

MATERIALISM AND RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE: AN ANALYSIS OF KARL MARX'S THOUGHT

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Abstract

Karl Marx was a philosopher and social observer, whose intelligence and brilliant thinking earned him a position as a political leader among the proletarian class of his time. For Marx, the essence of humanity lies in labor, and religion is a product and expression of the interests of the oppressed lower classes. Living in Europe during the industrial age, Marx's thoughts differed significantly from those of other philosophers of his time. This text examines Marx's thoughts on Materialism, religious beliefs, and Marxist Economics. Research findings indicate that Historical Materialism proposed by Marx is a useful term for providing the basic assumptions of his theory. The emphasis in his work "Das Kapital" is on the material needs and the struggle to enhance socialist revolution so that the proletariat can enjoy the majority of what is produced by industrialism. Marx believed that the ownership of the means of production in society should be evenly distributed according to human needs, not to the greed of a few. Religion, Marx argued, is an opiate for the masses, manipulating them with promises of eternal futures, thus alienating them from reality. In the capitalist economic system, Marx contended that fair wages for labor should be determined equally, just as the value of each commodity is determined by the amount of labor, meaning that employers should pay workers according to their labor.

Keywords: *Materialism, Religion, Karl Marx*

Abstrak

Karl Marx adalah seorang filsuf dan pengamat sosial, yang kecerdasan dan pemikirannya yang brilian memberinya posisi sebagai pemimpin politik di kalangan kelas proletar pada zamannya. Bagi Marx, esensi kemanusiaan terletak pada kerja, dan agama adalah produk serta ekspresi dari kepentingan kelas bawah yang tertindas. Hidup di Eropa selama era industri, pemikiran Marx sangat berbeda dari para filsuf lainnya pada masanya. Teks ini mengkaji pemikiran Marx tentang Materialisme, kepercayaan agama, dan Ekonomi Marxis. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Materialisme Historis yang diusulkan oleh Marx adalah istilah yang berguna untuk memberikan asumsi dasar dari teorinya. Penekanan dalam karyanya "Das Kapital" adalah pada kebutuhan material dan perjuangan untuk meningkatkan revolusi sosialis agar proletariat dapat menikmati mayoritas dari apa yang dihasilkan oleh industrialisme.

Marx percaya bahwa kepemilikan alat-alat produksi dalam masyarakat harus didistribusikan secara merata sesuai dengan kebutuhan manusia, bukan untuk keserakahan segelintir orang. Agama, kata Marx, adalah opium bagi rakyat, yang memanipulasi mereka dengan janji-janji masa depan yang abadi, sehingga mengasingkan mereka dari realitas. Dalam sistem ekonomi kapitalis, Marx berpendapat bahwa upah yang adil bagi tenaga kerja harus ditentukan secara merata, sama seperti nilai setiap komoditas ditentukan oleh jumlah tenaga kerja, yang berarti bahwa pengusaha harus membayar pekerja sesuai dengan kerja mereka.

Kata Kunci: *Materialisme, Agama, Karl Marx.*

A. Introduction

One of the philosophers who mastered his knowledge as an economist and sociologist was Karl Marx. As an economist, Karl Marx is renowned for his political economic critique of proletarian views, a perspective known as critical philosophy. His thoughts became a guide/reference for scholars thereafter. His works span various fields of knowledge, but among them, what influenced Karl Marx's thinking deeply was "Das Kapital." This concept elucidates Marx's philosophical understanding of social justice. In this regard, Karl Marx grounds himself in the reality of "economic injustice." His thinking and analytical approach to economics are based on "epistemological thought." Concepts like this are referred to as "dialectical and Historical Materialism." Departing from this epistemological philosophical concept, Karl Marx is referred to as "anti-God and anti-religion; religion must be eradicated because it is an opiate for the masses."(Faqih, 2002, p. 5)

In his thinking, Karl Marx based on an imagination known as "Socialist Imagination." Marx aims to realize a society without classes among humans and no oppression of one another. According to him, socialism is a product of "Dialectical Materialism" and "Historical Materialism."(Mariani, 2013, p. 171) These concepts originated from the intellectual conditions of the 19th century. Historically, humanity is based on natural processes, and history can be studied scientifically.(Farihah, 2015) This study allows for the formation of meaning, patterns, and human desires in the study of the origins of history.

