originally presupposes. Badiou asserts that "It would not be an exaggeration to say that all of Hegel can be found in the following: the 'still-more' is immanent to the 'already'; everything that is, is already 'still more'" (2007a, p. 162). Badiou opposes the idealist circularity of Hegel's dialectic. In other words, the Hegelian dialectic begins with being and arrives at unity, then returns to being and is, then again, the unity that is better developed but is still a unity, and so it goes on and on. For Badiou, this circularity should be suspended and divided.

It can be said that the concept of the whole -of unity - is probably the most antithetical concept in Badiou's philosophy because Badiou is known as a philosopher of multiplicity. During the 20th century, not only Althusser but also Adorno criticized Hegel, although their aims were different. Adorno's aim was not to liberate Marxism from Hegelian humanism or to develop a different understanding of history than the Hegelian linear narrative. In his *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno explicitly condemns the Hegelian whole or the idea of totality because of its moral consequences. For Badiou, however, as Trott (2015, pp. 59–60) says, "Hegel's whole is not only morally and politically unjust; after Cantor, Badiou concludes, the whole is not. That it is not shows that any claim to have achieved totality of all that exists is impossible to maintain".

To simplify, Hegel's dialectic depends on making everything determinable and commensurable to construct the relation between unity and particularity. As Trott (2015, p. 66) states, "relying on negation, Hegel's dialectic aims to make everything commensurable, that is, the myth of totality arises". However, Badiou bases his argument on Cantor's set theory and Russell's paradox. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy defines the paradox as follows: "The paradox arises within naive set theory by considering the set of all sets that are not members of themselves. Such a set appears to be a member of itself if and only if it is not a member of itself, hence the paradox" (Irvine 2003). Starting from this paradox, if we examine Hegel's concept of the whole, the whole contains both itself and something other than itself, which is mathematically false. The whole is not an ordinary concept in Hegelian philosophy since it determines the relationship between the individual and the totality. Through the concept of the whole, Hegel "… thus supposes he can resolve the contradiction into a whole resulting in "a circular completion" (Trott, 2015, p. 60). The whole achieved through negation is logically impossible for Badiou and from the perspective of Cantor's set theory. The idea of the whole ensures that contradictions are consistent and make everything its own. For Badiou, however, the One does not exist.[17] While Hegel's dialectic is convergent, approaching one point, Badiou's dialectic is divergent, moving away from this one point.

The difference between Hegel and Badiou concerning the idea of the whole is crucial and enables us to think of the dialectic. This refers not only to the concept of dialectic but also to universality, truth, and the subject. As Badiou (2009a, pp. 141–142) writes in *Logics of Worlds*

> Of course, we share with Hegel a conviction about the identity of being and thought. But for us this identity is a local occurrence and not a totalized result. We also share with Hegel the conviction regarding a universality of the True. But for us this universality is guaranteed by the singularity of

[17] As Trott (2015, p. 60) clearly expresses "But Badiou denies that the dialectical relation between multiplicity and differentiation, on the one hand, and unity and identity, on the other, is to be finally resolved into one non-contradictory whole, as it is for Hegel for whom the end of the dialectic really is the end of the dialectic. For Badiou, the dialectic is to be supplemented by an "'aleatory third term': subject-truths".

> truth- events, and not by the view that the Whole is the history of its immanent reflection.

Badiou's critique of Hegel's dialectic is thus a result of anti-Hegelianism in French philosophy but does not overlap with Althusser, nor does it follow him directly. Rather than being a strict follower of Althusser, Badiou is looking for a new way of thinking and being. In this respect, it was never his aim to save Marxist dialectic because, according to Badiou, Marxist dialectic would have its share of these critiques.

2.4.4. A Critique of Marxist Dialectic: Negation as Destruction

For Alain Badiou, history does not exist as a continuous flow but as modalities, as we will discuss in detail in the next part. For now, the question for us is how Badiou establishes that the century becomes the century of dialectic and that this dialectic eventually becomes the destruction for the creation of the "new man." In this respect, the October Revolution of 1917 is a key historical event that depends on the will of the subject, which pushes history in the "right" direction. As Badiou (2007b, p. 16) writes,

> The important thing to notice is that the imposition of a heroism of discontinuity onto vital continuity finds its (political) resolution in the necessity of terror. The underlying question is that of the relationship between life and terror. The century unflinchingly maintained that life can only accomplish its positive destiny (and design) through terror. Whence a sort of reversal between life and death, as if death were nothing but the instrument of life. Mandelstam's poem is haunted by this undecidability between life and death.

The dialectic between life and death, revolution and history, the new and the past makes the century a century of dialectic for Badiou. However, this dialectic also includes coercion and destruction. Since dialectic, as with Marx, links objective reality with subjective will and reflects the objective conditions and the possibilities of the subject, it requires the compulsion to change these very objective conditions. In this respect, Marx was the first to construct this relationship between objective conditions and revolutionary struggle. For him, expressive dialectic reflects the possibilities of revolutionary politics. In this respect, dialectic binds politics and its conditions, and

the last century has been the victorious form of this dialectical logic. Badiou (2015b, p. 45) explains

> Certainly, even in the classical conception, political struggles, insurrections or revolutions are not structural effects – they are moments, and we have to seize the moment, name the circumstances and so on. But the moment, the political struggle, expresses and concentrates social contradictions. This is why an insurrection can be purely singular and at the same time universal: purely singular, because it is a moment, the pure moment; and universal, because finally this moment is the expression of general and fundamental contradictions.

For Badiou, this is the consequence of the formulation of the dialectic around proper names such as the terms proletariat and mass, which are a concentration of strong singularities linked to universality and at the same time carry an objective reality within them. In other words, the expressive dialectic at the core of revolutionary politics requires proper names that build politics around itself and link singularity to universality. What we see in Hegel and simultaneously in Marx in the 20th century are similar formulations of this approach, albeit not in a revolutionary way. However, according to Badiou (A. Badiou, 2015b, p. 63),

> Alas, this conception is probably saturated, finished. Thus, my goal here is just to try to open the way for a non-expressive conception of political dialectics, for a conception of political dialectics that forbids this type of passage to the proper name from the action of the masses. In this new conception, revolutionary politics is no longer the expression of the concentration of social contradictions; it is a new way of thinking and doing collective action. In this way, the political process is not the singular expression of objective reality; it is in some sense separated from this reality. It is a process not of expression but of separation.

As mentioned, as soon as the impossibility of the whole is shown, a new opportunity for a new dialectic arises. However, for Badiou to connect this dialectic with radical politics, he must come to terms with the dialectic of Marx and Marxism.

Badiou’s critique of Marxism coincides with the years of retreat from Hegelian Marxist theory and politics that began in the mid-1980s and continued with Ellen Meiksins Wood's *The Retreat from The Class* (1998). As much as some of the critiques

of post-Marxist theorists such as Laclau and Mouffe or the representative of the third generation of the Frankfurt School, Juergen Habermas, overlap with Badiou, it is difficult to include Badiou in this series. For Badiou (2012, p. 163), Marx is "… was perhaps the first to create an explicit relation between revolutionary politics and a new logical framework"[18] and Marxism is the militant discourse of the popular uprisings of the proletariat and the masses during the 19th and 20th centuries. In this context, Badiou pays tribute to Marxism's achievements and persistent desire for equality. For Badiou (2008, p. 648), Marxism means, unlike the persona of Marx, "is something else—above all when it is a question of the Marxist practices of organization and concrete politics." In other words, for Badiou, Marx is more a political militant than a philosopher and more a revolutionary than a philosopher and the author of *Capital* who revealed the laws of capital or the laws of history. Therefore, I will summarize Badiou's relationship with Marx and Marxism in two points. The first point concerns Badiou's attitude towards Marxism and Marx. The last point refers to how Badiou sees the dialectic of negation as the core of Marxist politics, which is identified with destruction.

Badiou (2009a, p. 527) writes in *Logic of Worlds*, "I think there are only three crucial philosophers: Plato, Descartes and Hegel." furthermore, Marx does not appear in *Being and Event* or *Logic of Worlds*, whereas pretty much every philosopher from Leibniz to Spinoza is covered. In this respect, it is difficult to find a direct challenge to Marx in Badiou's books, even if he makes no secret of his sympathy for him. Clearly, Marx's works, such as *Capital* or *Grundrisse*, are not a starting point for Badiou. As Bosteels (2018, p. 3) states "for Badiou, the question of what constitutes Marxism is not philosophical but political. Beyond the naive, spontaneous, and nowadays entirely naturalized principle of a certain dominance of the economy, Marxism always means political Marxism for Badiou." According to this approach, Marxism is neither the science of history nor the philosophy of dialectic. Marxism is

[18] For Badiou (2012, p. 163), finding this logic is a political and theoretical problem for us today. He continues his sentence, "We have the same problem today. We have to rectify something after two centuries of failure in revolutionary politics and, in particular, after the failure of the State-form of socialism. But we also have to find a new logic, a new political proposition for a new revolutionary opposition in the field of politics. And so the question of dialectical and of non-dialectical relations is a pressing difficulty".

not at the same time “a critique of classical or bourgeois political economy” and “an objective description of the misery of the world with an underlying anthropology of the human subject as generic species-being. Instead, it is or was a militant, intervening discourse to sustain the real movement of communism.” (Bosteels, 2018, p. 7). However, this does not mean that Badiou disagrees with Marx’s analysis of capitalism. On the contrary, Badiou believes that Marx is right more than ever, but economic objectivity does not help elevate politics. Following on from this, Bosteels (2018, p. 8)

> As a diagnostic, Marx's critique of political economy may well be more valid today than yesterday, but this does not help the militant actors in the political uprisings of our time to devise the appropriate tactics and strategies for intervention. Something has entered into a profound crisis in the articulation between these two aspects or logics of Marxism, which I have called the analytical and the political and which others call the logic of capital and the logic of struggle, supposedly marked by an incommensurability overcome only by the imaginary glue of communism.

As a result of this approach, Marxism becomes a historical modality of politics for Badiou and not a philosophical question. Thus, the critique in this matter also becomes political, which turns into the question of the “validity" of Marxism today as a political ideology. If Marxism is reduced to the living knowledge and experience of political militants and defined as a historical modality of politics, and if it is not an objective science or systematic philosophy, its references can also be changed. In other words, as a political modality of politics, Badiou claims that its time is over. When Badiou says, “Marxism is not dead today, i.e., it is historically destroyed" (2018, p. 60), he means that the historical references of Marxism have been lost.

> But there is a being to this destruction. To be more precise: it is possible, and necessary, to hold oneself immanent to the destruction. The real existence of Marxism, at every stage of its development, is an immanent political given. Marxism is not a doctrine. It is the name of the One for a network made up of political practices. The view of the crisis of Marxism as the crisis of a reality ("really existing socialism") that would judge and disqualify a discourse (the Marxist doctrine) can only miss its target. Marxism for its part is indeed "really existing" only insofar as it is that with which a political subject sustains itself. The result is that the thought of the destruction of Marxism comes to be determined as the historical

> moment of a political subject. The juxtaposition of a reality and an ideology puts the lack in Marxism, but it does not permit us to think either its force or its weakness.

In its early formative phase, the Marxist political movement is neither dependent on socialist states nor on communist or social democratic parties in Europe. On the contrary, what gives life to Marxism as a political movement is its ability to draw on and engage with the political militancy of the proletariat. However, when Badiou says that Marxism is historically destroyed,[19] he does not mean the destruction of socialist regimes or their failure to create a communist society. He directly refers the lack of the capacity to create the political subject.[20]

As discussed in this chapter, dialectic is crucial for Hegel, especially for Marx, because it connects objective conditions with subjective conditions and theory with practice. By objective conditions, what is meant here is that they determine the conditions of the subject's political action, and simultaneously, these objective conditions become the basis of the subject's self-realization. However, these objective conditions are not free from contradictions, which is the reason for developing the subject's political capacity. Marx's definition of revolutionary change in the introduction to the *Critique of Political Economy*, which we quote above, refers to this point. He bases this political capacity on the contradiction in the relations of production, in which negation and dialectic find their meaning. Althusser's intervention in his study *For Marx* is to develop a simplistic overall view of the great contradiction and to show that it is more complicated than it appears. This perspective is (or was) a key aspect of policy-making in the Marxist tradition from Lenin to Mao. However, when Badiou says that Marxism has been historically destroyed, he also means that the ability to determine policy

[19] As Alberto Toscano (2007, p. 537) writes "Not only has Marxism lost its historical foothold, it no longer serves as an internal referent for nascent forms of emancipatory politics. This is what is meant by the expatriation of Marxism…".

[20] However, in *Theory of Subject* (1982) is more committed to Marxist dialectic and he tries to link "partisan political action" to "productive history of the masses". He writes (2009b, p. 27) "The whole point is to know how all this works together, because it is this working-together that is class." However, in time he gives up this aim and instead of dialectic link between masses and history, he will tend to theorize an evental politics.

based on objective conditions has also been lost. Nevertheless, Badiou remains true to the Marxist idea, as Bosteels (2011, p. 9) writes: "Throughout much of the 1990s, in particular, Lazarus and Badiou refused to tie the possibility of thinking contemporary politics to a dialectical articulation between objective and subjective conditions, or between the socioeconomic sphere and its concentration as the political act proper." In this respect, Badiou differs from the Marxist understanding of politics.

One of the main characteristics of Marxism is to explain the nature of historical change not only through a particular event but also to clarify the totality of this particular change and the circumstances surrounding the change in a dialectical relationship. Badiou, however, replaces this method of change with the event.[21] For Badiou, even though all of us know the conditions that surround the French Revolution, there is always an excess in the situation that cannot be explicable (Hewlett, 2006, pp. 385–388).

Furthermore, the convergence of economics and politics also leads to the working class being assumed as a political subject. Badiou opposes the Marxist understanding of a one-to-one correspondence of the political subject derived from economic relations. According to him, Marxist fiction of politics is no longer reproduced (Toscano, 2007). Even if Badiou still believes that the factory is a central place for politics, this does not apply to the worker as a political subject. As Badiou (2006, p. 176), in his article *Factory as an Event Site* writes,

> Reduced to its bare bones, Marxism is jointly the hypothesis of a politics of non-domination – a politics subtracted from the statist count of the count – and the designation of the most significant event sites of modernity, those whose singularity is maximal, which are worker sites. From this twofold gesture there follows that the intervening and organized experimentation of the hypothesis must ceaselessly prepare itself for the consideration of these sites, and that the worker reference is a feature of politics, without

[21] Hewlett is very critical about Badiou's this approach. As he (2006, pp. 385-386) states "most obviously, Badiou almost entirely rules out any role for the economy and when referring to the economy, perhaps tellingly, appears happy not to contest what Marx says (commenting that 'global trends have essentially confirmed some of Marx's fundamental intuitions', but simply to endorse it without however integrating it into his own work". According to Hewlett, this position weakens Badiou's theory and makes change inexplicable in other realms of society such as police or law or dominant ideology etc.

> which one has already given up subtracting oneself from the State count. That is the reason why it remains legitimate to call oneself a Marxist, if one maintains that politics is possible.

Badiou thus first recognizes that Marxism is a historical modality of politics and states that the time of this modality of politics is over. Secondly, he breaks the link between economics and politics. As Sylvain Lazarus states, this "historical mode of politics" is "saturated" (Bosteels, 2011, p. 9). So far, Badiou's critique of Marxism is a political opposition to Hegel's idea of the whole. For Badiou, from the outset, it is about the possibility of constructing a new dialectic, but after the philosophical critique, a political one is also necessary.

As Benjamin Noys (2010, pp. xi–xii) explicitly states, "… any theoretical or political project committed to a radical egalitarian politics requires a thinking of negativity if it is to be truly able to think the conditions of possibility of the change necessary to achieve that politics, and the potential forms of agency to carry out that change." Since the concept of negation is a condition of politics, it is necessary to reformulate it for a new capacity for action and political formulation. In an interview, Badiou (2008d, p. 652) acknowledges the necessity of reconceptualizing negation for a new politics "beyond the concept of a negation taken solely in its destructive and properly negative aspect" and also notes "'our contemporary need to produce a non- Hegelian category of negation.' For him, the Marxist dialectic is truly Hegelian, and negation as destruction has become an inherent part of it.[22] To put it simply, for Badiou, the negation of the dialectic becomes the whole of the dialectical process and surpasses the affirmation that excludes the emergence and creation of the new.[23]

First of all, destruction is the most radical form of negation, which does not allow that which is negated to continue to exist. There is no reconciliation between what is

[22] It should be noted that Badiou's critique of negation as destruction is a political interpretation based on praxis not a philosophical one. In this sense, Badiou offers a reading what happened in the 20th century, he doesn't make a textual reading of Marxist literature.

[23] Zizek's approach in this matter, is not a simple affirmation of Marxist tradition. He believes that the first negation is necessary to eliminate the old and the second negation as the negation of negation occurs as affirmation (Noys, 2010, p. xi).

negated and the one who negates. For Marx, revolution involves negation, such as the destruction of alienation, exploitation, etc., and the affirmation of equality, freedom, and justice to create the new. However, the dialectical relationship between negation and affirmation has shifted in favor of negation. As Badiou (2008a, pp. 652-653) writes "throughout the Marxist and Leninist revolutionary tradition of the twentieth century, the prevailing idea was that destruction alone was capable of opening a new history, founding a new man, and so on. Mao himself said: 'No construction without destruction." The idea of destruction as a precondition is rooted in seeing politics as a form of war, not a class war, but an actual war, sometimes a civil war. In this respect, politics becomes not a transgression of the law, but a war aimed at destroying the law and everything around it. While negation for Marx represents the relationship between philosophy and politics, later defined in dialectical materialism, negation over time defines the undialectical relationship between friend and foe. Thus, Badiou (2008b, p. 652) states

> I think that it is necessary, above all in the field of political action, to go beyond the concept of a negation taken solely in its destructive and properly negative aspect. Contrary to Hegel, for whom the negation of the negation produces a new affirmation, I think we must assert that today negativity, properly speaking, does not create anything new. It destroys the old, of course, but does not give rise to a new creation.

The adjustment between affirmation and negation in revolutionary politics has been lost, which has ultimately led to a focus not on constructing the new but only on eliminating the old or its remnants. This brings us to what Badiou calls a "crisis of negation." On the one side, there is a weak negation actualized in the idea of "respect for the other," and on the other side, negation in the form of war, which is appropriated by the states, not revolutionary politics (Badiou, 2009a, p. 653). Therefore, the crisis of revolutionary politics today is a problem of the dialectic of negation. In this context, Badiou first shows the impossibility of the Hegelian idea of the whole, based on the contradiction of development in a chain of negation, for a new dialectic. Secondly, he notes that the dialectic in Marxism is politically saturated and historically outdated. Under these conditions, Badiou offers a new dialectic in the form of subtraction, which, in his terminology, combines the theory of the event and truth.

2.5. Truth, Event, and Subtraction

The possibility of offering a new dialectic is twofold. One is political, and the other is philosophical. While the philosophical critique is directed at Hegel, the political one is aimed at Marxism. Badiou shows that there is no consistent whole that is symbolized under the idea of One. At the same time, however, dialectic is politically contextualized, so a new dialectical thinking and a new mode of politics are only possible if the Hegelian-Marxist version of dialectic is updated. Badiou approaches these two aspects separately but tries to link them together at the end. Badiou (2008, p. 652) writes,

> Just as the party, which was once the victorious form of insurrection, is today outdated, so too is the dialectical theory of negation. It can no longer articulate a living link between philosophy and politics. In trying to clarify the political situation, we also need to search for a new formulation of the problem of critique and negation. I think that it is necessary, above all in the field of political action, to go beyond the concept of a negation taken solely in its destructive and properly negative aspect. Contrary to Hegel, for whom negation of the negation produces a new affirmation, I think we must assert that today negativity, properly speaking, does not create anything new. It destroys the old, of course, but does not give rise to a new creation.

Political critique involves not only the linking of dialectic with destruction but also its detachment from objective conditions, i.e., social factors such as the relations of production, the place that political subjects occupy in these relations, the ideological and cultural struggle, and so on.[24] Since the dialectic expresses and reflects these relations, the revolutionary struggle aims to destroy these relations. In other words, to free itself from these relations, the revolutionary struggle is about destroying or annihilating these relations and the laws from which this struggle emerges to construct

[24] As Badiou (2015b, pp. 45–46) writes: "… the political process is not the singular expression of objective reality; it is in some sense separated from this reality. It is a process not of expression but of separation. Exactly as in the Platonic vision of dialectics, a truth is separated from opinions; or again, as in the Lacanian conception, where truth is separated from knowledge. It is thus not a contradiction, nor a negation, but a separation".

the new.[25] To put it another way, while dialectic thinking should have been the dialectic relation of negation and creation, this dialectic has lost its dialecticity and become one-sided thinking and practice. We, therefore, need a dialectic that neither submits to the law of the existing order nor can be subjected to the laws of destruction. Badiou calls this concept "subtraction," which doesn't only depend on destruction. Badiou (2008, pp. 652–653) states, "we need an originary subtraction capable of creating a new space of independence and autonomy from the dominant laws of the situation. A subtraction, therefore, is neither derived from nor a consequence of destruction as such. If we are to propose a new articulation between destruction and subtraction, we have to develop a new type of negation or critique, one that differs from the dialectical model of class struggle in its historical signification". To this end, Badiou uses the concepts of event, structure, intervention, and fidelity to avoid "totalization and the labor of negative".

If the crucial thing for dialectical thinking is to conceptualize the new, the dialectic does not depend on regularity but formulates how the new emerges as an exception in the midst of the ordinary flow of things and bodies. Badiou (2018, p. 80) formulates this idea in his pamphlet *Can Politics Be Thought* in the 1980s "dialectical thinking does not start from the rule but from the exception." Ultimately, this thinking is about connecting the dialectic with the truth and the event, which are rare. The philosophical path that Badiou has taken begins with the ontological rejection of the One and follows an interventionist ontology in the form of event and truth, emptiness in the sense of being as a contradictory multiple. In general terms, Badiou says that beings present themselves in the situation as an inconsistent multiplicity. However, this presentation, as an inconsistent multiplicity in the situation, should be made consistent through the operation of counting as one. These counting structures the situation and makes the inconsistent multiplicities consistent, which Badiou calls the state of the situation. Through counting, the situation is elevated to a structured state of the situation, the representation to a representation, and the inconsistent being to a consistent one.

[25] This feature becomes more obvious in the question of the state and revolutionary politics. The first line of this thinking is seen Marx's critiques on Paris Commune. Marx blames communards not to take state power and act as a "state". Later on, Lenin would theorize this position in his canonical study *State and Revolution.* According to Lenin, the revolutionaries have to take state power to exterminate the bourgeois state and, in this way, a true democracy can be possible. However, the problem is that Lenin remains in the mindset of the State.

Badiou shows that these operations of this simplified version of his philosophical system can be constructed ontologically through the theories of Cantor and Zermelo-Frankel. On this basis, every counting leaves aside a surplus, which Badiou calls emptiness and takes place at the edge of the state of the situation. As Hallward (1998, p. 94) states, “in more general terms, then, the event — regardless of "what happens"— is what ontology excludes. The event is "supernumerary," in a wholly "numerical" ontological scale.” An event simply interrupts the situation's laws, rules, and structure, which creates new possibilities. In other words, the event does not destroy evental site but creates a rupture that creates autonomy outside of the state. Badiou (2012, p. 164) says, “for Paul the event is the resurrection of Christ, and this event does not directly change anything in the Roman Empire. So, the general situation, which is the Roman Empire, remains the same. But inside the situation there is the opening of a new possibility by the event”.

The event then turns out to be a subtraction of the excess in the state of the situation and occurs as a transgression of the law. Moreover, truth is also subtracted from objective knowledge by the affirmation of the subject. In this respect, subtraction is characterized by four primary operations, which, for Badiou, cannot be reduced to one another: the undecidable, the unknowable, the general, and finally, the unnameable. Each of these characteristics refers to the trajectory of the truth event. For example, Badiou (2008a, pp. 114–118) defines undecidable as “any statement that subtracts itself from the norm we can call undecidable.” Following that, he adds, “I have said that the undecidable is a subtraction from a norm of evaluation and that the indiscernible is a subtraction from the mark of a difference. Let’s add that the generic is an infinite subtraction from any subsumption of the multiple within the One of the concept”. Subtraction thus differs here from negation in that it does not first reach wholeness, but separates itself from that which is represented as “whole”. Secondly, unlike negation, subtraction has no objective content, and since it is a separation from knowledge, it cannot be verified, or no objective content can be used to verify it. This is what Badiou means when he calls it undecidable. Finally, subtraction here connects affirmation and destruction and constructs a connection. Destruction is not a necessary process of truth and cannot be a compelling feature. Badiou (2012, p. 165) writes

> So there is something really undialectical about this logic, because we do not start with the creativity of negation as such, even if the site of negativity is certainly included in the consequences of something that is affirmative. And I think this alternative logic holds particularly in view of recent history, from the late 60s to today. Important events such as the dissolution of the Soviet Union suggest the necessity of a new conception of political development. My book on Paul was written ultimately to propose a clear example of this new logic, that is, a new logic for all truth procedures, and thus for those in the political field as well.[26]

This logic ultimately structures politics differently. First of all, Badiou's theory of politics departs from the classical dialectical scheme of revolutionary politics, which aims to seize state power. Therefore, politics is, first and foremost, an escape from this domination and the revelation of the surplus hidden in the state of the situation because, for Badiou, politics revolves around the singularity of the surplus in the situation. What is subtracted is this excess and the excess of domination by the state and representation. Simply put, subtraction is a dialectical relation between two different excesses. As Toscano (2004, p. 210) writes, "it follows from this dialectics of two excesses -the infra-representative excess of singularity and the supra-representative one of the excrescent State – that no politics of non-domination can be founded on the proposal of a new order with which to substitute the old. Not the figure of a new bond, but the invention -extracted from the singularity of an event and directed at the structure of representation- of an experiment in political unbinding, is what, according to Badiou, politics of non-domination requires". Subtractive politics, in that sense, is articulated in the event. Trott (2015, p. 64) expresses that "the event is the rupture from the situation that presents what constitutively could not be presented before and, in this sense, is subtraction".[27] The event first breaks up what is presented as a "whole"; it creates a rupture to reveal the surplus. The subtraction acts as a separation from the whole, a place "outside of the structure of the given order, whether

[26] Badiou (2008a, p. 52) writes in his study *Conditions "*The final question is that of the truth, or of the Idea or Notion, whose advent supposes schemas of rupture and singularization that cannot be rendered solely by a negative dialectic".

[27] As discusses above the inexistence of the whole opens the possibility for thinking a new form of dialectic. The inexistence of the whole is at the same time "subtraction or the break from what is possible because of the inexistence of the whole. Because the whole is not, a process of showing the point of its disruption is possible; that process is subtraction" (2015, p. 64).

of language, politics, or set theoretical mathematics" (2015, p. 64). The event of truth as subtraction is not the reconfiguration of totality as negation but the interruption of the logic that structures the whole. The reflection of subtraction in politics opens up a way in which representation is eliminated, and the subject can exist as a pure presentation.[28] Hallward (1998, p. 92) writes, "In other words, the goal remains 'the end of representation [the end of the metastructure], and the universality of simple presentation' EE125), the freedom of elements without the coercive integration of their combinations, a free and equal belonging without forced inclusions".

Moreover, the subtractive dialectic is not derived from objective conditions. As we recall, the expressive dialectic in Marx is a transition from the abstract to the concrete and so on. Politics, in this sense, focuses on contradiction in the concrete, and the purpose of revolutionary politics is to destroy the objective conditions under which the subject arises. In other words, revolutionary politics is based on the social. However, the politics of subtraction in this way is contingent since it has yet to be known what the surplus is in the condition of the situation. Moreover, for Badiou, politics becomes an axiomatic prescription not derived from or verifiable by social conditions. Badiou writes

> … political decision tears itself away from any dialectic of the subjective and the objective. No, it is not a matter of leading to action a consciousness of what there is, of changing, through reflection and operation, necessity into liberty. There is no passage here from the in-itself to the for-itself. The beginning, under its evental injunction, is pure declaration (quoted in Hallward, 2005, p. 772).

The meaning of this detachment of politics from objective conditions is the politics of equality or radical politics is not the way of organizing goods or the idea of dividing these goods. Nor can politics be reduced to or derived from the conditions of the

[28] The reflection of this in revolutionary politics is to question the role of communist party as the sole representative of the working class.

situation. It is a regulating hypothesis, "A pure point of departure" (Hallward, 2005, p. 773), that guides politics.[29]

The last point is why the subtractive dialectic differs from the expressive dialectic regarding the meaning of negation. The tension between the idea of subtraction and the dialectic of negation is rooted in the contradiction between affirmation and destruction. For Badiou, negation involves both destruction and affirmation, but as already mentioned, the classical understanding of negation becomes exclusively destruction, theoretically and practically. In other words, destruction is necessary for the creation of the new; disruption of what is (was) present must occur. While destruction is the negative part of negation, for Badiou (2012a, p. 269) "… 'affirmation', the affirmative part of the negation, because if a creation is reducible to a negation of the common laws of objectivity…" In this division of negation into affirmation and destruction, subtraction has become the affirmative part of negation since it emerges as new. However, when affirmation is reduced to negating the objective conditions of the situation or laws, it is reduced to destruction, where the destruction of the old seems to suffice to create the new. If we look at the truth event, truth in this formulation appears to be the negation of the situation; it reveals the hidden and subtracts the excess. In this sense, the truth event has a negative and destructive relationship with the world. At the same time, however, it also has an affirmative relationship since it is a consequence of this world and not the exterior of this world. As Badiou (2008c, p. 1878) says, "a truth is a transgression of the law. "Transgression" first signifies that a truth depends on the law, and second is nevertheless a negation of the law." I think it is necessary to make a lengthy quotation from Oliver Feltham (2008, pp. xxviii–xxix) to translate the practical consequences of the dialectic of subtraction

> We can also understand the practicality of Badiou's conception as the result of his subtraction of praxis from any form of the One—thus repeating the fundamental gesture of his ontology: the One of historical determinism (the dialectic of the class struggle); the One of eschatology (the ideal or goal of a classless society); and the One of a privileged and

[29] The separation of politics has deeper meanings for politics in terms of the idea of the subject and furthermore history, and lastly the question of violence. These subjects will be argued in the next chapter.

> necessary agent (the proletariat as the subject of history). The results of these three subtractions from the One are: first, that generic truth procedures may take any number of historical forms; second, that they are infinite and do not possess a single goal or limit; and finally, that any subject whatsoever may carry out the work of the enquiries.

Thus, for Badiou, subtraction is distinguished from expressive dialectic and negation by the latter's dependence on objective conditions, the idea of negation and destruction, and finally, by its connection with the place of the event. Badiou's aim for this distinction can be defined as follows:

1. *Politics cannot be derived from objective conditions, and objective conditions do not create a political subject.* By decoupling politics from objective conditions, Badiou first seems to weaken the political struggle or the organization of people around political concerns and to break the link between expressive dialectic, politics, and objective conditions. Most importantly, Badiou thus conceptualizes politics as a singular field of practice that cannot be reduced to economics or culture, and politics cannot be defined in terms of the gains of objective conditions. Similarly it cannot be measured or the political event cannot be verified by the change or improvement of objective conditions. Badiou, as an advocate of communist politics, believes that the impact and greatness of the idea of communism lies not in the way in which goods are distributed or in which the program for a new society is created but, on the contrary, in the faith and fascination that this idea arouses in people, as in the case of St. Paul in the resurrection of Christ.

2. *Politics is not the goal of achieving the whole but of subtracting from this whole. The whole does not exist, and attempting to achieve this in politics is futile.* As already stated, an alternative is only possible by accepting that the whole does not exist. Still, the expressive dialectic in Hegelian usage or Marxist application depends on the idea of the totality of the One. Whereas in Hegel, the whole represents the ethos of the historical mode, in Marx, the One such as capital is raised and expressed as a universal

constructive idea - which is - on the operation of counting so that Marxist politics aim to replace this One with another One such as the party. As a result, the problem remains the same. Politics becomes the field of constructing ties such as borders, citizenships or identities, etc., to structure individuals. The aim of emancipatory politics, however, is, first and foremost, the emancipation from these ties and the One. For this reason, Badiou offers a subtractive dialectic that allows us to remain connected to this world and gain autonomy at the same time.

3. *The dialectic is not a legitimate source of destruction, thus negation without affirmation is pure destruction.* The dialectic cannot be conceived or seen as a legitimizing source of destruction to achieve the new by deriving it from objective conditions. Without an affirmative relation to the idea of negation, politics turns into a reorganization of destruction without any novelty. So, what is needed for politics before destruction is the affirmation that subjects follow the idea that Badiou calls truth.

To make a long story short, the long line of the politics of negation, based on a single great contradiction that has its roots in Hegel and has been adopted by Marxist politics, is today historically obsolete, not only because its temporal modality has been lost, but also because the references on which it is based have been lost. Moreover, the metaphysical fiction of the One follows emancipatory politics as a shadow and reduces the problem of the destruction of capitalism. Badiou's objections and critiques pave the way for radical politics to be rethought, not only in the idea of radical politics but also in how to rethink politics. In the next chapter, we will discuss the problem of history and the subject, another pillar of radical politics.

CHAPTER 3

3. HISTORY AND POLITICS

3.1. Introduction

> In *Théorie du Sujet*, I introduced the thesis that History does not exist. It was a matter of refuting the vulgar Marxist conception of the meaning of history. Within the abstract framework which is that of this book, the same idea is found in the following form: there are in situation evental sites, but there is no evental situation. We can think the historicity of certain multiples, but we cannot think a History. The practical—political—consequences of this conception are considerable, because they set out a differential topology of action. The idea of an overturning whose origin would be a state of a totality is imaginary. Every radical transformational action originates in a point, which, inside a situation, is an evental site (Badiou, 2007a, p. 176).

We already mentioned that our research question is how an idea keeps its existence when the idea has lost its historical and theoretical referents -which doesn't mean the theory is wrong, but it means that the theory has not been a source of the praxis of emancipatory politics-. In the previous chapter, we discussed that dialectic, which has been one of the key referents for radical politics in the past two centuries, is outdated today. Following Badiou, instead of the possibility of thinking politics as a result of the transformation of objective conditions to subjective acts and destruction of these objective conditions, we argued thinking and practicing politics in terms of subtraction and affirmation, i.e., not focusing on the destruction of the old but following the new. History, too, is a referential concept, much like dialectic, shaping radical politics for the last two centuries. To put it another way, the idea of history is another suture for politics in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The concept of time was reformulated in nineteenth-century philosophy. This formulation was actually in search of answers to two problems. While the first was the concept of history, the

second was the problem of death. In this sense, the question of how historical time should be understood was an essential problem in modern philosophy (Osborne, 1995, p. 5) since explaining the emerging modern politics and the disappearance of old historical structures was the underlying reason for resorting to the concept of history.. In other words, the problem of the concept of history was to describe the dialectical link between the emergence of the new and the disappearance of the past. The modern revolutions were the political events that needed to be understood in this historical flow. Thus, whether history has a predetermined course and the role of historical knowledge in understanding these revolutions was one of the most critical issues in modern philosophy. Revolutions are the harbinger of a new society, and history is the primary source of understanding it. Thus, for Marx and Hegel, it was the idea of history that legitimized revolutions simply because for both philosophers the revolutions were inevitable in the course of history. In this sense, the suturing of modern politics to the concept of history is twofold: the concept of history as a field of legitimizing and justifying politics, and the field of history to derive the knowledge of politics from it. The position that Badiou will criticize is centered on these two points.

Therefore, in this chapter, I will discuss Hegel's, Marx's, and Badiou's ideas of history, respectively, but not in isolation, but through their relations and responses to each other. In the first section, I will discuss how Hegel integrates the modern idea of history into his philosophy. In the following section, I will discuss Marx's critique of Hegel. As stated in the first part, I argue that here, the constitutive character of the criticism rather than an objection comes to the fore, and Marx constitutes his philosophy of history. We will begin the last section with Badiou's criticisms of Hegel and Marx. Here, Badiou's critique goes beyond Hegel and Marx and is directed against modern political fiction. We will then discuss how Badiou situates the concept of truth in the relation between politics and history.

I follow this sequence because Hegel made the idea of history one of the founding elements of modern politics. Marx, as we will discuss below, is critical, but his criticism is limited to how the idea of history is derived. This critique is not directed at the nature of the relationship between modern politics and history, which in the

following century set the framework for radical politics and, at the same time, influenced the praxis of radical politics. Although critiques of this framework emerged in the mid-1960s, I argue that Badiou offers the most robust alternative to this framework. Therefore, since this historical and theoretical line is based on the critiques that these three philosophers addressed to each other, I have followed this critical line in this chapter. This method will reveal to us the difference between the political imagination at the founding moment of modern politics and today.

