
SOCIO-PHILOSOPHICAL HERITAGE AND THE LOGIC OF HISTORY*

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Resumo: a abordagem de “A Lógica da História” faz com que seja possível concretizar a dialética do natural (incluindo o biológico) e o social. O desenvolvimento criativo do método de investigação científica foi possível revelar a interligação interna sistemática das leis e categorias da teoria social que refletem a estrutura da sociedade desenvolvida, mas também tornou possível delinear a periodização teórica da história humana (as leis objetivas de sua “subida” desde o início, o surgimento, a formação, até a maturidade) por meio de um prisma de interconexões de fatores naturais e sociais. As fases do processo de desenvolvimento são analisadas aqui: como a unidade do natural (incluindo o biológico) e o social, como um processo de emergência do social que surge do natural, como a transformação do natural pelo social.

Palavras-chave: Lógica da história. Materialismo Histórico. Método. Dialética. Desenvolvimento.

When we speak of social philosophy, we are not dealing with notions regarding past and the future of humankind, which are implicitly contained in historiography, but rather with ideas concerning the content

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of social organization on the basis of which people try to comprehend society and the historical process.

In antiquity, there was no clear idea about the orientation of the historical process. The theocentric thinking of the Middle Ages tried to reveal Divine Providence as the driving force of history.

Social philosophy and the comprehension of history acquired philosophical features during the Renaissance and, especially in modern times, when together with the development of individuality there appeared secular philosophical thinking as comprehension and substantiation of a place and a role for the individual in the history of society. It was at that time that the first conjectures about the laws of history emerged (Vico); the concept of a “philosophy of history” was introduced (Voltaire) and the problems of historical development theory were determined, the main ones being the purpose, driving forces and purport of historical process. The given set of problems has a metaphysical character, being deduced from abstract thinking.

It was within this framework that notions about historical progress emerged (Condorset), as well as about the unity of historical progress (Herder), the history of culture (Voltaire) and the internal connection in a variety of historical epochs (romanticism). Hegel regarded social history as a single, law-governed, intrinsically necessary process of self-development of the spirit, the idea.

At the same time two basic tendencies were being delineated:

- 1) Idealistic social philosophy, according to which the historical process is realized through human activity, the latter, in turn, being the realization of diverse ideas;
- 2) Naturalistic social philosophy (positivism) focusing attention on the description of natural conditions and physical needs.

In the middle of the 19th century Marxist theory, detailed below, appeared and developed as an attempt to sublimate the one-sidedness of the aforementioned tendencies.

In the late 19th – early 20th centuries, positivist evolutionism went through a crisis, resulting in the appearance of various irrational views on historical process under the influence of the “philosophy of life” (Spengler, Toynbee, Sorokin and others).

Critical Philosophy (Neo-Kantianism) relegates these problems to the anti-positivist trend in the epistemological analysis of history. Dilthey

criticizes historical reason and reason in general, thus contributing to the strengthening of irrationalism. The Baden School of Neo-Kantianism introduces “method of individual facts” to social philosophy, narrowing it down to the philosophy of values, to axiology (which affected the traditions of “understanding sociology”). Existentialism considers these problems as an aspect of its anthropology. Neo-positivism reduces social philosophy to the logical-methodological research into existing historiography. The description of research activity aspects and historians’ language becomes a subject of investigation by the supporters of hermeneutic philosophy.

The post-modernist school highlights “radical” doubt regarding the possibility of any philosophy, including social, being an outlook-theoretical and genre-integral conception. According to this popular irrational wisdom of the systematic anti-system, the world is not only beyond the scope of human transforming efforts, but it also cannot be the subject of any theoretical pattern (Anderson P.). On the background of this irrationalism there emerge ad hoc philosophizing works by public officials dealing with “The End of History” (F. Fukoyama) or “The Clash of Civilizations” (S. Huntington).

THE PERSPECTIVES OF SOCIAL THEORY: DEVELOPMENT OR VULGARIZATION?

According to a well-known aphorism by J. P. Sartre, after Marx all philosophical concepts are either a return to pre-Marxist ideas, or a paraphrase of Marxist theses.

The attitude to Marxist theory is considerably influenced by the total crisis embracing the international communist and, in a wider sense, all the left movement as such (especially after the establishment of open capitalist counter-revolution in the majority of the countries of early socialist revolutions). The crisis resulted in a surprising variety of opinions among those who determine their stand through their attitude (positive or negative) to Marxism.

It may seem that an endless diverse variety of philistine approaches and common-sense maxims based on current ad hoc ideas reduces Marxist theory and revolutionary movement to naught. However, this is not so. The theory and practice of revolution do not cease to develop. To be adequate for the needs of our time, they continue their development and formation in the framework of a concrete-historical approach to Marxist philosophical, economic and socio-political views and the critical method-

ological comprehension of Marx's theoretical achievements.

To approach this question as scientifically as possible, we must cast at least a fleeting glance back on the history of Marx's theoretical achievements. "The most reliable thing in a question of social science, and one that is most necessary in order really to acquire the habit of approaching this question correctly and not allowing oneself to get lost in the mass of detail or in the immense variety of conflicting opinion-the most important thing if one is to approach this question scientifically is not to forget the underlying historical connection, to examine every question from the standpoint of how the given phenomenon arose in history and what were the principal stages in its development, and, from the standpoint of its development, to examine what it has become today" (LENIN, 1919, p. 67).