In his statements, Karl Marx explains history and its similarity to Hegel's concept of evolution, namely the theory of Historical Materialism adhering to Hegel's theory, known as "Hegelian dialectics."(Jary & Jary, 1991, p. 270) Karl Marx uses Hegelian thought very carefully. He accepts Hegel's formal dialectical ideas but rejects its idealism. On the other hand, Karl Marx appears to follow Ludwing Feuerbach.(Suseno, 1999, p. 66) As a brilliant philosopher, Karl Marx developed his philosophy, namely Materialistic Philosophy.(Sztompka & Santosa, 2005, p. 182) For Karl Marx, a person becomes truly human when they can express themselves in productive labor, free from domination, and have the will to implement their power, driving them to be continuously active and creative. Karl Marx rejects the existence of

religion because rulers exploit religion and give false hope to the working class. This is conveyed as Karl Marx's protest against the working class's economic conditions.

B. Method

The approach used in this research is "qualitative-conceptual," which is conducted through literature review. Various data and information from various reading texts, both primary and secondary sources (books and journals), are collected and integrated, selecting relevant data that aligns with the research objectives. After collecting the literature data, the author proceeds to analyze them through interpretation and comparison, then synthesizing all data conceptually based on the research focus.

C. Discussion

1. Karl Marx Biography

Karl Marx was born in 1818 in the ancient city of Bruckengasse in the Kingdom of Prussia. (Marx, 1976a, pp. 4–5) His father, Herschel, was known as the first to receive secular education. He worked as a lawyer, earning a middle-class income. Karl Marx's childhood history involved private education by his father until the age of 12 in 1830. He then continued his education at the Trier High School for 2 years, but the police raided the school in 1832. The government found literature supporting political liberalism distributed among the students. Given that such distribution of material was considered inciting, the authorities reformed the school and replaced several staff during Karl Marx's presence. (Marx, 1976a)

In 1835, Karl Marx continued his education at the University of Bonn to study philosophy and literature. He joined the Poet's Club, a group of political radicals monitored by the police. Karl Marx also joined the Trier Tavern Club, where many ideas were discussed, and at one point, he served as the club's vice president. Additionally, Karl Marx was involved in certain disputes. In August 1836, he participated in a duel with a member of the Borussia Corps at the university. Karl Marx then became serious about his studies and life. In October 1836, he was admitted as a law student at the University of Berlin. Karl Marx attended lectures by Eduard Gans (who represented a progressive Hegelian perspective, outlining rational development in history with a particular emphasis on libertarian aspects and the importance of social questions). Although studying law, he was fascinated by philosophy and sought ways to combine the two, believing that "without philosophy, nothing can be achieved" (Marx, 1976a). Karl Marx became interested in the German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel.

In his dissertation, Karl Marx wrote about the Difference Between the Philosophy of Democritus and Epicurus in 1841. In this work, Karl Marx depicted that theology must submit to the superiority of philosophy. Furthermore, in 1843, Karl Marx became one of the editors of a new and radical left-wing newspaper in Paris aimed at bringing together radical Germans and French. Karl Marx contributed his writings,

Introduction to a Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy, and On the Jewish Question. He then introduced his belief that the proletariat is a revolutionary group. Karl Marx engaged in the study of political economy (Adam Smith, David Ricardo, and James Mill), a project he would pursue for the rest of his life (Miskievich, 1986, p. xii) resulting in his major economic work, *Das Kapital*.

Some of Karl Marx's most important works, whether written alone or with Engels, include: *Theses on Feuerbach* (Marx, 1845), *The Poverty of Philosophy* (Marx, 1847), *Wage Labour and Capital* (Marx, 1847), *Principles of Communism* (Engels, 1847), *Communist Manifesto* (Marx and Engels, 1848), *Value, Price and Profit* (Marx, 1865), *The Housing Question* (Engels, 1872), and *Capital I, Capital II, Capital III* (Marx, 1867 – 1894).