3.2. Hegel and History of Philosophy

In his book *History of Philosophy*, Hegel deals with philosophizing history as a subject matter of thought more than historiography, which is understood as a combination of historical deeds and historical narration. Hegel's method to philosophize history allows him to unite the particular with the universal and the objective with the subjective. Suppose we define the subjective side of history as an act of individual reflection of self-consciousness. In that case, the objective side will be the knowledge that leads to such an action at a historical point. However, to combine them has its difficulties. The subjective side, as Marx calls the active side, refers to praxis since human action changes the flow and becomes the moving force of history. Knowledge of history and understanding what exactly had happened binds the objective side to the subjective side because knowing and understanding are already conditions of intervention to history (Blanchette, 1983, p. 90). As Blanchette (1983, p. 90) states, "the two sides of the meaning of the term 'history' are forever running into one another in a mutual interplay of theory and practice". Hegel prefers to narrate the objective side of history in terms of the footsteps of the Spirit toward freedom. Hegel (2001, p. 33) explains this idea "the History of the world is none other than the progress of the consciousness of Freedom; a progress whose development according to the necessity of its nature, it is our business to investigate". A few pages later, he states again: "We have spoken of the Idea of Freedom as the nature of Spirit *(Geist),* and the absolute goal of History". In other words, "history is the development of Spirit in time" (Cassirer, 1974, p. 255).

Until Hegel, Enlightenment thinkers in general and Kant in particular considered history along with the idea of progress which promised a future with a better social order, laws, and humanity. Even though Hegel inherited the idea of progress, he would not hesitate to criticize the Kantian understanding of time-subject relations in terms of homogenous, empty time, and deontological subjects. However, the French Revolution inescapably has an impact on the Hegelian philosophy as much as Kant's political philosophy.[30] In other words, the idea that is actual becomes concrete in the existent time and history as temporal changes flow through the direction of this self-realization (Taylor 1999: 395, Hemming 2013: 61). In that regard, Hegel was the first to historicize the subject by putting him into an actual historical period. Furthermore, this history consists of different historical modes reflecting the idea of Reason. As Hegel (2001, p. 12) states, "The only thought which philosophy brings with it, regarding history, is the simple thought of Reason—the thought that Reason rules the world, and that world history has therefore been rational in its course. This conviction and insight are a presupposition concerning history as such, although it is not a presupposition in philosophy itself". To put it another way, in Hegel, the idea of history has its own logic – a telos- that proceeds into modern philosophy. In the end, this logic actualizes itself through politics. What Hegel does through linking history with reason is to suture history and politics.

By attributing a reason and order to history, reason becomes the sovereign of the world and his conceptualization of history transforms into a process with consciousness which realizes its own goals.[31] A he (2001, p. 12) notes, "the only thought which philosophy brings with it, in regard to history, is the simple thought of Reason—the

[30] Ritter (1982, p. 46) in his essay on Hegel and the French Revolution states that "For Hegel, the French Revolution is that event around which all the determinations of philosophy in relation to its time are clustered, with philosophy marking out the problem through attacks on and defenses of the Revolution. Conversely, there is no other philosophy that is a philosophy of revolution to such a degree and so profoundly, in its innermost drive, as that of Hegel". Furthermore, Hegel different than Kant, had the chance to witness the *Black Jacobin* Revolution which was a rabble against slavery in Haiti. For the effects of Haiti Revolution on Hegel see: Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti and Universal History*, (2009).

[31] Marx will object both of the arguments of Hegel's. He will argue that history has an order but not a goal and according to him history does not own a consciousness to actualize itself (Hook, 1994, pp. 38–39). We will discuss this subject in the next part.

thought that Reason rules the world, and that world history has therefore been rational in its course" and he adds (2001, pp. 12-13) adds "just as Reason is its own presupposition and absolute goal, so it is the activation of that goal in world history—bringing it forth from the inner source to external manifestation, not only in the natural universe but also in the spiritual". For Hegel, actual history becomes a reflection of reason; in this regard, what defines history is the idea of Spirit. Reason is not historical fact. On the contrary, it is what make a rational whole (Marcuse, 1954, p. 224). The consequences of this Hegelian idea about history are essential since the idea of history and, at the same time, the reason for history can be instrumentalized in politics. The first usage of history for politics is for legitimizing political deeds and identifying political purposes and ideals with the reason of history is well known as if history takes sides. In other words, it is supposed that history flows in a certain direction as a result of a certain logic or relationship. The second one is that history becomes a courtroom for judging who is right and who is wrong. The last one is which is common point between modern and enlightenment thinkers, history is conceptualized in one direction, always moving progressively toward a better future. These three narratives shaped around the idea of history will be important in determining modern politics, including revolutionary emancipatory politics. In other words, placing the idea of history as an active side of politics results in a path that enables the discussion of the means and the ends. Actualization of history, i.e., realizing the ends, becomes a critical purpose and an ideal rather than discussing means .[32] Thus, it can be seen that there is a naïve belief in history in modern politics, which ended in converting the idea of history into a battlefield.[33] However, the reason in history is an internal feature that was not exposed. In this manner, it must be interpreted, possessed, and publicized. It must be shown that the historical changes of world history are parallel to political progress. Hegel operates the idea of Spirit to explain changes in history. As he (2001, p. 58) writes

[32] It can be said that leftist and rightist versions of the usage of this idea can be found. In this text, we will discuss its leftist versions.

[33] Susan Buck Morss' (2000) *Dreamworld and Catastrophe : The Passing of Mass Utopia in East and West* is a great example how history turned into an ideological battleground in the 20th century between Soviet Bloc and the West.

> The principle of development also implies that there is an inner determination, an implicitly presupposed ground that is to bring itself into existence. In its essence, this formal determination is Spirit, which uses world history as its theater, its property, and the field of its actualization. Spirit does not toss itself about in the external play of chance occurrences; on the contrary, it is that which determines history absolutely, and it stands firm against the chance occurrences which it dominates and exploits for its own purpose.

For Hegel, world history is a march to freedom, parallel to the march of Spirit. In other words, the meaning of the Spirit is exposed through the rise of freedom. The sense of politics for Hegel is to construct and actualize the conditions of freedom while the Spirit embodies itself in objective and subjective consciousness. Hegel defines Spirit as "essence that is in and for itself, and which is at the same time actual as consciousness and aware of itself, this is Spirit" (1977, p. 263) but it does not fall from thin air.[34] For Hegel, Spirit occurs through the movement of history, and historical development occurs through dialectic. Therefore, according to Taylor, "thus Geist cannot exist simply, Hegel would say 'immediately'. It can exist only by overcoming its opposite. It can exist only by negating its own negation" (Taylor, 1999, p. 104). In other words, Spirit exists and gets new forms through historical contradictions. Contradictions arise when the existent state of affairs opposes people's ideas in a particular historical age or as a sort of inner contradiction like in the case of the master-slave dialectic. In other words, the forms challenged by the ideas of the historical age are destined to be removed by the new ones. The experience becomes a crucial aspect of the contradiction since the subject experiences these contradictions in daily life. The contradiction between experience and consciousness also causes dialectic of negation again. As Taylor (1999, p. 145) argues, "in Hegelian language, our attempt to grasp things in knowledge first negates them as particulars; then, negating this negation, we recover them by grasping them through mediated conceptual consciousness. The immediate is negated, but it is retained in mediated form". Dialectic of negation due to the contradictions between experience and consciousness binds Spirit to the subjects since Spirit needs to realize itself. However, this realization of Spirit is possible

[34] It should be noted that Hegel's theory of Spirit depends on the idea of Subject, which relies on Herder's expressionism where the subjects actualize themselves through life at the same time by reflecting Spirit. The condition of expression of self is freedom and freedom is not possible without self-consciousness (Taylor, 2021, pp. 38–52).

through the development of consciousness of freedom, as Marcuse claims. He (1954, p. 231) states that

> The universal law of history is, in Hegel's formulation, not simply progress to freedom, but progress 'in the self-consciousness of freedom.' A set of historical tendencies becomes a law only if man comprehends and acts on them. Historical laws, in other words, originate and are actual only in man's conscious practice, so that if, for instance, there is a law of progress to ever higher forms of freedom, it ceases to operate if man fails to recognize and execute it.

Hegel always defends the link and unity between Spirit and the actual world as the condition of freedom. Thus, the essence of Spirit finds its reflection on self-consciousness, and in this way, it achieves its practical embodiment. However, this does not mean that Spirit is identified with man, but it "must thus embody itself in finite beings." Man's expressive actions actualize the ethical essence of the Spirit, but this does not mean that the subject loses his autonomy. On the contrary, as Taylor says (1999, p. 48),[35]

> Our conception of spirit and its self-realization must have a place for reason if man is to be the vehicle of cosmic spirit and yet retain his autonomy. This is the central insight which Hegel alone of his generation saw in full clarity and worked out to its full conclusion. Without it, the Romantics either fell into the despair of exile in a God-forsaken world, or recovered unity with nature and God only in the twilight zone of intuition and fantasy.

The issue here is that contradiction arises between consciousness and experience and man as the vehicle of the Spirit- bringing forward the problems of historical formations and philosophy of history. According to Blanchet, the reason for Hegel's differentiation of world stages based on the development of Spirit is not a priori conception of the development of Spirit. As Blanchet (1983, p. 94) states, "he has seen different forms of the state, each of which is the embodiment of spirit, appear in succession, starting from where only one is free…" Thus, Hegel constructs a

[35] A quiet striking comment is made by Taylor elsewhere in the same text. He (1999, p. 40) says, "a real unity of subject and object can only come about if nature is an expression of subjectivity in its own right, as it were, an independent spiritual reality which can come of its own to realize its unity with freedom" which conceptualizes unity as the condition of freedom.

relationship between Spirit and self-consciousness, and in the case of a mismatch of these two, a contradiction arises, which forces change. In other words, for Hegel, a change is inevitable when objective conditions no longer reflect self-consciousness. As Marcuse (1954, p. 231) expresses, "the higher phase, however, is finally to be reached; every obstacle on the road to freedom is surmountable, given the efforts of a self-conscious mankind". Hegel's Spirit also opens a part of the concept of world history, aiming to fulfill the idea of Spirit.

For Hegel, universal history is the development of the consciousness of freedom through the Spirit.[36] Thus, Hegel's idea is distinguished from Kantian universal history in two ways: First, the movement of history is not a movement of nature but freedom. Second, it is not a secret plan of nature, but it can be known for a reason (Blanchette, 1983, p. 93). Hegel's interest in universal history is to follow the footsteps of the Spirit and how the idea of freedom actualizes itself. It would be right to state that what Hegel sees in History is the co-movement of the Reason and self-consciousness of the freedom. In other words, the idea of history does not present the movement of the Spirit and conditions freedom to a predetermined ultimate goal; possibilities are born through contradictions. Marcuse (1954, p. 224) "The teleological character of history (if indeed history has such) can only be a conclusion from an empirical study of history and cannot be assumed a priori". In other words, Hegel's idea of history is determined but not anticipated. For Hegel, successive stages of the Spirit throughout history emerge only by transcending the previous form, but the new is only a possibility not written before. As Hegel (2001, pp. 79–80) says,

> The logical, and — as still more prominent — the dialectical nature of the Idea in general, viz. that it is self determined — that it assumes successive forms which it successively transcends; and by this very process of transcending its earlier stages gains an affirmative, and, in fact, a richer and more concrete shape; — this necessity of its nature, and the necessary series of pure abstract forms which the Idea successively assumes — is exhibited in the department of Logic. Here we need adopt only one of its

[36] It should be noted that freedom for Hegel is not something to be given but something to be achieved. To put it simply there is no *a priori* definition of freedom of what it should be. The subject recognizes freedom in his self-consciousness and reflection of the idea of freedom in the World-History (Blanchette, 1983, pp. 93–95) As he (1983, p. 95) writes "in the strong sense of the term, freedom is beginning of history".

> results, viz. that every step in the process, as differing from any other, has its determinate peculiar principle.

So, what Hegel says about the pre-determined principle is that it is not the result but the method of how history moves what the idea contains and how it is actualized. As Avineri (1972, p. 221) says, "the only necessity in historical development is that of freedom's progress towards self-realization in human consciousness, and the unfolding of reason in history is itself a philosophical necessity". For that reason, Hegel's philosophical perspective on the idea of history is not solely determined by the idea of objective freedom, but it needs subjectivation. Hegel (2001, p. 478) states clearly that point by saying that "— for the History of the World is nothing but the development of the Idea of Freedom. But Objective Freedom — the laws of real Freedom — demand the subjugation of the mere contingent Will — for this is in its nature formal". Based on Hegel's account of History, it can be averred that the idea of History is the combination of two meanings. As Hegel (2001, p. 76) says

> In our language the term History unites the objective with the subjective side, and denotes quite as much the historia rerum gestarum, as the res gestae themselves; on the other hand it comprehends not less what has happened, than the narration of what has happened. This union of the two meanings we must regard as of a higher order than mere outward accident; we must suppose historical narrations to have appeared contemporaneously with historical deeds and events. It is an internal vital principle common to both that produces them synchronously.

Similarly, Marcuse draws attention to this issue. According to him (1954, p. 229) "This double universality, subjective and objective, characterizes the historical world wherein man unfolds his life. History, as the history of the thinking subject, is of necessity universal history (Weltgeschichte) just because 'it belongs to the realm of Mind' (Spirit)." For this matter, the concepts of world history and subject link objective conditions and subjective consciousness together to understand the actual. In general, the march to freedom objectively and the defense of freedom subjectively, as well as the unity of both, consists of the ethos of an age. At the same time, this provides the opportunity to think about philosophy and history, precisely what Hegel does. In this unity, history refers to the past –what happened before- and philosophy refers to the present (Bosteels, 2009). What makes the Hegelian idea of history a powerful source

of political ideas is the unity of the objective and the subjective in itself, not only for the past but also for the present. So, history presents a way to actualize itself in the future that connects to the universal idea.[37] This does not mean that the Idea will perfectly match the actuality. As Simoniti (2020, p. 223) emphasizes "the objective of Hegelian idealization is not to produce an ontological force which will coerce reality into corresponding to it… In the same vein, Hegel's concept neither mirrors the world as it is nor projects its ideal from it…". The mutuality between ideality and actuality should not direct us to search for how much ideal is captured in reality but the unity of both. In this sense, the crucial point is how the objective and the subjective are dialectically interrelated. In this schema, one without the other is missing. The objective without subjugation will remain in the consciousness, only in the consciousness, and the subjective without the objective will need brute force to actualize itself. According to Schecter, Hegel accepts that his predecessors have achieved the idea that all objectivity is subjectivity. However, what distinguishes Hegel is that he also places subjectivity into the socio-historical context, i.e., changing forms of life, which means that consciousness "is mediated by objectivity in the guises of history and society…" (2012, p. 267). The consequences of this conceptualization of the Hegelian idea of history are significant for politics. First of all, the Hegelian projection shows that the idea of politics solely relying on the subject's will does not result in a significant change since objective conditions are not mature for this change. In other words, this Hegelian perspective brings structural dimension to politics in which subjective and objective conditions encounter.[38] This issue brings the Hegelian idea of history to the problem of actualization since Hegel never thought of history as a pure imaginary construction.

Indeed, Hegel discusses this issue in *The Phenomenology of Spirit* in in relation with self-consciousness. He (1977, pp. 121–122) says, "the freedom of self-consciousness

[37] I will return to this point when I discuss how much debt Marx owes to Hegel to formulate his idea of communism and how Marx differentiates himself from Hegel. Furthermore, this thought will return in our discussion of Badiou, too.

[38] Marx and revolutionary politics are mainly determined by this idea. To put it other words, Marx openly accepts that man cannot make history as they wish and furthermore the vanguard party functions as a mediatory between the subjective and objective conditions as we will discuss in the next chapter.

is indifferent to natural existence and has therefore let this equally go free: the reflection is a twofold one. Freedom in thought has only pure thought as its truth, a truth lacking the fullness of life. Hence, freedom in thought, too, is only the Notion of freedom, not the living reality of freedom itself". The example in his mind when he argues the difference between the notion of freedom and the living reality of freedom is Stoics. To put it another way, Stoics for Hegel is the picture of unhappy consciousness and this one-sidedness of freedom. For Hegel, the self always exists within a community and has a relation with the others since this is the only way to satisfy his desire and be free. This also brings us to the idea of dialectic of negation since living with others also brings the negation of the others. However, in the case of Stoics, negation is replaced by duplication. He (1977, p. 127) writes

> … in Stoicism, self- consciousness is the simple freedom of itself. In Scepticism, this freedom becomes a reality, negates the other side of determinate existence, but really duplicates itself, and now knows itself to be a duality. Consequently, the duplication which formerly was divided between two individuals, the lord and the bondsman, is now lodged in one. The duplication of self-consciousness within itself, which is essential in the Notion of Spirit, is thus here before us, but not yet in its unity: the Unhappy Consciousness is the consciousness of self as a dual-natured, merely contradictory being.

Stoic freedom from the Hegelian perspective is incomplete because of its inability to actualize freedom in social life through juridical institutions and political structures. The failure of the Stoics to complete their freedom is a result of a lack of unity between the practical and the theoretical (Taylor, 1999, p. 158). What is seen in the example of Stoics on the matter of freedom is a judgment based on the dialectical relation of the theoretical and the practical. The contradiction between these two allows us to use the dialectic of negation to understand the history of Stoics as a part of universal history. The contradiction between the practical and theoretical leads to negation from one to another, so movement and progress emerge.[39] However, in the case of the absence, one of the terms leads to a non-dialectical reflection of the Idea.

[39] Alberto Toscano (2008, pp. 28-29) defines such a relation between history and dialectic in Hegel as the "cumulative completion and resolution" which ignores innovation and failures. Put differently, what we encounter is a theological circularity.

Hegel would return to this debate in his text *Elements Philosophy of Right* simply because the right will be the actualization of the idea, and the subject would be the one who put it into practice. Hegel (2005, p. 21) states that "the idea of right is freedom, which, if it is to be apprehended truly, must be known both in its conception and in the embodiment of the conception". The actual in Hegelian terms cannot be sustained without the subject. For Hegel, in both subject and Spirit, this actualization combines his philosophical ideas on the unity of the universal and singular and dialectic. As Kouvelakis (2018, p. 39) expresses, "the real cannot maintain itself as such unless subjective activity takes place within it – through, not least, the elaboration of objectivity in the moment of particularity: 'the individual does not invent his content, but merely activates the substantial content which is already present within him. But this universal substance which every individual must translate into activity [is] an activity by which the whole of ethical life is sustained". Following Kouvelakis, it can be said that for Hegel, the lack of such a mediation, in other words, actualization of subjective ideals, causes a fury of destruction, which Hegel calls negative freedom, as in the case of the French Revolution. He (2001, p. 31) says, "negative freedom is actuated by a mere solitary abstract idea, whose realization is nothing but the fury of desolation". His definition of negative freedom in this manner depends on its one-sidedness, similar to Hindus, in which freedom exists only in consciousness as a notion (Hegel, 2001, pp. 31–32). Hegel was aware of the political consequences of his philosophy of history. First of all, Hegel, by offering a dialectic relation between objective and subjective, tried to overcome the problem of the legitimacy of sovereignty, which was a critical discussion a century ago. In that regard, the subject who presents himself as the agent of the objective conditions would have the chance to legitimize political actions.

Furthermore, in this way, it is possible to construct an organic society, and a state raises upon this society and actualizes the society in its body. To put it another way, Hegel provides an opportunity to build a dynamic politics shaped between universalism and particularism. On the other hand, Marx will present a different perspective, which simultaneously contains affirmations and oppositions to Hegel. However, Marx, later on Marxist radical politics, adapted the Hegelian idea of the philosophy of history into

politics since it brings a powerful ground. In the next part, we will discuss how Marx revolutionized the Hegelian theory of history and adapted it to revolutionary politics.

3.3. Marx and History as a Battlefield

Marx's argument in his *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (1978, p. 53), "The basis of irreligious criticism is this: man makes religion; religion does not make man. Religion is indeed man's self-consciousness and self-awareness so long as he has not found himself or has lost himself again" also fits as a critique of Hegel's idea of history. Although not in these exact words, Marx uses a similar thesis concerning the idea of history. Thus, one could read the very sentence by replacing the notion of religion with history: "The basis of irreligious criticism is: Man makes history, history does not make man". However, as famously known, Marx (2009, p. 1) would then immediately make his reservation in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*: "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please in circumstances they choose for themselves; rather they make it in present circumstances, given and inherited". Therefore contrary to Hegel who reduced man to a passive subject in terms of the carrier of Spirit, Marx implies that man and history are always in the process of a reciprocal making. Despite his strong criticism of the Hegelian conception of history, it is surprising that for Hegel and Marx, history is what legitimizes political revolutions. This path opened by Hegel, ascribing such power and role to history, finds its echo in Marx and continues to influence Marxist thought throughout the 20th century.

Marx first criticizes the concept and then reconstructs it as he did with the Hegelian dialectic. In this sense, his approach to history is no different. Marx continued Hegelian perspective of thinking history as a "totality with a definite trend, combining past and future in a living unity" and a "goal towards which the endeavour of the whole of humanity in history were directed" (Fleisher, 1973, p. 16). Marx would walk in another path to show how history is the embodiment of another narration, definitely not freedom like in Hegel. Thus, in this part, I will first argue how Marx criticizes Hegel's conceptualization of history to reformulate his own understanding. Then, I

will discuss how he expands his notion of history by combining it with political economy and how he politicizes history. At the end of these discussions, I aim to explain how Marx sutured history into radical politics.

3.3.1. Marx's Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of History

As the follower of the Enlightenment philosophers, Hegel was an in-between philosopher of his age. The Enlightenment philosophers had found themselves in the clash between feudal society, monarchies, and rising bourgeois society in which the bourgeois as a class could present themselves as the defender of the universal interest of the society. In that sense, the French Revolution was the culmination point of this struggle. However, in the case of Hegel, at least in his time, the consequences of the French Revolution, were ambiguous in the long run. Furthermore, Hegel was slightly blind in interpreting the results of rising capitalism. Even though he was particularly interested in Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, he argues that newly arising inequalities in society could unbalance peace among the classes. However, Hegel failed to define the problem precisely because it was brand-new to his generation. In that regard, he put his faith in the idea of history that Spirit and the state will eventually realize itself by embracing the whole. However, the first thing Marx criticizes in Hegel is his naïve faith in history. Marx and Engels (1956, p. 125) criticize this faith in *Holy Family as such:* "History does nothing, it 'possesses no immense wealth', it 'wages no battles'. It is human beings, real, living human beings who do all that, who possess and fight; 'history' is not, as it were, a person apart, using a human being as a means to achieve its own aims; history is nothing but the activity of human beings pursuing their aims." However, Marx and Engels abandoned the idea of history as a self-realized idea, as if it had its own consciousness and aims to actualize. In other words, similar to the notion of dialectic, Marx stresses that Hegel was trapped in the idealist circle in the case of history since, for Marx, when Hegel refers to man, it is not actual man but the reflection of the thought. So is the idea of history. Marx (2007, p. 145) wrote in his early writings for this issue

> But because Hegel has conceived the negation of the negation from the point of view of the positive relation inherent in it as the true and only

> positive, and from the point of view of the negative relation inherent in it as the only true act and self-realizing act of all being, he has only found the abstract, logical, speculative expression for the movement of history; and this historical process is not yet the real history of man-of man as a given subject, but only man's act of genesis-the story of man's origin.

This does not mean that Marx leaves aside the totalized and linear idea of history with a secret meaning. On the contrary, as in the case of dialectic, the concept of history needs to be reconstructed, i.e., reinvented. History should be saved from its idealistic turn and understood under the light of man's actions in the conditions in which they find themselves. As Fleisher (1973, p. 79) states, "History is a result, having no inherent 'meaning' of its own, and in particular no meaning in relation to any ultimate goal of its own; it is a dimension of the action of men who reproduce their life and also their socialization in possibly altered form". With this line of thought, Marx, different than Hegel, opened a path for subjectivity and praxis, which were passive and reflective in Hegel. But which men and under what kind of conditions? The answers to these questions determine the course of revolutionary action and politics. As Tomba (2013, p. 7) states, "'Historical materialism' as a theory of history or a materialist conception of history does not exist. 'Historical materialism' is not a passe-partout for the comprehension of history, but a practical mode of intervention into history."

As discussed earlier, Hegel's purpose was to demonstrate that the stages of human history, including men and nature, as merely reflections of what he called Spirit (Castoriadis 2004: 61). To put it another way, real was for Hegel an outcome of thinking and Marx (1973, p. 101) criticized him as "Hegel fell into the illusion of conceiving the real as the product of thought" and continued "the real subject retains its autonomous existence outside the head" (1973, p. 99). In this sense, the labour in Hegel is "abstract mental labour". As Burns and Fraser (2000, p. 3) state, "for Marx, then, Hegel fails to locate alienation in man's material existence because he offers only a 'dialectic of pure thought'." History, in that sense, becomes a production of pure thought. First of all, what Marx aimed to do was to situate history on a material basis. In that regard, Marx uses Hegel as a reference point to show the incorrect method.[40]

[40] This does not mean Marx does not respect Hegel's thoughts on the contrary probably Hegel was the only philosopher Marx cared about in his time. In his Hegelian critique, it is hard to find a sarcastic

To put it bluntly, Marx's critique to Hegel's idea was derived from the similar root from the critique of dialectic. To overcome the Hegelian philosophy of history, Marx needed to reconstruct it, and to do that; he started to criticize the philosophical tradition of his time, which he called "Robinsonades." His aim in that regard was to build a philosophy that emerged from the world, not a philosophy standing over the world, and he adapted his methodology for this purpose.

As Engels (1978, p. 760) wrote after Marx's death in a letter to Joseph Bloch, "According to the materialist conception of history the ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life." However, the reproduction of life does not have simple meaning in terms of survival or reduction human existence to animality. On the contrary, as Blanchette (1983, p. 106) says, "It is important to note here how Marx is careful not to reduce human existence to merely animal or natural existence, even while insisting on its material beginnings." In the conceptual framework of Marx and Engels, the production of reproduction of life refers to the relations and mode of production of a society in a determinate time, which covers state-society relations, society-individual relations, its cultural and ideological medium, economic habits or political regime, and so on. Marx and Engels (2010, p. 31) wrote in *German Ideology* with anthropological insights, "the first premise of all human history, of course, is the existence of living human individuals. The first historical act of these individuals, the act by which they distinguish themselves from animals is not the fact that they think but the fact that they begin to produce their means of subsistence". This act of finding subsistence is also vital for socialization. For Marx and Engels, if we start history from a vantage point, it is not a scenario of Robinson Crusoe but depends on providing a means of subsistence for living. To do that, men get action, with labor trying to satisfy their needs. In addition, while doing that, men also communicate and expand their relations, i.e., socialize. In that regard, from the beginning of *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* and *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Righ*t, two themes come to the forefront: need and labor. In this anthropological materialism, Marx stresses that social interactions produce need

language like he used against Young Hegelians. Not only Hegel left to Marx the method and the way of thinking, but also pointed out the concepts to think. However, Marx never remained in the boundary Hegel draw always reconstructed Hegelian problems.

through labor and satisfaction of this need. In a letter written to P.V. Annenkov, Marx writes, "What is society, whatever its form may be? The product of men's reciprocal action" (quoted in Wood, 2004, p. 66). Similarly, Marx writes, "Thus the social character is the general character of the whole movement: just as society itself produces man as man, so is society produced by him. Activity and consumption, both in their content and mode of existence, are social: social activity and consumption…".

Marx and Engels (2010, p. 55) in *German Ideology,* "In the whole conception of history up to the present this real basis of history has either been totally disregarded or else considered as a minor matter quite irrelevant to the course of history. History must, therefore, always be written according to an extraneous standard; the real production of life appears as non-historical, while the historical appears as something separated from ordinary life, something extra-superterrestrial. With this the relation of man to nature is excluded from history and hence the antithesis of nature and history is created". In his early writing, Marx's first distinction of the conceptualization of history from former philosophers aims to place the idea of history into a material basis: survival and labor. According to Marx, the flow of history is the alienation of men from themselves, and in his analysis private property stands as the main reason. Men's loss of ability to control their own labor, i.e., being forced to sell it, is the reason for the deterioration of the relationship between man to society and man to nature. The important thing here is that the political conclusion of this conceptualization of history has a limited perspective. For Marx, in that regard, communism is a return to human essence, an end to self-alienation, and an end to the alienated form of relation between man and society. The theme of alienation was in the foreground in this conceptualization: the alienation of men to himself, to society, and to nature. Communism, in that regard, is conceptualized as to overcome these forms of alienation. As Marx (2007, pp. 102–103) wrote in *1844 Manuscripts* in a long passage:

> Communism as the positive transcendence of private property, as human self-estrangement, and therefore as the real appropriation of the human essence by and for man; communism therefore as the complete return of man to himself as a social (i.e., human) being a return become conscious, and accomplished within the entire wealth of previous development. This communism, as fuly-developed naturalism, equals humanism, and as fuly-

> developed humanism equals naturalism; it is the genuine resolution of the conflict between man and nature and between man and man the true resolution of the strife between existence and essence, between objectification and self-confirmation, between freedom and necessity, between the individual and the species. Communism is the riddle of history solved, and it knows itself to be this solution.
>
> The entire movement of history is, therefore, both its actual act of genesis (the birth act of its empirical existence) and also for its thinking consciousness the comprehended and known process of its coming-to-be.

The Hegelian theme can quickly be detected in the last and previous sentences. Marx still sutures politics to history, and as he sees it, the purpose of politics becomes to realize history itself. Marx tracks the signs of alienation in history and sees communism as the possibility of changing the historical flow. However, the limitation shows itself in putting private property vs. communism relation. Since in the late 18th century, a newly emerging class shows itself as a political actor in Europe, and what defines this class is not the private property but its role in economic and social relations. In that regard, for political purposes, of course, Marx needs to reconceptualize communism and the idea of history.

3.3.2. Historization of Capital

This transition in Marx's idea is not specific to the idea of history but an expansion of his philosophy, and depending on that expansion, the conclusions and relations he constructed are also changed. However, the political core is still the same. The reason behind that expansion is to conceptualize the idea of revolution and politics properly since historical materialism claims to discover social life in a materialist way. As Wood (2004, p. 63) expresses, "The central claim of historical materialism is that people's economic behavior, their 'mode of production in material life', is the 'basis' of their social life generally, that this 'economic basis' generally 'conditions' or 'determines' both the society's remaining institutions, and the prevalent ideas or forms of social consciousness". To do that, Marx links survival and reproduction of life to the economic relations in society, expanding this notion. To put it bluntly, the appearance of labor has constantly changed and taken different forms throughout history. Parallel to that, social institutions and the consciousness of men have also been transformed

concerning changing economic relations. For Marx, these varying relations need to be understood by historicizing the idea of history itself. Marx wrote towards the end of his life, "My analytic method does not proceed from man but from the period of society given by economics' (V 217)" (quoted in Callinicos, 2004, p. 66). Marx (1904, p. 12) discusses this issue in the preface of *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*

> In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general.

Marx here objects not only to Hegelian understanding of consciousness as a mere reflection of the Spirit but also to the conceptualization of men in the political economy of the 18th century. Starting from Hobbes and continuing with Enlightenment philosophers, the idea of men is derived from passions and unchanging nature and used as a basis for social theory in social contract theories or political economy in Stuart Mill or Adam Smith.[41] For Marx, the more we dig into history, the more we encounter a greater whole surrounding the individual (1973, p. 84). Thus, history for Marx is encapsulated by a greater whole; it is the whole of these relations. To reach its meaning, this totality should be uncovered.[42] Marx attempts economic categories or economic

[41] Marx (1973, p. 83) wrote in *Grundrisse* Individual producing in society- hence socially determined individual production- is of course point of departure. The individual and isolated hunter and fisherman; with whom Smith and Ricardo begin, belongs among the unimaginative conceits of the eighteenth-century Robinsonades, which in no way express merely a reaction against. over-sophistication and a return to a misunderstood natural life, as cultural historians imagine.

[42] As Callinicos (2004, pp. 74–75) notes "Marx calls concrete reality, despite its complexity, a 'totality', 'unity of the diverse'. The notion that society forms a whole is central to his method. The different aspects of society can only be understood as parts of the whole; they do not make any sense in isolation from one another. Resolving the whole into its 'simplest determinations' is only a preliminary to recomposing them into 'a rich totality of many determinations and relations'. Marx criticized the political economists because they tended to treat society as a collection of isolated individuals lacking any real relation to one another, so that 'the limbs of the social system are dislocated' (CW vi 166-167)".

relations such as value, labor, relations of production, or mode of production, which are historical categories. What Marx offers is to think of history along the lines of productive forces as the objective conditions of history. Helmut Fleisher (1973, p. 38) states, "… history is the result of the dialectic between productive forces and productive relations" including economic social formations.

Furthermore, these concepts in Marx's terminology cover economic relations and appear as social relations. For example, what Marx did in the *18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* is the application of this method. As Helmut Fleisher says (1973, p. 31), "in Capital the capitalist is not considered as an individual, but as a personification of economic categories, an agent of definite class relations and interests, a creature of these conditions" in the *18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, we encounter personification of economic relations in the body of Louis Bonaparte who for Marx, was a creation of social and economic conditions upon the defeat of proletariat after the 1848 revolutions. Marx's originality in this regard is that in explaining the concept of history, he conceptualizes it through economic and, at the same time, social relations rather than inferring it from historical events. In this way, he also shows that capitalism's distinction between the political and the economic is an illusion, like the 18th-century natural man. Historical change or stages for Marx should be understood and conceptualized through the contradictions in these relations.

However, the formation of social order is not a frictionless process. It contains violence, terror, and enslavement of labor on the one side and rebellion and the desire for freedom on the other. The contradictions Marx mentions rely on these two sides, and the consequences of social and economic relations are not inevitable but are possibilities. In that sense, Marx conceptualizes history as the interconnection of past, present, and future; the future always exists as a possibility of past and present, not a predetermined result. Thus, history appears as tendencies, not a mere reflection of natural laws. But this does not mean that history is free-floating or entirely contingent. In Marx's writings, this issue is discussed in two ways. One is the destruction of the old, and the second is an expansion of capitalism. While the first is conceptualized regarding the dialectic between the old and new, the second appears as a temporal

synchronization of capital. The mode of production, for Marx, determines the general character of political, cultural, and ideological processes, and when the mode of production clashes with relations of production, old social ties can be renewed. As Marx (1976, p. 928) writes in *Capital*,

> As soon as this metamorphosis has sufficiently decomposed the old society throughout its depth and breadth, as soon as the workers have been turned into proletarians, and their means of labour into capital, as soon as the capitalist mode of production stands on its own feet, the further socialization of labour and the further transformation of the soil and other means of production into socially exploited and therefore communal means of production takes on a new form. … At a certain stage of development, it brings into the world the material means of its own destruction. From that moment, new forces and new passions spring up in the bosom of society, forces and passions which feel themselves to be fettered by that society. It has to be annihilated; it is annihilated. Its annihilation, the transformation of the individualized and scattered means of production into socially concentrated means of production, the transformation, therefore, of the dwarf-like property of the many into the giant property of the few….

Capitalism, as a newly emerging economic system, builds itself through creative destruction while destroying the old social and property relations to construct the new one. For Marx, capitalism, first of all historical production, has risen upon feudalism's contradictions. Harry Pitts (2017, p. 112) expresses, “Society as we know it is the form taken by the contradictory unity of the class antagonism. This antagonism is not something bourgeois society confronts as a problem but rather implies as the condition of its being. Contra functionalist accounts, the contradiction is here productive and reproductive. As Adorno writes, capitalist society ‘maintains itself only through antagonism’”.

What Marx exposes in this debate can be summarized under three titles. First, capitalism is not a natural, God-given economic formation but a historical phenomenon. Secondly, capitalism creates and relies upon class antagonisms, i.e., contradictions between classes, and the consciousness of men is shaped by these contradictions, paving the road for political subjectivity. Last of all, capitalism needs to overcome these contradictions to reproduce itself, and one of the ways is its

universal expansion. While Marx (1976, pp. 90–91) notes in the preface of *Capital*, he refers to this side of capitalism: "Intrinsically, it is not a question of the higher or lower degree of development of the social antagonisms that spring from the natural laws of capitalist production. It is a question of these laws themselves, of these tendencies winning their way through and working themselves out with iron necessity. The country that is more developed industrially only shows, to the less developed, the image of its own future".[43] However, this brings a historical shift simultaneously in the flow of history through temporal synchronization. This point becomes clearer with Marx's words: "World history does not always exist. History as world history is a result" (quoted in Fleisher, 1973, p. 67). In other words, world history is a historical product due to the synchronization of temporal diversities under the capitalist mode of production through the socially necessary labor time, which becomes a universal unit of time in capitalism due to the expansion of capital as a social relation. As Massimialliano Tomba (2013, p. xiv) expresses, "Capital, due to its indifference to different cultural horizons and social or familial structures, is able to functionalise different temporalities to the rhythm of socially-necessary labour".[44]

To sum up, it can be said that Marx's concept of history is more complicated in terms of containing more relations to understand the idea of philosophy compared to Hegel. In other words, Marx tries to uncover underlying conditions to understand history rather than seeing history as a reflection of an idea. First of all, this is because Marx sees history as something that happens and is formed rather than something that is given and reflected, as in Hegel. Secondly, it is because he asks the questions that Hegel did not, such as relating the concept of history to capitalism. In other words, Marx not only tries to make sense of the concept of history as a grand narrative but also draws attention to the role of time in the formation of everyday life within capitalism. In this sense, he thinks that political opportunities emerge in the dialectical

[43] In the same preface, Marx says, "De te Fabula narratur" refers to the same point.