Referring to the bankruptcy of Marxism in 20th century history, one narrow-minded approach of our times discards Marx's theory right away. The fact that in science theories cannot be discarded on the basis of induction does not disconcert the philistine. He perceives any statements concerning Marxism on the level of conditioned reflexes.

Marxism, however, plays an extremely important role in the history of social theory. Even its most staunch opponents do not dare to deny that.

Marxism is an open and developing scientific system of philosophical, economic, social and political views; its basic content is the theoretical basis of mankind's transition from capitalism to socialism. It emerged on the stage of mature capitalism, when historical conditions for its revolutionary abolition had been fully formed. At the same time, these conditions were historical premises for transition to a developed (classless) society:

- The decisive role of mechanical engineering;
- The beginning of the process of machines starting to produce machines;
- The capacity to provide a constant abundance of material goods;
- The social character of labor, determined by the nature of labor means that had already been produced;
- The socialization of production and the formation of a producers' class, adequate for the aforementioned process; this class was educated in the discipline of big enterprises and had an appropriately in high cultural level and ideology.

Marxism is a scientific ideology of the working class, which is the subject (the main motive force) of the world revolutionary process of transition from capitalism to socialism. Historically, Marxism emerged as a result of a complicated and controversial creative process of critical scien-

tific research into the nature of society (philosophy, religion, politics, “civil society”, production relations etc.), together with critical re-consideration and with dialectic sublation of the highest achievements of pre-Marxist scientific trends, representing “sources” of Marxism (Lenin): namely, German classical philosophy and, especially, idealistic dialectics (Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel and Feuerbach), classical bourgeois political economy (the Physiocrats, A. Smith, D. Ricardo etc.) and utopian socialist ideas (Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen, etc.).

The emergence and development of Marxism is integrally connected both to the acceptance of the class position of the proletariat and to research into “three internally connected but relatively independent subjects: 1) human society and its history, 2) the production relations of capitalist social-economic formation and 3) the preconditions for a new (communist) society” (VAZULIN, 1975).

It goes without saying that the founders of Marxism did not confine themselves to researching these subjects only (note, for example, their encyclopedic interests, philosophical-methodological substantiation of the natural sciences, history and mathematics, the study of religion, etc.).

They never claimed however, that their work constituted an “ontology” covering everything, or a natural philosophy “about the most general things”, based on eternal principles able to explain any reality. Research in the three above-stated subject areas formed the core of Marxism.

Marxism became the source of the well-known scientific trends: 1) historical materialism (the materialist understanding of history), 2) the political economy of capitalism and 3) scientific socialism (communism). Each of these domains is an organic complex unity (characterized by the internal interrelation and interaction of its components), which fact provides certain opportunities for historical and logical research into it and determines the stages of its theoretical cognition and the degree to which research into it may develop.

MARX'S POLITICAL ECONOMY OF CAPITALISM

In the 1850-60's, capitalism (in England) reached maturity, while bourgeois political economy had, in many respects, already completed its ascent from the sensual – concrete (from the starting point of the investigation, from the sensual multiformity of the object of study) to the abstract (PATELIS, 1991). These conditions enabled Marx to create the scientific concept of capitalist economy based on the surplus value theory (Marx's

second scientific discovery). In this way Marx managed to elevate the political economy of capitalism to the level of maturity, to the level of the systematic theoretical reflection of the object (of the system of capitalist relations of production) in concepts and categories, in a synthesis of many definitions, thus representing the unity of diverse aspects (Marx, *Capital*).

The political economy of capitalism in Marx's "Capital" is, from the viewpoint of dialectical logic and methodology, the most advanced scientific area of Marxism. It is this maturity of theoretical reflection on the subject that reveals the logic and methodology of Marxist scientific research in "its pure form", in the study of political economic material, using the method of the ascent from the abstract to the concrete. This method of scientific theoretical cognition consists of a thought process that proceeds from the sensual multiformity of the concrete and achieves the reproduction of the object in all its complexity (the concept of the object, the mentally concrete). This does not mean, of course, that scholars have exhausted all possibilities for the further development of the political economy of capitalism in the field of economic history at the present level of development of the world capitalist system, "sublating", in this way, the limitation imposed by the study of the economy of one separate national state. Marx did not manage to finish even the first of the six books originally planned by him to be written.

The philosophical-methodological reflection on "Capital" allows us, on the basis of concrete science regarding the capitalist relations of production, to cast light on Marx's method of researching the organic whole: the ascent from the abstract to the concrete, the relationship between the historical and the logical (especially the relationship and interdependence between the aspects of the developed whole, of the history of this whole, its emergence and the formation of its specific structure) as well as the relationship between the Intellect (Germ. *Verstand*) and Reason (Germ. *Vernunft*) in the process of cognition (VAZULIN, 1968). It allows us to estimate the concrete-historical level of development of other constituent parts of Marxism.