In addition to the above works, Karl Marx wrote about the thoughts of Feuerbach. This thesis states that philosophers only interpret the world in various ways, such as by changing it. Here, Karl Marx criticizes materialism because, in his view, materialism is contemplative, and so is idealism because this concept reduces practice to theory. This thesis illustrates that overall, philosophy can place abstract reality above concrete reality. Karl Marx's Historical Materialism argues that the world is changed not by ideas but by actual material activities and practices.

2. Materialism

The term materialism originates from the word "matter," which refers to visible substances or objects. Materialism is a worldview that seeks the basis of everything solely within the material realm, disregarding anything beyond sensory perception. (Salim & Salim, 2000, p. 946) Therefore, materialism pertains to individuals who adhere to or advocate for an ideology that prioritizes materiality or matter. The first philosopher to introduce materialism was Epicurus, and this line of thought was further developed by Democritus. (Weij, 1988, p. 1988) Therefore, Materialism is a doctrine that explains that everything is material, and if something cannot be seen, it is considered non-existent. Materialism is a system of thought that believes in matter as the sole absolute existence and rejects any existence beyond material. Thinking like this is known in the form of a doctrine called "Dialectical Materialism" by Karl Marx. This constitutes a critique of Hegel's view that humans are the essence of the soul.

Karl Marx rejects Hegel's view because he believes that humans are natural beings in the natural object. (Lavine, 2002, p. 106) The foundation of Karl Marx's theory of historical materialism is based on the work of Ludwig Feuerbach. According to Karl Marx, Ludwig Feuerbach successfully explained true materialism as the basic principle of his thinking. According to Michel Curtis, Karl Marx's historical materialism is philosophical materialism, not practical materialism. Because if in a practical sense, matter is a truth that is meaningless. The theory of historical materialism for Karl Marx aims to show that behind matter, there must be consciousness to drive history towards historical materialism. In the philosophy of materialism, it is mentioned that the reality

of existence is beyond human perception. Similarly, idealism philosophy asserts that consciousness is based on ideas and does not believe in the existence of reality behind human ideas. (Maksum, 2016, p. 156)

According to Karl Marx, Dialectical Materialism is a doctrine related to the nature of the universe. According to Karl Marx, the historical development of humanity conforms to the materialistic dialectical nature. (Damsar, 2011, pp. 24–25) This concept is what Karl Marx refers to as historical materialism. This idea is based on the reality that the determination of the structure of society and its historical development is the reality of social classes. This is not coincidental but an effort towards human life with the existence of division of labor. (Salam & Fadilah, 2019, p. 16) The fundamental aspect of the concept is that "it is not the consciousness of men that determines their social being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness." Karl Marx believed that to understand history and its direction of change, one does not need to pay attention to what people think, but rather how they work and produce. By observing how people work and produce, one can determine how they think. (Hakim & Ahmad, 2008, p. 374)

In addition to the above, Karl Marx stated that social class is a characteristic phenomenon found in post-feudal societies. In this regard, Karl Marx mentioned that within the class structure there are differences, namely: First, the upper class consists of owners and industrial instruments. Second, the lower class, namely the proletariat, workers. For capitalist societies, according to Karl Marx, there are three social classes as follows:

- 1) The laborers are those who live and earn their livelihood from working for wages.
 - 2) The capitalist class are those who derive income from the profit they obtain
 - 3) The landowning class, referred to as landlords, who live off their land rent.
- According to Karl Marx, the relationship between classes marks the beginning of what can be called an exploitative relationship, where there is a power relationship between the powerful and the powerless, allowing the powerful to do anything to the powerless, in this case, the laborers. (Ritzer & Goodman, 2004, p. 59)

Karl Marx explains that for all societies, they are characterized by infrastructure, which manifests as economic structure. Similarly, the superstructure encompasses ideology, law, government, family, religion, culture, and ethical standards. According to Karl Marx, the relationship between the economic infrastructure and the cultural superstructure and social structures built is a direct result of the position of historical materialism. People's actions toward the material environment will inevitably be connected through certain economic relationships, thus forming economic relationships. (Johnson, 1986, p. 146)