[44] Tomba (2013, p. 159) states in the same study "The capitalist mode of production does not produce its own premises out of nothing. It is fed by external/internal elements punctuated by historical temporalities that it tries to synchronise." Marx will put the universality of proletariat as a challenge against the universalism of the capital.

relationship he establishes between the synchronization of temporalities through socially necessary labour time and the idea of history as a grand narrative. In this sense, the two terms are essential for Marx. One is the acceleration of time for the sake of capital cycles, and the other one is a historical revolutionary break.

3.3.3. Politicization of History: Putting Class Struggle into the Heart of History

For Marx, history is a field of political struggle since understanding history and current relations of production is necessary for political struggle. In other words, for Marx, history is a political scene that guides current situations and is a way of finding possibilities to intervene in the political scene. As Fleisher (1973, p. 128) states, "Marxism's political history is 'theory of the conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat." Similarly, in Marx's 11th thesis on Feuerbach, "Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it" (2010, p. 5). In that manner, for Marx, history should be politicized to change the political field. For Blanchette (1983, p. 109), "What Marx proposes in *Das Kapital* is a science of capitalism which is at the same time a science of historical actuality, since 'capital' is the name for what characterizes our historical epoch". The analysis of capitalism aims to show its scientific analysis and how emancipatory politics can be shaped in capitalism. For this purpose, the politicization of history goes with lines of suturing history to the class wars and understanding epochal changes in terms of class struggles, including capitalism. While Marx (2007, p. 209) said in *Communist Manifesto* with Engels "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles," his further studies also stronghold this idea and expand it. In other words, Marx borrowed Hegel's mater-slave dialectic and implemented it into the idea of history. For him, the winner of history in the long run is always the slaves since they are the real producers of life. The thing that Marx conceptualizes history in terms of specific dynamics and analyzes the subjects' capabilities based on their material capacity. In that regard, new epochs come to the surface with new subjects and new ways of political struggles. As Marx and Engels (2007, pp. 209–210) wrote in Manifesto

> The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established

> new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

For Marx, the flow of history depends on the between the oppressed and the oppressing class. This was the ground antagonism upon which every society is based. However, history is not a one-way direction in which the oppressed always rebels and wins. For Marx, history always flows in the way, and eventually, the oppressors lose. The monarchy and the nobles in feudalism, the slave owners in Rome eventually encountered the rebel and political uprising. Spartacus against the Roman Empire or Thomas Müntzer and the peasant's war are just a few historical examples. He more likely thinks that history will flow where no oppression will come through. For example, according to Marx, capitalism produces poverty and pauperism more than wealth and population. Under these circumstances, capitalism will not last forever. Marx and Engels (2007, p. 221) say in *Communist Manifesto*, "And here it becomes evident that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society, and to impose its conditions of existence upon society as an overriding law." The reason for Marx's approach lies in the Hegelian dialectic. He sees society as a contradictory unity, i.e., unity of opposites, bourgeois and proletariat, which negates one the other, contrary to Hegel, who finds reconciliation in society at the end. The interpretation of history in such a way can be seen as a continuation of the Hegelian master-slave dialectic. In relation to that, Marx's theory of history is perceived as history that was reconstructed around the oppressed and oppressor. Marx changed the concepts of Hegelian understanding of history and revolutionized it. However, Marx's approach is always structured by history, i.e., depending on the historical conditions. If we quote Marx's own words, (1976, p. 165) "Economic categories are only the abstractions of the social relations of production", just alone economic relations lead revolution contrary to the belief of the second International's interpretation of revolution as natural law.

In other words, Marx sees that every class society is a unity of opposites i.e. one depends on the other as in capitalism. This brings a chance for political emancipation when the proletariat is organized and becomes a unified class for political purposes. The history of capitalism, in that regard, can be seen as a class war between the bourgeois and the proletariat. In this struggle, Marx favors the proletariat since history

also favors the proletariat. From the starting point where Marx put labor into the heart of history in the anthropological sense and then to the place to historicize and understand capitalism. History is understood in terms of labors conditions in terms of emancipation or repression, the wealth and capital labor created, and the unity and consciousness of the owners of labor specifically proletariat in capitalism. Thus, Marx and Engels (2007, p. 224) wrote in *Communist Manifesto*

> In bourgeois society living labor is but a means to increase accumulated labor. In communist society accumulated labor is but a means to widen, to enrich, to promote the existence of the laborer. In bourgeois society, therefore, the past dominates the present; in communist society the present dominates the past. In bourgeois society capital is independent and has individuality, while the living person is dependent and has no individuality.

When Marx historicizes capitalism, he also historicizes labor because both at the same take their meaning in historical time. While capitalism rooted in past because capital is the accumulation of dead labor, communism founds its roots in past and present and orients to future. In other words, communism is an expanded idea throughout history that has gained legitimacy and power from this expansion over time. As Wood (2004, p. 75) states "The basic thing in history is the relentless promethean expansion of humanity's creative powers. This is why even communism for Marx is not a 'state of affairs', and 'ideal' social form, but merely a historical 'movement' effecting a transition between the era of class society and the era beyond class society." History, in this manner, flows to a classless society while the bourgeois is digging its own grave.

To sum up, with Marx, history became a courtroom, judge, and witness for politics. Courtroom in the sense that all the oppression will be an object of court, which will be judged eventually. This brings an eschatological side to revolutionary politics, where the subject puts trust in history. History is a judge in the sense that what is done for the sake of capitalism against humanity, such as oppression, violence, and cruelty, will be found guilty and exposed to humanity. The belief that history is on the side of people. Lastly, history is a witness in which everything is recorded and never forgotten to be used in the courtroom. Marx conceptualizes history as an eternal class war until a classless society sutures history to radical politics. In that sense, history becomes a

ground for revolution and revolutionary action both for exercising and explaining them. History, in that sense, fed revolutionary politics and gave it legitimacy until the historical events flowed other way of revolutionary politics.

3.4. Badiou, Truth, and History

So far, we have discussed how, for Hegel and Marx, the difference in the ways of producing knowledge leads to different conclusions about history and politics. To recapitulate, as Hegel tried to infer the historical idea from the movement of Spirit, rather than deriving it by looking at society itself, the knowledge he produced pointed to what ought to be rather than what is. At this point, Marx did not object to Hegel's appeal to history to understand the development of modern society; on the contrary, his method and conclusions were a point of criticism for him. This was already Marx's point of criticism of Hegel's use of dialectic as a method. In this sense, Hegel's parallelism between the flow of politics and the flow of history was quite revolutionary, even though he claimed that it depended on the movement of the Spirit, and Marx would embrace the link between politics and history in Hegel. Instead he would seek the formation of historical knowledge in the laws of political economy. In this sense, the link between historical flow and politics would be established through the knowledge produced by political economy, and we have already seen that he made inferences about communism, political struggle, and the subject. To summarize, both thinkers use the future and the past to connect them. The produced knowledge tells us how both the past and the present should be understood, while at the same time linking the future to the present. In addition, both thinkers use the idea of history to give politics a ground of reference and legitimacy. The idea of history is used both to understand what is happening in politics and to legitimize it. In this sense, the idea of history, like dialectic, becomes a constitutive element of the idea of politics.[45]

[45] In fact, we are confronted with the situation in which every politics is realized as a separation. Sylvain Lazarus says of this situation: "All politics separate. Karl Marx, for example, separates his doctrine from philosophy (that of Hegel), and Vladimir Lenin separates politics from history; he(2015, p. xvi) gives primacy to consciousness over history -this will be a politics subject to conditions. For my part, I separate politics from history, that is to say, from Marxism and Marxism-Leninism, on the one hand, and from the conception that history has time, on the other. I also separate politics from philosophy and sociology". We can say that the position Lazarus articulates here also applies to his close colleague

Badiou is critical of the approach developed by the two philosophers. In fact, as we saw in the first chapter, this can be considered as a continuation of the approach he developed against the process of suturing politics to an element other than itself. For Badiou, the idea that the dialectical knowledge of the objective conditions and hence the idea of a politics depends on the assumption of the idea of the one.[46] However, the one does not exist. In other words, the idea of politics within the knowledge of the one is a dead end. In this sense, the idea of history is no different for Badiou. He first objects to the idea itself and then to its use. For the first time, Badiou (2009b, p. 92) writes in *Theory of Subject*, "This type of statement amounts to the following, which is crucial for Marxism: history does not exist (it would be a figure of the whole). Only historical periods or historicizations (figures of the One-of-the-two) exist. This is why we communists postulate no halting point".[47] Badiou's objection here is twofold. First, he opposes the Hegelian-Marxist idea of totalized history. Second, he says that the idea of history cannot be a reference for radical politics, or communism. This sentence reappears in the text *Logics of Worlds* (A. Badiou, 2009a, p. 509). As (2011, p. 5) says "... and the second time in LW as an objection to what is essentially the absorption of eternal truths in contemporary historical relativism." For Badiou, to speak about history is only possible with the idea of truth. Politics, as well as truth, is rare and occurs discontinuously. Corcoran (2015, p. 147) writes "For Badiou, the only history there is, properly speaking, is the history of truth, or rather of truths".[48]

Badiou. In fact, some of Badiou's ideas overlap with Lazarus' in the political use of the idea of history. For this reason, in this section we will discuss Lazarus' ideas as much as Badiou's.

[46] Lazarus (2015, p. xxi), with a different perspective, states a similar idea. He says "A totality is that which proposes to co-think the whole, that is to say, to surmount the heterogeneous character of the objective and the subjective. The subjective as such becomes unthinkable in the end".

[47] Badiou (2007a, p. 176), in *Being and Event*, returns to this subject and similarly expresses that "In Théorie du Sujet, I introduced the thesis that History does not exist. It was a matter of refuting the vulgar Marxist conception of the meaning of history. Within the abstract framework which is that of this book, the same idea is found in the following form: there are in situation evental sites, but there is no evental situation. We can think the historicity of certain multiples, but we cannot think a History".

[48] Corcoran (2015, p. 147) follows, "In the 1970s, Foucault also spoke of the history of truth, in a genealogical attempt to de-absolutise the notion of truth by reducing it to the always specific effects of certain epistemological and historical conditions. That is, for Foucault, the history of truth, which he calls a political history, rests upon his inscription of truth in a pragmatics of expression, and subsequent

Badiou's second objection is the attempt to intervene in the political sphere by deriving politics from historical knowledge. He calls this kind of theorization as suturing.[49] The negative side of suturing the knowledge of history, or knowledge in general, to politics is the parallelism established between the sphere in which knowledge is produced and politics. For Badiou, this is particularly evident in the debates around the idea of capitalism.[50] Badiou (2001, p. 105) in his study, *Ethics*, says in an interview to Peter Hallward

> The part of Marxism that consists of the scientific analysis of capital remains an absolutely valid background. After all, the realization of the world as global market, the undivided reign of great financial conglomerates, and so forth – all this is an indisputable reality and one that conforms, essentially, to Marx's analysis. The question is: where does politics fit in with all this? I think what is Marxist, and also Leninist – and in any case true – is the idea that any viable campaign against capitalism can only be political. There can be no economic battle against the economy.

Badiou's aim is "to conceive of a revolutionary politics that is unbeholden to historical necessity, that relies on no 'economic' guarantee of its truth" (Walker, 2012, p. 42). In other words, the power of Marxism to determine political history goes beyond Marx's analysis of capitalism as a field of scientific knowledge, but rather the fact that Marxism was an organized knowledge and practice of the subaltern classes, whether we call it proletariat or Badiou prefers to name as "masses." Thus, I will argue first

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emphasis on effect (truth qua phenomenon) and efficacy (productions of knowledge-induced power differentials) (cf. Balibar 2004). Badiou's thesis about the history of truths is far from this notion of truth-effects, which he flips on its head".

[49] For Badiou, Althusser is the best example of this kind of intention. For Althusser, Marxism is the "science of history," and Marxism is the scientific production of knowledge. For Badiou, what Althusser did is suturing politics to science.

[50] This is a current debate, Negri is one of the opponents of Badiou. Negri (2010) explicitly criticizes Badiou in I*s It Possible to Be Communist Without Marx?,* for constructing the idea of communism without relying on Marxism, in other words, by excluding political economy. Badiou, on the other hand, finds Negri's analysis of capitalism as a self-destructive machine too self-affirming. Also, Walker (2012, p. 41) writes "As a consequence, he has been criticized for thus leaving aside the theoretical markers of diffferentiation that distinguish the Marxist revolutionary project from all other subjective orientations in radical politics, which are located in the critique of political economy, the central methodological and conceptual innovation of Marx's work and the trajectories that stem from it".

how Badiou constructs its critique the idea of history in Hegel and Marx. Then, I will deal with the meaning of “history does not exist” and “there is only history of truths”.

3.4.1. History Does Not Exist

We can say that Hegel's philosophy of history is, in fact, the pursuit of the knowledge of Spirit's existence in the world. In this sense, Hegel presents his philosophy of history as linear, continuous and holistic. For him, it is the existence of fundamental contradiction that constitutes this knowledge and at the same time guides the way to this knowledge. In this sense, the idea of history is an endeavor to understand the historical course of the concept of One, because when it is understood, what happens in the world will also be understood. That is the reason that Badiou (2009a, p. 5) sees “Hegel is the modern conjurer of this ecclesiastical question. Instead of saying that there is creation of the Whole by the One, Hegel will show that the Whole is the history of the One …”. Here, the key issue is knowing the reasons that led the history to flow in a particular direction. For Hegel, this fundamental contradiction lay between particular and universal. In this sense, if the Spirit could not embody itself, there would be a disharmony between the state, society, and individual. This fundamental contradiction between the Spirit and the individual in a historical period eventually creates a new social topology that all of them unite again.

Even though it is well known that Marx was one of the prominent critics of the Hegelian idea of history, he inherited the Hegelian vision of fundamental contradiction and the idea of deducing history from knowledge. However, before Marx defined the fundamental contradiction and put forward theses about the philosophy of history, he said that history is based on the dialectical contradiction between the oppressed and the oppressors. As Badiou (2009b, p. 43) states in *Theory of Subject* “Where there is oppression, there is rebellion. This is the objective dialectic, the way of the world—history, which is made by the masses, as we all know”. Therefore, the main question for Marx is to define the relationship between the oppressors and the oppressed and the identities of the oppressors and the oppressed. Subsequently, another aim is to reveal the social and political structures in which they find themselves in relation to

this situation. Although Marx places the historical process on a binary dialectical relationship, he emphasizes that the parties to this relationship constantly change. For Marx, this change is the driving motor force of history. Again, the key for Marx and Hegel is to gain knowledge to deduce historical flow and politics. Marx's approach was to unite objective and subjective dialectic. One without the other reduces politics to a deadly impasse. Badiou (2009b, p. 43) writes in *Theory of Subject*, when he still tries to deduce politics in the Hegelian-Marxist lineage, "The objective and the subjective divide the dialectic. If you take the two antagonistic forces (without forgetting their underlying articulation into splace and outplace), you can isolate within them an objective dialectic and a subjective dialectic, whose ensemble constitutes the dialectic of force". The objective side alone reduces politics into a teleology that denies the role of the subject, or only a subjective dialectic alone puts politics into voluntarism. However, later on, Badiou, in *Being and Event*, claims that the subjective side is forgotten and objectified as a matter of knowledge. He (2007a, p. 334)

> The first (Vulgar Marxism) claimed that truth was historically deployed on the basis of revolutionary events by the working class. But it thought the working class as the class of workers. Naturally, 'the workers', in terms of pure multiples, formed an infinite class; it was not the sum total of empirical workers that was at stake. Yet this did not prevent knowledge (and paradoxically Marxist knowledge itself) from being forever able to consider 'the workers' as falling under an encyclopaedic determinant (sociological, economical, etc.), the event as having nothing to do with this always-already-counted, and the supposed truth as being merely a veridicity submitted to the language of the situation. What is more, from this standpoint the truth could be annulled—the famous 'it's been done before' or 'it's old-fashioned'—because the encyclopaedia is always incoherent. It was from this coincidence, which it claimed to assume within itself— because it declared itself to be simultaneously political truth, combative and faithful, and knowledge of History, of Society—that Marxism ended up dying, because it followed the fluctuations of the encyclopaedia under the trial of the relation between language and the State.

Thus, for Badiou, Marxism, once the sum of the revolutionary wisdom of the proletariat now turned into a discipline of thinking of working class which puts the

subject into a place of production relations.[51] In other words, the transition from the proletariat as a subject to the working class as a position in the relations of production is symptomatic to show the transformation of Marxism itself.[52] Badiou (2005b, p. 43) expressed this situation in his evaluation of his comrade, Sylvain Lazarus' *Anthropology of Name* "Lazarus ably demonstrates how the installation of thought within these composite configurations necessarily supports the State, since history is ultimately a 'relation of the State'. It follows that any contemporary freedom of thought presupposes, by virtue of the rupture with the most subtle forms of historicism, a distancing of the State, of which one of the paradigms is the clear separation between politics (as thought) and the State". Thus, for Badiou, politics cannot be derived or sutured to knowledge.[53] In his evental understanding of politics, Badiou proposes a trans-historical perspective that does not depend on history or knowledge derived from it (Toscano, 2006, pp. 16–17). To put it in other ways, the binary relation between the subject and the object reduces politics into presentation in the situation. This is the reason, Badiou (2007a, p. 329) states that "knowledge does not know of the event" because the event cannot be verified through false or true knowledge. Badiou's aim is to erase the idea of history as a source of knowledge for politics as a halting point. In fact, what Badiou is trying to articulate here is a critique of politics in which subjectivity is crushed under objectivity. In other words, it is the transformation of a politics understood through the objective into a teleology by abandoning subjectivity.

[51] For example, Badiou (2009b, p. 26) writes, "We are only apparently confronted with the choice of saying that the working class is designated either as a place in the relations of production or as the concentration of all antagonism to the bourgeoisie. Taken in isolation; the first designation leads directly to the result that the class, which would exist only in the factory, confines its subjectivization to the gloomy protestations of trade unionism, or its variants".

[52] Perry Anderson (1976), in his canonic study, *Considerations on Western Marxism*, indicates a similar point. For him, Marxism is prisoned to the universities, and the movement's leaders have become university professors, not militants of the working class. The examples of this situation for Anderson were Lenin, Luxemburg, and Gramsci at the beginning of the century. However, in the sixties, we encountered university professors such as Althusser or Negri as the leaders of working-class movements.

[53] Similarly, Lazarus (2015, p. xxvi) writes "Separated from history, politics no longer has to do with time but, rather, with the prescriptive. The evacuation of time and the removal of time as a category effects the separation of history and politics, thereby breaking with an age-old tradition that saw a given politics as bound up with a given history and a given history as bound up with a given politics".

If we put it in Hegelian terms, the relationship between history and knowledge has ultimately resulted in the negation of the particular by the universal. About this problem,[54] Badiou (2009b, p. 44) states in *Theory of Subject*

> At bottom, it is always in the interests of the powerful that history is mistaken for politics, that is, the objective is taken for the subjective. This is the natural element for the maintenance of their own subjective activity, which is applied so that no unaligned quality may come to concentrate itself to confront them.
>
> There is no shortage of people under their thumb among the 'Marxists': All those who embroider their dispiriting niceties around a 'Marxism' reduced to the morose virtue of a 'science of history'.
>
> Science of history? Marxism is the discourse with which the proletariat sustains itself as subject. We must never let go of this idea.

The problem here is that for Badiou, there is no room for subject, will, and choice in such an understanding of politics. The problem lies in the fact that history is the source of legitimacy for objective knowledge and the politics formed accordingly in this political imagination, in which subjectivity is ignored. In relation to this point, establishing politics from here would place politics itself in a hierarchical relationship between intellectuals and masses. Again, related to this, this is why consciousness has always occupied an important place in the Marxist political imagination since the role of consciousness in the formation of the political subject is associated with knowledge.[55] As Toscano (2006, pp. 16–17) writes

> … when he states that the *reason of revolt* (or rebellion) is an invariant, 'deep and inextricable'; that the refusal of mastery – as the mastery of authority and of knowledge – constitutes a subjective given that *precedes* Marxism and any causal or structural analysis that a critique of political

[54] Here, Badiou's target is also his former master Althusser, who tried to conceptualize Marxism as the science of history.

[55] This point is also a point of criticism for Althusser's student Jacques Rancière. For Rancière, the distinction between those who know and those who do not know was destroying the egalitarian goal of politics. Although he first criticized his former master in a reactionary manner in *Althusser's Lesson* (2011) after the '68 protests, he would make this criticism permanent in his later works. Especially in *The Philosopher and His Poor* (2004) he will direct this criticism to political philosophy - Plato and Marx - and contemporary sociology - Bourdieu.

> economy may be capable of providing. This suggests an ontological anteriority of revolt, an autonomous power of egalitarian opposition that operates like a trans-historical constant.

As mentioned above, there is a relation between political imagination and knowledge produced from history. Also, another relation lies between politics and historical praxis, i.e., historical mode of politics determined by the idea of history. In other words, Badiou's criticism that the knowledge produced by objectifying the idea of history is the source of political legitimacy can be extended to the content of this knowledge. In this sense, this idea of politics comes up with the set of concepts and problems of historical praxis. In this sense, the answers produced within this praxis such as party, consciousness and subjectivity belong to this historical period. In this sense, Badiou criticizes Marxist dialectic for its ironic convergence with Hegelian dialectic in its periodization. We know that while the relation of Marxist dialectic to history reveals how dialectical processes differ from each other in its conceptualization, Hegelian dialectic circles back to where it began. In this sense, Badiou argues for a similar approach to historical problems and concepts. He (2008b, p. 113) writes in *The Meaning of Sarkozy*

> Revolution absolutely must transmit to the scattered militants of the communist hypothesis a rational certainty, already immanent at these intense political moments: what will come will not be, and cannot be, a continuation of the second sequence. Marxism, the workers' movement, mass democracy, Leninism, the proletarian party, the Socialist state - all these remarkable inventions of the twentieth century - are no longer of practical use. At the theoretical level, they certainly deserve further study and consideration; but at the level of politics, they have become impracticable. This is a first point of essential awareness: the second sequence is closed, and it is no good trying to continue or restore it.

According to Badiou, the relationship between Marx and Hegel is more complicated than in the case of dialectic. In this sense, this relationship can be summarized as continuing with Hegel, breaking with Hegel, or, as a third option, breaking with Hegel in a Hegelian way. As we have discussed, the concept of time and history appears in Hegel as a reflection of Spirit. Badiou (2005b, p. 35) calls this as "subjectified presentation of the Absolute". For Badiou (2005b, p. 35), to get rid of this subjectified version of history necessitates “introducing historical time as material and objective

time, while maintaining it as a dimension of historical consciousness, which is the consciousness of objective temporality. One then enters into the regime of heterogeneous multiplicity, wherein time circulates between the material and the mental, between the objective and the subjective". This is actually what Marx did in his philosophy of history.[56] According to Badiou (2015, p. 28), it is a combination of Marx, who replaces the Hegelian idea of history with materialism, and another Marx, who deduces the future of capitalism based on the critique of the British political economy tradition. The path Marx followed was getting away from Hegel by using him. Marx differs from Hegel not only in terms of English political economy or in giving history a materialist form. Marx also draws parallels between political struggle and historical praxis and makes sense of the idea of communism within the flow of history. In a way, the idea of communism is sutured to the historical flow. In other words, the Marxist idea of history was getting stronger and stronger as its image of the flow of historical praxis was realized by historical events, and at the same time it was giving strength to political movements. However, the key relationship here was that historical movements moved parallel to the Marxist political vision. In this sense, the Marxist idea of history served as an anchor for political movements. But this was a dangerous relationship, as Badiou would later criticize. To the extent that the political struggle moved in parallel to this fiction, the idea of radical politics of Marxism was also expanding its legitimacy. In this sense, the idea of history and politics fed each other. However, when this was reversed, the ground on which radical politics was founded was also affected by this reversal. Thus, as we discussed in the first chapter, while Badiou found Marx's analysis of capitalism more justified than ever, he described Marxist political movement as "historically destroyed". According to Badiou, the strength of Marxism as a political movement lay in its ability to make claims on history. To the extent that it has lost this power, according to Badiou, Marxism has become a "historically dead" movement. As he writes (2018, p. 41)

> … among all the revolutionary doctrines issued in the nineteenth century, that which designated the singularity of Marxism was the historically attested right to lay claims on History. Marxism alone presented itself as a

[56] One of the roles of the part arises on this basis. According to Bosteels, the idea of vanguard party emerges when the temporal gap comes out between objective and subjective history.

> revolutionary political doctrine that was, if not historically confirmed (which is a slightly different matter), at least historically active. For half a century at least Marxism has had historical credit. This credit was actually the guarantee that Marxist politics remained adequate to its founding mobility, and this is what excepted it from the political, conceived as a purely speculative and always obsolete apparatus.

To put it bluntly, the singularity of Marxism turned into its weakness. In fact, this is a consequence of the loss of the references that made Marxism historically powerful. The first historical reference was the existence of socialist states. Although the USSR has been criticized in many ways, its existence symbolized the transformation of Marxism from an insurrection into a victorious doctrine. As Badiou (2018, p. 41) says, "for almost sixty years these States have incarnated a victorious subjectivity". The second reference was the national liberation struggles linked with Marxism. And the last one as Badiou (2018, p. 43) writes "The third referent, finally, is the workers' movement itself, including this time in the metropolis of the West and especially in Western Europe. This movement manifested its political permanence in the general element of the Marxist reference." These three referents at the same time come through the historical claims of Marxism for the past hundred years. However, the USSR collapsed, national liberation struggles turned into civil wars, and workers became paid labor as an economic category more than their political capacity. According to Badiou (2018, pp. 43–57),

> We can call the "crisis of Marxism" the step-by-step collapse of this framework of references. Marxism today finds itself confronted with the impossibility of continuing to lay claims on History. Its credit has been spent and now it is reduced to the common proportions of other doctrines. … Thus, today, neither the socialist States nor the national liberation struggles nor, finally, the workers' movement constitute historical referents anymore, which might be capable of guaranteeing the concrete universality of Marxism.

To the extent that the historical references of Marxism, in other words, the realizing pillars of Marxism lose their power, its claim over history has turned into incapacity. In this sense, Badiou is right in his observation that the attachment of politics to objective conditions - neither knowledge nor history - is problematic. While the former builds its political idea through the knowledge of the One based on the assumption of

a holistic history, the latter becomes the legitimacy and ground of politics. For this reason, Badiou first rejects the idea of a unified history and, secondly, tries to construct an idea of politics other than the idea of a politics sutured to history.

3.4.2. History of Truth

Badiou's own intellectual trajectory has been a debate between Bosteels and Peter Hallward. Hallward argues that there is a sharp distinction between the period prior to and after Badiou's *Being and Event*. According to Hallward, Badiou departed from Maoist dialectical thinking with this work. Bosteels, like Hallward, argues that there is a shift rather than an intellectual rupture. In this sense, Badiou tries to reformulate the concepts and problems of the Maoist period in a different framework. However, it is difficult to say something similar about the concept of history. For example, Bosteels (2014, p. 218) writes " (in) *Theory of the Subject* Badiou attempts to devise a dialectical articulation between history and politics, mapped onto the dialectic of productive mass and partisan class". Bosteels' reason for thinking this way is Badiou's position in *Theory of Subject*. Although he is critical of the Marxist concept of history in the sense we quoted above, Badiou does not want to get rid of this concept completely. For example, Bosteels continues (2014, p. 218) "Class, apprehended according to the dialectical division of its dialecticity, means partisan political action anchored in the productive historicity of the masses. ... The whole point is to know how all this works together, because it is this working-together that is class. This entails nothing less than to make the rectifiable singularity of policies rise up in the real movement of history". With *Can Politics Be Thought*, however, this idea is completely abandoned. In this sense, it takes a critical position on the Marxist idea of history and the idea of politics with the knowledge of political economy. For example, Badiou (2018, pp. 36–37) writes "We will also say that policies must be freed of the tyranny of history so as to be rendered once the event. We must dare to posit that, from the point of politics, history as meaning does not exist, but what exists is only the periodized occurrence of the a priori of chance. … The mobility that is policies does not find its truth in the social relation".

Thus, the aim of Badiou's with *Being and Event* is to formulate radical politics that neither depends on social conditions i.e. objective knowledge of it nor a politics based on State. For this reason, Badiou's aims to desuture radical politics from both knowledge and the concept of history or the idea of the State. Only then, Badiou argues, can one arrive at an idea of politics that does not need an external reference to build itself. On the contrary during the emergence of the politics, the concepts of knowledge or history find themselves a new meaning.

It can be said that the two key concepts in Badiou's philosophy are situation and state of situation. It is known that Badiou's philosophical deductions are based on mathematical axioms and that in the first pages of Being and Event he claims that mathematics is ontology. These two concepts, namely the relation between the concepts of situation and state of situation, are also defined by mathematical axioms. Set theory can be considered here as the basis of mathematical axiomatics. We can think of a set itself as the basis of the concept of a situation. As Hallward (2003, p. 87) says, "In the second place, for any set to be 'established' means, in set-theoretic terms, 'to have at least one element that offers nothing of its own' (NN, 93). The basic term of a situation is the element to which nothing belongs when viewed from within the situation (i.e., which has no members in common with the situation)." Badiou writes in *Being and Event:* "I will maintain— it is the wager of this book— that ontology is a situation," that is, that ontology is itself a "structured presentation".

Situation is scattered and not structured. Hallward (2003, p. 94) states "The "extraordinarily vague" notion of a situation is thus defined only by the fact that it has an infinite number of distinct components". It should be structured so the members of the sets are related and organized with definite characteristics. Badiou calls this concept the structure of situation. This concept shows what defines a given situation. In other words, a situation is simply the result of such a structuring. What Badiou rather loosely calls the "structure of the situation" is "the existing mechanism of the counting- for- one that qualifies the situation as being this particular situation." (Hallward, 2003, p. 94) Thus, a situation is a structured set and operates the rule of distinction.

The subsets of a set are also the elements of that set, and one of the subsets of each set is the empty set. This empty set stands as the uncanny, unstructured element in the situation. As Hallward (2003, p. 95) writes, "the classic historical emblem of such eruption is an uprising of the masses (EE, 127). Such breakdowns in law and order are possible in principle from within any unstructured point of a situation. And there is at least one such point in every situation, since the structuring operation that shapes a situation is unable to structure itself." A second structuring operation is necessary to eliminate the danger of the void in the situation. With the second structuring operation, the void in the situation is tried to be controlled. Badiou calls this process counting-as-one and calls the resulting structure state of situation. What is present in the situation is now represented in the state of situation. In a sense, this operation involves including or excluding what belongs to the situation. As Hallward (2003, p 96) states "The state— and Badiou uses the term in both its political and its ontological senses simultaneously— is what discerns, names, classifies, and orders the parts of a situation." The state emerges as the primary structure for order in a general sense and also for ordering things.

The crucial difference between situation and state of situation is that state of situation always exceeds situation. It always has more elements. As Badiou (2004, p. 155) says "This question is really that of power. The power of the State is always superior to that of the situation. The State, and hence also the economy, which is today the norm of the State, is characterized by a structural effect of separation and superpower with regard to what is simply presented in the situation". We can summarize the results of our discussion of the two concepts of Badiou's philosophy as follows. State of situation is a structuration of the void, the uncanny in the situation through the operation of counting-as-one. The state does this recounting. Secondly, the state of the situation is an excess, and this excess reveals the power of the state. Thirdly, to the extent that our knowledge remains within the state of situation, we cannot give any information about the nature of this excess because it is not normally a measurable excess.[57]

[57] Badiou (2004, p. 156) states "Freedom here consists in putting the State at a distance through the collective establishment of a measure for its excess. And if the excess measured, it is because the collective can measure up to it. … We will call political prescription the post-evental establishment of a fixed measure for the power of the State".

At this point, the reasons why Badiou says “history doesn't exist” or why history cannot function as a halting point should become clearer. Because, for Badiou, what we generally call history is the chronology of the order of things. What is called politics in this chronology is the story of the existence of the state. In this sense, the knowledge derived here is inherent to the situation and pertains to the state. This is why we can also understand Badiou's statement that politics is a rare, and that the common thread between politics and the state is the aforementioned notion of excesses. In this sense, politics is the act of knowing and measuring this excess, the knowledge of which is not achievable in the state of situation. In other words, politics is the measurement of the excess of the state's power over the state of situation, i.e. to reach its knowledge. In this sense, we can see politics as an effort to make the unmeasurable become measurable and the unknown become known. This is why we can also understand Badiou's statement that politics is rare. At the risk of quoting Badiou (A. Badiou, 2004, p. 155) at length

> It has been mathematically demonstrated that this excess is not measurable. There is no answer to the question about how much the power of the State exceeds the individual, or how much the power of representation exceeds that of simple presentation. The excess is errant. … We know that when politics exists, it immediately gives rise to a show of power by the State. This is obviously due to the fact that politics is collective, and hence universally concerns the parts of the situation, thereby encroaching upon the domain from which the state of the situation draws its existence. Politics summons the power of the State. … The usual symptom of this summoning is the fact that politics invariably encounters repression. But repression, which is the empirical form of the errant superpower of the State, is not the essential point. … The real characteristic of the political event and the truth procedure that it sets off is that a political event fixes the errancy and assigns a measure to the superpower of the State. It fixes the power of the State. … It configures the state of the situation. It gives it a figure; it configures its power; it measures it.

For Badiou, political economy in the Marxist sense is a great attempt to understand the order of things and to reveal the structure of the contemporary state. But this knowledge cannot organize politics itself. Badiou's opposition to a concept of politics derived from political economy and thus based on the concept of history is related to the fact that he does not see the economy as an evental site. This position is also linked

why Badiou rejects the totality of history. However, this is also an aspect of Badiou criticized by Marxist thinkers.[58] For example, Zizek (2006, p. 328) says

> … he refuses to explore the revolutionary potential of the 'economic' sphere (since, for him, this sphere belongs to the order of Being, and does not contain potential 'evental sites'); for this reason, the only way left is that of a 'pure' political organization which operates outside the confines of the State and, basically, limits itself to mobilizatory declarations. . . . The only way out of this deadlock is to restore to the 'economic' domain the dignity of Truth, the potential for Events.

It would not be wrong to look for the reason for Badiou's rejection of the concept of economy as an evental site in his rejection of the concept of history. Because thinking history as the history of class struggle also requires thinking politics around social relations. This would also mean taking the proletariat from a political position and reducing it to the status of a worker in a factory. For this reason, it is difficult for Badiou to find the counterpart of economic relations and the historical transformation it creates. Social relations are ultimately relations structured within the situation, and Badiou's aim is to intervene in and change the logic of this structuring. This point is also criticized by Peter Hallward. For example, Walker (2012, p. 46) states "Hallward lucidly puts this problem forward in another way: Badiou rejects the very concept 'society', as it names in a single totality an articulation of the subjective and objective, the movement of history and the intervention that convokes a subject".[59]

Even in Badiou's rejection of the idea of grounding politics on economics and social relations, the opposition he places between knowledge and politics can be seen. Because politics emerges through a rupture that also changes the formation of knowledge itself. For this reason, Badiou argues, history another basis of knowledge

[58] Probably the harshest critique belongs to Negri. He (2010, p. 9) states that "In the French experience of 'Maoism', we witnessed the spreading of a sort of 'hatred of history', which - and this was its terrible deficiency - betrayed an extreme malaise whenever it carne to defining political objectives".

[59] Following that, "But as Hallward points out, in contrast to Badiou, it is important to acknowledge 'the inevitable and necessary relation of politics and economics as basic to the very structure of our situation.' It is one of the central analytical foundations of the Marxist project that what furnishes the structuring of this parallax between the political and the economic is precisely the form called 'society'" (Walker, 2012, p. 46).

is not a source of legitimacy. It is only the state itself that provides its own legitimacy within that order. For Badiou, if we are to speak of the concept of history outside of the state, it can only be the history of truths which are neither knowledge nor verifiable.

This brings Badiou a paradoxical position. On the one hand, Badiou cuts any relation between politics and objective conditions such as social and economic relations, and knowledge; on the other hand, he defends truth is a materialist conception rather than idealist. As Hewlett says, this can be attributed to the influence of two major philosophical traditions on Badiou. To put it the other way "the Platonic and idealist on the one hand and the materialist and activist on the other" (Hewlett, 2006, p. 373). Although Badiou's concept of truth does not derive from material conditions, it connects itself to material conditions through the material trace it leaves. This is even more evident in Badiou's conceptualization of truth that constitutes history rather than truth that is derived from history.