THE MATERIALIST UNDERSTANDING OF HISTORY

According to Marx, capitalism is the last step in the "prehistory" of human society. Before Marx, classical bourgeois social philosophy had made an attempt to systematically study society on the basis of idealistically hypostatization of abstract spiritual activity and the state as an em-

bodiment of the “tribal essence of man” (Hegel). Hence, from the methodological point of view, pre-Marxist social theory was at a lower level of development than was the bourgeois political economy of that time, for the process of an ascent from the sensual-concrete to the abstract in it had not been completed.

In this cognitive situation, Marx and Engels made their first scientific discovery – the discernment of a materialist understanding of history. It was originally formulated as a scientific hypothesis (in “German Ideology”) and then as a verified theory (a philosophically substantiated scientific study of the relations of production of capitalist formation) in “Capital.”

The basic elements of this theory are the materialistically meditated “reduction” of all spheres of social life to economy (see categories: social being - social consciousness, basis and superstructure etc.) and the corresponding conception of the structure of human society: requirements - productive forces – relations of production (relations in the process of production, distribution, exchange and consumption) - forms of social consciousness and ideology - superstructure.

It is on the basis of this conception of the structure of society that the theory of “socio-economic formation” was created; on this theory rests the corresponding division into periods (formation approach): primitive-communal system, slave-owning system, feudalism, capitalism and the communist formations.

The category of socio-economic formation highlighted during research into a given mode of production (historically determined relations of production in their unity with a determined character of the productive forces), makes it possible to determine the main characteristics of the basic stages of mankind’s historical development from the point of view of the structure of these stages. The contents of this category were concretized and substantiated scientifically in the fifties and sixties of the 19th century, when Marx investigated the essence, the internal interrelation of the production relations of capitalism, i.e. the most advanced socio-economic formation of that time.

The theoretical-methodological value of the formation approach lies in the following:

- 1) The opportunity arose for a more detailed comparison of pre-capitalist formations with capitalist ones, and, in this connection, - for the analysis of the formation structure;
- 2) It became possible to highlight the category of “relations of production” and to specify the dialectics of productive forces – relations of

production and the development of society as a whole;

- 3) It was substantiated that capitalism, as one of the formations, has a historically transient character: at the theoretical level this demonstrated the necessity of sublating capitalism and of further research into the laws of transition from one formation to another;
- 4) The theoretical foundation of historical periodization was formulated (as any division of history into periods is based on a certain understanding of society's structure).

It should be taken into account that K. Marx's concept of socio-economic structures reflects a certain level of development of social theory, which is connected:

- 5) To the level of society's development at that time and to the cognitive situation appropriate to this level;
- 6) To the expediency, proceeding from the basic task of the era (from the point of view of the deep needs of mankind – from the goal of the revolutionary abolition of the capitalist structure). According to this task, capitalism is defined as a historically transient formation; all the other stages of history are also regarded as formations.

The historical transience of a social structure is usually perceived within the framework of the given approach as being transience in individual, in particular, while the fact that the common and the universal itself is changing and developing is ignored. Every structure is not just an independent formation, but also a stage, a moment in the historical development of a society. Within the framework of the structural approach there appear common elements, in many respects repeating constant features, fixed by the comparison of various structures, "all epochs of production have certain common traits, common characteristics" (MARX, 1857).

Singled out by such comparison, "the common" is regarded frequently as the constant sameness (identity) describing all structures (production, consumption, distribution, exchange, circulation, productive forces, relations of production, mode of production etc.) However, these constant common attributes bear the indelible seal of capitalism, i.e. the formation in which all parties of the social whole represent themselves as being different or opposite (VAZULIN, 1988, p. 317).

The aforementioned "seal" characterizing mainly historical materialism and the formation approach is expressed particularly distinctly in the approach to the dialectics of productive forces and relations of production, i.e. in the approach to a mode of production which represents the nucleus, the essence of society as a whole. Further research (especially in the frame-

work of “The Logic of History”) has revealed that the above-mentioned dialectic contradiction (as well as each of its constituents) passes through certain regular stages in its development: it emerges, is formed and matures.

This development is integrally connected to the development of productive forces (the productive influence of man on nature). The productive influence of man on nature is directly connected to the question of the character of labor, to the problem of the correlation between the simple and the complex, repeating and changing labor. Under capitalism (which represents the last antagonistic formation, completing the forming of human society), we observe the development of productive forces and the change of labor processes, and this development, beyond any measure, surpasses the previous periods of development of human society. K. Marx made the classic revelation of the mechanism of this inconsistent development in “Capital”.

However, such development does not prevail under capitalism, for it is subject to the process of the accumulation of the products of work, to the process of the accumulation of capital. The sequence of steps when capital is self-increasing as a result of the production of relative surplus value is integrally connected to the development of productive forces, and to revolutionary changes in the technological and social conditions of labour; all these factors act as a means promoting the basic capitalist production relation (the production of surplus value). Such an external correlation of productive forces and relations of production is characteristic of the stage of development of the social mode of production, in which the named parties are in the relationship of “antithesis” (interaction by which they determine each other excluding each other) (VAZULIN, 1968, p. 219).

The objective reasons lie in the circumstances under which the correlation of productive forces and relations of production, within the framework of the prevailing traditions of historical materialism, is, as a rule, perceived “in its functioning unchanged for all historical stages of mankind’s development, and then the fact that the very dialectics of productive forces and relations of production are in the process of development is ignored. Moreover, productive forces as such, relation of production as such, and their correlation as such is also developing, which fact is very essential” (VAZULIN, 1988, p. 141).