Karl Marx's explanation of economic structure is that it serves as the foundation upon which power is established. Therefore, changes in how production is carried out

result in changes in social relationships among humans.(Praja Juhana S, 2022, p. 111) Then, in the ongoing production process in industrial societies, it leads to the formation of two conflicting classes. These two classes are the "Bourgeoisie" and the "Proletariat." According to Karl Marx, the Bourgeoisie is recognized as the capitalist class. Similarly, the "Proletariat" is the working class that depends on the Bourgeoisie". In practice, both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat experience conflict. The reality is that the bourgeoisie often oppress the labor and intellect of the proletariat. They assume that the bourgeoisie will benefit from the suffering of the proletariat. Ultimately, the proletariat find themselves disadvantaged and experience increasing poverty.(Martono, 2011, p. 45) For Karl Marx, these classes emerge when the mode of production involves the division of labor, allowing for the accumulation of "Surplus Production"(Giddens, 1986, p. 8).

A book by Karl Marx entitled "Das Kapital" is his work containing a very profound discussion regarding economic and political issues. Karl Marx is a key figure and the foundation of ongoing theory development. According to Karl Marx, Das Capital is part of the "surplus value," a value obtained from the bourgeoisie. Das Kapital, Karl Marx's Magnum Opus, contains critical analysis of capitalism and practical applications in economics, along with other parts related to criticism of the theory. According to Karl Marx, the usefulness value of a commodity and the profit obtained from it when used differ. This is different from the exchange value of a commodity when exchanged for a different commodity.(Damsar, 2011)

Karl Marx explains that a commodity is meaningful or valuable if it is based on the average labor cost in society. According to him, the wages received by workers are not commensurate with the price of the goods sold, which is what constitutes exploitation of labor. A job involves the economic value of a commodity that can be determined objectively. This value is determined by both the use value and the exchange value. This is the value of labor, known as wages. A worker will receive wages equal to their needs, which are for the needs of their family. Then, the profit obtained is the difference between the selling value and the very low production cost due to the exploitation of workers, referred to as surplus value. This theory is called the theory of surplus value, which is the only source of profit for capitalists because this value determines the amount of profit obtained. So, surplus value is the difference between the productivity value of labor and the costs given to workers, then obtaining profits for the entrepreneur.(Suwasono, 2000, p. 90)

Karl Marx criticizes the surplus value system as unjust and inhumane, as it exploits workers and creates social inequalities between classes in society. Karl Marx says that surplus value is a form of theft by capitalists from workers' rights to the results of their own labor. Karl Marx also states that surplus value is the source of various contradictions and crises in the capitalist system, such as crises of overproduction, consumption, distribution, accumulation, and legitimacy crises. The impact of surplus value, according to Karl Marx, will lead to destruction due to revolutionary movements

by workers who realize their position as oppressed and exploited by capitalists. Karl Marx calls on workers to unite and fight to overthrow the capitalist system and replace it with socialism, where there are no longer social classes and exploitation of labor. Karl Marx hopes that the socialist system will bring progress and happiness to all humanity.

In his work *Das Kapital*, published in 1867, where this work introduces the concept of surplus value. For him, surplus value is the value obtained by entrepreneurs as profit on investments. In financial terms, this surplus value is said to be in the form of excess money compared to the amount of capital. According to Karl Marx, surplus value can only be obtained from the value of labor. Surplus value will only exist when workers work beyond the predetermined limits according to their job. This condition can occur when labor works only to meet it. In surplus value, the greatest profit is obtained by business owners. Calculating surplus value can reduce the wages received by workers with increased working hours and an increase in the number of machines or equipment. (S, 2014, pp. 20–21) Then Karl Marx became active in politics and was involved in the development of the German state through the formation of a revolutionary socialist party. Two years later, in 1869, Karl Marx founded a Social Democratic Labor Party, which later developed into the "German Social Democratic Party." Then, in the late 1870s, Karl Marx retired from his political activities due to his deteriorating health. On March 14, 1883, Karl Marx passed away at the age of 64.