It is now well known that Badiou's philosophy is structured by the truth-event that emerges in four generic fields: politics, science, art, and love. In this sense, truth-event has common features for all four fields. Truth-event creates a rupture. Truth-event is contingent. Truth-event embodies subjects in this world. While all subjectivities except politics are singular, only the subject of politics is collective, which has nothing to do with numbers. To recapitulate, truth-event reconfigures being in the world in which being appears. But here a paradoxical situation arises. If, contrary to Heidegger, being is not conditioned by time, how can truth-event claim a history? In other words, while truths are, as Williams (2012, p. 125) puts it, "denial of time because it rests on eternal truths and identities independent of the becoming and passing of durational time", can truths also have a history-making claim?

Following Meillassoux, it can be said that the answer to this question consists of two contradictory theses. As he states (2011, p. 1) "I will thus attempt to explain a nodal and seemingly paradoxical thesis of Badiou's: that there is only a history of the eternal, because only the eternal proceeds from the event. In other words: there is only a history of truths insofar as all truth is strictly eternal and impossible to reduce to any

relativism.” The reason why Badiou characterizes the concept of truth as eternal is because truth is not perishable. A truth becomes perishable only with the disappearance of the subjects who keep fidelity to the truth-event, that is, the subjects who would give embodiment in this world.[60] However, Badiou's de-historicization of the concept of truth may seem to metaphysicize the concept. The main difference between the metaphysical concept of truth and Badiou's concept of truth is that the former is found in Ideas of Heaven, “deprived as such of their historicity, that is, of the specificity of their historical appearing” (Corcoran, 2015, p. 148) whereas in Badiou truth exists as the result of an undecidable event and through subjects who have fidelity to it.[61] In this sense, as Badiou puts it, truth appears, but it is not certain and not verifiable. Therefore, the subject must decide an undecidable situation. As Meillassoux (2011, p. 1), says “*LW* will conversely add that all processes lacking truth are not historical in the true sense, but have been reduced to a simple temporal modification without the capacity for truth and the subjects who adhere to it”. In other words, for Badiou, all change that lacks the concept of truth lacks historicity in the proper sense of the word. The best example for that situation for Badiou is “democratic materialism” which reduces everything into language games, historical relativism. For Corcoran (2015, p. 148), the common point between metaphysical and democratic materialism is “What both positions thus share is an emphasis on the mutual exclusivity of truth and history”.

We know that truth is not constructed in a linear historicity and at the same time does not occupy timeless, transcendental position as a metaphysical design. On the contrary, truth makes itself historical through its impact and the subjects that bear it, but at the same time it is transhistorical in a way that it cannot be reduced to the conditions in which it exists. In this sense, truth cannot exist outside of historical and material

[60] The Hegelian analogy here is striking. Truth, like Hegel's Spirit, needs mediators to bring it into being in this world.

[61] Corcoran states (2015, pp. 147–148) “At least two key dimensions emerge from this link between history and eternity: the first is that Badiou is brought to oppose two standard positions that presuppose the diametrical opposition of history and eternity. Second, it leads him to oppose two very different but equally 'idealist' notions of history: the idea of a totalising Marxist-Hegelian History (in TS) and that of what he calls 'democratic materialism' (in LUI)”.

subjects, unlike a metaphysical truth, but cannot be fully understood or conceptualized through these conditions. As Meillassoux (2011, p. 4) states,

> This is why truths are eternal and historical, eternal because they are historical: they insist in history, tying together temporal segments across the centuries, always unfolding more profoundly the infinity of their potential consequences, through captivated subjects, separated sometimes by distant epochs, but all equally transfixed by the urgent eventality that illuminates their present. Because they are eternal, truths can be reborn, but because they are infinite, they are not reborn under the form of a simple and sterile repetition: on the contrary, they deepen the revolutionary path with each of their reactivations. They are not reborn in history by interrupting its becoming with their recommenced identities: on the contrary, they give birth to history itself through their reactivation, making their inexhaustible potential for novelty intervene in the monotonous train of daily work, ordinary oppressions, and current opinions. This fragmented history is opposed to the simple passage of time without meaning, from which we weave empty hours and epochs that for Badiou are clearly not worthy of the name of history in a genuine sense.

For Badiou, if we are to speak of a concept of history, it can only be the history of truths. However, Badiou does not think that truths push history in a certain direction. In this sense, truth brings together the truths of the past and the truths of the present. While there is a continuity of ideas between the truths of the past and the truths of the present, there is also a discontinuity between the ways in which they are realized. At the same time, the ways in which a truth is embodied in different temporalities are also different because, as Badiou notes in *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil,* no one has full control of truth or the authority to name it in its full sense. In this sense, there is an "unnameable" part in every truth. In other words, the ways in which truths are realized and the impact they have, i.e. the forms of politics they bring about, may differ. For example, there is an intellectual unity linking the truth of the French Revolution and the truth of the October Revolution, but the truths are not simply repetitive. In this sense, the forms of politics generated by the two truths similarly differ. For this reason, Badiou invokes the concepts of "communist invariants" and Sylvain Lazarus' "historical mode of politics".

Communist invariants function transhistorically in Badiou's political fiction. In this sense, they are for Badiou the *sine qua non of* the idea of communism and the ideas

that have made themselves present in every truth event, from Spartacus to Müntzer, or from the October Revolution to the Cultural Revolution. For example, Nina Power (2012, p. 158) writes "As soon as mass action opposes state coercion in the name of egalitarian justice, rudiments or fragments of the hypothesis start to appear. Popular revolts - the slaves led by Spartacus, the peasants led by Müntzer - might be identified as practical examples of this 'communist Invariant". Just as they are transhistorical, communist invariants are also independent of the subject. It is possible to think of them as undercurrents that historically connect truths. As we mentioned above, historically, in every truth event, it appears as the sine qua non of truth. Bosteels (2005, p. 755) says "We should not forget, though, that the communist invariants are the work of the masses in a broad sense. There is as yet no specific class determination to the logic of revolt in which slaves, plebeians, serfs, peasants, or workers rise up against the powers that be".[62]

If communist invariants are the undercurrents of the history of truths, the historical mode of politics can be seen as the praxis of how they, truths, appear in this world. Related with that, historical mode of politics can be divided into two modes: interior and exterior. Badiou (2005b, p. 39) writes

> The category that corresponds to the name 'politics' is that of the historical mode of politics, which supports the seizure of the intellectuality of a politics, which is what Lazarus calls 'the relation of a politics to its thought'. These modes can be characterized through their interiority or exteriority. They are 'interior' when the multiplicity of their places remains a homogeneous (subjective, prescribed) multiplicity. They are 'exterior' when the multiplicity is heterogeneous, and when the name is presented as having only a single place: the State.[63]

[62] Badiou (2009b, p. 173) writes "The masses can irrupt onto the stage of history only in a destructive excess over and above the State. This is their communist invariance. They may also, in their identity as substance, dictate the thickest, and even the most abject, statist consensus. But this is their placed being, their forced being. Their being-in-force falls under the law of nonlaw. We call 'masses' the historical interruption as such, the real of the cut".

[63] Lazarus (2015, p. xiii) defines historical mode of politics as such: "Politics, as I think of it, is not given in the space of an object, whether the object is the State or the revolution. The end of classism, with which the categories of the State and of revolution were co-substantial, necessitates positioning politics otherwise. It is in this sense that politics, as it is understood in Anthropology of the Name, will be called a politics in subjectivity, and this politics does not function through the objectalities that I

The historical mode of politics is sequential and rare. It exists in a certain period of time and then ceases. Lazarus (Lazarus, 2015, p. xiv) “The end of the sequence is its cessation, the exhaustion of its specific political capacity. It is not its defeat.” What happens with the historical mode of politics is “saturation” as Lazarus calls which means this historical mode of politics is closed.

For Badiou, Lazarus' historical mode of politics overlaps with his politics of truths. Both are sequential and rare. Both see politics as subjectivization and practice that constitutes its own historicity. Both refer singularity which politics are localized. Both Lazarus and Badiou agree that each truth or historical mode of politics generates its own problems and produces its own responses. However, these problems or solutions are not historically eternal like the mode of politics, they are saturated, ceased. For Badiou, the best example of this situation is the Leninist Party, which emerged as a solution in the aftermath of the failed revolutionary attempt and succeeded in 1917, and it was saturated with Stalin. Lazarus’ division of interior mode of politics intersects with Badiou’s examples of truths. As Badiou (2005b, pp. 39–40) writes

> The interior modes identified by Lazarus (but the list never claims to be closed) are the following:
>
> • the revolutionary mode (Saint-Just), of which we have already spoken, and whose sequence is 1792–94;
>
> • the classist mode (Marx), in which history is the subjectified category of politics, whose places are the working-class movements, and whose sequence runs from 1848 (Manifesto of the Communist Party) to 1871 (the Paris Commune);
>
> • the Bolshevik mode (Lenin), identified by the conditioning of politics (the proletarian political capacity must identify its own conditions, the party crystallizes this imperative), whose places are the party and the Soviets, and whose sequence runs from 1902 (What is to be done?) to 1917 (disappearance of the Soviets and ‘statification’ of the party);
>
> • the dialectical mode (Mao Tse-tung), identified through the dialectical laws of politics, as distinct from the ‘laws’ of history, which permit a

have just mentioned, nor is it constructed through them. This is what I will call a politics in interiority. It is supported by processes of thoughts that convoke the thoughts of people, and this politics will itself be called a thought in a very precise sense—a politics will be identified by the relation to its thought”.

> mobile treatment of situations and conjunctures – a mode whose places are those of the revolutionary war (the party, the army, the united front), and whose sequence runs from 1928 (Why Can China's Red Political Power Exist?) to 1958 (the outcome of the Korean War).

What this list shows us is that the idea of communism reconstitutes itself in different periods and around different praxis. In this sense, the end of these periodicities has never meant the saturation of the idea, nor has it led to the cessation of the idea. Herein lies the link Badiou establishes between history and politics. The disappearance of a historical period does not mean the death of the idea. Badiou's critique of past incarnations of the idea of communism can be seen as an attempt to rescue the idea itself from the ghosts of the past. In this sense, the idea itself can only be reincarnated under the influence of a new truth that will emerge. Thus, the following theses can be deduced on the idea of history and politics:

1. *The idea of communism and communist politics must always be reinvented and put into practice.* History shows us that an idea neither lives nor dies unless we ascribe such power to history. The communist idea is a struggle against neither time nor history. It is a struggle for the reinvention of time and history. In this sense, the temporality of capital or the domination of that temporality is not an object of political struggle for Badiou. The difference between Marx and Badiou is that although Marx accepts that there are different temporalities within world history, he believes that the movement of capital will pull these different temporalities in the same direction and that the relationship between them is a temporal difference. As a result, for Marx, capitalism was a progress towards unifying itself into a single temporality, constituting world history. The concept of revolution was also affected by this temporal difference. The fact that revolution was not expected in Russia marked a temporal gap in the backwardness of capitalism. For Badiou, it is impossible to talk about different temporalities or a history flowing in the same direction. But Badiou thinks that the truth of the present can unify the truths that emerge in different time periods. Therefore, for Badiou, politics appears as a praxis that keeps fidelity to the

idea of truth, rather than clinging to the past. In this respect, communism for Badiou is an idea that is always waiting to be reinvented.

2. *Politics is not a praxis shaped by a condition*. Politics is the ability to have the capacity to create its own condition. The attempt throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to subordinate radical politics to objective conditions, history, and knowledge ultimately undermined the very condition of radical politics itself. The existence of emancipatory politics does not need an external mechanism; emancipatory politics establishes these conditions as they arise. What we need to remember is that these conditions and periods are not eternal.

To summarize, for Badiou, the idea of history is not an external condition on which politics can be based. Nor can politics be derived from knowledge in this sense. For Badiou, politics is the ability to create both the history and the knowledge of truth through the emergence of a truth, which is rare. And this is related to the subject's fidelity to that truth. Therefore, I will discuss politics, subject, and universality in the next section.

CHAPTER 4

4. THE SUBJECT AND POLITICS

4.1. Introduction

According to Badiou, there are three main philosophical approaches to the subject. The first reduces the subject to the level of consciousness, the second to the level of morality, and the third to the level of ideology. For Badiou, although all three of these approaches have particular problems, all three remain to theorize that the subject is constrained by the limitations of the existing world. The creative influence of the subject or the potentiality of to change the world in this world has disappeared in these formulations. Badiou (2009, pp. 47-48) writes,

> 1. 'Subject' would designate a register of experience, a schema for the conscious distribution of the reflexive and the non-reflexive; this thesis conjoins subject and consciousness and is deployed today as phenomenology.
>
> 2. 'Subject' would be a category of morality. This category would (tautologically) designate the imperative, for every 'subject', to consider every other subject as a subject. It is only retroactively, and in an uncertain fashion, that this normative category becomes theoretical. Today, this is the conclusion reached by all varieties of neo-Kantianism.
>
> 3. 'Subject' would be an ideological fiction, an imaginary through which the apparatuses of the State designate (in Althusser's terms, 'interpellate') individuals.
>
> In all three cases, there is no room for an independent, formal theory of the subject.

The first category refers to the Hegelian idea of the subject, and Badiou criticizes the construction of the subject around consciousness. Here, the process of consciousness brings us back to the relationship between subject and object and the problem of knowing. While the second approach turns the subject into an extension of morality, the autonomous subject must be content with the given world. The third approach, embodied in Althusser, makes the subject an extension of ideology, and the subject cannot take any action that would remove itself from the scope of ideology.

The cruciality of the concept of the subject stems from the fact that it comes with the concept of an Idea. If the subject is unthinkable, this is also a problem for the actualization of the Idea. Politically, the subject appears as collective "we" for being an agent of transformation or realization. Although the conceptualization of the collective we are much older than the concept of the subject, the idea of the subject in the political sphere is based on this idea of the collective we. As Nicolacopoulos and Vassilacopoulos (2006, p. 213) state, "Since the Greeks, western history can be understood as the yet to be resolved tension between a world that produces the revolutionary idea of the gathering 'we' and at the same time constructs itself as the reality that denies the idea its actualization".

Although the conceptualization of the subject emerged with the Enlightenment philosophy, thinking of the concept of the subject is also thinking of the Idea based on the collective "we" in post-Enlightenment philosophy. This also includes an approach that determines how we think about politics. If we define the subject as dependent on material relations, we formulate that politics can rise on a social basis through class conflict, ethnic problems, etc. In this sense, an identity is established between the social problem and the subject. As Marchart (2007, pp. 11–12) states, "in most cases of political and social foundationalism, a principle is sought which is to ground politics from without. It is from this transcendent ground that the functioning of politics is claimed to be derived". This is the approach we will see in Hegel and Marx. However, one of the main distinctions between Marx and Hegel is the binary distinction Marx makes. According to him, the subject emerges in a double sense. The first one is subject

as an agent of actualization and action. The second meaning in Marx, on the other hand, appears as subjectivization, i.e., under domination.

In this chapter, I will discuss how these three philosophers theorize the subject from this perspective. In this way, we will see how they interpret both the Idea and the concept of politics. In the first section, we will see that Hegel approaches the idea of the subject by discussing knowledge and morality. Hegel's criticism in these two debates is directed against Kant. Their criticism of Kant pushes Hegel to think of these two ideas with the social whole and to think of the subject with the notion of ethical life. On the other hand, Marx tries to think about the subject concerning consciousness, social relations, and political action together. He focuses on the subject's potential to transform these relations while comprehending free action, consciousness, and social relations of domination. Finally, we will turn to Badiou in the last section. His argument that the subject emerges with a singular name and as a militant of truth necessarily associates the subject with a mode of politics. While Badiou shares Marx's conception of the subject as holding the power to transform the world, his critique is that Marx's conceptualization determines the politics of a particular period. For Badiou to think about the subject and politics together, we need to rethink the Idea, the belief in the Idea, and the comradery bond of the collective “we”.

4.2. The Idea of the Subject: Follower of the Geist

For Hegel, dialectic was a way of understanding and reaching the condition and becoming of being, while the concept of history gave us a direction. In this sense, while dialectic was the condition of understanding what emerged, the idea of history indicated what was to come. The concept of the subject completes this theoretical topology because the problem now becomes self-realization. In Hegelian terminology, the idea of the subject tells us how the abstract can realize itself in the concrete. Pippin states (2004, p. 3), “in very general terms, for many, the only modern philosopher who had begun to develop the resources to understand and ‘theorize’ the distinct aspects of the rapidly changing, unprecedented nature of modern society was Hegel”.

Modernity had risen on the idea of Enlightenment and embodied its values. These values are roughly the belief in universal truths and values, linear progress, reason and freedom, rational planning, and standardization of knowledge (Wood, 1997, p. 544). However, the key concept behind these values is the idea of reason. As Cassirer (2009, p. 5) writes, "when the eighteenth century wants to characterize this power in a single word, it calls it 'reason.' 'Reason' becomes the unifying and central point of this century, expressing all that it longs and strives for, and all that it achieves". The aim of applying reason was to liberate man from the traditional values and constraints of thinking in which he lived. In his famous article, *An answer to the question: What is enlightenment? (1793),* Kant (1999, p. 17) states, "Enlightenment is the human being's emergence from his self-incurred minority. Minority is inability to make use of one's own understanding without direction from another reason and autonomy". Thus, what defines the Enlightenment for Kant is that for man to be liberated, reason must first be free and have autonomy. The fact that modern philosophy continued to use the concept of the subject by keeping these meanings and adding new meanings is related to the French Revolution and the simultaneous Haitian Revolution, which revealed the power of people to determine politics and history.[64] Pippin (2005, p. 10) mentions the cruciality of the idea of subject in modern philosophy as such

> I have called that problem the persistence of the problem of subjectivity, but in modern philosophy that topic has ranged from questions of self-knowledge, epistemological incorrigibility, first-person authority, and action theory to the nature of autonomy, the scope and basis of rights claims to phenomenological issues (what it is "like" to be the subject of one's experiences and deeds, if it is anything at all).

The concept of the subject is utilized both in acquiring knowledge and identifying the bearer of the right. In addition, the subject is employed to formulate the concept of

[64] The questions raised by the French Revolution were crucial to the Enlightenment and the development of modern philosophy. As Marcuse (1954, p. 3) states "German idealism has been called the theory of the French Revolution. This does not imply that Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel furnished a theoretical interpretation of the French Revolution, but that they wrote their philosophy largely as a response to the challenge from France to reorganize the state and society on a rational basis, so that social and political institutions might accord with the freedom and interest of the individual. Despite their bitter criticism of the Terror, the German idealists unanimously welcomed the revolution, calling it the dawn of a new era, and they all linked their basic philosophical principles to the ideals that it advanced". It should be noted Marcuse was very keen to interpret post-French Revolution German philosophy in a revolutionary direction.

action, whether collective or individual. For Kant, for example, action is connected to moral law. However, in order to speak of any moral law, it is necessary to conceptualize who is held responsible and the limits of freedom of choice. All of them emerge together because one disappears without the other.

As a post-Enlightenment thinker, Hegel was confronted with these problems and considered the available answers to these questions as unsatisfactory. Hegel reformulated these questions in his philosophy, politics, and ethics. However, one of the crucial distinctions between Hegel and Enlightenment philosophers was that "for Hegel philosophy was always connected intimately with the general, socio-political and cultural problems of the present; it would provide the final intellectual solution for all the problems of the past pressing upon the present" (Lukacs, 1975, p. 261).[65] In other words, against the abstract universalized values and the subject of the Enlightenment, Hegel comes up with a historicized and socio-culturally structured perspective. As we know from previous chapters, the aim of Hegelian philosophy was that "...philosophy is a great, unified historical process whose content is the dialectical unfolding of reason in its unity" (Lukacs, 1975, p. 265).[66] Thus, in this part, I would like to discuss Hegel's approach to the issues of the subject and its self-realization. To this end, I will first discuss the intersection of subject, universality, and politics. Then, I will argue the question of the subject's self-realization. This discussion will also open the door to one of the most critical debates in modern politics: the relationship between theory and praxis.

[65] In elsewhere, Lukacs (1975, pp. 264–265) states, "Objective idealism will provide the solution to these problems, it is the philosophy which arises from the living contradictions of the age and its thought: in the language of Hegel's later philosophy, objective idealism is 'the truth of subjective idealism'".

[66] Taylor (1979, p. 14) expresses the aim of Hegelian philosophy to unite the dichotomies: "As an attempt to realize the synthesis between rational autonomy and expressive unity, Hegel's work aims to overcome the oppositions in which these two terms in one form or another stand over against each other, such as the opposition in us between freedom and nature, or that between individual and society; the seemingly unbridgeable gulf between the knowing subject and his world, or the even more unbridgeable one between finite and infinite spirit, man and God".

4.2.1. Hegel and Subject: A Problem of Determination

The modern subject has been at the center of the debate regarding the possibility of knowledge and politics. For example, Wood (1990, p. 134) states that “the distinguishing characteristic of modern social life is "subjectivity"; the moral standpoint is the standpoint of the ‘subject.’ This standpoint may be difficult for us to grasp in its specificity because it may be hard for us to see how there could be any real alternatives to it. Subjectivity is simply the standpoint of any individual agent”. However, the subject is not the same thing as the concept of the individual. It rather transcends it. In this sense, determination is needed for the individual to become a subject. Kant finds this determination in the idea of reason, for the subject to be an agent of moral-political philosophy. To put it in other words, the subject needs a universal reason that can take responsibility for its actions. Kant's subject appears in two fields. Although these two spheres are not external, Kant distinguishes them from each other. The former concerns the problem of knowledge, i.e., the realm of pure reason, while the latter is the realm of morality, i.e., the realm of practical reason in which the subject realizes its freedom. In the former, the subject realizes the limitations of its knowledge, whereas in the latter, it appears as the one who acts according to the universal moral law.

Kant's approach to the problem of knowledge attempts to combine both Descartes' idea of the thinking “I”, i.e., Descartes' rationalism, and Hume's empiricism, i.e., the notion that knowledge is based on experience. He argues that insofar as knowledge is universal, like the laws of nature, it cannot be derived only from experience. In other words, when knowledge is obtained as a result of our experience, Kant argues that the subject cannot know the knowledge beyond the experience. When derived from experience, we can only know what is experienced, not much more. On the other hand, for Kant, knowledge cannot be derived solely from the laws of pure reason because the subject must receive the object of knowledge as intuition. Still, the acquired

knowledge attains the form of knowledge through reason. Kant's "transcendental idealism" aims to synthesize these two approaches.[67] Marcuse (1954, p. 21) states that

> Kant adopted the view of the empiricists that all human knowledge begins with and terminates in experience, that experience alone provides the material for the concepts of reason. There is no stronger empiricist statement than that which opens his *Critique of Pure Reason*.' All thought must, directly or indirectly, . . . relate ultimately to intuitions, and therefore, with us, to sensibility, because in no other way can an object be given to us.

While Kant uses reason in the construction of knowledge, he says that reason is a universal determinant in the construction of the subject. In other words, reason is the universal common cut between subjects. This universality of reason is thanks to the categories that reason possesses. Marcuse (1954, p. 21) says, "Kant set out to prove that the human mind possessed the universal 'forms' that organized the manifold of data furnished by the senses. The forms of 'intuition' (space and time) and the forms of 'understanding' (the categories) are the universals…". Thus, the vital thing for this debate is that Kantian formulation of the subject operates by limiting the capacity to know.

For Kant, the term metaphysics bears the trace of this limitation. Kant defines metaphysics in the *Critique of Pure Reason* as acquiring knowledge of the unconditioned by pure reason. The unconditioned here indicates that metaphysics transcends any form of determinant relations. As Beiser (2005, p. 54) expresses, Kant "explains that there are three fundamental ideas of metaphysics corresponding to three basic concepts of the unconditioned: God, freedom, and immortality. … Hence he declared that metaphysics, understood as the attempt to know the unconditioned through pure reason, is impossible". In this sense, he defines the subject by limiting how the subject can know and what it can know. This limitation in Kant's definition of

[67] "Transcendental consciousness depends on the material received through the senses. The multitude of these impressions, however, becomes an organized world of coherent objects and relations only through the operations of transcendental consciousness. Since, then, we know the impressions only in the context of the a priori forms of the mind, we 'cannot know how or what the 'things-in themselves' are that give rise to the impressions. These things-in-themselves, presumed to exist outside of the forms of the mind, remain completely unknowable" (Marcuse, 1954, p. 23).

the subject tells us two things. The emergence of the subject is through a relation of determination. Secondly, this limitation will be a guide that also shapes the action of Kantian subject. However, for Hegel, a philosophy that could not know the thing-in-itself, God, or freedom was defunct.

For Hegel, God was the subject of philosophy from the beginning, and philosophy cannot avoid this. Beiser (2005, p. 56) writes, “It was the central challenge of his philosophical career to provide a critical foundation for metaphysics, to base it upon a method that would satisfy the demands of the Kantian critique of knowledge”. Hegel has an understanding of metaphysics that is the opposite of Kantian one. For him, metaphysics means reaching the knowledge of the unconditioned through reason. Hegel's objection is directed towards Kant's understanding of the infinite and metaphysics. According to Hegel, Kant conceptualized the infinite as beyond the finite and argued that the finite cannot attain knowledge of the infinite. For Hegel, the situation lies in the fact that traditional metaphysics sees the infinite as an entity that transcends the finite. Beiser (2005, p. 60) states how Hegelian metaphysics differs from traditional one:

> Although Hegel states that the absolute or God is the goal and subject matter of philosophy, he does not think that philosophy should begin by proving its existence, still less that it should presuppose its existence. Famously, he insists that the absolute should be the result of doing philosophy, not the starting point. It is only after his investigation that the philosopher understands that his object has been all along the absolute or God. In this regard Hegel’s metaphysics differs from traditional theology, which from the very beginning makes God its subject matter ….

Hegel thinks that the fact that traditional metaphysics begins with the idea of God leads him to a different philosophical design. Hegel was never a metaphysician in the sense that Kant described the term simply because he rejected the idea of transcendental or, to be more precise, the distinction between noumenal and phenomenal. According to Hegel, what is defined as transcendental exists in finite things. Hegel's critique of Kantian and basically traditional metaphysics would also determine his approach to the subject. With this critique, Hegel would link the Idea to the subject.

Hegel's perspective on the problem of the subject also includes a criticism of Kant's limitation of the subject's act of knowing. Hegel, unlike Kant, argues that the subject can know the thing-in-itself. To begin with, Hegel is critical of Kant's construction of subjective reason. According to Hegel, this leads to a conclusion in which the subject imposes its reason on the world. Hegel sees the ground for this in the fact that the Kantian idea of reason can only know what is in its mind. The subject is imprisoned within its self-consciousness. As a result, the reality outside the reason is set down as an unknowable thing-in-itself since the intellect cannot create this reality outside the reason.[68] In other words, the world cannot be known before the reason is directed to the world. The Kantian relation between subject and knowledge results in a solipsism in which the subject only knows what is in its mind. Hegel's critique aims to remove Kant's limitations on the subject and to get out of Kantian solipsism (Beiser, 2005, pp. 62–63).

Overcoming the problem posed by Kantian dualism on the question of knowledge was one of the most critical issues of German philosophy "because all knowledge requires some form of correspondence or connection between the subjective and the objective, the ideal and the real, or the transcendental and the empirical. … To explain the possibility of knowledge, then, it is necessary to unite these realms, to forge a bridge between them" (Beiser, 2005, p. 106).[69] The separation of the realms, such as between subjective and objective or intellectual and empirical, must be overcome for the possibility of knowledge. Hegel's solution to this problem is dialectical logic based on the abovementioned idea of contradiction. In this way, the thing is grasped in itself

[68] As Beiser (2005, p. 63) writes, "Since the transcendental subject knows only what it creates, it is caught inside the circle of its own consciousness; and since it cannot create the entire world, the reality outside it will be an unknowable thing-in-itself".

[69] In elsewhere, Beiser (2005, p. 158) expresses Hegelian difference from Kantian understanding of knowledge: "Hegel's endorsement of Kantian criticism, his critique of the methods of the older rationalism, and his rejection of intellectual intuition, all derived from his deeply held conviction that metaphysics stood in need of a new foundation. Ever since his early Jena years, Hegel's fundamental concern was to provide a critical foundation for metaphysics. This new metaphysics would be critical in the sense that it would begin with a critique of knowledge – an examination of the limits and powers of reason – and then derive metaphysics from it". For Hegel, the concepts that we applied based on our intuitions and senses are not given but structured through our everyday experiences and concepts. Such a metaphysics would be an inherent part of everyday life and reason.

and with the whole. In addition, the reason is formulated as "(reason) is simply the necessary result of the immanent movement of the understanding" (Beiser, 2005, p. 164).[70]

To summarize, Hegel departs from the Kantian idea of knowledge and metaphysics. Metaphysics aims to know the unconditioned - such as God and freedom -because, for Hegel, what metaphysics does not consider as the object of knowledge is the first aim of philosophy. He differs from the idea of knowledge by rejecting the distinction between noumenal and phenomenal, like Kant. For Hegel, this distinction is artificial. Hegel does not define the subject in terms of a limitation because, unlike Kant, he does not distinguish between the knowable and the unknowable.[71] To the extent that reason finds existence in things outside of it, this distinction made by Kant for the subject loses its validity in Hegel. Whereas Kant sees reason as a property of a self-conscious being, Hegel sees reason in the world. With this approach, Hegel comes close to Spinoza's idea that matter and mind are different attributes of the same substance. However, for Hegel, Spinoza's monistic doctrine was a giant machine, and his explanations were mechanical. Spinoza defines finite things inside God, but the answer to the question of how the finite exists inside the infinite in time and space was obsolete.[72] As Beiser states (2005, pp. 91–93)

[70] One can ask how the error arises in this process of understanding. The error arises when the particular gives itself self-sufficiency status vis-à-vis the whole (Beiser, 2005, p. 164).

[71] Here, I will not go into the details of the discussion of knowledge in Hegel. Although this discussion, that is, how knowledge is obtained, is a separate and long topic, Hegel makes this discussion in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and combines the issue of knowing with absolute knowing. The important point for our discussion is how knowledge defines and determines the subject.

[72] At that point, the role of dialectic can be remembered. As Beiser (Beiser, 2005, pp. 164–165) states, "The chief result of the dialectic is that reason is not only a form of mechanical explanation, which shows how one finite thing depends upon another, but also a form of holistic explanation, which shows how all finite things are parts of a wider whole. The fundamental mistake of Jacobi and Kant, in Hegel's view, was that they understood reason according to a mechanical paradigm of explanation, which understands an event by its prior causes and so on ad infinitum. Since they believed that reason is limited to such a form of explanation, they had to conclude it could never grasp the unconditioned, which is never given in the series of finite causes".

> The problem of the relationship between the infinite and the finite in Spinoza can be put more neatly and simply in the form of a dilemma: the infinite and finite must be, and yet cannot be, united. On the one hand, the infinite and finite cannot be united because they have opposing characteristics. The infinite is eternal, indivisible and unlimited; the finite is temporal, divisible and limited. Hence if we were to join them in a single substance, that substance would be self-contradictory; it would be per impossible both eternal and temporal, indivisible and divisible, unlimited and limited.

Hegel abandoned the idea that finite things are reflections of the infinite and extensions of the same substance. His philosophical stance was to conceptualize how the particular or finite being reflects and embodies the infinite. In that matter, Hegel searched for the trace of the Idea, i.e., the Spirit. One of the concepts of finite things for Hegel was the idea of the subject.

In his own formulation of the subject, Hegel aimed not to repeat the criticisms he has leveled against neither Kant nor Spinoza. It is neither reducible to reason nor an extension of the infinite. To overcome this, Hegel distinguishes between the universal and the particular. According to Hegel, universal is a first-order explanation, while particular is a first-order existence. The reason for this is to determine what something is and its relation of determination with the universal.

Hegel sees existence as particular because for something to exist, it must be determined (Beiser 2005, pp. 56–57). For Hegel, the subject is, first and foremost, a reflexive identity that contains universality and particularity. In other words, the subject exists in its particularity and is explained through the universal. As Wood (1990, pp. 134–135) states, “subjectivity is the ‘movement’ by which these universal and particular sides of the self are made identical/experienced as harmonious aspects of the same self. Subjectivity is the task of ‘working this ground of freedom,’ transforming ‘abstract’ subjectivity into "concrete" subjectivity by making it ‘objective’ and ‘equal to its concept’”.

Hegel's theory of the subject is, above all, anti-dualist, unlike Descartes, and affected by Herder’s expressivist theory. For Hegel, the subject, rather than a given category,

seeks to realize itself in this world (Taylor, 1979, p. 16). However, this self-realization is not only individually shaped, i.e., by only the subject's desires and wishes; it is socially constructed. Hegel's concept of the subject aims to establish the relationship between the subject and the Spirit. In this sense, the subject is connected to the Hegelian Spirit, but this does not mean that the subject is a puppet of the Spirit and has no autonomy.[73] On the other hand, it does not mean that the subject is not only dependent on its own will and desires. As Taylor (1979, p. 21) says

> Thus we can say that the subject is both identical with and opposed to his embodiment. This can be because the subject is not defined by Hegel in one dimension, as it were, as a being with certain properties, but in two. He has certain conditions of existence, those of embodiment; but at the same time the subject is characterized teleologically, as tending towards a certain perfection, that of reason and freedom, and this is in line with both Aristotle and expressivist theory. And the demands of this perfection run counter, at least at first, to his conditions of existence.

The concept of the subject emerges by attributing certain properties to being. For Hegel, these attributions are the will and the self-consciousness. Hegel (1991, p. 135) writes about the relation between subjectivity and the will in *Elements of Philosophy of Right* "since subjectivity now constitutes the determinacy of the concept and is distinct from the concept as such (i.e., from the will which has being in itself), and more precisely since the will of the subject, as the individual [des Einzelnen] who has being for himself…". In addition, for Hegel, the subject must be self-conscious of its freedom and autonomy. Hegel thinks there must be a transition for the subject from a position of in-itself to a position of for-itself. In that regard, Hegel (1991, p. 68) writes, "the person is essentially different from the subject, for the subject is only the possibility of personality, since any living thing whatever is a subject. A person is therefore -a subject which is aware of this subjectivity, for as a person, I am completely for myself: the person is the individuality of freedom in pure being-for-itself". However, the concepts of will and freedom are possible with each other. The subject, who is the mediator of the realization of freedom, which is the goal of Hegelian

[73] As Taylor (1979, p. 23) writes, "The answer is that this theory of the subject applies not only to man, but to cosmic spirit or Geist as well. And indeed, we already saw at the end of the last section that the resolution of opposition in man required that we refer beyond him to a larger rational plan, which is that of Geist".

philosophy, can only do so through will. Hegel (1991, p. 135) writes, “the will without freedom is an empty word, just as freedom is actual only as will or as subject”. The reason why the will is an attribution that determines the subject for Hegel is because it determines how the subject will act, that is, how it will realize itself. For this reason, Hegel divides the concept of the will into two, subjective and objective will, and again establishes a dialectical relationship between them. In this sense, the subjective will becomes the instrument of realizing the objective will. Hegel (1991, p. 135) states, “thus, the subjective will determines itself as correspondingly objective, and hence as truly concrete”.

Hegel's relationship between the subject and the will is two-dimensional. He builds the concept of the will around the subject and adds a social dimension. Hegel thinks that the subjective can coexist with the objective. He relates the two to the whole in which the subject exists, similar to the relationship Hegel establishes between the particular and the universal in the concept of dialectic. Hegel (1991, p. 136) writes, “this entire determination of the subjectivity of the will is again, a whole which, as subjectivity, must also have objectivity. Only in the subject can freedom be realized, for the subject is the true material for this realization. But this existence of the will, which is called subjectivity is different from the will, which has being in and for itself. For to become the latter, the Will must free itself from this second one-sidedness of mere subjectivity”. In *The Elements of Philosophy of Rights*, Hegel identifies the subjective will with the particular, representing the subject's interests, desires, and needs. At the same time, the objective will refers to the laws, customs, and morality of the society in which the subject exists (Beiser, 2005, p. 236). In the relationship that Hegel establishes here between the subjective will and the objective will, he states that the subject can only pass from in-itself into for-itself through the mediation of the objective, that is, within it. This opens a path for the subject to preserve and transcend its individuality. Thus, while the subject tries to protect and realize its desires and wills, it also expresses that it can coexist with the social and other wills. For Hegel, the relationship between the subject and the other represents a holistic development in

accordance with his view of organic society.[74] Rather than relying on human nature with self-determined desires and wishes that motivate action, he makes sense of the subject's existence and action in relation to the whole in which it exists. Hegel (1991, p. 138) writes

> The content of the subjective or moral will contains a determination of its own: even if it has attained the form of objectivity, it should nevertheless still contain my subjectivity, and my act should be recognized only in so far as it was inwardly determined by me as my purpose and intention. Only what was already present in my subjective will do I recognize as mine in that will's expression, and I expect to reencounter my subjective consciousness in it.

Hegel's approach to the concept of the subject is a novelty in modern philosophy. In terms of our discussion, Hegel's decisive role for conceptualizing the subject is that the subject needs an attribution to reach a definition beyond the individual. Hegel has in common with Kant, but unlike Kant, he does not reduce the subject to the subject of knowledge, and his subject is not isolated from the collective. Subsequently, he places the concept of the subject within a particular social context which allows the subject to coexist its temporality. In addition, Hegel tries to grasp the concept of the subject concerning the objective. In this sense, he establishes a connection between the conditions and the action.