Thus, capitalist productive forces (“contents”), in general, act as if they were sufficiently well enough developed to eliminate capitalist relations of production (“form”) and to establish new socialist relations of

production. The same principle is preserved (it is simply “reversed”) when, after socialist revolution, relations of production are actually perceived as given (subject only to “perfection”); the whole problem is reduced to just the development of productive forces.

In both cases “one of the aspects of the contradiction is taken as being given; the relations between these aspects are perceived as being external, and, therefore, as being a source of self-development; the law-governed nature of social development ought to be sought not in the contradiction of the social character of production, but outside it” (for example: in the needs, in the “human factor”, in consciousness and in the volitional acts of subjects etc.).

The specified approach as a principle has carried out its historical role and to a certain degree continues to. This approach specifies the possibility (and partly the necessity) of abolishing capitalist relations of production or, after a socialist revolution, the possibility (and partly the necessity) of developing productive forces. However, as the “mechanism” of developing and resolving this contradiction is not obvious in this way, many misconceptions and illusions arise concerning the law-governed nature of the historical process and, consequently, concerning the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary movement.

Various tendencies in the workers’ movement (economism, reformism, leftist opportunism etc), different variants of the official ideology in the USSR, and the overwhelming majority of the left-wing movement in the former USSR after the bourgeois contra-revolution found their “theoretical basis” in various interpretations of this approach. The narrow-mindedness of this approach manifested itself as an obvious inability to predict an open capitalist restoration in the late eighties and the early nineties. Such an approach reduces the reasons for this restoration to subjective factors only: nor can it explain the absence of any theoretically substantiated perspective of the present left-wing rearguard.

To overcome the limitations of the aforementioned approach is obviously possible at a new level of theoretical comprehension of society. It is at that level that V. A. Vazulin develops his research. “The social character of production, in its full sense, - writes the researcher, - is the dialectics of productive forces and relations of production ... a developed contradiction of productive forces and relations of production. In it, the productive forces are the relations of production, and the relations of production are the productive forces: each of the oppositions is its own opposite denying its own opposite” (VAZULIN, 1988, p. 140-1).

To a certain extent, K. Marx gravitated to drawing the same conclusion in his research. However the above-mentioned cognitive situation, as well as the strong need to research capitalism determined historical and methodological restrictions in Marx's approach. The limitation of dividing history into periods in the framework of the formation approach is also connected to this circumstance.

In the latter, the "mechanism" of society's self-development is not explained. It is just stated that society's self-development is a sequence of historical forms coming one after another and only outwardly correlated with each other. Various formations "are such totalities of relations of production, each of which denotes a particular stage of development in the history of mankind" (MARX, 1849). At the same time, the modes of production "may be designated as progressive epochs of the economic social formation" [Germ. "progressive Epochen der ökonomischen Gesellschaftsformation bezeichnet werden"] (MARX, 1859).

The limitation and schematic character of the partitioning of history in formations manifest themselves (without the originality and creative spirit of Marx's works) in post-Marxist literature and, especially, in works by mere imitators of Marxism (for example, in economic determinism, structural and structural-functional interpretation of Marxism, the voluntaristic approach to the mode of production and to the socialization of production etc.).

The formation approach is frequently treated in a stereotyped way, and people try to mechanically squeeze historical diversity into this scheme. They aspire, for example, to find, "in pure form", the base and superstructure in all societies or they consider that revolution (meaning bourgeois or socialist revolution) is a necessary condition for transition from any socio-economic structure to the subsequent one, in spite of the fact that historical data and theoretical consideration exclude this eventuality in mankind's history up to the period of transition to capitalism.

Thus, with the structural partitioning of society, the development of society is not fixed directly, it is only stated that there exists an alternation of supervening historical forms external to one another.

In the framework of Marxism there is a more general partitioning of mankind's history into pre-class, class and classless society. In this periodization, the class stage of society is taken as the main starting point: proceeding from this, all the other stages are singled out negatively (pre-class and class-less society). One very important aspect of historical development is considered to be the main one: The main criterion for his-

tory's division into periods is the alternation of the main historical forms of property: communal property – private property – public property. This is a vital aspect for the positive determination of historic development, yet even in this case the process is treated one-sidedly.

If with the five-part periodization of history there is an attempt to proceed from the task of the transition from capitalism to socialism, the three-part division proceeds from the idea of the cyclical development of the historical process, which originates from a reevaluation of the similarity of communism to the primitive communal system or survivals of the primitive community. It is necessary to consider, in this framework, the resurfacing of the problem of the Asian mode of production, which was current in the circles of the Second International in the pre-war years.

In any case, the division of the history of pre-capitalist societies according to the forms of community system brings to the foreground that which disappears, and the division of the history of antagonistic societies made on the basis of the form of private property brings to the foreground that which denies the primitive communal system.