3. Method of Historical Materialism

In Greek, the term "method" is derived from "methodos," consisting of the words "metha," meaning after or above, and "hodos," meaning a path or a way. (Bagus, 2005, p. 635) Thus, historically, the method describes the path or the way to achieve something in building. Approaching a field of knowledge methodically involves studying it according to a plan, working on specific aspects, arranging various pieces logically, and establishing as many connections as possible. Ultimately, it aims to understand why each matter exists. Here, knowledge is limited to facts and the basics of those facts. (Bagus, 2005)

Karl Marx is a philosopher renowned for his philosophy of materialism, meaning that materialism is the basis of Karl Marx's thinking in developing theories across various dimensions of human life. This is because material is something that sustains and develops human life towards achieving a good, happy, and prosperous life. As a philosopher inseparable from his way of thinking, Marx's thinking method is the opposite of that employed by the philosopher Hegel. Karl Marx explained that he was a disciple of the great thinker Hegel. For Hegel, the thinking process is transformed into an independent subject called the idea, or in other terms, the real world is merely the external appearance of the idea. But for Karl Marx, on the contrary, ideas are nothing but the reflection of material manifested by the human mind and translated into thought forms. (Marx, 2004, p. 94)

Karl Marx addresses this issue in connection with the material aspect of the history of society by linking the basic historical relations and aspects of social production activities. Below are the aspects as follows:(Marx, 2004)

- 1) Production, as a means to meet life's needs, is the production of material life itself. Production is a natural characteristic, the basis of all historical moments or past eras that must be fulfilled for every human to sustain life. Historical science must observe and examine production facts with all their significance and implications in life.
- 2) Life's needs emerge and must be produced due to population growth within human society.
- 3) Newly emerging life needs must be produced due to population growth within human society.
- 4) Production to meet life's needs, containing the three aspects above, consists of two relationships: natural relationships and social relationships. Specific forms of production or industrial stages are always combined with specific forms of cooperation. Ultimately, humans have consciousness, but not pure consciousness

Karl Marx's conception of history begins with the principle that production is the basis of every social order, and the division of society into classes is determined by what is produced, how it is produced, and exchanged. The main argument used by Karl Marx in analyzing society is his economic interpretation of history. The production of goods and services helps humans in their lives, and the exchange of these goods and services is the basis of all social processes and institutions. Karl Marx does not argue that the economic factor is the only important one in the process of historical formation. Karl Marx indeed claims that the economic factor is the most important basis for building a cultural superstructure, laws, governance, and reinforced by political, social, religious, literary, and artistic ideologies that are in line with it.(Chirot, 2000, p. 91) Karl Marx illustrates the relationship between the material conditions of human life and human ideas. As Karl Marx stated, it is not the consciousness of humans that determines their existence, but their existence in social life that determines their consciousness.(Ebenstein, 2006, p. 234)

4. Perspective of Karl Marx on Religion

Religion is a system that regulates beliefs and worship towards the Almighty God and the customs or methods associated with traditions that can connect humans to the order of life. In Karl Marx's view, the discussion of religion cannot be separated from his concept of alienation. This understanding arises because religion becomes the main source of alienation, meaning the alienation of society from its world.(Muttaqin, 1970, p. 5) This perspective implies that religion occupies the most important or primary position compared to others. This is the primary source of alienation for other aspects of society. Fundamentally, society as a whole is followers of religion.

Alienation in this context refers to the situation where humans lack control over the products of their creative labor. Human creativity directed towards changing the environment in which they live is important because humans in society aim to fulfill their needs and sustain their lives. On the other hand, human activity will lead to contradictions and is not beneficial for humans themselves because when someone produces a product from their creativity, the product becomes an objective entity, associated with the person who produced it. Additionally, productive activities undertaken by individuals inevitably involve their energy and abilities, resulting in the product manifesting part of the essence of that individual. (Johnson, 1988, p. 139) Human creative products are free entities with their own value but are not exempt from human control. Therefore, this process applies not only to materialistic creative products like religion but also to non-physical entities produced by individuals, which will limit and compel them to submit and adapt. Essentially, humans are governed by objects because these objects are inherently part of human nature.

