



A JOURNAL OF NATURE, CULTURE, HUMAN AND SOCIETY  
VOLUME 3 | ISSUE 1 | WINTER 2024

EDITORIAL

## Science and Humanism

The relation of Science and Humanism has often been presented as a juxtaposition of the methods of the natural sciences with the humanist legacy of the humanities. In the current situation of academia but also politics on a global scale this is understandable, but poses a serious challenge to the integrated way the Marxist tradition treated the concept of Science. This concept is rooted in the German term *Wissenschaft*. Even though historically it was present in all European languages and has been adapted in this sense by many other languages, today this integrated understanding of all kinds of collective knowledge production is endangered, facing the division of labour of institutionalised praxis.

At *Marxism & Sciences* we see the relation between science and humanism first of all not pertaining to any kind of present state of the division of intellectual labour and thus not only in terms of a complementary correspondence but as rooted in a common project. Hence our journal is dedicated to *keep alive and reconstruct* the awareness of that common project which connects all the *sciences* with endeavours of *emancipation* throughout the world. The European setting in which Marxist theory was first developed does not preclude but on the contrary emphasises as a cosmopolitical idea the pluralism of these endeavours, integrating them in a framework which upholds the necessary moment of unity.

Today we need to emphasise this unity more than ever before, if the Marxist endeavour as such wants to continue in one way or the other. Marxist thought today faces not only the practical challenges of 'late capitalism,' but also theoretical ones in the form of different kinds of so-called anti-, trans- and posthumanisms. We need to distinguish these from another, but also see them as perspectives to be confronted in an informed manner.

The notion of "keeping alive and reconstruct" reminds us of the historical period of the Renaissance where science as well as humanism (in both the scholarly and the political sense) were truly revived by revising the ancient notions of the philosophers. Thereby political as well as epistemic activities were connected and out of this, if you will, common root scientific and humanist projects sprang. Needless to say, that everyone who wants to continue to keep this kind of continuous engagement

alive needs to revise the conceptions of the forerunners. This is the way scientific knowledge proceeds.

And this goes for Marxist thought, too. However it may be not in vain to remember that Marx and Engels formulated in their *German Ideology* “the first premises of Materialist Method,” integrating *science with the task of emancipation*. A critique of ideology is not sufficient, but the task is, as they put it, to empirically take into account “the real living conditions of concrete human individuals.” If Marxism wants to uphold its connection to the scientific endeavour and the need for political emancipation at the same time it has to be revised over and over again.

This issue (as the whole endeavour of *Marxism & Sciences*) is dedicated precisely to this task. With this issue we inaugurate a new section of our journal: “From the Archives,” where we will henceforth republish (and translate) pieces which make visible Marxist engagement with the sciences and the integrated concept of Science. Our first piece is a translation of a talk Albert Einstein gave in the Marxist workers school Berlin in 1930 as reported by Marxist philosopher Karl Korsch. We are happy to receive criticisms as well as suggestions for texts to be included in this section in future issues.

This issue is at the same time a special issue on the occasion of the centenary of Soviet philosopher Evald Ilyenkov, who is a prime example of earnest engagement with a Marxist approach to science and humanism in the context of historical (i.e., really existing) socialism. In his short piece “Humanism and Science” Ilyenkov stressed that the aforementioned distinction between science as an expression of rationality and humanism as pertaining to morality and “the needs of the heart” have to be traced to a common understanding of the role of knowledge and emancipation. This is of course no easy task, and criticism of what “science” means in the conditions of global capitalism today is necessary. However, as Ilyenkov already insisted—and we agree with him here, we cannot fail this task if we want to continue to unfold the emancipative potentials in all human practices and in the sciences in particular.

Many thanks go to all who have helped us preparing the issue and who donated to make it possible. We are an independent and international collective of scholars without any further funding. Therefore each issue testifies to the dedication of individuals from different countries and backgrounds and each time represents a tiny victory over the conditions of today’s world.

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On behalf of the editorial collective of *Marxism & Sciences*