The materialist understanding of history is the most probable theoretical reflection of the society's structure and history at the final stage of its formation. From the methodological point of view, it determines the stage in the shaping of social theory (philosophy); it completes the ascent from the chaotic notion of the whole (from the sensual-concrete) to the abstract; it completes the analysis and, thus, it creates the preconditions for mature social theory, which is created by the method of ascent from the abstract to the concrete. Yet, it does not allow for a singling out, in pure form, of the elementary attitude, the initial abstraction of society. This does not mean, of course, that in the framework of historical materialism all the possibilities for further investigating some particular problems are exhausted. Historical materialism appeared and developed as a theory within the framework of capitalism, and its scientific achievements are topical as long as the transition from capitalism to socialism remains the main task of the time; this process was initially regarded as the replacement of the formation, as the denial of capitalism.

The further development of the materialist understanding of history through the classics is connected to:

- 1) The comprehension and generalization of new results of historical research. This made it possible to render more precise the notion regarding the preconditions for society and the initial relations of society (the

starting point for the theoretical reproduction of its structure according to the method of the ascent from the abstract to the concrete), without precisely distinguishing this starting point from the essence of society. From this point of view, Engels fixes a “twofold character” of the determining factor in history, of the production and reproduction of the immediate essentials of life: “On the one side, the production of the means of existence, of articles of food and clothing, dwellings, and of the tools necessary for that production; on the other side, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species”. (ENGELS, 1884,131).

2) A deeper economic study by K. Marx, which brought him to the understanding:

a) Of the fact that communism is the final result of development in world history which sublates the pre-class and class stages of society (this is “truly humanity’s history”) and overcomes the “prehistory” of mankind;

b) Of the need which is contrary to “reducing” or “removing” all the other spheres and levels of society to/from the economic life of society.

The materialist understanding of history, however, bears an indelible imprint of the specific character of the theoretical analysis of capitalist society and the comparative correlation (extrapolation) of this analysis with past and future history.

PREVISION OF CLASSLESS SOCIETY

The cognitive situation in which the concepts of scientific socialism were formed was less favorable. On the one hand, there was a complete absence of real experience in the past; on the other, researchers contemporary to Marx and those who lived before him had concepts of a hypothetically utopian nature of future society. The corresponding theoretical principles of K. Marx and F. Engels constitute a brilliant scientific prevision of great theoretical and practical (revolutionary) significance. This prevision proceeds from research into the tendencies, contradictions, laws, and perspectives of society’s development, i.e. it is based exclusively on fixing the preconditions for a new society. Scientific communism acquires particular significance from the point of view of the theoretical substantiation of the struggle for the emancipation of the working class and exploited humanity.

CREATIVE MARXISM AND THE 'LOGIC OF HISTORY'

Soviet philosophy cannot be reduced wholly to dogmatic scholasticism and official apologetic ideological constructions. Contrary to these tendencies in Soviet philosophy there were also creative approaches to the development of Marxist theory. Such important aspects of this theory as dialectical logic and methodology were worked out by M.M. Rozental, E.V. Ilyenkov (Ilyenkov), L.A. Mankovsky, Z. M. Orudzhev and especially profoundly by V.A. Vazulin (PATELIS, 2003).

Theoretical research into the processes of human development along with critical reassessment of social theory and social philosophy brought forth an original trend in the sphere of social theory, dialectical logic and the methodology of science. This trend found its expression in V.A. Vazulin's conception of "The Logic of History". Its formation was based on certain preconditions and passed through regular stages. The main scientific achievements that brought V.A. Vazulin to his conception are:

- 1) Revealing the logic of the theoretical part of Marx's "Capital" by a systematic category reassessment of politico-economic material alongside a parallel critical analysis of Hegel's "The Science of Logic". This enabled him to work out the methodology of advanced research, mature science regarding the organic whole. In the framework of this logic and methodology we see, in pure form, the ascent from the abstract to the concrete in its dialectical unity with the ascent from the sensual-concrete to the abstract, the logical in its dialectical unity with the historical, the reasonable aspect of thinking (Germ. Vernunft) in unity with the intellectual (Germ. Verstand).
- 2) a concrete historical approach to the achievements of social theory and, especially, to Marxism, which is treated as a scientific system developing through the appearance and resolving of necessary contradictions (of the real object and of the process of cognitive activity); it should be mentioned that the systems are internally united in the differences of their components, each of which is at a certain level of its making and development. The logical and methodological analysis of the history of Marxism (from the point of view of the methodology of the political economy of capitalism – the most developed part of it) made it possible, firstly, to reveal the objective laws and contradictions (including the necessary errors) of the beginning, the emergence, the formation, and the maturity of the de-

velopment of scientific research, i.e. the movement of cognitive thinking from the external to the internal and vice versa, from the surface to the essence of the object (of the subject matter) and vice versa, and so on; and, secondly, to concentrate all efforts on the most promising direction for the development of social theory.

The above-mentioned achievements are internally connected to the approach to scientific thinking “as a process of natural history, governed by laws” (KAUFMAN *apud* MARX, 1873).

- 3) The creative development of the method of scientific investigation made it possible to reveal the inner systematic interconnection of laws and categories of social history which reflect the structure of developed society; it also made it possible to outline the theoretical periodization of human history (the objective laws of its “ascent” from the very beginning, emergence, formation, to maturity) through a prism of interconnections of natural and social factors.