After defining the concept of the subject, Hegel focuses on how the subject realizes itself. This problem will later be reformulated in political theory under the concept of praxis. Marx will recontextualize this question in a different context. In the next section, I will discuss how the subject realizes itself in light of the above discussion.

4.2.2. Subject and Self-Realization

For Hegel, the self-realization of the subject was a question of practice because, like Kant, Hegel saw practice as an action carried out for specific purposes. Kant's (1999,

[74] Beiser (2005, p. 80) defines Hegel's organic view as such "For all Hegel's thinking essentially proceeds from an organic vision of the world, a view of the universe as a single vast living organism. Hegel saw the absolute as the 'one and all', the Hen Pai Kan, of the pantheistic tradition".

p. 279) definition of practice "conversely, not every doing is called practice, but only that effecting of an end which is thought as the observance of certain principles of procedure represented in their generality". This definition is seen in establishing the unity between theory and practice. In other words, while practice aims to establish the unity between the Idea and the concrete, the subject becomes a means for the Idea to actualize itself in the concrete. It enables both itself and the Idea to be embodied. The idea of practice, in other words, the self-realization of the subject[75], finds its place in Kant's moral philosophy and Hegel's ethical life.[76]

Freedom, one of the most fundamental concepts of Hegel's philosophy, connects both the concept of the subject and the concept of Spirit. Hegel comprehends freedom within a social environment where the subject is conscious of its freedom. For Hegel, freedom has two dimensions. One is the subject's autonomy and will to act with its freedom, and the other is the completion of freedom within the social sphere. One cannot form a meaningful unity without the other, and Hegel says that this holistic relationship can only be established within ethical life. As Wood (1991, p. xi) argues, Hegel's *Elements of The Philosophy of Right* is based on how to realize the idea of freedom that was conceptualized in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which leads Hegel to seek the answer to the question of what an ethical life in which freedom is possible and should be like. In other words, freedom is a constitutive component of everyday life conceptualized by ethical life. Hegel (1991, p. 189) states

> Ethical life is the Idea of freedom as the living good which has its knowledge and volition in self-consciousness, and its actuality through self-conscious action. Similarly, it is in ethical being that self-

[75] As Wood (1990, pp. 30-31) states "The two commonest models for ethical theory are the deontological and the teleological. Deontological theories are based on a law or principle that tells us what to do and what not to do, an ultimate imperative or set of imperatives that we are supposed to obey. This theory selects the actions to be performed by their conformity to the relevant set of commandments. Biblical ethics is deontological, as is Kantian ethics. Teleological theories are based on a conception of some end or set of ends that is to be realized in action. They select actions as instruments to the end. Utilitarianism is a teleological theory, as are the various forms of egoistic eudaemonism found in classical Greek ethics". The distinction between Kant and Hegel on the idea of construction ethics is crucial to understand further distinctions

[76] With Marx, both the idea of self-realization of the subject and the idea of practice will shift from the moral sphere to the political sphere.

> consciousness has its motivating end and a foundation which has being in and for itself. Ethical life is accordingly the concept of freedom which has become the existing [vorhandenen] world and the nature of self-consciousness.

It is necessary to say here that Hegel treats the subject not only as a rational agency but also as a whole with the medium in which it exists. For this reason, the role of the subject is both cognitive in the sense of understanding the world in which it exists and active in the sense of realizing action within it. The subject and the social conditions in which it exists are established in a reciprocal relationship, which distinguishes it from Kant's idea of the subject or liberal thought. The self-realization of the subject, which we encounter in liberal thought, is related to the lack of obstacles to the subject's actions and desires. With this characteristic, liberalism is defined by the concept of negative freedom as conceptualized by Isiah Berlin (1990). However, for Hegel, this subject is ahistorical and constructed outside of society. He sees self-realization as impossible without the subject becoming part of a reason, i.e., an idea greater than itself, because the subject's action is structured on both subjective and objective realms. In other words, the moral-psychological dimension of the subject and the subject's dependence on social relations, and the fact that these two feed each other, invalidate the idea of a subject with self-determined reason and desires as imagined by liberals. As Pippin (2008, p. 125) writes,

> The basic claim in the Introduction concerns the nature of freedom. Hegel suggests that *The Philosophy of Right* will establish that, once we understand freedom concretely, in its actuality (and not merely in its negative form – as a capacity to resist inclinations and desires, to withdraw from and stand above sensible impulses, even the "infinite" freedom not to act at all – all of which he thinks the merest faint shadow of true freedom) we shall understand why only an ethical being (*sittliches Wesen*), a rights-bearing, morally responsible member of modern ethical life and the modern state, can be free.

Hegel will level a similar criticism against Kant's moral philosophy. First and foremost, Hegel distinguishes between Kant's concept of morality and his concept of ethical life. For Hegel, Kant's moral theory is individual, deontological, and reflective, whereas his idea of ethical life is based on social laws and customs. Hegel's most well-known definition of Kant's moral philosophy as 'empty formalism' is a criticism of its

inability to provide the subject with insight for judgment on the distinction between right and wrong and the subject's failure to integrate with his action because the action is fulfilled only because it is a duty.

The moral law, which Kant defines within the sphere of practical reason, approaches the subject as a universal rule-maker. In this sense, Kant (1992, p. 30) describes the moral maxim: "Act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law" which binds autonomy of the subject and morality. Kant considers the relationship between morality and the subject by abstracting the subject from social conditions and the subject's desires. The motivation of the subject's action is neither the approval of society nor the satisfaction of his desires. According to Kant, the goal of the subject's action should not be happiness but to realize it because the moral duty of the action requires it. Thus, Kant says that moral duty provides the subject with a purpose, and in this way, he will try to realize the highest good on earth. Here, Kant says that the subject must find out the universal rule, which is the necessity of the subject's duty, and he must find it out himself. For this reason, as mentioned above, Kant's morality was deontological, and the subject cannot derive its action from a holy book, social traditions, or anyone else. Autonomy is the only condition for deriving universal law. Only a subject with autonomy, in this way we can speak of the freedom of the prior, can derive the universal law and act.[77] We can say that Kant relies on two abstractions here.

One is the abstraction of the subject excludes itself from the conditions in which she exists. The second is to consider the decision of moral duty as a state, not a relationality, and to make it independent of its results and causes. This is the reason why he famously argued that the subjects should deliver his friend to the authorities even though the prosecution of him is unjust. For Kant, everybody has to obey the law even though a corrupt government legalizes it under unjust conditions. The key problem here is that the consequences of actions cannot be attributed to the subject

[77] Lukacs, too, had a harsh criticism of Kantian morality. He Lukacs, too, had a harsh criticism of Kantian morality. He (1975, p. 286) writes, "The ethical philosophy of subjective idealism is not able to attain to a true understanding of the general nature of moral imperatives and of the social content of ethics".

because he has only done the right thing as a matter of moral duty. The execution of my friend who took refuge in the house represents an act of a corrupt government, for which we cannot attribute complicity to the subject. However, it can be asked what kind of subject does not take responsibility for his actions. Kant's approach to the subject concerning the problem of knowledge is parallel to his approach to moral action. Just as the subject cannot know the thing in itself in the former, it cannot know the result of its actions in the latter. As Kant argues in the example of the friend who rebels against the government, perhaps his friend will escape from the hands of the police, and the result will not be as expected. However, in both knowledge and action, Kant plays the card of unknowability while avoiding the responsibility for the action whose outcome we cannot know. This leaves the subject incomplete. If action has a meaning, it is to take responsibility for its consequences, which is not the case for Kant's moral action. However, Hegel opposed the Kantian logic of self-realization of the subject. As Douzinas (2000, p. 266) writes,

> When Hegel turns to the normative field, he argues, against Kant's moral and legal formalism and his separation of morality from legality, that freedom and ethical life are intrinsically linked. In ethical life, the final stage, which entered the historical scene with the modern state, morality, and legality are finally re-united into an organic whole and become the state's institutional manifestation.[78]

As Douzinas points out, Hegel, in contrast to Kant's definition of moral law as a separate sphere and severing its ties with the social and legal spheres, tries to unite these spheres and form a whole. To do that, Hegel's purpose is to link the subjective to the objective. In other words, the distinction between morality and ethical life arises from the distinction in the characterization of the relation between the subject and the social whole. This distinction also creates a divergence in the realization of the

[78] Apel makes a similar comment about the difference between Kant and Hegel in terms of their approach to consider these spheres. He (2004, pp. 58–59) says "The superiority of Hegel's systematic philosophy with respect to the cognitive grasp of moral phenomena reveals itself in the first instance in his distinction between the three realms of "right," "morality," and "ethical life" (*Sittlichkeit).* Whereas in the case of the first two realms he could build on Kant's work, the conceptualization of the third here allowed him effectively to grasp and characterize the kinds of phenomena that Kant himself had excluded, namely, those involving a substantively concrete and experienced form of realized morality in the broadest sense. Hegel thus furnishes us with a dialectical introduction to the phenomena encountered in three realms of experience, which together express the lived ethos of a human community in the spirit of Aristotle's ethics".

universal in the subject's action. As Beiser (2005, pp. 234–235) expresses, “morality is an abstract universal: it makes the part prior to the whole as if each individual were self-sufficient or independent. Ethical life is a concrete universal: it makes the whole prior to the part, such that the very identity of the individual depends on its place in the whole”.

For Hegel, ethical life contains both the subjective and objective, and “the substance of the ethical life is good, that is, the fulfillment of the objective [united] with subjectivity” (Hegel, 1991, p. 189). What Hegel refers to here with the term objective is the existence of the objective independent from the subject's wishes, such as laws, customs, and traditions. For Hegel, these are sources of authority to which the subject submits and surrenders itself. For Hegel, they also have a subjective quality because the subject internalizes them and acts as if they were part of his persona. Beiser (2005, pp. 235–236) says,

> While ethical life negates morality in so far as morality attempts to separate the individual from the whole, it also attempts to preserve the fundamental principle of morality, the right of subjectivity (§154). If the individual is to become one with the community, he must do so from within, according to his own critical reflection. Hence, Hegel insists that the synthesis of the community with the individual in ethical life is not based on trust or faith alone (§147).

For Hegel, the subjective always finds its counterpart in the objective. Both the origins, motivations, and consequences of the subject's actions are, in this sense, for Hegel, neither merely subjective nor merely objective, but rather the unity of both. Through ethical life, freedom becomes concrete and unites its subject to object. In this way, Hegel expresses the journey of the Spirit and how it actualizes itself in family, civil society, and the state, which is also a continuation of the distinction between morality and ethical life over the idea of the subject and social whole.

Hegel is critical of the approach that pits the individual against the state and sees the state as an apparatus of power that must be limited. In this sense, he finds it naïve to think that the way to protect the individual from the state apparatus is to grant rights to the individual. This is a formalistic approach for Hegel and he sees these rights as

abstract rights. In this sense, a moral sphere abstracted from the state and individual rights are ‘empty abstractions’ for Hegel. As Wood (1991, p. xxv) states, “we do not actualize our freedom by entertaining the empty imaginings of moralists, but only by relating ourselves to something real which truly actualizes the power of reason in the world. The state, Hegel says, is 'the absolute power on earth'".[79] For Hegel, the modern state is the ‘highest actualization of the individual's freedom’ because it can only survive if it ensures the freedom and happiness of its members (Wood, 1990, pp. 27–28). Hegel (1991, p. 276) states that the rationality of the modern state lies “in the unity and interpenetration of universality and individuality,” and the modern state forms a unity of them. In other words, for Hegel, neither the idea of freedom nor the idea of universality can be considered separately from the social whole, nor can they be made meaningful by positioning them against the state. On the contrary, this relationality and unity are essential for these concepts to be understood and actualized.[80]

Subjectivity can be seen as the defining element of ethical life, its characterizing feature. Hegel's choice of ethical life instead of morality as the field in which modern subjectivity realizes itself is not only because ethical life encompasses the social whole and the subject in the relation between the whole and the particular. As Wood (1990, p. 26) states, “Ethical life is more concrete than abstract right and morality not because it emphasizes the collective over the individual, but because the ethical image of the individual is a more concrete one. It addresses every side of the individual self, and situates the self in a living social order”. James (2007, pp. 1–2) writes

[79] Wood (1990, p. 28)(1990, p. 28) writes in elsewhere, “Hegel maintains that the modern state works only because the universal life of the state provides for the subjective freedom and particular happiness of its members. The "rationality" of the modern state consists in the "thoroughgoing unity of universality and individuality" (PR § 257R). "The principle of modern states has this tremendous strength and depth, that it lets the principle of subjectivity complete itself in the independent extreme of personal particularity, and simultaneously brings it back to substantial unity" (PR § 260)”.

[80] As Wood (1990, p. 30) writes on this matter, “Hegel’s insistence that each individual's supreme duty is to be a member of the state (PR § 258) is therefore not a rejection of the idea that the individual should aspire to play a role in the universal life of the human race. On the contrary, Hegel thinks that it is only through participation in the state that individuals can realistically hope that their actions will gain such a universal significance”.

> We shall see that Hegel offers a theory of subjectivity which seeks to identify both its essential features and its implications for our understanding of the nature of the modern self, including a set of demands that modern individuals, who have become progressively more aware of themselves as subjects in the course of history, might reasonably make in relation to their social world. In this respect, Hegel's account of subjectivity helps to explain why, for him, modern individuals are individuals in the strong sense of the term, that is to say, people who not only distinguish themselves from others on the basis of certain physical traits or psychological features, but who also think of themselves as having separate and particular interests, certain rights and a conscience.

As a result, while establishing the relationship between the subject and the social, Hegel's idea of ethical life establishes a link between the particular and the universal and enables the subject to embody both self and freedom. The subject's action is conceived as a relationship inseparable from the social whole. The subject attains a self-conscious status through its action and freedom. Hegel puts the concept of will be based on this. However, this whole process is constructed in relation to the social whole, that is, the idea of the subject as the process of self-knowledge and the subject as the agent of ethical life, and the subject thus becomes a carrier of the universality of the idea. Hegel's construction of the concept of the subject, both in the process of knowing and in the process of acting, differs from the liberal tendency of Enlightenment and Kant's ideas and gives it social and historical integrity. To the extent that Hegel (1991) sees the unity of subject and social whole as an organic relationship, he establishes it as a complementary relationality, even though he thinks the class he defines as rabble in civil society poses a danger. On the other hand, Marx starts from where Hegel left off by showing that neither the subject nor that totality is unproblematic. First, Hegel's idea of freedom's limitations and then how the idea of the subject refers to a specific class would be the target of Marx's criticism. All these discussions on the subject, knowledge, consciousness, and self-realization can be grouped under five abstractions. The relationship among these principles forms a whole. This also reveals the direction, as determined by Hegel, on the discussion of the subject in modern politics.

1. Hegel reconstructs the Enlightenment's, and particularly Kant's, take on the subject, which is formed in the relationship between knowledge and

consciousness. While Kant establishes knowledge through the principle of limitation, Hegel, in contrast, expands knowledge to encompass social totality. Therefore, when we reflect on the relationship between knowledge and consciousness in relation to the actions of the subject, the progressive nature of the connection between the subject and politics becomes apparent, with politics being subordinate to consciousness. This link between consciousness and politics enables a definition of politics with a progressive character.

2. The second decisive point on the subject is the relation established between subjectivity and objectivity. The Hegelian subject takes on a character that can contain the universal interest in itself and act for it. As we will see in the next section, this will pave the road for Marx's conceptualization of the proletariat as a universal class, or as Balibar (2017b) puts it, “people of people”.

3. The crucial and the third element is the historicity of the subject and the inclusion of social formation in its thinking. This approach is also critical in terms of showing how subjectivity and objectivity, subject and history, envelop and determine each other.

4. Another significant influence of Hegel is his definition of the subject as having an inner purpose. For Hegel, this inner purpose was the subject's realization of the Idea both within itself and in the world, which in turn allowed for the political to be defined in terms of ends and means.

5. Although this determination is a principle also discussed by Kant, Hegel locates it onto an ontological basis. This is the problem of theory and praxis. The subject exists through praxis rather than an abstract principle of determination. The discussion surrounding how this praxis is determined will clarify the differentiation in the relationship between the Idea and politics.

4.3. Marx: Subject of Emancipation

As we have discussed, Hegel aimed to create a philosophical framework that actualized the concept of freedom and to define a political situation accordingly. In this regard, we discussed in the previous section how the subject is determined by the idea of freedom in Hegel and how it exists in this world. Before Marx directed his critiques at Hegel, the Young Hegelians reopened discussions on his concept of freedom and alienation. Conversely, Marx reconstructs both the idea of the subject and the notion of emancipation while attempting to carve his path through the critiques of the Young Hegelians. As Burdon (2021, p. 232) states, "for Marx, critique does not mean abolishing or rejecting something. Rather, critique is concerned with understanding what assumptions and preconditions underlie a problem. What does a problem symptomatize or say that is larger than itself".

First, Marx expands the concept of freedom from political emancipation to human emancipation. Quante (2010, p. 198) summarizes post-Hegelian philosophy as "the multiple points of contention in the post-Hegelian debate can be organized into two problem areas: first, the relation between religion and philosophy; and second, the function of philosophy as both a critique of the present and an instrument of knowledge for the future". This section will also address these debates through the lens of Marx's ideas. Therefore, I will first discuss the context in which this conceptual reconstruction by the Young Hegelians. Then, I will focus on the topic of emancipation and its limitations, a conclusion Marx reaches in his discourse on emancipation in the first section. Finally, I will examine the relationship between the proletariat and revolution, which Marx identifies as the subject.

4.3.1. Bauer and Feuerbach: The Problem of Alienation and Emancipation

For Marx (1975, p. 98) Hegel "wants to write the life history of the abstract substance, the Idea, so that human activity etc. must appear as the activity and result of something other". Marx agrees that both the existence and actions of the subject are manifestations of Spirit, as we discussed above. The subject serves as an instrument

for Spirit's manifestation. Hegel, on the other hand, equates God with the Absolute, or Spirit, asserting that the sole goal of philosophy is the idea of God. The subject's existence, or the act of self-realization, materializes through its relationship with Spirit, which is to say, the objective world. However, Hegel defined Spirit's inability to exist under the conditions it encounters as alienation. In *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel uses the concept of alienation "to denote Spirit's becoming other than itself in the realm of objectivity" (Comninel, 2012, p. 92). This also implies that Hegel conceptualized "the longstanding philosophical (and theological) concept of alienation, particularly pursuing the integration of its sense of the sale of property with a more profound sense that involved personal identity, informed by the idea of being a "stranger" to God" (Comninel, 2012, p. 75). In other words, alienation in Hegel has a dual aspect. In the first aspect, Spirit cannot manifest itself because the external conditions lack the means to realize freedom. Consequently, the subject becomes alienated from the Spirit and cannot realize itself. Hegel illustrates this with the example of the Stoics in the chapter on "Unhappy Consciousness" in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. According to Wood (2004, pp. 11–12),

> On Hegel's diagnosis, the unhappy consciousness is unhappy only because it does not interpret the world aright. It does not recognize that the natural realm, far from being 'inessential', is the necessary expression or objectification of the divine world spirit, of which consciousness itself is only the particularization. The alienation of the unhappy consciousness is consequently just a matter of finite spirit's imperfect knowledge of its own infinite essence. The only remedy for alienation is the attainment of a higher stage of self-knowledge, where God and humanity, the universal essence of spirit and its particular self-consciousness, are seen to be fundamentally in harmony or identical with each other.

In other words, unhappy consciousness has misunderstood its spiritual essence and cannot grasp the divine infinite being beyond its finite existence. Nevertheless, Hegel's identification of the Absolute or Spirit with God also imparts a religious significance to alienation. Man's alienation from God is, consequently, his alienation from himself. The Young Hegelians, who emerged from the schism in Hegelian philosophy after Hegel's death, took a critical stance against him and returned to the debate on religion and alienation, which became essential texts defining Marx's early discussion of the subject. One of the reasons why Young Hegelians developed a critical approach to his

philosophy was that, at the time, Hegel was seen as the official philosopher of the authoritarian Prussian State, and the idea of religion he developed was seen as the religion of the Prussian State. For example, Comninel (2012, p. 75) writes, "The Left Hegelians turned this conception back against Hegel's concessions to Prussian official religion, articulating the view that religious belief constituted alienation from our own humanity". Religion had become a tool of an oppressive apparatus far from human emancipation. Philosophically, the source of the criticism lay in the relationship Hegel established between the material and the ideal. If Hegel's idea of alienation is based on man's alienation from God, the Young Hegelians turn this idea on its head and argue that religion in Hegel's philosophy is the cause of man's alienation from himself. For the Young Hegelians, religion is no longer a means of self-realization but an obstacle to human self-realization and freedom. As Comninel (2012, p. 75) writes,

> In this critical conception of alienation, putting faith in an imaginary divinity was a denial of our own responsibility, through our individual and especially collective human capacities, for the forms of life and achievements we realize in and through the social whole. In worshipping God, then, "religion alienates our own nature from us," we project the potency of our own collective existence as something apart, a divine "other" to which we are subject—a subjection made palpable in subordination to religious authorities, and particularly to the "holy" form of the monarchy.[81]

Bauer (1927, p. 95 cited in Quante 2010, p. 210) argues that "religion is the fixed, intuited, made, desired, and essentialized passivity of the human; the highest suffering which it could inflict on itself; the fear of human beings; the poverty and emptiness of spirit raised to the essence of the human; the sorrow of the world, which is examined, desired, and fixed as its essence". For Bauer, the obstacle to self-emancipation is religion. Thus, it is the cause of human slavery and misery. Bauer follows the anti-religious stance inherited from the French Revolution. He argues that the autonomy that the Enlightenment attributed to the subject has been lost by surrendering to

[81] Wood (2004, p. 10) states the relation between Marx and Left Hegelians on the concept of alienation "The concept of alienation is not original with Marx. His use of it in the early writings draws upon, and presupposes familiarity with, the philosophers through whom he acquired it, especially Hegel and Feuerbach. From the beginning, however, Marx's views about the nature and causes of alienation differ decisively from theirs".

religion. According to Bauer, the subject has also lost the ability to take responsibility for its actions. The transition between autonomy and subject is no longer smooth and shaped by the conditions. This included a critical position towards the Enlightenment philosophical understanding of the subject as a self-sufficient, homogeneous whole. Another reason for Bauer's criticism of religion was that religion was part of the authoritarianism of the Prussian State. Religion mitigated with the state was also an obstacle to political emancipation since political emancipation is equated with the state.[82] As Quante (2010, p. 211) writes, "the sublation of this phenomenon in Bauer's philosophy of radical self-determination can thus be achieved only through the complete negation of religion" to overcome alienation.

Feuerbach took Hegel's critique to a new dimension, distinguishing himself from the Young Hegelians and forming the first nucleus of the line that Marx would follow. Although Feuerbach, like Bauer, was stuck in the debate on religion and alienation, he did not only base his critique on content but also developed a methodological critique of the Hegelian philosophy. Feuerbach's criticism is first and foremost directed against the speculative idealism that Hegel used to construct his intellectual system. In this sense, Feuerbach argues that we cannot grasp things through philosophical thought. He argues that Hegelian philosophy fails to understand the superiority and independence of matter over thought and that matter cannot be grasped through thought. As Quante (2010, p. 217) writes, "in his critique of Hegel, published in 1839, Feuerbach rejected the claim that we can grasp things themselves by means of philosophical thinking. Against this claim, he offered his first materialistic thesis, namely, that there is matter independent of thought, given to humans in experience, the existence of which is always already presupposed, such that it cannot itself be captured philosophically".

[82] As Comninel refers this point will be criticized by Marx harshly. He (2012, p. 79) writes, "The philosophical freedom of humanity from the alienation of religion, embodied in the freedom of the state from religion, would result in the realization of freedom in the republic, or Freistaat. It was this reduction of human emancipation to nothing more than achieving the merely political objective of the French Revolution—the "free state" rather than free humanity—to which Marx directed his caustic criticism of Bauer in the first part of 'On The Jewish Question'".

As we have seen for Bauer, religion represents a false and dishonest worldview. The main perspective here was that religion was an instrument that distorted reality. In fact, Marx was right when he observed that Bauer's critique of religion was a copy of Hegel's "unhappy consciousness" (Quante, 2010, p. 213). Although Feuerbach agrees with this aspect of religion, he focuses on the anthropological aspect of religion with a perspective that goes beyond this. Feuerbach's basic thesis is that the idea of God is a reflection of the human unconscious. Quante (2010, p. 203) expresses, "according to Feuerbach, the individual, who in a finite life riddled with contingencies is unable to realize the essence of what it means to be human, projects essential properties onto a divine being…". In this sense, man clings to the idea of God to escape his responsibility. In addition, Feuerbach thinks that the idea of the other world arises from the misery of this world as a salvation. Thus, Feuerbach, unlike Bauer, tries to provide a materialist explanation of both the meaning and function of religion.

Both Bauer and Feuerbach attributed to religion a role that distorts reality and deceives people in attaining knowledge. In this sense, religion also disrupts one's connection with self-consciousness, leading to one's alienation from oneself. What is noteworthy here is that the evaluation of the subject's action, that is, whether the action is compatible with the subject's material conditions and the judgment of whether the subject has this awareness, is derived according to the concept of consciousness. In this sense, *a priori* link is established between the subject and the action, and the subject is expected to show a specific behavior. If the subject does not exhibit this expected behavior, the conditions that cause it become the cause of alienation and, relatedly, the cause of false consciousness. For Hegel, alienated life is "unhappy consciousness". According to Wood, for the Young Hegelians, the source of false consciousness was religion, as in alienation. Religion both devalued human life and alienated them from their essence while at the same time offering them solace and comfort. As Wood (2004, p. 13) states, "Hegel and Feuerbach hold that people are alienated only because they misunderstand themselves and the real nature of the human condition".

Concerning the relationship between knowledge and consciousness, Bauer and Feuerbach add a new interpretation and focus on the effect of knowledge on consciousness in this relationship between subject and consciousness. Therefore, based on this relationship, it is concluded that a distorted knowledge of material relations will lead consciousness to a misperception, and the subject will not be able to perform the correct action. Therefore, by establishing a direct link between the change of consciousness and the emergence of 'right' action, they place an interpretation that sees the change of consciousness as necessary for political change at the heart of politics.

Marx agrees with Feuerbach and Bauer that religion is related to false consciousness. However, he objects to the idea that alienation arises from false consciousness because alienation cannot be reduced to consciousness. As Wood (2004, p. 13) states, "the difference is that for Marx the human essence is not merely species consciousness but social labor; the alien being, the dominion and the state of worthlessness are thus not unhappy illusions but monstrous realities". For Marx, religion was a symptom of the conditions in which the subject found himself and was the result, not the cause, of his alienation. Wood (2004, p. 15) writes about "… false consciousness is only a symptom of alienation. The battle against it must be seen as only one aspect of the struggle against alienated practice, a battle which cannot be wholly won until the more fundamental practical struggle is successful". In the debate opened by Bauer and Feuerbach, Marx saw that the problem was not limited to religion.

Fine (2009, p. 109) states, "Marx identifies Hegel to reduce social relations into timeless categories while Marx searches for conceptualizing social relations with a certain historical mode of production". He follows a similar critical method when criticizing Bauer and Feuerbach on alienation and religion. Although both thinkers criticize Hegel's idealism and try to deal with religion in terms of worldly relations, their limited approach to social relations and their reversal of cause and effect are points that Marx would criticize. However, both thinkers are essential in building Marx's materialist theory step by step, as he will later build on these criticisms to establish a holistic relationship between the subject and emancipation.

As mentioned above, Bauer finds the solution to the problem of the "emancipation of Jews" in the political state. Marx's criticism of Bauer is twofold. The first is how the alienating role of religion is rooted in this world, i.e., it is not self-evident as Marx states in *On the Jewish Question,* "religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people". The second shows the limitation of political emancipation in the discussion that begins with the emancipation of Jews. Here, suppose Marx's critique is directed against the bourgeois citizen. In that case, Marx undermines the bourgeois concept of the subject as the bearer of rights and focuses on the relationship between emancipation and the subject. Contrary to Bauer, both critiques are rooted in social relations rather than a critique of the existing conditions.[83] As Mezzadra (2018, p. 23) points out, "this movement of critique … described primarily in relation to the production of a specific figure of subjectivity, in the historical moment in which the state ensured its monopoly on politics as such". In other words, Marx shows that any idea of emancipation should go beyond the French Revolution and what it represents for human emancipation (Comninel, 2012, p. 82).

For Marx, the main problem of Feuerbach's philosophy was that even though it proceeded with a materialist method, the trajectory of thought he followed ultimately reduced social relations to consciousness. Practice and history were left out in the formation of this consciousness. Marx (2010, p. 41) writes about Feuerbach: "He gives no criticism of the present conditions of life. Thus, he never manages to conceive the sensuous world as the total living sensuous activity of the individuals composing it". Marx thinks that Feuerbach does not ask why alienation occurs and, like Bauer, sidesteps it. While viewing religion as a tool that manipulates consciousness, the questions of why consciousness can be manipulated or under which conditions it can be manipulated were left unanswered. In answering these questions, Marx (2010, p. 41) offers a critical interpretation of social relations as such:

[83] For example, Marx (1978, p. 46) writes in *On the Jewish Question,* "Every emancipation is a restoration of the human world and of human relationships to man himself. Political emancipation is a reduction of man, on the one band to a member of civil society, an independent and egoistic individual, and on the other hand, to a citizen, to a moral person".

> But man is no abstract being encamped outside the world. Man is the world of man – the state, society. This state, this society, produce religion, an inverted world-consciousness, because they are an inverted world. Religious distress is at the same time the expression of real distress and also the protest against real distress.

Even under the influence of the Young Hegelians, young Marx's work bears the earliest shades of a critique of political economy. In this period, when he had not yet developed a comprehensive critique of capitalism, the first observations on the destructive effects of capitalism, the influence of Hegelian philosophy, and its critique determined his work. In this sense, the themes of alienation and emancipation shaped Marx's work in this period when the two intertwined. Marx removed the concept of alienation from the realm of religion and philosophy and reshaped and widened it with critiques of political economy. His criticism of capitalism in this period is intertwined with the theme of the rapid transformation that capitalism creates in the social structure and how capitalism deprives people of their freedom. For example, in *The German Ideology*, Marx (2010, p. 79) says, "for the proletarians … conditions of existence of modern society, have become something extraneous, something over which they, as separate individuals, have no control, and over which no social organization can give them control". For him, the first loss of freedom begins with losing control over one's labor.

In the critique of religion and alienation that began with the Young Hegelians, the effort to shift alienation from an idealist conception to a materialist basis led Marx to conceptualize both alienation and emancipation within a specific historical context. To him, the problem of alienation is no longer a problem of illusion but a problem of the appropriation of human freedom within capitalism. Labor and alienation are seen within this historicization when we consider that for Marx labor is a means of human self-existence and a means of regulating social relations. As a result of the legal enslavement of labour, Marx sees "workers are people 'robbed of all actual life content', and rendered 'worthless, devoid of dignity'" (Wood, 2004, p. 9). With his re-theorized concept of alienation, he expresses that alienation emerges as a form of relationship within capitalism and that this form of relationship alienates the worker from his labor and the product of labor. At the same time, capital stands as a power in

itself over society. For this reason, Marx simultaneously considers the concept of alienation and the concept of emancipation from the perspective of the political economy.

As a result, Marx unites the species-being as the subject that materializes around the concept of alienation with the worker as the subject that owns labor under capitalism. Therefore, the species' freedom and the working class's freedom are now intertwined (Kökerer, 2024, p. 552). For example, Marx (2007, p. 82) states

> Political form of the emancipation of the workers; not that their emancipation alone was at stake but because the emancipation of the workers contains universal human emancipation and it contains this, because the whole of human servitude is involved in the relation of the worker to production, and every relation of servitude is but a modification and consequence of this relation.

According to Marx, the working class is now responsible for achieving human freedom because the former will not be free without the latter's freedom. The working class will now liberate itself and humanity through the proletarian revolution. Thus, social relations need to be changed to overcome alienation in capitalism. However, for Marx, the subject's actions are determined not only by the subject's will but also by the conditions in which the subject acts.

For the Young Hegelians, the question of knowledge appears in terms of consciousness and alienation. Marx's intervention here is twofold. First, he does not see the debate as the self-realization of the subject's consciousness. Therefore, he does not think the subject can be liberated from a consciousness distorted by religion because liberation is not an act in the subject's consciousness. Marx interprets the relationship between the subject, knowledge, and consciousness within the framework of material relations. However, he also maintains the relation between consciousness and action. The second is his revolutionary intervention in the duality of subject and object. It shifts the object of the subject from consciousness to action and, therefore, sees human labor as the object of this subject. When we look at alienation from this perspective, the subject is deprived of its object. To the extent that this subject cannot control its object, it is

impossible to talk about its freedom or free existence in social life. For this reason, Marx's subject is, in fact, a subject left without an object, an incomplete subject. However, for Marx, the main purpose of this whole discussion is about how this incomplete subject can establish itself. For this reason, Marx sees the idea of revolution as a constitutive element of emancipation, aware that at the end of the day, the subject to which he attributes historical and political agency is incomplete and enslaved. However, rather than a question of will, the idea of revolution depends on how the subject will bring itself into existence within historical and social conditions. A third intervention of Marx is related to the question of emancipation. By critically addressing the assumed synonymity between citizenship and political rights, he renders emancipation the subject of politics. This is why we see the conceptualization of the proletariat as the liberating subject of humanity, the 'people of people', even though it is still not fully matured. These three interventions can be positioned as a result of Marx's criticisms of Hegel and the Young Hegelians.

4.2.2. In Between The Subject and Subjectivation

In the first chapter, we said that the subject and the idea of the individual are not the same thing; the subject is defined based on the principle of determination. For Hegel, this principle was in the notion of will, the subject's determination to exist as an instrument of Spirit and act accordingly. In this sense, Hegel's principle was shaped by a decision at the level of consciousness in accordance with his philosophy. On the other hand, Marx had an idea of the subject that opposed Hegel's philosophy. Marx's concept of the subject arose from the unity, instead of the separation between consciousness and action since the two had a relationality that affected each other. However, Marx saw the subject's actions as determined and constrained by social and historical conditions rather than realized in a self-determined manner. Marx (2009, p. 1), in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,* writes "Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past".

On the other hand, Marx also thinks that structural moments can emerge within capitalism where the subject can realize its revolutionary potential. In other words, he says capitalism inherently produces situations in which it becomes difficult to reproduce its sustainability politically and economically. For this reason, Marx sees this as an opportunity for the subject as during such moments, the reproduction of social relations becomes untenable. For Marx, these are moments of crisis in which capitalism is vindicated by its contradictions. As Marx (1978, p. 18) says, "... the development of insoluble contradictions within the society 'prepares the way for social crises, which burst out in political revolutions". For this reason, Marx operates a dialectic that determines the struggle between the subject and the structure in which it exists. On the one hand, capitalist social relations, which enable the reproduction of social relations, push the subject into a kind of passivity; on the other hand, crises arising from the internal contradictions of capitalism bring the subject to the brink of political intervention. A crisis is seen as a structural moment that opens a path for the realization of revolutionary subjectivity.

Marx knew that the proletariat's ability to revolutionize depended not only on itself but also on the class alliances it could forge. A revolutionary social transformation was possible only when the proletariat came to occupy a prominent position among the masses as an organized power. The need for the proletariat to ally with other classes is not just a strategic problem for Marx. For example, he writes in *Paris Manuscripts*, "...the emancipation of the workers contains universal human emancipation-and it contains this, because the whole of human servitude is involved in the relation of the worker to production ...". Similarly, Marx (1988, p. 78) refers this point by stating that "…the emancipation of society from private property, etc., from servitude has as its political form the emancipation of the workers; but not just their emancipation, because their emancipation implies what is included in it, universal human emancipation". This can be considered as a response to the fact that Marx and Engels saw that the destruction caused by the dynamism of capitalism would not only stop by enslaving the working class but spread throughout society. The proletariat, with its class position, appears as the class that will enable other social classes to get rid of this domination relationship because its position in the relations of production gives the

proletariat this power. However, the reflection of this power on social relations is another problem.

Marx and Engels (2010, p. 59) already state in *The German Ideology*, "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", and the proletariat struggles against these ideas as a revolutionary subject. Marx and Engels point out why there is a gap between the objective conditions and the subject's consciousness and action. A correspondence between the two is not possible for the working class within capitalism because the dominant ideas of capitalism contradict the interests of the working class.[84] However, as Marx and Engels (2010, p. 60) also state, "the existence of revolutionary ideas in a particular period presupposes the existence of a revolutionary class …". The dialectic between revolution and dominance is still dominant in Marx's early writing, but this implied a contradictory unity between the two rather than a dialectical relationship in which the more significant the repression, the greater or lesser the likelihood of revolution. To put it bluntly, Marx's view concerning the contradiction between the subject and objective conditions offers a reading that is neither contingent nor teleological path-dependent. On the contrary, it seeks to show what is possible within these limits while attempting to establish the boundaries of the subject (Smith, 2010, p. 263). It is possible to encounter the tension between this dual meaning of subjectivity in Marx's early writings. For this reason, Marx thinks that there is no pure revolutionary subject already there. On the contrary, he thinks that the emergence of the subject is a process.