The above thesis shows how Karl Marx positions religion as a general human construct. For him, religion is akin to a product of human creativity. Religion, as a moral value, is the result of someone's creativity in sustaining their life and needs. For Karl Marx, religion is alienation and limitations placed on individuals in expressing their creativity. Such thoughts by Karl Marx are undoubtedly influenced by Feuerbach. According to Feuerbach, the cosmos (world) and human consciousness along with its ideas reflect material forces. (Johnson, 1988)

According to Feuerbach, it is not God who creates humans, but for him, God is a human fantasy. The essence of God is the essence of humans themselves, which are freed from limitations and ultimately considered an autonomous reality outside of humans. (Seven, 1966, p. 139) God is a projection, and for him, God is a human characteristic projected beyond humans through elevated forms. As a result of this projection, God is seen as the leader of human existence and confronts humans through his commands. Feuerbach starts from the fact of the alienation of religion duplicating the world; within religion, he reduces the religious world into its secular basis. (Marx, 1976b, p. 62) It is this understanding that underlies Karl Marx's thoughts on religion.

Karl Marx believes that according to his image, humans create God, but the reality in religious society is as if God creates humans according to his image. Religion is an opiate for society (Universal Grouod of Consolation). This understanding can be interpreted as all consolation in religion, for those who suffer and are oppressed, is a temporary and illusory comfort. For him, this does not provide solutions but sometimes tends to hinder various solutions through further suffering and oppression. This understanding is akin to the pursuit of material well-being. Religion allows those suffering to endure.

For Karl Marx, religion is an invitation for humans to resign themselves to their circumstances rather than take action to improve their lives. Religion seemingly disregards human efforts in life struggles, instead urging humans to always remember

and contemplate the divine.(Muttaqin, 1970) With such thinking, humans forget about the suffering they experience. They accept things as they are, such as the meager income they earn from their work. From this perspective, it is evident that religion has left humans in their material conditions, resigned to accepting what exists, even though they are experiencing material suffering. Similarly, religion has taught humans the courage to endure whatever happens because such endurance is considered a virtue.(Seven, 1966)

The above thesis suggests that for Karl Marx, religion causes humans to lose control over themselves to carry out their creativity. According to the manipulation and illusions taught by religious teachings, humans become creatures living in a false world. This lack of control will lead to alienation from humans. The activities carried out by individuals are understood only as means of survival rather than as tools for developing their own creative abilities.(Johnson, 1988) Karl Marx's criticism of religion is the first step, followed by identifying material and social conditions, which are sources of alienation and illusion. Subsequently, it gradually moves towards revolution, which eliminates the need for illusions by allowing humans to act creatively for themselves. For Karl Marx, anyone who wants genuine happiness must rid themselves of religion because the happiness offered by religion is only temporary for the oppressed. Religion is a product of social conditions, so it cannot be eliminated. Karl Marx states that religion has no future and is a product of social environments rather than inherent human instincts. Religion is a consequence of human alienation, a kind of escape. Humans can only realize themselves superficially through religion.(Ramli, 1982, pp. 162–166) This is because in the structure of society, there is no opportunity to fully realize oneself. Reality shows that humans suffer and seek salvation in the hope of heaven. According to Karl Marx, this primary alienation must be resolved by humans themselves. Human escape to religion, according to him, is caused by material conditions, ultimately leading humans to alienate themselves from religion.(Suseno, 1982, p. 32)

5. Critique of Karl Marx's Thought

The essence of Karl Marx's philosophical thought lies in historical materialism, and socialism is the culmination of his imagination. Despite Karl Marx's vision of a classless society not yet materializing, his thoughts and philosophy remain a reference for modern and postmodern thinkers. As Engel once remarked, most people are Marxists, while others are critics. These critics fall into two categories: Firstly, those who criticize Marx's approach as being reductionist and overly simplistic, arguing that the empirical reality has shown that the proletarian revolution never occurred as Marx predicted, and the collapse of capitalism he foresaw never materialized. However, defenders of Marx argue that while the complete victory of the proletariat revolution has yet to be achieved, its successes will eventually materialize.(Mariani, 2013) On the other hand, thinkers like Paul Baran, who adhere to Marxist ideology, disagree with Marx's views, particularly regarding the development of third-world countries. Marx

believed that the influence of capitalist nations on less developed countries would lead them to progress similarly to capitalist countries in Europe. (Budiman, 2000, pp. 46–48)

From a religious perspective, historical events are interpreted as the will of the Almighty, viewing human development as part of God's plan in the universe. The primary difficulty in interpreting history from a religious standpoint lies in the fact that God's will is unknown and cannot be directly experienced by humans. (Black & Champion, 1999, p. 175) While there is only one God, human interpretations of God vary widely, with some denying and others acknowledging His existence. God's plans for humanity are diverse and unknown to humans.