The conception of “The Logic of History” makes possible a more substantiated and reliable comprehension and prevision of the regularities of society’s development, in comparison with the state in pre-Marxist philosophy, in classical Marxism and in other trends current at the present moment. Simultaneously, it opens a stage in the successive dialectical development of social philosophy by subsuming historical materialism and the formation approach.

The theoretical approach of “The Logic of History” to the fundamental problems of social development (on the “early” socialist revolutions, the extensive and intensive development of production forces, the formal and real socialization of production etc.) gives a key to the comprehension of objective reasons for numerous social phenomena, opening in this way the whole area of approaches in research.

According to “The Logic of History”, the structure of society as a whole is a multi-level, hierarchical and subordinated system, the organic whole of interconnected elements, relations and processes. The mental reflection of this organic whole by a method of ascent from the abstract to the concrete is carried out at the following levels:

1. “Being” (immediacy, the starting point of the theoretical reproduction of the subject-matter), in which the elementary simple relation is singled out: a “cell” of the organic whole: an interaction of people as living beings with the environment to sustain their lives and an interaction of people with one another for the propagation of man as a biological species.

2. “Essence”: the exchange of goods between people and nature in the process of labour (production) the influence of the former on the latter and the whole web of the relations of labour (production). The “social way of production” is the “nucleus” of society.
3. “Appearance” (“Phenomenon”), i.e. the manifestation of the essence of society in the interactions of people. Hence the necessity in personalities, i.e. in subjects who can change society, who possess consciousness and self-consciousness. Here are analyzed the forms of social consciousness which are manifested through actions, emotions and thoughts (moral consciousness, aesthetic consciousness and philosophy). At the antagonistic stages of society’s development there appear two derivatives of the moral forms, which testify to the immaturity of social development of form (politics and law), and one which is derivative of aesthetic form (religion).
4. “Reality” as the unity of being, essence and appearance. The conscious activity of people as subjects presupposes their definite organization. People as subjects, i.e. individuals having certain social characteristics, from the point of view of inner unity of the social and the individual (including the biological), are regarded as personalities.

In the framework of the expounded approach, it is possible to single out, in “pure form”, the elementary (simplest) relationship: human society – “being”, which differs radically from the essence of society. As a “sublated precondition” of society, being (transformed) represents a necessary condition for society’s development. This problem – including the problem of coordination of the biological and the social – remained methodologically unsolved in the framework of classical Marxism. It was with regard to this problem that different concepts of social theory were divided and polarized in different variants: from biological reductionism (the attempt to explain social phenomena in terms of biology) to sociocentrism. The approach of the logic of history makes it possible to concretize the dialectic of the natural (including the biological) and the social. The natural element acts, preserving and reproducing itself by the development of society. It is an inner moment of society’s structure, the nucleus of which constitutes the process of the development of contradiction between the productive relation of man to nature and social relations of production.

Using the above-mentioned approach it is possible to determine the theoretical sphere of the social in the narrow sense (the sphere of appearance), the role and the dual character of social consciousness and self-consciousness (it is addressed, on one hand, to an object and, on the other

hand, to a subject), as well as the dynamics of the development and formation of a multi-stepped hierarchy, subordination and interaction of all its forms. This approach to the analysis of social consciousness opens up a completely new methodological opportunity for the analysis of the derivatives of the basic forms of social consciousness – politics, law and religion. From this point of view, political, legal and religious consciousness, are characteristic of an immature, undeveloped society alongside basic forms of social consciousness. As opposed to the materialist understanding of history – as per “The Logic of History” – the forms of the social consciousness and superstructure are not reduced to the economic base; on the contrary, they are deduced from the being and essence of society and are treated as necessary elements for people to be subjects acting on the being and essence of society.

The approach of “The Logic of History” makes it possible to undertake a theoretical analysis of the personality (as an inner unity of the social and individual, the “refraction” of the social through living individuals), as well as to formulate the social typology of personality structure on the basis of different levels and types of life programs.

The historical process is regarded here as a gradual transformation of the natural (including the biological) by the social, i.e., as a social “sublation” of the latter by the former. Such an approach overcomes the narrowness and sketchiness of periodization based on some invariable signs of the mode of production and establishes the periodization in accordance with the changing foundation. The stages in the process of development are analyzed here:

- As the unity of the natural (including the biological) and the social;
- As a process of emergence of the social from the natural;
- As the transformation of the natural by the social.

In this way, the following stages of development are distinguished out in the progressive historical development of society:

1. The beginning of the process of historical development – the creation of historical preconditions for society (walking upright, “homo sapiens” species, the gregarious way of life and the corresponding natural-ecological conditions) before society existed.
2. The primary emergence of society – primitive-communal system.
3. The formation of society (transformation by the emerging society of the natural environment, of those conditions from which it has emerged) – class-antagonistic formations:

- Slave-owning socio-economic formation – the birth of private property as ownership of the means of production;
- Feudal socio-economic formation – the development of large private property on the non-adequate basis (on terms set mainly by nature);
- Capitalist socio-economic formation – the development of large private property on the adequate basis (with means created mainly by humans). The completion of the formation of human society.

4. The maturity of society (inclusion of the natural base transformed) in the process of the development of society – classless society.