For Marx, another condition that limits the subject's actions is productive forces. Marx (1904, p. 121) writes in *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* "no social order ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is room in it, have been developed; and new higher relations of production never appear before the

[84] To overcome this problem, Lenin says that the proletariat must be organized through a working-class party and that this party must represent the working class in the political arena as a vanguard party. Here Lenin resorts to a dual process. First, instead of waiting for the working class to gain the ability to represent itself in the political arena, which we can call the transfer of subjectivity, he moves to the idea of a party that will accelerate time. The second is the embodiment of subjectivity through representation.

material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society". To sum up, as Mezzadra (2018, p. 27) states, "in Marx's work, the shadow of 'necessity' will progressively spread over history: the objective configurations of social relations, which assign different subjects to determinate positions, will significantly restrict the margins of action of these subjects…".

Here, Marx's negative relation between the social structure and the subject - negative because the structure restricts and determines the subject's action - presents a critical plane that distinguishes Marx from Hegel. He departs from the Hegelian conception of the subject as an extension of the social structure. He abandons the idea that the social structure is the founder and protector of the subject's freedom. In this sense, he also shows that Hegel's idea of organic society is, in fact, an illusion. In doing so, he also abandons the notion of a subject imprisoned in consciousness. If the subject has a condition of existence, and if this is through praxis, it will be within those social relations that imprison and objectify the subject itself. While capitalism objectifies labor and turns private relations into objective relations, or on a plane where commodity fetishism is a social determinant, Marx already thinks that the subject can only act for its freedom without being free. This negative conditioning is what determines the subject in Marx. In other words, the subject exists as a negated element within capitalism, and the struggle of the subject is to negate this negation.

On the other hand, Marx mentioned that the moments in which all these social relations fail and have to restructure themselves are inherent to capitalism. Marx observed that capitalism is structurally inherently crisis-producing and crises are, moments of reorganization of class relations rather than liberating instances for the working class. In other words, for Marx, crises are not teleologically seen as revolutionary moments that bring the working class closer to revolution. In *Grundrisse,* Marx (1973, p. 749) writes, "The growing incompatibility between the productive development of society and its hitherto existing relations of production expressed itself in bitter contradiction, crises, spasms". Marx's interpretation of crisis is more than a mere squeeze in the relations of production but also encompasses its social dimension. The reason why crisis is seen as a revolutionary moment lies in the fact that the reproduction of

domination becomes difficult in these moments. For Marx, there is a link that connects crisis and revolution, that is, the idea. In *The Class Struggles in France,* he (2022, p. 108) notes, “With this general prosperity ... there can be no talk of a real revolution. … A new revolution is possible only in consequence of a new crisis. It is, however, just as certain as this crisis”.

Until the early 1850s, Marx and Engels' interest in crisis theory was political rather than economic. Although they saw crises as a consequence of the internal contradictions of capitalism, they focused on their political rather than economic consequences. Analyses of this period pointed to the fact that crises would lead to the emergence of the working class as a political force. For example, Clarke (1994, pp. 94–95) says

> in the absence of any significant mass organizations of the working-class Marx and Engels looked to the class struggles provoked by the disruption of economic crises as the primary source of the revolutionary mobilization of the workers, while the financial pressures imposed by crises on the state reduced the latitude within which the bourgeoisie could respond.

After the defeat of the 1848 Revolutions, Marx and Engels turned their gaze to the next crisis and thought that it would be through this crisis that the working class would be liberated (Clarke, 1994, p. 96). However, it would be too ambitious to say that this was an idea to which Marx and Engels remained faithful throughout their intellectual lives. On the contrary, they began to think that crises also demoralize and disorganize the working class. In this respect, the crises of capitalism or crises within capitalism could determine subjectivity in both directions. However, they thought that the crisis-producing structure of capitalism and the methods used to solve crises made capitalism even more destructive every time. For Marx, in addition to the crises of capitalism arising from its own cycle, there are also crisis situations arising from the working class. It must be said that revolution was a crisis produced by the working class within capitalism, and it marked a situation to which capitalism could not find an answer. As Bell and Cleaver (2002, p. 1) write, “crisis is thus, most basically, the rupture of that fabric and a positive consequence of the development of the working class as subject.

Within this framework, revolution is to be understood as a “working class produced” crisis to which capital is unable to find an adequate response”.

Although in his early years Marx thought that crises offered a political possibility, in later years he seems to have realized that the relationship between crises and capitalism is not unidirectional and that crises reconfigure capitalism and the working class. In a similar way, however, we find in Marx a double meaning between crisis, subject and political action. The dialectic here actually oscillates between being subjected to crises and creating them. Again, in the former, the working class is exposed to the crisis in a subjectivated position, while the working class, as the creator of the crisis, holds a position of subjectivity and creativity. The crisis here is the result of capitalism no longer being able to keep the working class in a subjectivated position.

As a result, Marx's approach, in which social relations and the subject are mutually positioned, symbolizes a second break from Hegelian philosophy and its criticisms. The first break was his attempt to understand the subject in terms of consciousness and material conditions rather than seeing the subject as an expression of consciousness in the discussion of the subject and alienation. The second was to show that the freedom of the subject is not something to be realized but an idea to be gained. In other words, it does not assume that the subject already has autonomy. Marx thinks that there is no free action or no autonomous subject in capitalism; the subject's action is conditioned, and autonomy must be earned. While the subject gains autonomy within the social conditions that restrict its action, he thinks that certain historical moments offer opportunities for the subject to act. In this sense, the idea of the subject is embodied in Marx as the manifestation of social relations. In this sense, the third point of rupture from Hegel is the self-realization of the subject.

4.3.2. The Proletariat as the Universal Subject

The third innovation Marx brings to the subject is the theoretical perspective he adds to the discussion of self-realization. In Hegelian philosophy and the Young Hegelians who criticized it, the problem of self-realization is shaped by the *a priori* connection

between the subject and its action. As we have discussed above, the subject is predetermined, and thought with an inner purpose. In Hegelian terms, this is shaped by the freedom of the subject, and the goal is to embody the Spirit in this world. In the Young Hegelians, on the other hand, rather than overlap between subject and purpose, the existence of alienation is the problem. The inner purpose of the subject becomes to remove this alienation.

It should be noted here that the notion of the subject points to the concept of humanity; that is, it does not have a division that defines it. Marx, on the other hand, first relates the determination of the notion of the subject to the mode of production in which it exists while at the same time using it to analyze history. In this sense, there is a temporal relation between the subject and the mode of production since the subject's existence depends on that. This emerges from the inherent connection between the idea of freedom for the oppressed and the subject. For Marx, the subject is the key and constructor of emancipation. In other words, the question of what is to be self-realized as a subject and in what ways depends on the mode and the relations of production. For example, Marx and Engels (1956, p. 53) write,

> The question is not what this or that proletarian, or even the whole of the proletariat at the moment considers as its aim. The question is what the proletariat is, and what, consequent on that being, it will be compelled to do. Its aim and historical action is irrevocably and obviously demonstrated in its own life situation as well as in the whole organization of bourgeois society today.

The reason why Marx sees the proletariat as the historical subject within capitalism is related to the role of labor in capitalism. Although labor is a transhistorical category, in other words, a feature that defines human beings, its transformation into a commodity as a dominant relation that can be bought and sold under capitalism into a determining element of social relations is specific to capitalism. In this sense, to the extent that labor is a carrier of social relations, it can change and reconstitute those social relations. This is why Marx sees the proletariat as the historical subject in capitalism, as the owner of commodified labor. As Postone (2009, p. 216) states “Labour in capitalism, according to Marx, then, is not only labour, as we

transhistorically and commonsensically understand it, but also is a historically specific socially mediating activity".

For this reason, Marx places the class struggle and its subject at the heart of politics. Politics takes the demands for equality and emancipation out of obscurity, clarifying the addresses of these demands and their advocates. With Marx, the abstract is now concrete, and ideas do not determine the material reality of politics. On the contrary, the concrete defines the idea. Marx changes the direction of the relationship between politics and ideas. The great transformation at the heart of post-Hegelian politics concerns this relationship of determination around demand and struggle.[85]

Marx (2021, p. 160) writes in *The Poverty of Philosophy* about class struggle and class interests "In the struggle, . . . this mass becomes united, and constitutes itself as a class for itself. The interests it defends become class interests. But the struggle of class against class is a political struggle". Marx and Engels' other contribution to the relationship between politics and philosophy was to reveal the unexplored potential of the working class and its meaning for universal emancipation. Marx and Engels aimed to abolish the bourgeois state through the proletarian revolution and expropriate the means of production for the benefit of society, taking them out of the hands of a particular class. This would eliminate the dematerialized nature of labor and the working class. While the proletarian revolution is destructive in destroying old social relations and modes of production, it is also constructive in building new ones. Thus, the proletarian revolution has this double contradictory character. For Marx, the inner purpose of the subject, i.e., the proletariat, lies in this communist horizon. The political subject is the one that struggles in the name of the communist idea. The Communist idea becomes what emerges after the negation of the proletariat capitalist social relations. Now, in the face of the unstable and counter-revolutionary character of the bourgeois revolutions, the proletariat must negate it with a final revolution. As Balibar

[85] Arendt's criticism of Marx and his equation of the political with the social around the demand for equality in *On Revolution* (2006) is actually a discomfort with Marx's inversion between politics and the idea. In this way, the idea is detached from the purity of the world of ideas and reflects the pain, violence and misery of the material world. It can be said that it is this inversion that Arendt has difficulty to accept.

(2017b) states, “the idea of revolution is intense modality of the idea of progress,” revolution for the communist idea which will be the last revolution, is pushing the communist idea to the limits.

Although the proletariat, as a subject, is seen as the social agent that can make the revolution and build the new society, it should be noted that this does not mean the proletariat is revolutionary in itself or that the revolution can take place immediately. Marx’s analysis of capitalism begins with commodity and labor’s daily time frame, but politically, it is based on long temporal topographies in which social relations take shape. In other words, the economic unit of analysis on which capitalist exploitation is based is opposed to the historical unit of analysis of political struggle. Magri (1970, p. 100) writes

> The development of capitalist society and the growth of a revolutionary crisis within it mean an ever more rigorous social subordination for workers, an intensification of alienation and social isolation. In its immediacy and its pure objectivity, therefore, the proletariat appears as the most faithful expression of capitalist reality, its most triumphant testimony. As a revolutionary class, on the other hand, or simply as a determinate united class, it does not have a purely ‘objective’ existence. Only through the mediation of a revolutionary consciousness of itself can it acquire effective reality. In the absence of such a consciousness, it remains no more than an objective possibility.

For Marx, the only way for the proletariat to realize itself is through revolutionary intervention to free itself. The internal dynamics of capitalism will further antagonize the proletariat and the social conditions in which it finds itself such that these contradictions can no longer be contained by other means. This approach is based on the growing tension between the expanding productive forces and social relations with a universal class, the proletariat, within capitalism expanding globally (2024, p. 552). In other words, For Marx, the specificity of the proletariat as a class comes from its revolutionary and constitutive nature, and its role in the relations of production only constitutes the social condition of this political struggle. As Marx says: “The working-class is revolutionary, or it is nothing”. In other words, for Marx, as long as the working class does not emerge as a revolutionary subject within capitalism, it will be seen as having no qualities other than being the owner of productive labor. Therefore, the

working class will be ignored, trivialized, and discarded. Only within the working class itself can it find the strength to resist this. Therefore, although the proletariat emerges as a universal class, it will not be able to actualize this universality and its own freedom as long as it remains under the domination of social structures and the dominant ideology.

To summarize, Marx's innovation in the discussion of the subject is multidimensional and has determined the subsequent discussion of subjectivity. In this sense, the break between Marx and Hegel is more layered than a simple inversion of Hegelian philosophy. In his early studies, Marx approached the issue of the subject with a critique of Hegel and Young Hegelians. Here, he defined the subject as a relation of determination that emerges in social relations by removing it from the relation of consciousness and autonomy. For this reason, the subject in Marx appears as both a determination and a determiner, that is, as both subjectified and subject. Since the subject is a relation of social determination, Marx's analysis turns from searching for a subject to analyzing existing social relations because the subject will manifest itself within this network of relations. However, for Marx, to the extent that the subject emerges out of social relations, it is neither spontaneously free nor does its action involve complete autonomy. The action of the subject is limited and shaped by social relations. However, the subject's action oscillates between the limitations of social relations and the possibilities created by political crisis. This is the second contribution Marx adds to this discussion. Finally, the third novelty Marx adds to the debate on the subject is that individual emancipation is not possible because the concept of freedom is also socially determined, and that emancipation can only be collective. This is only possible through revolution and the negation of existing social relations. This puts the proletariat as the subject as the only way of emancipation, and for Marx, this is a political rather than an economic struggle.

4.4. Badiou: The Subject as Militant of Truth

Dunayevska (1971, pp. 1410–1411) states that "'[n]o word is more important than Subject" in terms of thinking politics. As Dunayevska points out, the vitality of the

concept of the subject lies in its function. In this sense, the subject is the bridge between philosophy and politics, theory and practice, or the conceptualization of the subject as the actor of the realization of the Idea. For this reason, even though a theory that cannot think of its subject is stuck in the world of thought, the crisis of the subject can also appear as the crisis of the theory. In addition, the role of the subject also varies depending on the relationship between philosophy and politics. In this sense, the priority of philosophy or politics over the other determines how the subject appears. For example, in Hegel, this relationship seems to be the supremacy of philosophy. At the same time, the subject appears in the embodiment of the Idea, but the subject is not the discoverer of the Idea. Marx counters this with the supremacy of politics. With the theme of the end of philosophy, Marx thinks of the revolutionary subject as the actor who changes both the world and philosophy. This is critical of Hegel's and Kant's idea of the subject, but Marx also pushes the subject beyond being content with what exists. In other words, instead of limiting himself to understanding the world as an object of knowledge, he wants to restructure it.

As we will discuss below, Badiou's position is critical of the interpretation these two leading philosophers opened, but what they have in common is the general theoretical positioning of the subject. Although Badiou thinks with different conceptual names, the subject is also at the intersection of theory and practice in his philosophy. However, he is more careful about the relationship between philosophy and politics. He does not get stuck in a passive subjectivity in which philosophy dominates the political, nor is he convinced by the idea that politics dominates philosophy. He takes the position that philosophy is autonomous but that politics does not determine itself but affirms its existence. Therefore, unlike Hegel's and Marx's conceptualizations of the subject, the subject is an emergent subject rather than an a priori-determined subject, and the task of philosophy is to register this. As we will discuss below, Badiou's position is critical of the interpretation offered by these two leading thinkers, but what they have in common is the general theoretical positioning of the subject.

In this section, I will begin with Badiou's critique of the conceptualization of the subject in both Hegel and Marx. However, I will discuss how the conceptualization of

the subject, which he sees as innovative in Marx, saturated and, thus, the subject's decline from the political scene. The subject's decline has led to increased discussions in contemporary political theory that can be seen as a return to the subject. In this way, we will see how Badiou differs from these approaches. Then, I will reflect on how Badiou's subject appears in the context of set theory. This section will focus on how politics constructs itself through the subject. In the last section, through the figure of Saint Paul, I aim to show the importance of the relationship between faith and the subject of both politics and ethics.

4.4.1. Badiou's Objections

In *Metapolitics*, Badiou (2005b, p. 43) lists the approaches conceptualized by the idea of the subject according to Lazarus as follows

> • dialectics – that of the social sciences rather than Hegelian negativity – which is given in operators of reversibility between the subjective and the objective, such as 'consciousness', 'representations', 'mentalities', etc.;
>
> • scientism, to the extent that it presupposes the typically historicist pairing of subject and object;
>
> • circulating categories, like that of 'social class', which cement heterogeneous multiplicities, since they circulate between objectivity (analysis of the social whole in terms of classes) and subjectivity (class consciousness);
>
> • the theory/practice pairing, which permits the ascent from the objective to the subjective (theory), then the descent from the subjective to the objective (practice), thus allowing for the reversible identification of politics and history, of the subjective and the State.

For Badiou, the subject is always paired with an object in modern political thought. While for Kant, the subject is the subject of knowledge or morality, for Hegel, the object of the subject is consciousness.[86] In this sense, Hegel's subject becomes a part

[86] Badiou (2009, p. 50) writes in *Logics of Worlds*, "we have affirmed that the theory of the subject is not descriptive (phenomenology), nor is it a practical experimentation (moralism) nor is it an instance of materialist critique (imaginary, ideology). We are therefore compelled to say that the theory of the subject is axiomatic".

of the social totality while gaining its self-consciousness. While the object of Marx's subject, the proletariat is the social whole and social classes, the process that connects subject and object is realized through the mediation of dialectic thinking. The problem of this intellectual position for Badiou comes from the fact that pairing the subject with an object eventually traps the subject in a position of trying to change the object on purpose. In other words, an unbreakable bond is established between consciousness and the subject. Whether at the level of self-awareness -Hegel- or at the social level -Marx- this bond constructs the subject as a whole. In addition, this thinking is based on the idea of "One". Whether the idea of One is the unity of the Idea in the Hegelian sense or the unity of the social totality we encounter in Marx. The subject exists as a reflexive construction of the dialectic unity.

For Badiou, this desire for dialectical unity was one of the obstacles to thinking about the subject itself causing its loss between subjective and objective conditions. While the singularity of the subject became unthinkable, the subject's emergence was made part of knowledge. The existence of the subject, which, as mentioned above, emerged in conjunction with the particular mode of politics of a given period, disappeared between the institutions that emerged in objective conditions. The Soviets, the symbol of the October Revolution of 1917, and the party's state after Lenin's death are examples of this relationship. Badiou (2005b, p. 34) writes, "as soon as the Soviets, which are one of the places of Bolshevik politics, disappear (thus from autumn 1917), the Bolshevik political mode, whose thought Lenin names, ceases to exist".

Although Marx builds his conceptualization of the subject on Hegelian dialectical logic, for Badiou, Marx's perspective that establishes the subject as both the agent and the subjectivated, is one of the most significant contributions to the political scene. Although the existence of the subject is irreducible to the material conditions in which it exists, the knowledge of the practice it gains from here also allows it to break the equality of consciousness and action. For Badiou, the figure of the worker has become the name of the subjectivity of the politics of a particular period. Related to that, the factory has a dual meaning. The first is the idea of a social space where the factory is defined as a place of production and where people of different social statuses gather.

The factory appears as a social bond and community alongside its economic structure.[87] On the other hand, when the factory is a site of subjectivation, it becomes an evental site that Marx envisioned and the historical mode of politics it produces. Badiou gives the example of the factories in Shanghai during the Cultural Revolution or the factories in Petrograd during the Soviet Revolution, both of which emerged in a specific moment of politicization. Another form of the factory is the space of the work. In that case, the subject turns into a worker and the focus becomes production, efficiency, and profit. For example, the working class belongs to the space of the State during the Stalin era. For Badiou (2005b, p. 41) "this category of 'factory' authorises the capture of the intellectuality of an unnameable name which is not 'worker' as such, but the worker/factory pairing: In the case of the factory as a place of the State, time or money (three specifications of place), the factory is always a subjective category, it is prescribed".[88]

For Badiou, Marx's account of the subject is based neither on class interest nor on the proletariat as class power. He finds the construction of a singular subject crucial in Marx's philosophy because this singular figure also calls for subjectivity under a name that reappears repeatedly, determining both the rebellion, its content, and its form. The proletariat as an immutable class category, or a working class that knows its class interest a priori and is trapped in the union organizations, is not a meaningful category

[87] Badiou (2009, p.50) openly states that "We must effectuate, both practically and theoretically, the de-fixing of politics as communitarian bond or relationship. Let us pose axiomatically that the free mobility of politics stems from the face chat it touches upon the real by way of an interruption, and not by way of a gathering. That policies is an actively intervening-interpreting thought, and not the assumption of a power".

[88] Actually in 1978, Balibar in an article response to Althusser's *Marxism as a Finite Theory*, states a similar perspective with different concepts. He (2017a) writes "The Marxist revolutionary tradition has conceptualized the relationship between the constraints that the state places on the development of the revolutionary movement, the existence of internal contradictions within the state, and the historical initiative of the masses through the distinction between *bourgeois politics* and the *proletarian politics* of the workers' movement. They constitute a theoretical couple, a "unity of opposites," whose concrete translation is encountered in each conjuncture through an ongoing process of experimentation since, in light of this opposition, each political tendency "divides into two": for example, the independence of working-class organization into workerism *and* proletarian hegemony, the struggle for national liberation into nationalism *and* anti-imperialism, etc. It is indeed to this distinction (one could say that this is the true "kernel" or core of the unity between theory/practice in Marxism) that Althusser refers to". It is important that the dialectic approach that "one divides itself into two" finds its reflection in French Marxism on the idea of the relation between revolution and proletariat.

of subjectivity for Badiou. Thus, although he agrees with and justifies Marx's analysis of capitalism, the proletariat is a meaningful category of subjectivity as it symbolizes a singular name. For Badiou (2005a, p. 670) “Marxism must be conceived as the accumulated wisdom of popular revolutions, the reason they engender, the fixation and detailing of their target”. In other words, Badiou is trying to say that the subject's political militancy strengthened the communist idea with Marx and brought it to life. While this link between the subject and the Idea re-establishes politics - as in the case of the Soviet Revolution and the Cultural Revolution - the fall of the Idea into the background will also be caused by the fall of the subject from the political scene.

4.4.2. The Decline of the Subject

For Badiou, Marxism was the political discourse in which the proletariat could express itself as a subject. It was neither a science, as Althusser thought, nor a political text with strict rules that could become a party program. At its most basic level, the meaning of Marxism was not analytical but the construction of a militant subjectivity. Badiou (2005a, p. 670) states, "science of history? Marxism is the discourse through which the proletariat supports itself as subject. We must never let go of this idea”. However, as we mentioned above, it is possible to talk about the decline of the proletariat as a subject in parallel with the crisis of Marxism. In this sense, many reasons can be listed for the decline of the proletariat as a subject from the political and historical scene, such as the impact of the transformation of capitalism on the working class, the role of trade unions, the crushing of the working-class organizations by military coups in countries such as Chile, Brazil, and Turkey, and so on. However, concerning our topic here, the discussion of subjectivity, the question of the party is important since the party acts as the representative of proletarian subjectivity.

The defeat of the 1848 revolts and the Paris Commune of 1871 showed that the disorganization of the working class was its greatest weakness.[89] At the same time, it

[89] Although this is a very long and fruitful topic of discussion when we consider both the theoretical dimension and the historical practice of Marxism, a limited discussion will be made within the scope of this thesis.

also showed how powerful an organized subjectivity could be under the existing conditions. While Marx saw the proletariat's organization as a means to put itself on the stage of history, for Lenin, the party meant something else. While for Marx, there was a unity between objective and subjective conditions, Lenin thought there was a temporal gap between subjective and objective conditions and that time had to be accelerated. This is where the vanguard party gains meaning (Bosteels, 2018, pp. 7–8). With the Soviet Revolution, the idea of the communist party and revolution came together for the first time. It was also a process in which the state was being restructured or constructed but with an attempt to adhere to the idea of withering away of the state.

On the other hand, while the party was building the revolution, it was also building itself. The making of revolution and the making of revolution were intertwined. The proletariat, as the vanguard class of the revolution, was transferring its subject role to the party against the strengthening of the party. At the level of this tripartite relationality, the party, the state, and the proletariat, the party also became a vehicle through which the subjectivity of its class was reconstructed. In this process of multiple and reciprocal making of revolution, party, state, and subjectivity, it can be said that that the statization of communist parties is what we are confronted with in the aftermath of the Soviet Revolution, especially under Stalin's leadership. As Althusser (2017) says, at the end of this process, the party, which was thought to be a tool for the overthrow of the bourgeois state, turns into a tool for the reform of the state. In other words, without the autonomy of the party and the state vis-à-vis each other, neither the party can become a space of subjectivity nor can the state be freed from its bourgeois qualities and withered away. Althusser defines the party's position as "political exteriority" to the state. He (2017) writes, "I know that it is not easy to take such a political position: but without it the autonomy of the party is irremediably compromised, and there is no longer any chance of escaping from the risk either of class collaboration, or of the party-state and its consequences".[90] Balibar (2018) in his speech which was a response to Althusser's text, similarly mentions "it is a structural

[90] Ironically, Althusser presented this text at a colloquium on the crisis of Marxism. In other words, he saw a direct link between the crisis of Marxism and the question of the party and the state.

fact that the “party-form” as it functions today is not the form of unity of the international communist movement, but has become the form of its crisis and division…”. While this leads us to understand what Badiou sees as statization, the other point is that at the end of this process, the subjectivity of the proletariat is reduced to representation in the form of the party. However, as we know from Badiou's critique, which will later show representation as a state function in set theory, the subject ca not be represented.[91]

Another theme of consideration for the subject is that subjectivity is thought as a place. We see here that once the subject is located in a place or the occupant of that place is seen as the subject, a metaphysical link is established between action, the subject, and the interests of the subject. However, this a priori link presupposes that the subject will act a certain way. The problem is that the subject continues to be seen as an agent on the historical stage to the extent that it acts within this presupposed expectation of action. However, it is precisely when it fails to fulfill that expectation that its fall from the historical stage is announced and not considered a category of subjectivity. This is why, in the European case of Eurocommunism, the inclusion of the working class by the capitalist welfare state is seen as a betrayal of the historical role of the working class. Even if the working class still occupies the same place and capitalist relations of production continue to exist, its subjectivity is seen as lost. The problem here has nothing to do with the proletariat behaving in one way or another at specific historical moments but with the metaphysical link established. In this sense, the proletariat can again acquire a revolutionary subjectivity at that historical moment or assume the opposite role. It would not be wrong to say that agency rather than position defines subjectivity here. This brings to mind Badiou's other criticism: “Subjectivity is not place”.

What we encounter here is a theoretical problem. The fact that it is a theoretical problem does not exclude it from being a practical problem, but it can be defined as

[91] When we consider the Cultural Revolution, it follows that the communist party itself is part of the class struggle. Mao's call to the proletariat and students against the gang of four within the party can be seen as part of this struggle.

the practical consequences of theory. In this sense, when the link connecting subjectivity to the relation between space and action is severed at a given historical moment, this can be seen as a failure of theory and can lead to the abandonment of theory and thus of praxis. The claim that the proletariat as a subject has fallen from the political scene should also be considered, along with the search for new subjectivities, since the idea of the proletariat as an agent of political transformation has been abandoned.

In conceptualizing an axiomatic definition of subjectivity, Badiou links the axiom itself with the emergence of the subject. For Badiou, the subject is the one who does not know its own subjectivity until it becomes a subject. The basic idea here is that the subject emerges by saying I am here. What distinguishes an axiomatic conceptualization of the subject is that it is not based on a place and is not representable which reminds Rousseau's conceptualization of *Volonté Générale (General Will)*. In addition, the subject is far from being a transitivity or a form in which particular struggles are added. For Badiou, such transitivity is not applicable because it is first and foremost based on the idea of difference, whereas for Badiou, it is a sameness that defines the subject. The concept of sameness is the point that connects the subject to the idea of universality. However, the existence of the subject is conditioned for Badiou, and this condition is the concept of truth. Therefore, the notion of truth is needed for the existence of the subject.

4.4.3. Democratic Materialism vs. Dialectic Materialism

For Badiou, contemporary philosophy is currently divided concerning truth. This division is also reflected in the discourse about politics and its subject. For Badiou, these two main camps have been reshaped in a way that resembles the opposition between idealism and materialism. These are democratic materialism and dialectical materialism, respectively. In this sense, any philosophical school of thought that denies the existence of truth -some post-Marxist approaches can be included- falls under democratic materialism. The common characteristic of democratic materialism is that,

in the absence of any truth, all politics is reduced to the search for linguistic meaning, reaching consensus, and communication.

Badiou (2009a, p. 1) states in *Logics of Worlds*, “there are only bodies and languages. … This statement is the axiom of contemporary conviction. I propose to name this conviction democratic materialism. Why? … Democratic materialism. The individual as fashioned by the contemporary world recognizes the objective existence of bodies alone”. Democratic materialism is characterized by its contentment with the visible. When Badiou refers to bodies and languages, he criticizes both reducing truth into the linguistic play and the relativity of language against the absoluteness of truth. For example, a worker is a worker and remains a worker, and the bourgeoisie remains the bourgeoisie. For Badiou, a worker can also be a commander of resistance or a philosophy teacher. The state in which the body appears is not enough to conceptualize it, which is what Badiou said about the process of representation and counting. Therefore, democratic materialism is also the bearer of politics, which can be defined as the governance of things. It is precisely for this reason that philosophical thinking about how things can be governed, whether in the form of the public sphere or politics of morality. As Mueller (2024, p. 11) states, “Badiou’s materialist dialectic rejects the axioms of democratic materialism, seeing them as ‘reduce humanity to an overstretched vision of animality’. The materialist dialectic acknowledges that the unevental life of humans caught up in what appears to be the circular body/language world can be ruptured through incorporation within a Truth, as the result of an Event, and under the directive of an emancipatory-egalitarian Idea”.

Against democratic materialism, Badiou takes a position in favor of the truth and subject in the name of dialectic materialism. As Badiou (2001) states in his book *Ethics*, the relationship with truth takes the human animal out of its animality. Badiou (2009a, p. 45) writes in *Logics of Worlds,* “The materialist dialectic says: ‘There are only bodies and languages, except that there are truths’. The 'except that' exists qua subject”. In this trilogy, truth appears as an exception that changes both body and language, and a new subjective body appears. The difference of dialectic materialism is that it goes beyond accepting things as they are. At that point, Badiou (2009a, p. 9)

reminds that “a subject in conformity with democratic materialism may instead be nihilist: it prefers itself to every situation. We shall see (Book I) that such a subject must abandon every logic that is productive or faithful to the situation and endorse either the formalism of the reactive subject or that of the obscure subject”.

4.4.4. Idea, Truth, and the Subject

The concept of truth binds not only the concept of subject to itself but also the concept of Idea. While the existence of the Idea is how the subject lives in adherence to truth, the subject is more than an instrument of the Idea; it removes the subject itself from human animality. Badiou (2011, p. 105) defines Idea as

> I name 'Idea' that upon which an individual's representation of the world, including her- or himself, is based once s/he is bound to the faithful subject type through incorporation within the process of a truth. The Idea is that which makes the life of an individual, a human animal, orientate itself according to the True. Or, put another way: the Idea is the mediation between the individual and the Subject of a truth – with ' Subject' designating here that which orientates a post -evental body in the world.

For a philosopher who considers himself a materialist, Badiou's recourse to the concept of Idea can be seen as ironic and can be interpreted as a return to the Hegelian theme. The philosopher Badiou follows here is Plato instead of Hegel or Kant. According to Badiou (2011, p. 106), Plato's problem is to find an answer to the question of how our experience transcends our particularity and acquires a transmundane dimension. For Badiou the answer to this question lies in the concept of truth. Badiou differs from Hegel's concept of Idea or Spirit, even though he shares a similarity with the Hegelian theme. However, the notion of the subject diverges from the Hegelian approach. The fundamental divergence here is between the idea of One and multiplicity. In Hegel's relation between Idea and subject, the subject accepts that Idea is true and sees itself as its vehicle. Even though Badiou refers to the concept of Idea, this concept of Idea is not a Hegelian unity but rather an Idea that reproduces itself under different names yet preserves its principles. In this sense, it does not tell the subject the truth but offers its principles, which is why Badiou sees the concept of Regulative Idea as appropriate. The subject must find what is true and what must be done.

In *The Rebirth of History,* Badiou (2012b, p. 87) says, "truths are not prior to political processes; there is no question of confirming or applying them. Truths are reality itself, as a process of production of political novelties, political sequences, political revolutions, and so forth". Similar to this idea, Bosteels (2018, pp. 14–15) writes, "ideas would be part of the ongoing political process. Rather than operating at a theoretically superior level, they would be active on the ground or at the grassroots level, in the militant rationality of the struggles themselves".

Although Badiou sees the relation between the subject and the Idea as a projection, this projection can be defined as an ethical relation. However, this ethical relation does not refer to the ethics of others or the ethics of human rights of democratic materialism and is shaped through the concept of truth. Therefore, while the relationship between truth and the question of living is ethical, the absence of such a relationship would confine us to nihilism. Thus, the ethics of truth and nihilism depend on the subject's political process and militancy. The subject for Badiou appears as a body that cannot be reduced and is faithful to the truth. However, for the appearance of the subject, a truth-event is needed.

4.4.5. Truth Event

We know that truth is associated with an event and emerges in relation to it. At the same time, truth differs from knowledge in the situation, transcends it, and is not verifiable like knowledge. Truth is axiomatic and is left to the choice of subject, as we will discuss later. It affects and redetermines the situation, but it does not depend on it. On the other hand, the event is situated within the situation and overturns the existing regime of counting within the situation. As Badiou (2005b, p. 155) says,

> the real characteristic of the political event and the truth procedure that it sets off is that a political event fixes the errancy and assigns a measure to the superpower of the State. It fixes the power of the State. Consequently, the political event interrupts the subjective errancy of the power of the State. It configures the state of the situation.

In this respect, the event develops outside and against the state and connects itself to the truth. Although this event, which Badiou refers to with different words

occasionally, has an evental site and a history, it cannot be reduced to these. In addition, the event reveals the void within the situation. As Peter Hallward (2003, p. 117) puts it

> However it takes place, we know that it is 'the event [that] reveals the void' of a situation, and 'a truth always begins by naming this void'. Revealed or hidden, the void as such remains universally included in every part of the situation, and for that very reason remains unpresentable, ungraspable. The evental site is not itself void but that element of the situation which is located "at the edge of its void." The void that sutures a situation to its being is, by the same token, radically a specific and a situational: it is scattered everywhere throughout that situation. Whatever lies along the edge of the void, however, is always precisely located in the situation. The edge of the void is locatable even if the void itself is not.

The phenomenal connection between the void in the situation and its revelation perpetuates itself through truth. As Badiou says, if truth is the naming of the void, truth is the concretization of making the seemingly impossible possible. The Soviet Revolution, for example, carries the truth that the working class, which was seen as nothing, as a rabble, emancipated itself and showed that an egalitarian and just world was, in fact, possible. This truth exists as an Idea to be pursued rather than a verifiable knowledge. As Jodi Dean (2017, p. 163) states, "truth is the aleatory process of fidelity to an event. So even if, for an individual, "the Idea presents the truth as if it were a fact," history does not and cannot verify it". In the event-truth-subject trilogy, Badiou thinks of the subject not around the event but around the truth as a postevental appearance, as the formation of the body, because the subject is understood as the bearer of the effect created by change, not change itself. Here, Badiou (2015, pp. 66–67) approaches Althusser, the father of subjectless change. Still, he considers the notion of the subject with the idea of "the subjective without the subject" to be concepts such as choosing sides, fidelity, and decision-making. The intersection of truth and politics is precisely the call to become a subject in this subjective but subjectless process. In other words, truth is a summoning to make a decision and fulfill the requirements of that decision. Politics, in that matter, is only a collective and universal generic field. Badiou (2005b, p. 153) writes

> An event is political if its material is collective, or if the event can only be attributed to a collective multiplicity. 'Collective' is not a numerical concept here. We say that the event is ontologically collective to the extent that it provides the vehicle for a virtual summoning of all. 'Collective' means immediately universalizing. …
>
> … The use of the term 'collective' is an acknowledgement that if this thought is political, it belongs to all. It is not simply a question of address, as it is in the case of other types of truth. Of course, every truth is addressed to all. But in the case of politics, the universality is intrinsic, and not simply a function of the address. In politics, the possibility of the thought that identifies a subject is at every moment available to all.

While politics emerges within the postevental regime, the truth of politics addresses everyone with its universal character.[92] While Badiou attributes universality as a property of truth, he builds politics on sameness, not difference. Badiou operates a logic parallel to Marx's notion of the proletariat as a universal class. As Marx was well aware, although there were classes other than the proletariat, the universality of the proletariat was due to its political subjectivity. Only the proletariat was the subject that could establish an order that would include everyone, not only itself. This reference to the universality of the subjectivity of truth is similar in this respect. Truth speaks to everyone, but not everyone chooses to follow the truth. Therefore, truth does not include everyone, but those faithful to truth create a condition where differences among themselves become irrelevant.[93] Just as the proletariat emerges from people of different colors, ethnicities, and genders, for Marx and Badiou, the subject of truth emerges with a similar logic. For both Hegel and Marx, there is a distinction between the subject and the individual, and these concepts do not have the same meaning. The

[92] Badiou (2018, p. 78) writes "I call politics that which establishes the consistency of the event in the regime of the intervention and propagates it beyond the prepolitical situation. This propagation is never a repetition. It is an effect of the subject, a consistency. … I call .fidelity the political organization, that is, the collective product of postevental consistency beyond its immediate sphere".