Furthermore, historical interpretation from an ideological standpoint suggests that ideas, according to Hegel, are the primary drivers of historical processes. The material conditions in society, such as social, economic, and technological factors, are believed to originate from ideas. While it is undeniable that the ideological approach has merits in emphasizing the significant role of ideas as the primary driving force in history, solely focusing on ideas overlooks the fact that ideas not only cause events but also reflect them. Thus, emphasizing ideas as the primary motivator of human actions neglects the environmental circumstances that ultimately lead to the realization of various thoughts and actions. (Ebenstein, 2006)

The discussion on economic development according to Karl Marx prioritizes the study of the long-term effects of the collapse of the capitalist system. In the analysis of capitalist economics, Karl Marx explains the view that communism will expand its influence as the capitalist system fails to do so. The aim of this analysis is to examine capitalist economic development. Economic policies in communist states are influenced by Karl Marx's thoughts on economic development, using these ideas as the basis for determining economic policies. Marxist economic theory is a theory written by Karl Marx in his scholarly work. (Hasan & Aziz, 2018, p. 33) With this theory, Karl Marx aims to explain three things: interpreting history from an economic standpoint, the forces driving capitalist development, and offering an alternative path to planned economic development. Karl Marx then explains the evolution of human development. In this regard, he identifies three stages of human development. First is the Feudalism era, characterized by a traditional condition where landlords are economic actors with relatively high bargaining power compared to others. Second is the Capitalism era, where capitalists have relatively high bargaining power compared to others, especially laborers, leading to exploitation. Third is the Socialism era, the beginning of a socialist society where there is a shift from the capital accumulation in the capitalist era to the equal distribution of resource ownership, allowing all parties to have equal bargaining power. (Praja Juhana S, 2022)

D. Conclusion

Karl Marx was an exceptionally brilliant philosopher, with extraordinary ideas that surprised many people with the theories he proposed. His thoughts on Historical Materialism are a hallmark of Karl Marx's theory. Historical Materialism connects history with material, as it is determined by the existence of consciousness. This means

that the conditions of material life determine a person's normative consciousness. Karl Marx's theory was influenced by Hegel, although these two philosophers had different thoughts. While Hegel explained that ideas were central, for Karl Marx, material was the source of everything.

Karl Marx's thoughts on Historical Method, which depict the past of humanity and humans as social beings, are comprehensive and scientifically assembled. Here, Karl Marx thoroughly and systematically investigates the entire development of society and its humanity in terms of its forms. He critically examines this systematically. According to Karl Marx, the history of society is highly diverse because diversity is determined by the system of production, material aspects, and building the production system, which are fundamental.

Karl Marx positions religion as something that contributes negatively to the project of human development in the world. This thought emerges because religious practices in society imply a denial of humanity's existence. Marx's critique of religion becomes a crucial point for criticizing oppressive social structures. Marx seeks to dismantle the old system and replace it with a new structure, namely socialism. Religion is the realization of human essence in imagination; humans have not succeeded in realizing their essence. Religion is a sign of human alienation from themselves. To end human alienation, religion must be abolished. Karl Marx desires a revolution that can give birth to a classless society without power.

Karl Marx believed that material is everything to humans. Therefore, for him, humans originate from material, and that's why humans must seek material. Material is the factor in real change for humans. Change is always related to history because material itself is the place of development and perfect happiness for humans. This thesis provides an understanding that Karl Marx's Historical Materialism is the development of human history summarized in five stages, all of which are interconnected. This demonstrates significant progress towards an ideal stage. These five stages begin with the primitive communal society, followed by slave society, the development of feudal society, capitalist society, and finally, socialist society.

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