Theoretical research into the historical process makes it possible to reveal the main regularities of dynamics in the development of society and to trace the perspectives of humanity, which are not accessible to the conventional-empirical approach of modern times (VAZULIN, 1992).

The preconditions leading to the appearance of mankind in the womb of nature are certain ecological conditions, walking upright, the gregarious way of life and the appearance of homo sapiens. The primary emergence of the human race is connected to the beginning of the transformation of a herd into a primitive community. Here, undoubtedly, the unity of society and nature prevails. Their differentiation is just coming into existence.

At this stage, consumer goods are collected and produced as the ready results of natural processes, without human interference, with the help of produced tools for production. Relations of production appearing in this way act as natural relations, alongside tribal community relations.

The difference between natural relations and purely relations of production and between ties of kindred and community grows, as the production of consumer goods becomes regular, constant.

The highest growth and the beginning of community disintegration is reached with the transition to cattle-raising and arable farming and the development of social labour, which make regular output of surplus produce and the appearance of private ownership possible. The latter begin to form in the community, and as the ownership of land (i.e. of the means of production given by nature in ready-made form, a means of production which is not produced) is formed here, the relationship is not fully social; it is not separate from natural connections. As long as property exists as a conflation of ownership and the relations of the naturally formed collective (community), natural relations appear as an inalienable moment of social relations.

With the transition to animal husbandry, private property appears (the first negation of the previous stage, of the primitive community); the regular production of basic staples above the sustenance level and thus the social division of labour comes about.

The exploitation of man by man, which appeared together with antagonistic classes and the appearance of private property, takes on a regular character and envelops the whole production process. It means a transition to the full (slave-owning society) or partial (feudal society) appropriation of another man as an objective condition for production with the help of organized force and compulsion. The treatment of land (as a means of production which was not produced) changes, the community degenerates, and the leading role in the development of society is played by the perfection of the means of labor which are brought into action individually. Capitalism is the completion of this stage.

As private property based on individual labor begins to develop, the connection of individuals in production is materialized more and more through an exchange of products manufactured by separate individual producers. The subordination of production to exchange (the market) results in the alienation of the means of production from producers and in the concentration of the means of production in the hands of proprietors – other actors in production.

With the expansion of the role of the means of production, the relationship between the producer and the means of production becomes indirect, which results in the differentiation between man and nature, between man and the means of production. However, on one hand, under capitalism this differentiation becomes endless: the capacity of man to labour becomes an object of sale and purchase, and all people are connected in the process of production only through the exchange of goods. On the other hand, the differentiation between man and the means of production, between man and nature, appears as a split: the conditions of production are hostile to the laborer, because he is deprived of the means of production, and private proprietors treat nature with rapacity and utilitarianism. This leads to an ecological crisis, which is a manifestation of alienation maximally developed under capitalism. Under such conditions the results and the products of human activity become alienated from individuals and social groups and appear to them as something independent from them and dominating them.

However, no matter how paradoxical it may seem from the conventional point of view, the material and spiritual preconditions for abolishing

capitalism and private property are generated in the womb of capitalism. The produced means of production, especially when we speak of the technological system, are, in fact, social. Their social character is a technological necessity. With the development of big industry, the technological application of the natural sciences and universal production forces, conditioned by the division of labor, begin to play a paramount role in comparison to direct labor. And this undermines the most significant condition under which capitalism can exist – surplus value is created by direct live labor, and, accordingly, it prepares the conditions for the deterioration of capitalism and the preconditions for a new, more mature society.

The negation of the negation in the development of humanity is, in a way, the “return” to the original unity with nature, with the preservation of the positive achievements of the first negation – the “conquest” of nature. Mastering nature (the second negation) promises not only colossal opportunities for providing man with the means of sustenance, but also for the re-creation of the natural environment.

The negation of the negation is also observed in the attitude to the productive reconstruction of nature and to the mode of production.

- The starting point: the use of nature as such, without any transformation.
- The first negation: the transformation of the object by modifying an object of nature through direct labor.
- The second negation is, in a way, a return to the initial state (preserving the achievements of the first negation), to an automatic process of production, which is not natural but created. It occurs at the highest stage in the development of big industry – the stage of automation and computerization of industry. The natural processes directed by scientifically developed technologies and, thus, transformed by man into industrial processes, cease to be hostile or antagonistic to man. The relations of man and nature become mature and constructive.

Universal wealth, under capitalism, develops in the antagonistic form which was analyzed in depth by K. Marx: on one hand, capital strives to minimize the dependence of the creation of wealth on labour time (with the help of machines, nature and society), while on the other, it is obliged to measure the colossal social forces that have been created by labour time and value relations (MARX, 1857).

This contradiction of capitalist relations can be removed by the socialization of the means of production, i.e., by eliminating the alienation and hostility of social forces in order to reach the free development of so-

ciety. If we digress from the bourgeois form, “the real wealth of society ... is nothing but constant production and reproduction by man of himself as an integral, universal and harmonious being” (VAZULIN, 1992, p. 95).

Developed social property is the property of a united and socialized mankind. This is the negation of private property and a certain “return” to the initial point: to communal property, while preserving in transformed form all the positive achievements of the process of the development of private property. It is no longer the property of a group of people, but of the whole of mankind united in a single collective.