[93] Badiou is very clear that subjectivation cannot be defined by any identity and community or, in other words, by any position that defines what the individual is. He says this first of all because it is closed to universality and secondly because of the knowledge that a regime of truth cannot be produced through these identities because they are inherent to the situation. He (2009a, p. 9) states "The universality of truths rests on subjective forms that cannot be either individual or communitarian. Or: To the extent that it is the subject of a truth, a subject subtracts itself from every community and destroys every individuation".

idea of the subject needed a determination. Similarly, Badiou offers a principle of determination but theorizes it differently.

Badiou clearly states that subjectivation cannot be defined by any identity and community or, in other words, by any position that represents the individual. He says this first because it is closed to universality and secondly because of the knowledge that a regime of truth cannot be produced through these identities that are inherent to the situation. Smith (2006, p. 135) states, “The importance of the Axiom of Choice is clear; it provides the connection between the individual, the event and the subject. It defines the individual and provides the condition under which subjectivity is possible”. For Badiou, the critical position of the subject comes not only from being a follower of the emergent truth but also from being an affirmer and follower of the novelty. The axiom of choice involves not only subjecthood but also the acceptance of an innovation. Smith (2006, p. 137) again says, “The subject affirms that something has happened and is prepared to bare the consequences, whether the event actually occurred may be undecidable but the situation provides the subject with the necessary material to not only distinguish different events, but also recognize the problem posed by the event as different from the problem of foundation”. To be a subject is to decide in the face of an undecidable situation within the situation. Is what emerges something new, or is it part of the existing situation? Thinking of the 1871 Paris Commune, was the surrender of arms by the National Guard the beginning of something new, or was it a continuation of the existing situation of the German-French war? The axiom of choice means making this decision and being involved. Here, the finite individual becomes part of the infinite truth. To make a lengthy quotation from Smith (2006, pp. 147-148)

> The subject of an event will always be a finite portion of an infinite procedure that attempts to represent a singular term; this production is the production of a truth. So a singular term is not strictly a presented term that is not represented, it has a temporal quality with reference to a subject. It is a term that is not yet represented, or one that will have been represented.

> The decision as to whether this site belongs, or not, is undecidable. To affirm its belonging depends only on the event actually having happened, and the intervention of a subject to begin the process of making it belong.

The axiom of choice shows us how the being in the situation elevates itself to the subject's position. Badiou argues that the subject occupies three different positions according to this decision. Since the decision is shaped according to the truth-event, the first is the faithful subject who is loyal to truth and becomes its militant. The second is the reactive subject, who is indifferent to the truth and advocates that a new one has not emerged, while the third is the obscure subject, who rejects the truth and takes a position against it. While this subjective body constituted by the truth is positioned against the truth, the faithful subject tries to be the bearer of the truth, and the obscure subject tries to kill and eliminate it. While the former is universal, the latter exists through the elevation of the closed and particular to universality. Fascism is an exemplary version of the obscure subject. While the indifferent position of the reactive subject is a representative of nihilism in contemporary politics, for Badiou, it is the faithful subject that makes politics meaningful. Badiou cites Saint Paul as an example of this.

4.4.6. The Subject in Between Decision and Faith

Although Badiou's reading of Saint Paul adds a dimension that reinforces the criticism that the concept of the event miraculously descends from the top (Bensaid, 2004), Badiou's aim is not to understand Paul and theologize Christianity. Instead, Badiou wants to reinterpret Paul for his philosophical purposes. One could say that Badiou's aim is similar to Pasolini's. Pasolini's (2014) screenplay for his film project, published as *St. Paul: A Screenplay*, reimagines Paul as a figure of the Spanish Civil War. With the same conviction and dedication, Paul is not on the side of Christianity but on the side of the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War, and he is trying to justify the Republicans. Just as Pasolini reconstructs Paul, Badiou does the same. For this reason, Badiou's appeal to Paul as an example of the subject figure in the event of truth is not a theological discussion but an attempt to show Paul's dedication and fidelity. Another aim is related to the universality of the truth claim.

Badiou's interest in Paul is about the notions of law and subject. In the absence of law and subject. Badiou seeks the answer to how the subject can declare itself and the law that will bring itself into existence. Badiou (2003, p. 5) writes, “Let us say that, for Paul, it is a matter of investigating which law is capable of structuring a subject devoid of all identity and suspended to an event whose only "proof" lies precisely in its having been declared by a subject”. For Paul the truth event is not Christ's death but his resurrection. There is nothing verifiable that can be used as knowledge in this statement. In this sense, Paul's truth event is a declaration that constitutes itself as law. Badiou (2003, p. 14) writes in a long passage,

> Paul's general procedure is the following: if there has been an event, and if truth consists in declaring it and then in being faithful to this declaration, two consequences ensue. First, since truth is evental or of the order of what occurs, it is singular. it is neither structural, nor axiomatic, nor legal. No available generality can account for it, nor structure the subject who claims to follow in its wake. Consequently, there cannot be a law of truth. Second, truth being inscribed on the basis of a declaration that is in essence subjective, no preconstituted subset can support İt; nothing communitarian or historically established can lend İts substance to the process of truth. Truth is diagonal relative to every communitarian subset; İt neither claims authority from, nor (this is obviously the most delicate point) constitutes any identity. it is offered to all, or addressed to everyone, without a condition of belonging being able to limit this offer, or this address.

Paul's declaration of Christ's resurrection is based neither on law nor community. The truth of which he is a militant does not rely on law but creates a new condition that establishes itself with the subject of truth. Paul's declaration does not concretize itself in a community, a congregation, or a social group but transcends them and becomes the bearer of a universal call. Badiou (2003, p. 5) says, “What is true (or just; they are the same in this case) cannot be reduced to any objective aggregate, either by its cause or by its destination”. To the question of why Badiou returns to Paul's case for the discussion of the subject, we can give the following answer: Paul was delivering a revolutionary figure in his own time. He was demanding an equality that transcended class and linguistic ties. This is why Pasolini wanted to make his movie. In addition, Paul's dedication, faith, and loyalty are other reasons why Badiou chose Paul. Because Badiou was seeking to reconstruct the lost revolutionary subjectivity and knew that the lost comradery was possible through faith and loyalty, through the commonization

of the idea, but this is not a form of relationship that can be established under the authority of the law or state or party - or with a community, a congregation. On the contrary, politics can be considered a declaration that we are the people. This constitution emerges as a self-declaration and actualizes itself through truth and the mode of politics within history.

Badiou's conceptualization of the subject, like Marx's and Hegel's, can be thought of as the result of a combination of the ideas of the idea, subtractive dialectic, truth in transhistorical historicity, and mode of politics. The revolt of Spartacus can be considered as an example that gathers these points in itself. While the idea that slavery will continue as long as Rome exists belongs to the situation, the enslaved people remove themselves from the situation for their freedom and become no longer part of the situation, neither as slaves nor as citizens. They do not want to be a citizen of Rome anyway, and they want to return home free. They are outside the situation of the Roman Empire and do not belong to it. Within this externality, a truth transcends the concretization of the Idea in history, which realizes itself in the idea of rebellion, by emerging from the sudden non-belonging to it. Subjectivity applies to Spartacus, his comrades, and those who remain faithful to their truth. While the revolt of Spartacus and his comrades belongs to their temporality, the truth of the event transcends the present and reasserts itself in new movements. As Badiou says, the event, politics, and subjectivity emerge when what is considered impossible in the situation becomes possible. Badiou (2009a, p. 52) writes

> But in subjective terms, it is the realization in the present of a hitherto unknown possibility. In this sense it is indeed into the present, into the new present, that the escaped slave incorporates himself. It is clear that the body here is subjectivated to the extent that it subordinates itself to the novelty of the possible (the content of the statement 'We slaves, we want to and can return home'). This amounts to a subordination of the body to the trace, but solely in view of an incorporation into the present, which can also be understood as a production of consequences: the greater the number of escaped slaves, the more the Spartacus-subject amplifies and changes in kind, and the more its capacity to treat multiple points increases.

In short, for Badiou, subjectivity is the body constituted by fidelity to the event of truth that emerged in a given historical period. This body can be grouped under singular

names, such as the slaves in the Spartacus revolt, Marx's proletariat, or "the people" during the Cultural Revolution. In this respect, subjectivity is not a fixed category but depends on a mode of politics and an event of truth. In conclusion, the following theses can be drawn.

i. Subjectivity is a transition. There is a common point between Badiou, Hegel, and Marx. This common point determines the philosophy of these three philosophers regarding the concept of Idea and its actualization and realization. However, while Hegel's subject acts from a position within the whole, Marx's concept of the subject is more complex than Hegel's. While Marx speaks of a subjective, that is, determined subjectivity according to position; he says that the proletariat emerges when this position is abandoned. That is the transition from the proletariat as a position of nothing to the proletariat as everything. This is where the idea of subjectivity, which Badiou also defends, overlaps with Marx. However, Badiou's concept of subjectivity is based on this kind of transition. The contact of the finite with the infinite, from nothing to everything, the rejection of fixed positions, etc. This is why subjectivity is not a position, a particular identity, because this kind of subjectivity is based on rigidity and the preservation of positions. Subjectivity based on community proceeds in a similar fashion. Therefore, with subjectivity, if we want the realization of the idea and the capacity to change the world to emerge, it cannot be derived from the existing. It can only be done by bringing the non-existing into existence.

ii. Badiou's conceptualization of the subject is a response to the limitations of contemporary theory. He is critical of pluralism, in which post-Marxism eventually articulates itself to liberal politics or Negri's surrender of the idea of multiplicity to the intrinsic teleology of capitalism. Reminiscing on the great 18th and 19th century philosophers, it connects the idea of true life and the idea of the subject and reflects this in the political sphere. At the same time, it seeks a way out of the nihilism in which contemporary

liberal theory imprisons the subject. For this reason, politics and subjectivity without the idea are doomed to disappear like a rebellion that flares up quickly. The temporality of truth transcends the present and commands the subject to struggle for the future.

iii. The exceptionality of the event of truth cannot be reduced to the idea that subjectivity can only occur in that period, that is, that the subjects of the French Revolution were its contemporaries. In other words, the transhistorical aspect of truth also affects the present. Therefore, subjectivity is not waiting for a new truth to emerge. It means struggling for the present within the framework of truth that the past has brought and left for the present.

CHAPTER 5

5. CONCLUSION

The main aim of this thesis was to try to look at the crisis and debate of radical politics after the collapse of the Soviet Union from a different perspective. This study was guided by the idea that the cause of the crisis of radical emancipatory politics is neither the changing conditions of capitalism, increasing authoritarianism, or the vanishing subject, but rather the lack of an idea to bind radical politics. Therefore, in this thesis, I have tried to discuss how the relationship between the idea and politics was constructed by Hegel, Marx, and Badiou. In discussing the relationship between ideas and radical politics, I explained how the two are intertwined, conceptualized, and, ultimately, manifested. Therefore, I first addressed dialectic, then history, and finally, the concept of the subject. My goal was to demonstrate how and why these three strands play a critical role in the construction of both ideas and politics.

I first discussed the concept of dialectic because I conceptualized dialectic as a means by which we construct the idea. As a constitutive element of Hegel's philosophy, dialectic appeared as a method concerned with the change and emergence of the new. I discussed how Hegel's grounding of dialectic in the concept of contradiction and his elevation of each contradiction to the unity of opposites led to a concept of the unity of opposites and thus established a link between the subjective and the objective, and between the universal and the particular. Hegelian dialectic created the unity by establishing a relationship between the part and the whole. However, the working principles of the dialectic changed in Marx, and he replaced the Hegelian concept of the whole with capitalism while keeping the relations between the universal and the particular and between the subjective and the objective in his own philosophical system. Hence, the dialectic took on a new form with the contradictions inherent in the

particular - the commodity - and showed the dominance of the capitalist mode of production. In this way, Marx was able to reveal not only how capitalism shapes the social sphere as a dominant form of relation but also uncover the political potentials of the contradictions it contains. However, the relation of the subjective to the objective led Marx to the subordination of politics to social relations. For this reason, an alternative political idea to capitalism could only emerge through the negation of existing social relations. For example, the new man of the new society would only rise from the ruins of capitalism. Marx's intervention in the Hegelian dialectic and the concept of idea was twofold. The first was related to the role of politics. Instead of the Hegelian system in which the incompatibility between reality and Idea inevitably causes the change in the relationship between part and whole, Marx sought an active political intervention. Objectivity appeared here as an extension of politics. Secondly, while dialectic functioned as a means of reaching the Idea in Hegel's works, for Marx, the Idea constituted the goal to be achieved by negating the existing situation. However, to the extent that political practice proceeded by suppressing the affirmation of the new, negation transformed into destruction. This was one dimension of the impasse in which the idea finds itself. Badiou's objection to this debate, thus, was twofold, one directed against Hegel and the other against Marx. His objection to Hegel concerned the idea of the One and the concept of the whole. Here Badiou turned to ontology and tried to prove the mathematical impossibility of the one. His criticism of Marx, however, was about the relationship between dialectic and negation. To Badiou, insofar as Marx equated former with the latter, the constitutivity of the idea began to diminish. The second aspect concerned the crisis that might emerge from the changing objective conditions of the subjective and the idea, as it connected the idea to objective conditions. Badiou, however, asserted that such unity cannot exist and that one must first abandon the idea of the one. Additionally, he proposed that politics does not develop based on objective conditions; rather, those conditions provide a foundation. In the dialectic of situation and event, he argued that while every event has an evental site, it cannot be understood through objective causality. Finally, regarding the relationship between the idea and the dialectic of negation, he asserted that the idea must be affirmative; only in this way can the new be constructed. For this reason, Badiou proposed a dialectic of subtraction instead of a dialectic of negation. Through

this approach, radical politics can achieve a non-statist form by distancing itself from the state rather than attempting to take over.

In the next chapter, I discussed the concept of history in which the concept of Idea was projected, and here, I tried to discuss how history played a role in political fiction. In the Enlightenment and Modern philosophy, the idea of history was conceived along with the idea of progress, and accordingly, politics was expected to establish more just and free societies eventually. Although Hegel had also embraced the idea of progress, for him, history was also the field where the Idea revealed its telos. This made history, first and foremost, the field where the world of reason exposed itself. Therefore, in the relation between the idea and historical reality, history was relegated to the position of determination. Marx rejected the idea of history as the movement of the Idea and criticized it as an idealist illusion. However, the idea that history has a reason and that this leads to historical progress was another Hegelian theme that Marx would embrace and preserve in his own philosophy. For Marx, the only reason to be found in history was class struggle, and it was here that he found the movement of history. At this point, the relationship between the idea of history, idea, and telos became clear. This telos, which he found in the idea of history, enabled history to serve politics and the idea as a source of legitimacy. To the extent that history flowed in the same direction as the idea, it strengthens the idea, while the widening of the distance between the two would cause the idea to lose one of its legitimacy and historical bases. For Badiou, there was no complete history from beginning to end. Therefore, there was no reason to be sought and found in history. In this sense, a positive connection between history and politics could not be established. History could only be the history of truth, which emerge through certain modalities of politics. What Badiou expressed here was that each modality of politics tried to realize the idea of equality and justice that it understood within the framework of its communist idea shaped by the historical conditions and the subjectivity of the moment. For this reason, there was a common link between the French Revolution of 1789 and the Paris Commune of 1871, as well as the October Revolution of 1917. While the idea and truth connect these three events, each produced a form of politics rooted in its own subjectivity and understanding of equality and justice. However, the political frameworks proposed by each truth reached a point of

saturation today. Consequently, Badiou asserts that it is futile to continuously rely on the saturated political procedures and tools of truth to attain the Idea.

In the last chapter, I aimed to conceptualize the subject as the realization of the Idea, meaning as the agent of that Idea. For Hegel, the subject appeared as a social and historical entity of the abstracted subject from the Enlightenment and became the complement of the Idea. In this regard, in contrast to Kant's empty formalism, the subject became the carrier of the Idea under concrete conditions. To illustrate this, Hegel introduced the notion of an organic society. He argued that only under these conditions the Idea could actualize itself. The society that arose here was shaped by the distinctions among the state, civil society, and family, with the state, as the embodiment of the Idea, acting as the entity that can represent both the particular and the general within itself. In Hegelian system the realization of subjectivity is related to the state and its power. In this sense, the class, the representative of the ideal, becomes the ruler of the state. Marx criticized Hegel's distinction between the state and civil society, as well as the notion that the state represents both the particular and the general interest. To Marx, the capitalist state, which Hegel did not examine in his analysis of emerging capitalism, always represents a specific class. Although Marx criticizes the Hegelian idea of the distinction between civil society and the state, he establishes the way for subjectivity to realize itself through the state and power. The idea of revolution gains its meaning in this context. Revolution is possible by seizing state power. The subject will realize its telos only through the seizure of power. Although Lenin defended the idea of withering away of the state for the communist idea, the distinction between the communist idea, the subject and the state did not emerge; on the contrary, these three became identical with each other. Badiou's critique of the subject and the communist idea takes shape in this theoretical context. In the relationship between the subject and state power, the idea of seizing power has become dominant in the emancipatory politics in which the subjectivity is transferred to the party on the way to power, while dialectics turns into destruction. Badiou places subjectivity against the state while building his critique from here. For this reason, politics is a process of subtraction away from the state. On the other hand, Badiou does not define the subject temporally with a telos. If subjectivity is an axiomatic declaration of being militant of

the truth, what the subject can do is to act in accordance with the truth. As Badiou (2010, p. 239) says, "… the communist Idea is the imaginary operation whereby an individual subjectivation projects a fragment of the political real into the symbolic narrative of a History".

For Badiou, Marxism is the name for a period of time for thinking communism. Marx's way of thinking about the idea of communism is Hegelian which also regulates the relationship with politics. Although Marx's analysis of capitalism is still valid, and Badiou gives credit to Marx in this sense. However, he thinks that Marx's way of thinking about politics is now saturated in thinking about the idea. Therefore, Badiou's aim is to uncover the conceptual tools to think the idea.

The fact that Badiou did not perceive the idea as either a program or a political regime in the relationship between the idea and communism was actually linked to the role of the concept of truth in his understanding of politics. Since truth emerged solely in situations where equality and justice manifest themselves, it effectively converges with communism as both a program and a functioning entity. What it meant for him to shift communism from an adjective to an idea, was to abstract it from history and material relations. Firstly, it can be asserted that he aims to safeguard the concept of the idea from historical and political developments in this manner. Here, Badiou certainly adopted a Platonic perspective. While the idea was liberated from reality, it became operational between the subject and the truth. Badiou's motivation in this context was tied to the transformation of the concept of communism over the last century. A concept that inspired the masses to march a century ago or fifty years ago now transformed into a term from which many flee. This transformation resulted from the previously mentioned construction of the concept of the idea based on material relations and the understanding of history.

Another point was that political movements cannot get anywhere without an idea. Here Badiou had a twofold intervention. The first was against contemporary nihilism. The idea of politics without an ideal would remain at the level of maintaining things within the existing liberal democracy. Even if a movement without an idea responds to this

nihilism with a subversive kind of rebellion, this subversion would not lead to the emergence of the new. The idea was what keeps political movements growing and keeps them united. Without it, collapse was an inevitable end for political movements. The second intervention concerned the way contemporary political theory interprets politics. As we mentioned in the Introduction, political theory became a kind of strategic intervention. While questions of good strategies, what kind of party, how to organize, and how to analyze existing capitalism were important, they alone neither gave birth to nor grew political movements. Although the idea of communism and its means, on which Hegelian Marxism was based, has guided the last two hundred years, they reached saturation today. For this reason, it is vital today to rethink the concept of idea and make it part of politics. In other words, while the idea of communism shaped the political movements of the last two centuries as the greatest alternative political ideology to capitalism, today, it seems that egalitarian and libertarian political movements need to hold on to the idea.

Although Badiou presents the communist idea different from Hegelian Marxism, and therefore proposes a different idea of politics, subjectivity and history, his theoretical approach is not free from criticism. First of all, his abstraction of politics from material conditions and his reading of the political sphere in relation to the state renders forms of economic relations and state power external to each other in contemporary capitalism. In this sense, it would be useful to see exploitation, capital circulation, and surplus value production as different facets of social relations rather than as economic and financial transactions. Moreover, if the multitude emerges as a result of a counting operation, it is unclear in which relations the state as a counting apparatus emerges. In addition, by attributing such a role to the state, we implicitly state that seizing state power would be the easiest way to organize the political sphere, even though the idea claims that state power is not the goal. These two points can be seen as the weak points of Badiou's idea of the communist idea. However, there is no doubt that an idea that would include these two points would be effective in our thinking about politics. From this point of view, it is clear that Badiou has paved a path, but this path has shortcomings.

This thesis positions itself as a critical examination of the relationship between the idea and politics over the last two centuries. The main purpose of this thesis is to argue that we have reached a dead end in the way we think about politics and that we need to reflect on the way we think about politics and the idea. In this thesis, we have discussed the concept of idea and, related to it, the perspective of the communist idea, both historically and in contemporary times. This study was intended as an intervention focusing on the conceptual framework of the idea. We know that capitalism is not only an economic mode of production based on the exploitation of labor and the depletion of existing resources but also a political system that erodes human freedom while shaping social relations within a context of domination. A century ago, when capitalism was neither as dominant nor as widespread globally, the voices opposing capitalism were considerably stronger than they are today. Although capitalism possessed fewer resources then than it does now, the existence of communism as a potent counter-ideology played a significant role in amplifying these opposing voices. Today, while capitalism is more dominant and more destructive, anti-capitalist and egalitarian utopias aimed at abolishing capitalism are considerably weaker. The political issue here is not the lack of social unrest but possibly the absence of a unifying idea that could connect these movements, whether horizontally or vertically, and encourage them to struggle together despite the presence of numerous social movements, both large and small.

Therefore, today the concept of idea is more important in shaping politics than ever before. The presence of such an idea will not only strengthen the political sphere, but will also reinforce a politics that transcends national boundaries once again as different nations and identities share them. In Marx's phrase, ‘Workers of the world, unite', what could unite the workers was the existence of an idea that defines and negates capitalism, even though capitalism served as the common denominator of their lives. Today, the lack of a unifying idea has driven the collective we of politics into countless divisions, into moralized versions of politics, and into the nihilism of liberal democracy. The idea of communism remains the only reminder of an alternative world, opposing both contemporary nihilism and the destructiveness of capitalism.

In a world where riots and protests have spread from France to Latin America, it is challenging to discuss the existence of a connecting line in these countries compared to sixty years ago. While this idea once united revolutionaries in Latin America with the subjects of 68 and the workers of the Cultural Revolution, the absence of a unifying idea today can be seen as a fundamental crisis of politics. For this reason, this study aims to rethink this crisis and the concept of communism and reminds us that we need to repair the broken link between politics and the idea.

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APPENDICES

A. CURRICULUM VITAE

Yunus YÜCEL

Address:

Mobile: | Email:

Driver's License: | Military Status: Served

Education

- 2001-2015 - Rahmi Kula High School, Balıkesir
  CGPA: 5.00/5.00
- 2006-2012 - Middle East Technical University (METU), Ankara, Turkey
  B.Sc. in Electrical and Electronics Engineering
- 2013-2016 - Middle East Technical University (METU), Ankara, Turkey
  M.A. in Media and Cultural Studies
- 2016-2025 - Middle East Technical University (METU), Ankara, Turkey
  Ph.D. in Political Science and Public Administration

Work Experience

-
  Harness Manufacturing & Electrical Systems Installation Engineer (07/2022 - Present)
- Head Department of Construction and Technique Affairs, Ankara
  Senior Electrical and Electronics Engineer (2013 - 06/2022)

Technical Skills

CADIA, AutoCAD, Jira, Confluence, PLM Teamcenter, EFAB, PVsol, PVsyst

Professional Skills

- Avionic Electrical System & Installation
- Assembly & Manufacturing Planning
- Project & Time Management
- Budget and Financial Planning

Achievements & Other Activities

- Ranked 821st in Math-Science out of ~1M students in 2005 University Entrance Exam.
- Member of METU Mountaineering and Winter Sports Club.
- Member of the Chamber of Electrical Engineers (EMO), Turkey.

Personal Skills

Self-motivated, adaptive, analytical, good communicator, excellent time-manager.

Languages

- Turkish (Native)
- English (Advanced)
- French (Beginner) - One year at Institut Français Turquie

B. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Kriz kavramı etimolojik olarak Antik Yunanca "*krisis*" kelimesinden türetilmiştir. "*Krisis*"in fiil hali ise "*krinō*"dur ve karar vermek ya da ayırt etmek anlamına gelir. Bu, kriz durumunun eylem gerektiren bir dönüm noktasına ulaştığını yani müdahale edilmesi gerektiğini gösterir. Bu yanıyla Antik Yunanca'da "*krisis*" terimi bir eylem çağrısı olarak da görülebilir. Bir şeyin acilen yapılması gerektiğini ve bir karar gerektirdiğini ifade etmektedir. Kriz kavramının idea kavramıyla dolaylı da olsa bir bağlantısı olduğu söylenebilir. İdea kavramını nasıl hareket edeceğimize ve nasıl karar vereceğimize dair bir kılavuz olarak düşünürsek, idea kavramının krizi, yani kararın kendisinin krizi, bizi tüm kararlar arasında göreli ve biçimsel bir eşitliğe götürecektir. Bu, çağdaş kapitalizmde karşılaştığımız nihilizm sorununun bir yanıdır. Bu nedenle bu tez, idea kavramının krizine odaklanmakta ve onu yeniden siyasetin bir parçası haline getirebileceğimizi savunmaktadır.

Bugün kriz kavramını şeylerin, nesnelerin ve insanların artık yönetilebilir olmadığını ifade etmek için kullanıyoruz. İçinde yaşadığımız dönemin bir krizler çağı olduğu söylenebilir. Kapitalizmin krizi, iklim krizi, mülteci krizi ve siyasetin krizi gibi adlandırmalara sahip birçok krizin varlığından bahsedebiliriz. Gündelik hayatın bir parçası haline gelen krizler tarafından kuşatılmış durumdayız. Buradaki kriz tanımlarının hep dünyamızdaki şeylerin ve insan ilişkilerinin yönetilemez haline gönderme yaparken, bu durumdan çıkmak için bir yapılacaklar listesini de içerdiklerini söyleyebiliriz. Ancak bu reçeteler mevcut iktidar ve toplumsal ilişkiler ağı içinde uygulanamaz hale geldikçe, politik karşı çıkışlar da kapitalizmi sona erdirmek gibi makro çözümlerden, geri dönüşümü vurgulamak ya da plastik kullanımını azaltmak gibi mikro çözümlere kaymaktadır. Siyasetin kolektif bir öznesinin varlığı yerine, birey artık siyasetin öznesi olarak adlandırılmakta ve burada siyasete katılım biçimleri tüketim ve bireysel davranış biçimlerine indirgenmektedir. Eğer siyaset bir çatışmanın kolektif örgütlenmesiyse, o zaman bugün siyaset adına ne çatışmanın ne de kolektif

örgütlenmenin varlığından söz edebiliriz. Kriz, modernite boyunca 'yeni'nin ortaya çıkabileceği bir siyasi olasılık anı olarak görülmüş olsa da bugün kriz ve krize müdahale depolitizasyonun bir parçasıdır.

Dolayısıyla siyasetin eylem ve düşünsel alanını belirleyen daha büyük bir krizin varlığından söz etmek mümkündür. Bu büyük kriz de ideanın krizidir. İdea kavramıyla kastettiğim, siyasete yön ve amaç veren bir siyasi idealin varlığıdır. İdeanın krizi, bu amaç ve hedeflerin artık amaç olarak görülmemesi ve siyasi ilişkileri ve düşünceleri belirleme gücünü yitirmesi olarak anlaşılmalıdır. Bir başka deyişle burada siyasi idea derken Marksizm'in düşünsel ve pratik birikimini kastediyorum. Çünkü Marksizm'in modernitede kapitalizmin krizlerine alternatif geliştirebilecek hakim bir siyasi doktrin olduğunu düşünmekteyim.

Marksizm, on dokuzuncu ve yirminci yüzyıllar boyunca radikal bir özgürleştirici siyasi pratiğin birleştirici unsuru ve teorik referans noktası olmuştur. Üçüncü Dünya ülkelerinin sömürgecilik karşıtı kurtuluş hareketlerinden Çin Komünist Partisi'ne ve Sovyet Devrimi'nin kuruluşuna kadar pek çok örnekte asıl referans noktası Marksizm tarafından belirlenen teori ve pratiğin birliğiydi. Herhangi bir krizin beklenen sonuçlarından biri, bir fikrin yeniden üretiminin ve bununla birlikte onu var eden referans noktalarının bozulmasıdır. Kriz, Marksizm söz konusu olduğunda ise eşitlikçi özgürleştirici siyasetinin temelini oluşturan bu referans noktalarının, yani partinin, sosyalist devletin ve devrimin artık kurtuluş vaat etmiyor oluşuydu. Dahası, bu aynı zamanda her türlü pratiğin krizinin teorinin de krizine işaret ettiği ve bunun tersinin de geçerli olduğu bir durum anlamına geliyordu.

Louis Althusser, Marksizm'in krizinin içinde bulunduğumuz döneme özgü olduğunu ve Marksizm'in kendisinin de değişen dünya ve tarihsel koşullar altında krizlere girdiğini ve uyum sağladığını söylemiştir. Buradaki kriz kavramı ne çöküş ne de teorinin sonu anlamındaki ölüme işaret etmektedir. İkinci Enternasyonal'in ve onun ürettiği sınıf dayanışmasının çöküşü, Marksizm'i teori ve pratiğini yeniden düşünmeye zorlayan kriz anlarından biriydi. Bununla birlikte, günümüz Marksizm'in etkisi, yani 1970'lerdeki Marksizm'in gücü, İkinci Enternasyonal vakasıyla karşılaştırılabilir

ölçekte değildir. Artık söz konusu olan, devrim için mücadele eden yeraltı Marksist örgütlerin işçi sınıfı sendikalarıyla mücadelesi değildir. Tam tersine, yirminci yüzyılın sonunda Marksist hareket birçok ülkede iktidardaydı ve Marksizm geniş bir kitle tabanına sahipti. Başka bir deyişle, 1980'lerin sonundaki kriz Marksizm içindeki bir krizin aksine, dünya ölçeğinde tarihsel bir etkiye sahipti.

Bu krizin Marksist hareketler üzerindeki etkisi, Marksizm'e referansla özgürleşme adı altında geçmiş ile gelecek ve şimdiki an arasında bağlantı kurulamamasına yol açmıştır. Diğer bir deyişle, Marksizm'in krizi aynı zamanda komünist ideanın krizi olmuştur. Burada İdea kavramını zamansal bir kategori olarak düşündüğümüzde, idea geçmiş ve geleceği şimdiki ana bağlar ve dolayısıyla şimdiyi bir arada tutmayı sağlar. Öyleyse, idea bu üç zamansal düzlemi pratik ve teorik olarak bükmeyi, siyasal teoriyi ve pratiği inşa etmemizi sağlar. İdeanın krizi zamansal bir perspektiften baktığımızda geçmişi, geleceği ve şimdiyi yorumlayabilme ve şimdide eyleme gücünün yitilmesi anlamında siyasal pratiğin ve teorinin krizidir diğer bir deyişle. Althusser'in işaret ettiği kriz, partiyi revize ederek ya da lideri değiştirerek çözülemez. İlginç olan Althusser'in, Marksizm'in krizinin köklerini 1930'larda SSCB'nin çöküşünden çok öncesinde ortaya çıktığını dile getirmesidir. Ona göre bugün yeniden karşılaştığımız şey, 1930'larda başlayan ve Stalin tarafından bastırılan teori ve praksis, parti, devlet ve devrim kavramları sorununu tekrardan gündeme getiren uzun vadeli bir krizin yansımalarıdır. Ancak SSCB'nin çöküşü, beklenmedik olduğu kadar, dünyanın dört bir yanındaki Marksistler üzerinde şok etkisi yaratmıştır. Bu sadece bir devletin çöküşü değil, aynı zamanda bir fikrin somutlaşmasının da sonuydu. Başka bir deyişle, "başka bir dünya hayalinin" sonuydu.

Wendy Brown ve Enzo Traverso, SSCB'nin çöküşünden sonra Marksist teori ve pratikte hakim olan tutumun kendisini melankoli olarak gösterdiğini ileri sürmektedir. Melankoli kavramı, Marksizm'in krizini tanımlamak için ilginç bir seçimdir. Freud *Yas ve Melankoli* adlı makalesinde bu iki form arasındaki psikanalitik ayrımı netleştirmeye çalışır. Freud ilk olarak her iki durumda da öznenin bir arzu nesnesini kaybettiğini söyler. Ancak yas durumunda özne bu arzu nesnesinin kaybını yaşarken, zamanla sevilen başka bir arzu nesnesi kaybedilen arzu nesnesinin yerini alır. Öte

yandan melankoli durumunda özne kaybedilen nesneyi bilinç düzeyinde somutlayamaz, diğer bir deyişle kayıp belirsizdir. Bilinç düzeyinde bir karşılığı olmadığı için özne kaybedilen arzu nesnesinin yerine bir başka arzu nesnesini koyamadan bunu tecrübe etmektedir. Melankolinin özellikle Marksizm ve politik pratiği tanımlamak için kullanılması durumu ilginç kılıyor çünkü yas, SSCB'nin çöküşünden sonraki politik pratik kavramı için daha önemli bir işleve sahiptir. Ancak melankoli fikri, mevcut durumda daha fazlası olduğunu ima ediyor. Melankoli, yastan farklı olarak kayıp nesnesinin belirsizliği ise, Marksizm'in kayıp olarak kabul etmediği şeyin, ona geleceği belirleme ve umut etme gücü veren idea kavramı olduğu söylenebilir.

Thatcher'ın ünlü "başka bir alternatif yok" sözü, Birleşik Krallık'ta Yeni Sağ dışında bir siyaset izlemenin imkansızlığından daha fazlasını ifade ediyordu. Aynı zamanda kapitalizmin alternatifi olmadığını ve başka bir şey ummanın ya da beklemenin beyhude olduğunu öne sürüyordu. David Graeber umutsuzluğun insanlar için doğal bir durum olmadığını ve üretilmesi gerektiğini savunmaktadır. Açıkça söylemek gerekirse, umutsuzluk uğruna mücadele edilecek bir siyasi ideanın yokluğu olarak da düşünülebilir. Marx'tan bu yana özgürleştirici siyasi hareketlerin uğruna mücadele ettikleri bir ideaya sahip olduklarını söylemek yanlış olmaz. Bu açıdan son iki yüzyıldır özgürleştirici ve eşitlikçi siyasetin ideasının ismi komünizm olduğunu söyleyebiliriz. Ancak tam da ideanın krizi ve ideanın siyaseti belirleme gücü kaybolduğunda ideadan yoksun bir siyasetin yolunu kaybetmeye meyilli olduğu dile getirilebilir. Diğer bir deyişle, Marksizm'in hem pratik hem de teorik olan krizi, özdeşleştiği komünizm ideasının çöküşünü de beraberinde getirmiştir. Özgürlükçü siyasi hareketler ideanın yokluğunda da mücadeleye devam etmiş olsa da kalıcı bir siyasi başarının ya da bir ideanın varlığından söz etmek zordur.

İdea kavramı, ne kadar soyut ve ulaşılmaz olursa olsun, maddi yaşam hakkında düşünmenin bir aracıdır. Dolayısıyla soyutluğun ötesinde etik ve siyaseti belirlemenin de bir aracıdır. İdeanın varlığı, toplumsal olan üzerine düşünmenin ve olan ile olabilecek ihtimaldekiler arasındaki ayrımın temelidir. Bu nedenle idea, verili olandan mümkün olana ulaşmanın siyasi ve etik araçlarını sağlar. Dolayısıyla neyin doğru ya

da yanlış ve neyin iyi ya da kötü olduğu fikri olmadan bu kavramları tanımlayacak araçlardan da yoksun oluruz. Daha yüksek bir soyutlama düzeyinde, idea kavramının kendisi, toplumsal düzeni iyi ve doğruyu kapsayacak şekilde siyasi olarak düşünmenin bir aracı olarak görülebilir. Diğer bir deyişle, idea kavramı ile siyaset arasında bir bağlantı vardır. Siyaset, şeylerin ilişkisinin ötesinde bir değişim ve düzen kurma ve bunu eşitlikçi ve adil bir şekilde gerçekleştirme fikriyse, siyasetin teorik ve pratik inşası da ideanın varlığına bağlıdır.