We can also observe the dialectics of negation of the negation in the alternation of basic forms of a set of aims which are objectively formed in society:

- The initial point: the aim of the primitive tribal society is the reproduction of the physical existence of an individual as the aim and condition for the physical existence of other members of the community and the community as a whole:
- The first negation (the development of private property): the aim of social production is the production and reproduction of man as a private proprietor. People deprived of private property in the framework of society act as means and resources for the development of private property. The latter becomes independent of the proprietor as a person. In the capitalist era private property is extremely alienated and depersonalized. What becomes the main aim of social development is not individual consumption but a constantly expanding reproduction of private property, in other words, its productive consumption as self-increasing private property. In this respect the proprietor himself is reduced to the role of a simple bearer – a means to move private property.
- The second negation: The aim of socialized mankind can be only a free, all-round harmonious development of every individual, which acts both as an “aim in itself” and a condition for the development of the whole “organism” of humanity. “In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all” (Marx K., Engels F., 1848). It is, in a way, a return to the starting point. Only now man acts not as a member of a narrow community but of united humanity as a whole, with the preservation (transformed) of all positive achievements of private property. These achievements are reflected in the formation of a “mature” personality – of an individual with self-awareness.

Thus, from the simple production of the physical existence of an individual (the starting point), mankind passes over to the production of the isolated individual – the bearer and means to move private property (the first negation), and from it – to the reproduction of man – a free, harmoniously developed representative of the united “organism” of mankind.

The law of negation of the negation can be traced while analyzing the historical process from the point of view of meeting requirements:

- Initial stage: the struggle for physical survival against the primeval forces of nature and the securing of the means of sustenance at the level close to minimal requirements. At the initial stage, the gratification of human needs determines such basic motivations as the yearning for physical survival, and, first of all, the preservation of the human race. No possibility for consumption other than in the “organism” of the tribe (and later of the community) can guarantee survival. Therefore, the gratification of the needs of the whole takes priority over the gratification of the needs of any part of the whole.
- The negation of the initial point is the gratification of needs under conditions of antagonistic struggle for the optimal securing of sustenance. Social-antagonistic rivalry determines the self-assertion of individuals and social groups. It is this circumstance, within the context of gratifying needs, which denies the priority of the whole, subordinating it to a part.
- The second negation returns man to the whole (to the organic unity of mankind), but to a more profound and mature whole, which is a result of the lengthy reorganization of antagonistic relations in society. An individual at this stage acquires wholeness and becomes a creative, socially responsible personality.

The effect of this law is manifest also in the spiral-like development of society, taking into consideration the attitude of mankind to the natural conditions of its existence.

- The initial stage: the threat of peril to humanity from the spontaneous forces of nature.
- The stage of the first negation: man’s mastering of the main conditions for his existence and the simultaneous formation of means and transformation activities which can harbour the threat of self-destruction for the human race. Thus, humanity faces a partially incomprehensible dilemma: either peril or a transition to a qualitatively new stage of development.

The negation of negation in this context means the transition to this new stage of development, when humanity acquires the capacity for purposeful self-perfection and the creative mastering of the natural conditions for its development.

The creative development of K. Marx's research method made it possible to reveal the inner systematic interconnection of the laws and categories of social theory reflecting the structure of developed society, to present a theoretical periodization of human history (the regularities of its beginning, the first emergence, formation and maturity) through a prism of interconnection of natural and social forces.

The scientific breakthroughs made by V.A. Vazulin and especially the breakthrough of "The Logic of History", made it possible to comprehend the regularities of the development of society more substantially and fully than in classical Marxism. At the same time, those breakthroughs opened the way for the consecutive dialectical development of Marxism ("sublation" in a new synthesis) by "sublating" historical materialism and the formation approach.

The prognostic strength of this theory and methodology was repeatedly approved in the early seventies. The theoretical approach of "The Logic of History" to the fundamental problems of social development (on "early" socialist revolutions, the extensive and intensive development of production forces, formal and real socialization etc.) provides a key to the comprehension of an objective reason for a number of social phenomena, opening a whole spectrum of research approaches. Such phenomena include, for example, the problem of the reasons for the victory of the capitalist counter-revolution and restoration as opposed to the prevailing reduction of these reasons to a subjective factor, the problem of perspectives for mankind etc (see: The International "Logic of History" School, The Actual Methodology of Marxism and Prospects for its Development, etc.).

Modern life shows the need to reveal in greater depth the cognitive and heuristic potential of this concept.

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SOCIO-PHILOSOPHICAL HERITAGE AND THE “LOGIC OF HISTORY”

Abstract: the approach of “The Logic of History” makes it possible to concretize the dialectic of the natural (including the biological) and the social. The creative development of the method of scientific investigation made it possible to reveal the inner systematic inter-connection of laws and categories of social theory which reflect the structure of developed society; it also made it possible to outline the theoretical periodization of human history (the objective laws of its

'ascent' from the very beginning, emergence, formation, to maturity) through a prism of interconnections of natural and social factors. The stages in the process of development are analyzed here: as the unity of the natural (including the biological) and the social; as a process of emergence of the social from the natural; as the transformation of the natural by the social.

Keywords: Logic of History. Historical Materialism. Method. Dialectics. Development.