Bu da bizi bu çalışmanın odak noktasına ve araştırma sorusuna getiriyor. Tarihsel ve kuramsal temelleri ortadan kalkan bir fikir nasıl var olmaya devam edebilir? Bu tez, bu soruya bir ideayı oluşturan ve ona hayat veren tarihsel ve kuramsal temeller üzerinden cevap vermiştir. Dolayısıyla, idea kavramının bu dünyada gerçekleşebilmesi için inşa edilmesi, tarihe yansıtılması ve bir fail tarafından sahiplenilmesi gerektiğini söyleyebiliriz. Bu noktalar sırasıyla fikir kavramının inşası, projeksiyonu ve gerçekleşmesidir. İdea kavramına anlam kazandıran bu üçlemede inşa için diyalektik kavramını, yansıtma için tarih kavramını ve gerçekleştirme sorunu için ise özne kavramı tartışılmıştır. Günümüzde komünizm fikrinin doygunluğa ulaşmasının, onu var eden düşünce sütunlarının da doygunluğa ulaşmasından kaynaklandığı savunulmuştur. Bu soruya cevap ararken modern felsefenin üç eleştirel filozofu incelenmiştir. Bu filozoflar G. W. F. Hegel, Karl Marx ve Alain Badiou'dur.

Bu çalışmanın metodolojik ve teorik bir müdahale olduğu ileri sürülmektedir. İdea kavramına, özellikle de komünist idea kavramına odaklanmakla birlikte, bu iki kavramı doğrudan incelemeyi amaçlamamıştır. Bunun yerine, idea kavramının nasıl düşünülebileceğine, tarihsel ve teorik temellerine ve bu temellerin siyaseti belirlemede nasıl bir işlev gördüğüne odaklanmıştır. Bu nedenle fikir kavramının siyasete eklemlenmesinin metodolojik yaklaşıma bağlı olarak farklılaştığını göstermeyi amaçlamıştır. Aynı zamanda, idea kavramının düşünülmesinin teorik ve sosyolojik değişime bağlı olduğunu açıklamıştır.

Bir yöntem olarak felsefenin siyaseti sorunsallaştırması, yaşadığımız dünyayı tasarlanan dünyadan, bir idea olarak kurulan tasarımdan ayırmaya dayanır. Neyin

doğru ya da adil olduğu sorusu ideaya ilişkin olarak ele alınır. En azından Platon'un *Devlet*'inin bu yönteme dayandığını ve kendisinden sonraki felsefe tarihini etkilediğini biliyoruz. Bu anlamda, felsefenin verili dünyanın pozitif gerçekliği ile devrimci ideal arasında ilişki teorize etmeye çalıştığını söyleyebiliriz. Platon'dan bu yana idea kavramı, gerçeklikte somutlaşmamış, maddileşmemiş ve dolayısıyla duyumsanamaz ve ulaşılamaz olandır. Platon'da, şeylerin mükemmel biçimini temsil ederken, ideal yaşam doğru ve adil olarak kabul edilir.

Platon'un ardından idea kavramı Hegel'de farklı bir bağlamda farklı bir kavramsallaştırmayla (mutlak idea) karşımıza çıkar. Aynı zamanda Badiou'nun Platon'a dönüşü de yine idea kavramına farklı bir içerikle gönderme yapar. Bu ikisi arasında Marx'ın idea kavramına açıkça başvurmadığını ama Marx'ın politik kavramsallaştırmasının komünist ideayı ürettiğini söyleyebiliriz. Burada idea kavramının bu üç filozof tarafından kuramsallaştırılmasındaki farklılık, her birinin yaşadığı dönemin siyasi ve ekonomik olayları çerçevesinde şekillenmektedir. Bu anlamda Hegel 1789 Fransız Devrimi'ne tanıklık etmiş, Marx ise 1848 isyanlarını yaşamıştır. Badiou 68 ayaklanmasını ve Kültür Devrimi'ni görmüş olsa da, bu olaylar kalıcı bir dönüşüme yol açmamış ve Çin Devrimi'nin sağa kaymasını ve Sovyetler Birliği'nin çöküşünü engellememiştir. Dolayısıyla, Hegel için Fransız Devrimi diğer şeylerin yanı sıra aşırılık anlamına gelirken; Marx için 1848 ayaklanmaları yeni bir toplumsal düzenin doğuşu anlamına geliyordu. Öte yandan Badiou için, yukarıda saydığımız toplumsal olaylar yenilgiyi sembolize ediyordu. Bu üç filozof bu etkiler altında kendi felsefi ve politik kurgularını şekillendirmiştir. Bu anlamda Hegel için politik ve felsefi kurgu, aşırılıkları önleyebilecek organik bir toplum fikrini sunmayı amaçlar. Marx için bu yeni ortaya çıkan toplumsal düzende, başka bir toplumsal düzene nasıl ulaşılacağı sorusu haline gelir. Badiou, yenilginin ardından ideayı yeniden diriltmeye ve siyasetin ideası olmadan anlamını ve yönünü yitirdiğini teorize etmeye çalışır.

Hegel'in düşüncesinin Aydınlanma felsefesinin birikimi ve felsefe tarihinde ortaya çıkardığı sorunlar üzerinde yükseldiğini söylemek yanlış olmayacaktır. Felsefesini, Aydınlanma'nın metafiziğe yaklaşımının eleştirisiyle inşa ettiği ve idea kavramına da

bu çerçevede anlam yüklediği ifade edilebilir. Hegel, Kantçı felsefenin dogmatik olduğunu, çünkü selefinin "dünya aklının metafiziği" (*metaphysics of the reason of the world*) ile yüzleşmediğini düşünür. Bu nedenle Hegel'in metafizik kurgusu, her şeyi, "dünyanın nedeni" olan idea kavramıyla ilişkilendirmek üzerine kuruludur. Hegel'e göre idea kavramı koşullanmamış olandır. Başka bir deyişle, ideanın doğası ya da bilgisi başka bir şeyle ilişkisi üzerinden anlaşılamaz. Öte yandan, Hegel'de teleoloji kavramının içsel amaçlılık fikrine işaret ettiğini söyleyebiliriz. Bu anlamda idea (Dünya'nın nedeni), teleoloji ve yaşam kavramsallaştırmalarını birbirine bağlayan bir kavramsal topolojiden söz etmek mümkündür. Hegel, *Mantık Bilimi*'nde "idea her şeyden önce yaşamdır" derken yaşamın amaçsız olamayacağına işaret eder. Bu, yaşamın ideaya bağımlı olduğu ya da yaşamın kendisinin ideanın bir yansıması olduğu anlamına gelmez. Aksine, Hegel için yaşam idea olmayandır.

James Kreines'in ileri sürdüğü gibi idea içsel bir amaçla ve normatif bir dünya kurgumuzun olduğu yerde buluruz. Bu normatif standart tikel varlığın tözünü oluştururken, hakikat ise nesnenin tözüyle yani içkin standardı ile uyuşması olarak karşımıza çıkar. Kısacası, Hegel için idea kavramı hem metafiziği hem de yaşamı anlamlandırmak için vazgeçilmezdir. Bu nedenle Hegel, aklı dünyanın tarihinde arar ve bu aklın gerçekleşmesini siyasetin amacı olarak belirler. Yukarıda bahsettiğimiz üçlü kavramsal topolojiyi düşünmek için diyalektik kavramına, sözün (ya da ideanın) nedeninin izini sürmek için tarih kavramına ve onun faili olarak özne kavramına yönelir.

Öte yandan Marx bu Hegelci şemada hayranlık duyacak ve eleştirilecek çok şey bulmuştur. *Kapital*'in önsözünde belirttiği gibi, Hegel'e "ölü bir köpek" muamelesi yapılırken, Hegel'in diyalektiğini ve mantığını kullanmaktan çekinmemiştir. Öte yandan, 1844 tarihli *Ekonomik ve Felsefi El Yazmaları*'nda veya *Yahudi Sorunu Üzerine*'de Hegel'i sert bir şekilde eleştirdiğini görmek de mümkündür. Marx'ı Althusser'in yaptığı gibi genç ve olgun Marx ayrımı üzerinden düşünmek yerine, Marx'ın düşünsel serüveninde bir süreklilik ilişkisi olduğunu söyleyebiliriz. Bu çalışmada Marx'ın Hegel'in modern felsefe içerisinde belirlediği düşünsel topoloji içerisinde kaldığını ancak bu topolojiyi başka bir düzleme taşıdığını iddia edebiliriz.

Marx'ın idea kavramıyla ilişkisi, kavramın kendisinden çok nasıl kullanıldığı ya da gerçekliği nasıl belirlediğiyle ilgilidir. Yukarıda da söylediğimiz gibi, Hegel metafiziği idea kavramına dayanırken, verili maddi dünya ile idea kavramını iki ayrı düzlem olarak ayırır. İdea, koşullanmamış olan olarak gerçekliği belirleme gücüne sahiptir. Marx'a göre ise idea ile gerçeklik arasındaki ilişki, gerçekliği belirleyen bir ideadan değil, ancak maddi olandan türetilebilir. Ancak Hegel'de her ikisi de aynı şeye gönderme yapan idea ve dünyanın nedeni kavramları Marx'ta farklılaşacaktır. Böylece dünyanın mantığı, politik mücadelelerin iç amacını tanımlarken, idea bu politik mücadelelerin sonunda ulaşılacak *telos* olacaktır. Başka bir deyişle, dünyanın nedeni sınıf mücadelesiyken, mevcut siyasi mücadelelerin ulaşılması gereken son noktası komünizm fikridir. Ancak belirtmek gerekir ki Marx için komünizm ideası Platonik ideadan farklıdır; gerçekliğe dışsal değil içseldir ve proletaryanın mücadelesi içinde ortaya çıkar.

Daha açık ifade etmek gerekirse, Marx için idea, Hegel'de olduğu gibi ne koşulsuzdur ne de gerçekliği belirleme gücü vardır. Bununla birlikte, komünizm fikri maddi ilişkilerden türediği için gerçekliğe içkin olsa da ulaşılması gereken bir hedef, yani şimdi ve burada olmayan bir son olduğu için gerçekliğe dışsaldır. İşte komünizm ideası bu ilişkisellik içinde inşa edilir. Burada artık siyaset devreye girer. Çünkü Marx için felsefenin bizi götürdüğü yer dünyayı değiştirme gücümüzün sağlayıcısı olamaz. Başka bir deyişle, Platon'dan Hegel'e kadar siyaset felsefeye tabi kılınmışsa, Marx ile birlikte felsefe siyasete tabi kılınacaktır. Marx, diyalektiğe ilişkin fikri bir inşa yöntemi, tarihi bir yansıtma düzlemi ve özneyi de bunu gerçekleştirecek bir fail olarak kavramsallaştırır.

Kısacası Marx, siyasi mücadeleler ile idea arasında aktif bir ilişki kurar. Bu ikisi artık birbirine bağlıdır. Sonuç olarak, ideanın gücü ölçülebilir ve fikrin bilgisi ulaşılabilir hale gelmiştir bu vesileyle. Bu durum fikri hem güçlendirir hem de kırılgan hale getirir. İdea ve gerçeklik arasındaki ilişki, birincisini ikincisinden güç alan bir konuma sokar. Başka bir deyişle, siyasi mücadeleler ve tarih ideayı güçlendiren bir yönde aktığı ölçüde, İdea güçlü bir siyasi yönelim merkezi olmaya devam eder. Ancak siyasi mücadeleler ve tarihsel konjonktür ideayı güçlendirmek yerine zayıflatan bir yönde

ilerlediğinde, ideanın kriziyle karşı karşıya kalırız. Diğer bir deyişle, idea, tarihsel akış hakkında konuşma kapasitesini kaybeder. Yukarıda Marksizm'in krizi olarak bahsettiğimiz şey, bir bakıma idea ve siyaset arasındaki ilişkinin krizidir.

Marx politik sahnede Hegel'e meydan okurken, Badiou ise felsefi sahneye geri döner. Onun idea kavramıyla ilişkisini Marx hakkındaki görüşlerine benzetebiliriz. Badiou, Marx'ın entelektüel olarak haklı olduğunu düşünmesine ve onunla aynı politik fikirlere sahip olduğunu kabul etmesine rağmen, ideayı maddi ilişkilere bağlamaz. Yine de Badiou, siyaset için yalnızca komünist ideanın tek geçerli idea olduğunu teyit eder. Badiou, her şeyden önce ideayı maddi gerçeklikten ve onu savunmasız kılan tarihsel bağlantıdan koparır ki bu aynı zamanda ona yöneltilen idealizm eleştirilerinin de çıkış noktasıdır.

Badiou'ya göre eğer bir ideadan bahsedeceksek yukarıda bahsedilen üçlü şemayı terk etmemiz gerekir. Çünkü komünist İdea Antik Yunan'dan bu yana yani Spartaküs'ten Kültür Devrimi'ne eşitlikçi özgürlükçü siyasetin değişmez bir parçası olmuştur. Bu anlamda Badiou için komünizm ideası ulaşılması gereken bir devlet biçimi değil, hakikat ile özne arasında bir dolayımdır. İdea, ne Hegelci anlamda ne de Marx'ın kavramsallaştırdığı gibi gerçekliği belirleme gücüne sahip değildir. İdea kavramı, hakikatin var olduğu ve siyasi eylemin Platon'un doğru yaşam fikrini anımsatır şekilde, yanlış olana karşı adil olanın yanında yer almak olduğu anlamına gelir. Dolayısıyla hakikat, "insanlığın kolektif sunumu (komünizmin toplumsallığı)" anlamına gelir. İdeanın bu şekilde kavramsallaştırılması, temel bir siyasi sorun olan devlete karşı ne yapılacağı konusunda da Badiou'yu Hegel ve Marx'tan ayırır. Hegel ideanın kendini somutlaştırması için devlete ihtiyaç duyarken, Marx'ta ideanın varlığı iktidarın ve devletin ele geçirilmesi ve tasfiye edilmesine bağlıdır. Badiou'da ise idea iktidarın ve devletin dışında kalır. İdeanın ortaya çıkışının toplumsal ve tarihsel temelleri olsa da öznel bir müdahaleye ihtiyacı vardır. Bu tam da Marksizm'in krizine yol açan devletin krizinden ideanın krizine geçişi önlemek içindir.

Bu noktada Badiou, Hegel tarafından kurulan üçlü şemanın ötesine geçer. Badiou için ne ideanın işleyişi olarak olumsuzlama diyalektiği, ne komünist ideanın kendini

yansıttığı bir tarih kavramı, ne de sabit bir özne fikri vardır. Bunun yerine diyalektik eksiltme, tarih hakikate ilişkin bir siyaset kipi ve özne de hakikatin militanı olarak görünür. Diğer bir deyişle, Badiou için idea kavramı bir hakikat prosedürünün belirli bir tarihsel momentte öznelleştirilmesidir. Başka bir deyişle, komünizm fikrinin işleyişi bir siyasi, bir tarihsel ve bir de öznel unsur gerektirir. Bu üçlü ne ideanın kendisini güçlendirir ne de onu gerçekleştirmeyi amaçlar.

Badiou, idea kavramıyla doğru hayatın nasıl yaşanacağı sorusuna politik bir yanıt vermeyi amaçlar. Eğer politik hakikat kolektif bir unsursa, bu hakikat toplumsal düzenin kendisini sorgulamaya açar. İdea, öznenin doğru ile yanlış arasında seçim yapmasını, adil olan ile olmayan arasında karar vermesini sağlayan aracıdır. O olmadan adil bir hayat yaşama şansı yoktur.

Dolayısıyla bu tezin temel amacı, Sovyetler Birliği'nin çöküşünden sonra radikal siyasetin krizine ve tartışmalarına farklı bir perspektiften bakmaya çalışmak olmuştur. Bu çalışma, radikal özgürleştirici siyasetin krizinin nedeninin ne kapitalizmin değişen koşullarına ne artan otoriterleşmeye ne de kayıp özneye indirgenemeyeceğini, daha ziyade radikal siyaseti bağlayacak bir fikrin eksikliği olduğu düşüncesinden yola çıkmaktadır. Bu nedenle, bu tezde idea ve siyaset arasındaki ilişkinin Hegel, Marx ve Badiou tarafından nasıl kurgulandığını tartışılmıştır. İdea ve radikal siyaset arasındaki ilişkiyi tartışırken, bu ikisinin nasıl iç içe geçtiğini, kavramsallaştırıldığını ve nihayetinde nasıl tezahür ettiği açıklanmıştır. Bu nedenle önce diyalektiği, sonra tarihi ve son olarak da özne kavramı ele alınmıştır. Amaç, bu üç unsurun hem fikirlerin hem de siyasetin inşasında nasıl ve neden kritik bir rol oynadığını göstermektir.

İlk olarak diyalektik kavramını tartışmaya açılmıştır. Çünkü diyalektik kavramını bir fikri nasıl inşa edeceğimizin bir aracı olarak kavramsallaştırılmıştır. Hegel felsefesinin kurucu bir unsuru olarak diyalektik, yeni olanın ve değişimin ortaya çıkışıyla ilgili bir kavramsallaştırma olarak düşünülmüştür. Hegel'in, diyalektiği çelişki kavramında temellendirmesinin ve her bir çelişkiyi karşıtların birliğine yükseltmesinin karşıtların birliği kavramına nasıl yol açtığını ve böylece öznel ile nesnel ve evrensel ile tikel arasında nasıl bir bağ kurduğu açıklanmıştır. Hegelci diyalektik, parça ile bütün

arasında bir ilişki kurarak bu birliği yaratmıştır. Ancak Marx'ta diyalektiğin çalışma prensipleri değişmiş, Marx kendi felsefi sisteminde evrensel ile tikel ve öznel ile nesnel arasındaki ilişkileri korurken Hegelci bütün olan Tin kavramının yerine kapitalizmi koymuştur. Böylece diyalektik, tikele -metaya- içkin çelişkilerle yeni bir biçim almış ve kapitalist üretim tarzının hâkimiyetini göstermiştir. Bu sayede Marx, kapitalizmin egemen bir ilişki biçimi olarak toplumsal alanı nasıl şekillendirdiğini ortaya koymakla kalmamış, aynı zamanda içerdiği çelişkilerin politik potansiyellerini de açığa çıkarabilmiştir. Ancak öznel olanın nesnel olanla ilişkisi Marx'ı siyasetin toplumsal ilişkilere tabi kılınmasına götürmüştür. Bu nedenle Marx için kapitalizme alternatif bir siyasi düşünce ancak mevcut toplumsal ilişkilerin olumsuzlanmasıyla ortaya çıkabilirdi. Örneğin, yeni toplumun yeni insanı ancak kapitalizmin yıkıntıları arasından yükselebilirdi. Marx'ın Hegel diyalektiğine ve idea kavramına müdahalesi iki yönlüdür. İlki siyasetin rolüyle ilgiliydi. Gerçeklik ve idea arasındaki uyumsuzluğun kaçınılmaz olarak parça ve bütün arasındaki ilişkinin değişmesine neden olduğu Hegelci sistem yerine, Marx aktif bir siyasi müdahale arayışındaydı. Nesnellik burada siyasetin bir uzantısı olarak ortaya çıkmıştır, siyasetin üstünde inşa edildiği bir düzlem olarak karşımıza çıkar. İkinci olarak, Hegel'in eserlerinde diyalektik İdea'ya ulaşmanın bir aracı olarak işlev görürken, Marx için İdea mevcut durumun olumsuzlanmasıyla ulaşılacak amacı oluşturuyordu. Ancak siyasi pratik yeninin olumlanmasını bastırarak ilerlediği ölçüde, olumsuzlama yıkıma dönüşüyordu. Bu, fikrin kendini içinde bulduğu çıkmazın bir boyutuydu. Dolayısıyla Badiou'nun bu tartışmaya itirazı, biri Hegel'e diğeri Marx'a yönelik olmak üzere iki yönlüdür. Hegel'e itirazı Bir fikri ve bütün kavramıyla ilgilidir. Badiou burada yüzünü ontolojiye dönmüş ve bir olanın matematiksel imkânsızlığını kanıtlamaya çalışmıştır. Ancak Marx'a yönelttiği eleştiri, diyalektik ve olumsuzlama arasındaki ilişkiyle alakalıdır. Badiou'ya göre, Marx birinciyi ikinciyle eşitlediği ölçüde, ideanın kurucu rolü yok olmaya başlamıştır. İkinci boyut, ideayı nesnel koşullara bağladığı için öznel ve ideanın değişen nesnel koşullarından doğabilecek kriziyle ilgiliydi. Ancak buna ek olarak, siyasetin nesnel koşullara bağlı olarak gelişmediğini, aksine bu koşulların bir temel sağladığını öne sürmüştür. Durum ve olay diyalektiğinde, her olay, olaysal bir sahaya sahip olsa da siyaseti nedensellik yoluyla anlaşılamayacağını savunmuştur. Son olarak, idea ve olumsuzlama diyalektiği arasındaki ilişkiye dair ise ideanın olumlayıcı

olması gerektiğini, yeninin ancak bu şekilde inşa edilebileceğini ileri sürmüştür. Bu nedenle Badiou, olumsuzlama diyalektiği yerine bir eksiltme diyalektiği önermiştir. Bu yaklaşım sayesinde radikal siyaset, devleti ele geçirmeye çalışmak yerine devletle arasına mesafe koyarak devletçi olmayan bir form kazanabilir.

Takip eden bölümde idea kavramının yansıtıldığı tarih kavramını ele alınmıştır. Burada ise tarihin siyasi kurguda nasıl bir rol oynadığını tartışılmıştır. Aydınlanma ve modern felsefede tarih fikri ilerleme fikriyle birlikte düşünülmüş, buna bağlı olarak da siyasetin eninde sonunda daha adil ve özgür toplumlar kurması beklenmiştir. Hegel de ilerleme fikrini benimsemiş olsa da onun için tarih aynı zamanda ideanın kendi *telos*unu ortaya koyduğu alandı. Bu da tarihi her şeyden önce "dünyanın mantığının" kendini açığa vurduğu bir alan haline getiriyordu. Dolayısıyla idea ile tarihsel gerçeklik arasındaki ilişkide tarih, belirlenen konumuna indirgeniyordu. Marx ise ideanın hareketi olarak tarih fikrini reddetmiş ve idealist bir yanılsama olarak eleştirmiştir. Bununla birlikte, tarihin bir nedeni olduğu ve bunun tarihsel ilerlemeye yol açtığı fikri, Marx'ın kendi felsefesinde benimseyeceği ve koruyacağı bir başka Hegelci temadır. Marx için tarihte bulunabilecek tek neden sınıf mücadelesiydi ve Marx tarihin hareketini de burada bulmaktadır. Bu noktada Marx için tarih fikri, idea ve *telos* arasındaki ilişki netleşmiş olmaktaydı. Tarih fikrinde bulduğu bu *telos*, tarihin siyasete hizmet etmesini ve ideaya bir meşruiyet kaynağı olmasını sağlamaktadır. Tarihsel akış, ideanın öngördüğü yönde aktığı ölçüde ideayı güçlendirirken, idea ve tarihsel akış arasındaki mesafenin açılması ise ideanın meşruiyetinden ve tarihsel dayanaklarından birini kaybetmesine neden olur. Badiou tarih fikrinin bir kaynağı olarak kurulmasına eleştirelken, bunun bütünlükçü ve tek bir tarih anlatısı gerektirdiğinin farkındadır. Ancak, Badiou için baştan sona eksiksiz, tek bir değişen etrafında düşünülebilecek bir tarih yoktur. Dolayısıyla tarihte aranacak ve bulunacak bir neden de yoktur. Bu anlamda tarih ile siyaset arasında pozitif bir bağ kurulamazdır. Tarih ancak siyasetin belirli modaliteleri olduğunu ve dönemsellikleri içerisinde ortaya çıkan hakikatin tarihi olabilirdir. Badiou'nun burada ifade ettiği şey, her bir siyaset tarzının belirli tarihsel koşulların içinde ve belli bir öznellik formu ile var olduğu fikridir. Bu nedenle 1789 Fransız Devrimi ile 1871 Paris Komünü ve 1917 Ekim Devrimi arasında ortak bir bağ vardır. Badiou için. Fikir ve hakikat bu üç olayı

birbirine bağlarken, her biri kendi öznelliğine ve eşitlik ve adalet anlayışına dayanan bir siyaset biçimi üretmiştir. Ancak her bir hakikatin önerdiği siyasi çerçeveler günümüzde bir doygunluk noktasına ulaşmıştır. Sonuç olarak Badiou, ideaya ulaşmak için hakikatin doymuş siyasi prosedürlerine ve araçlarına sürekli olarak güvenmenin beyhude olduğunu ileri sürer.

Son bölümde ise özne ideanın gerçekleşmesi, yani ideanın faili olarak kavramsallaştırılmıştır. Hegel için özne, Aydınlanma'nın soyutlanmış öznesinin toplumsal ve tarihsel bir varlığı olarak ortaya çıkmış ve ideanın bu dünyada kendisini gerçekleştirmesinin aracısı olmuştur. Bu bağlamda, Kant'ın boş biçimciliğinin aksine, özne somut koşullar altında ideanın taşıyıcısı haline gelmiştir. Bunu göstermek için Hegel organik toplum kavramını ortaya atmıştır. İdeanın ancak bu koşullar altında kendini gerçekleştirebileceğini savunmuştur. Burada ortaya çıkan toplum yapısı, devlet, sivil toplum ve aile arasındaki ayrımlarla şekillenirken, ideanın cisimleşmiş hali olan devlet hem tikeli hem de geneli kendi içinde temsil edebilen bir varlık olarak karşımıza çıkar. Hegel'in devlet, iktidar ve öznellik arasındaki ilişkisinde, öznelliğin gerçekleşmesi devlet ve onun iktidarıyla ilişkilidir. Bu anlamda idealin temsilcisi olan sınıf, aynı zamanda devletin de yöneticisidir. Marx, Hegel'in devlet ile sivil toplum arasında yaptığı ayrımı ve devletin hem tikel hem de genel çıkarı temsil ettiği düşüncesini eleştirmiştir. Marx'a göre, Hegel'in gelişmekte olan kapitalizm analizinde incelemediği kapitalist devlet her zaman belirli bir sınıfı temsil eder. Marx, Hegel'in sivil toplum ve devlet ayrımı fikrini eleştirse de öznelliğin kendini devlet ve iktidar üzerinden gerçekleştirmesi fikrini benimser. Devrim fikri de bu bağlamda anlam kazanır. Devrim, devlet iktidarının ele geçirilmesiyle mümkündür. Özne *telos*unu ancak iktidarın ele geçirilmesiyle gerçekleştirecektir. Lenin, komünist ideanın gerçekleşmesi için devletin sönümlenmesi fikrini savunsa da komünist ideayı inşa etme sürecinde özne ve devlet ayrımı ortaya çıkmamış, aksine özne olarak parti ve devlet birbiriyle özdeşleşmiştir. Badiou'nun özne ve komünist fikir eleştirisi bu teorik bağlamda şekillenir. Özne ve devlet iktidarı ilişkisinde iktidarı ele geçirme düşüncesi, iktidara giden yolda öznelliğin partiye devredildiği, diyalektiğin ise yıkıma dönüştüğü özgürleştirici siyasete egemen olmuştur. Badiou eleştirisini buradan inşa ederken öznelliği devletin karşısına yerleştirir. Bu nedenle siyaset, devleti karşısına alan bir

eksiltme sürecidir. Öte yandan Badiou özneyi zamansal olarak bir *telos* ile tanımlamaz. Eğer öznellik hakikatin militanı olmanın aksiyomatik bir beyanı ise, öznenin yapabileceği şey hakikate sadık olmaktır.

Badiou için Marksizm, komünizm düşüncesi içerisindeki bir döneminin adıdır. Marx'ın komünizm fikrini düşünme biçimi Hegelcidir ve Hegelci felsefenin etkisi ideayı düşünme biçimi siyasetle olan ilişkiyi de düzenlemiştir. Gerçi Badiou için, Marx'ın kapitalizm analizi hala geçerlidir ve Badiou bu anlamda Marx'ın hakkını teslim eder. Ancak Marx'ın siyaseti düşünme biçiminin artık ideanın doygunluğa ulaşmış olduğunu düşünür. Dolayısıyla Badiou'nun amacı ideayı düşünmenin kavramsal araçlarını ortaya çıkarmaktır.

Badiou'nun idea ile komünizm arasındaki ilişkide ideayı ne bir program ne de bir siyasi rejim olarak algılamaması aslında hakikat kavramının onun siyaset anlayışındaki rolüyle bağlantılıdır. Hakikat, hakikat yalnızca eşitlik ve adaletin kendini gösterdiği durumlarda karşımıza çıktığı için komünizm ideası hem hakikatle ortaya çıkan dolayısıyla da bu dünyada siyasetin bir sıfatı olarak karşımıza çıkar. Badiou için komünizmi insanları ya da devletleri tanımlayan bir sıfat olmaktan çıkarıp bir fikre dönüştürmek, onu tarihten ve maddi ilişkilerden soyutlamak anlamına gelmekteydi. İlk olarak, bu şekilde Badiou'nun fikir kavramını tarihsel ve politik gelişmelerden korumayı amaçladığı söylenebilir. Badiou burada kesinlikle Platoncu bir perspektif benimsemiştir. İdea gerçeklikten özgürleşirken, özne ile hakikat arasında işlevsel hale gelir. Badiou'nun bu bağlamdaki motivasyonu, komünizm kavramının son yüzyılda geçirdiği dönüşümle bağlantılıydı. Bir asır önce ya da elli yıl önce kitlelere yürüyüş için ilham veren bir kavram, şimdi pek çok kişinin kaçtığı bir terime dönüşmüştür. Bu dönüşüm, daha önce bahsedilen, maddi ilişkilere ve tarih anlayışına dayalı idea kavramının inşasından kaynaklanmıştır.

Bir diğer nokta ise siyasi hareketlerin bir ideaya tutunmadan uzun soluklu bir dönüşümün mimarı olamayacaklarıdır. Burada Badiou'nun iki yönlü bir müdahalesi vardır. İlki çağdaş nihilizme karşıdır. İdeasız bir siyaset fikri, mevcut liberal demokrasi içinde şeyleri idare etme düzeyinde kalacaktır. İdeası olmayan bir hareket, bu

nihilizme yıkıcı bir isyanla karşılık verse bile, bu yıkım yeninin ortaya çıkmasına yol açmayacaktır. Siyasi hareketleri büyüten ve onları bir arada tutan şey ideanın varlığıdır. İdea olmadan, çöküş siyasi hareketler için kaçınılmaz bir sondur. İkinci müdahale, çağdaş siyaset teorisinin siyaseti yorumlama biçimiyle ilgiliydi. Bugün kapitalizme alternatifi düşünmek siyaset teorisini bir tür stratejik düşünce alanına dönüştürmüştür. Siyaset için stratejiler, ne tür bir parti, nasıl örgütlenmeli ve mevcut kapitalizmi nasıl analiz etmeli soruları önemli olsa da bunlar tek başlarına siyasi hareketleri ne doğurmuş ne de büyütmüştür. Hegelci Marksizm'in dayandığı komünizm ideası ve araçları son iki yüz yıla yön vermiş olsa da bugün doygunluğa ulaşmıştır. Bu nedenle bugün idea kavramını yeniden düşünmek ve siyasetin bir parçası haline getirmek hayati önem taşımaktadır. Başka bir deyişle, komünizm ideası kapitalizme en büyük alternatif siyasi düşünce olarak son iki yüzyılın siyasi hareketlerini şekillendirirken, bugün eşitlikçi ve özgürlükçü siyasi hareketlerin yeniden bir ideaya tutunmaya ihtiyacı var gibi görünmektedir.

Badiou, Hegelci Marksizm'den miras alınandan farklı bir komünist idea ve dolayısıyla farklı bir siyaset, öznellik ve tarih fikri sunsa da teorik yaklaşımı eleştiriden muaf değildir. Öncelikle siyaseti maddi koşullardan soyutlaması ve siyasal alanı devletle ilişkili okuması, günümüz kapitalizminde ekonomik ilişki biçimleri ile devlet iktidarını birbirine dışsal kılmaktadır. Bu anlamda sömürü, sermaye dolaşımı ve artı değer üretimini ekonomik ve finansal işlemler olarak değil, toplumsal ilişkilerin farklı yönleri olarak görmeyi ıskalamaktadır. Üstelik çokluk bir sayma işlemi sonucunda ortaya çıkıyorsa, bir sayma aygıtı olarak devletin hangi ilişkiler içinde ortaya çıktığı da belirsizdir. Buna ek olarak, devlete böyle bir rol atfederek, devlet iktidarının amaç olmadığını iddia etse de devlet iktidarını ele geçirmenin siyasi alanı düzenlemenin en kolay yolu olacağını dolaylı olarak belirtmiş oluruz. Bu ise gene siyasetin amacını devlet iktidarını ele geçirmek olarak görmesine yol açmaktadır. Bu iki nokta Badiou'nun komünist ideasının zayıf noktaları olarak görülebilir. Ancak bu iki noktayı içerecek bir ideanın siyaset üzerine düşünmemizde etkili olacağına şüphe yoktur. Bu açıdan bakıldığında Badiou'nun bir yol açtığı, ancak bu yolun eksiklikleri olduğu açıktır.

Bu tez, kendisini son iki yüzyılda idea ve siyaset arasındaki ilişkinin eleştirel bir incelemesi olarak konumlandırmaktadır. Bu tezin temel amacı, siyaseti düşünme biçimimizde bir çıkmaza girdiğimizi ve siyaseti ve ideayı düşünme biçimimiz üzerine düşünmemiz gerektiğini savunmaktır. Bu tezde, idea kavramını ve bununla bağlantılı olarak komünist ideanın hem tarihsel hem de güncel olarak hangi kavramlar üzerinden düşünüldüğü tartışılmıştır. Bu çalışma, ideanın kavramsal çerçevesine odaklanan bir müdahale olarak tasarlandı.

Kapitalizmin sadece emek sömürüsüne ve mevcut kaynakların tüketilmesine dayalı ekonomik bir üretim biçimi değil, aynı zamanda toplumsal ilişkileri bir tahakküm bağlamında şekillendirirken insan özgürlüğünü aşındıran siyasi bir sistem olduğunu biliyoruz. Dolayısıyla bugün idea kavramı siyasetin şekillenmesinde her zamankinden daha fazla önem taşıyor. Kapitalizme alternatif bir ideanın varlığı sadece siyaset alanını güçlendirmekle kalmayacak, aynı zamanda farklı ulusların ve kimliklerin paylaştığı, ulusal sınırları aşan bir siyaseti de bir kez daha pekiştirecektir. Marx'ın 'Bütün Dünyanın işçileri, birleşin' sözünde işçileri birleştirecek olan şey, kapitalizm işçi sınıfının ortak paydası olsa da kapitalizmi tanımlayan ve olumsuzlayan bir ideanın varlığıydı. Bugün, birleştirici bir ideanın eksikliği, siyasetin kolektif bizini sayısız bölünmeye, siyasetin ahlakileştirilmiş versiyonlarına ve liberal demokrasinin nihilizmine sürüklemiştir. Komünizm ideası hem çağdaş nihilizme hem de kapitalizmin yıkıcılığına karşı çıkan alternatif bir dünyanın tek hatırlatıcısı olmaya devam ediyor.

Ayaklanmaların ve protestoların Fransa'dan Latin Amerika'ya yayıldığı bir dünyada, altmış yıl öncesine kıyasla bu ülkelerde bir bağlantı hattının varlığını tartışmak zor. İdeanın varlığı bir zamanlar Latin Amerika devrimcileri ile 68'in öznelerini ve Kültür Devrimi'nin işçileri ile birleştirirken, bugün birleştirici bir ideanın yokluğu siyasetin temel bir krizi olarak görülebilir. Bu nedenle bu çalışma, bu krizi ve komünizm kavramını yeniden düşünmeyi amaçlamakta ve siyaset ile idea arasındaki kopuk bağı onarmamız gerektiğini hatırlatmaktadır.

Son olarak, Marx ve Hegel felsefe tarihinde hem ayrı ayrı hem de aralarındaki ilişki bakımından çok defa tartışılmıştır. Marx'ın Hegel'den ne ölçüde etkilendiği ya da ondan ne ölçüde farklılaştığı hep tartışılmış ve tartışılmaya devam etmektedir. Badiou'nun bu iki filozofla ilişkisi de tartışılsa bile, Hegel, Marx ve Badiou'yu birlikte ele almanın ortak noktası, her üç düşünürün de eserlerini idea kavramı etrafında kurdukları ilişkidir. Hegel için idea birliktir; Marx için ulaşılması gereken bir hedeftir ve Badiou için ise özneleşmenin bir aracı olarak doğru ve adil olanı yapmanın aracısıdır. Bu çalışmada tartışılan filozoflar için, idea olmadan siyasetin bir anlamı olduğunu söylemenin zor olduğu söylenebilir. Günümüz siyasetinin karşı karşıya olduğu sorunun da bu olduğunu söylemek yanlış olmayacaktır. Bu nedenle ideası olmayan bir siyasi hareket kurucu bir potansiyele ulaşamaz. Dolayısıyla bu tez, fikir kavramının neden bugün yeniden siyaset için elzem olduğunu göstermeye, radikal siyasetin kendisini bağlayabileceği tek bir idea olduğunu göstermeye çalışmaktadır. Marksizm'in krizinden sonra komünizm ideasının yeniden düşünülmesine katkıda bulunmayı amaçlamaktadır.

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