

Review

# A Review of "Theses on Feuerbach" and Its Deconstruction in the New Era

Linjie Lu <sup>1,\*</sup><sup>1</sup> School of Marxism, Zhejiang Normal University, Jinhua, China

\* Correspondence: Linjie Lu, School of Marxism, Zhejiang Normal University, Jinhua, China

**Abstract:** Karl Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach* remains a milestone document in the historical development of Marx's philosophical thought, marking the genius emergence of a radically new worldview within Marxist philosophy. This comprehensive review, grounded in the fundamental methodological frameworks of Marxist classical text study, systematically examines the complex writing background and diverse ideological origins of the Theses. By delving deeply into its profound philosophical revolution centered on human practice, the study focuses on the triple transformation of thought inherent in its theory of practice, the conceptualization of the nature of humanity, and its rigorous religious critique. Building upon this robust theoretical foundation, the article reveals the foundational value and enduring contemporary significance of the Theses from two critical dimensions: the systematic construction of the broader Marxist theoretical framework and its practical guidance for historical and modern workers' movements. Furthermore, in the contemporary context characterized by the deep structural development of digital capitalism and the rapid proliferation of artificial intelligence, this paper explores emerging frontier issues. Specifically, it addresses the hollowing-out of the intrinsic value of human practice under the pervasive hegemony of technological rationality, alongside the unprecedented challenge of confirming the social essence of humanity within a rapidly evolving post-human context. Ultimately, this review attempts to provide viable theoretical pathways for the creative transformation and modern application of the Theses' core ideas, while strictly adhering to the fundamental, emancipatory principles of Marxism.

**Keywords:** marxist philosophy; human practice; human essence; religious critique; digital capitalism; technological rationality

## 1. Writing Background

*Theses on Feuerbach* was written in the spring of 1845 and occupies a significant place in the development of Marxist theory. Its publication is closely tied to the historical context of the time and the evolution of Marx's own intellectual framework [1].

### 1.1. Historical Context

#### 1.1.1. Frequent Economic Crises in Capitalism

During the first half of the 19th century, the establishment of capitalist modes of production in major Western European nations led to intensified contradictions within capitalist society due to the rapid development of productive forces. This culminated in the first economic crisis in Britain in 1825, followed by subsequent crises in Western European countries in 1836 and 1847. These events highlighted the inherent social challenges within capitalism at the time, as capitalist relations of production increasingly constrained the development of productive forces. These conditions provided the objective basis for Marx to explore the general laws of social development amidst the significant changes and recurring crises in capitalist society, ultimately shaping the evolution of his thought and the formulation of his foundational theories [2].

Received: 08 February 2026

Revised: 02 April 2026

Accepted: 13 April 2026

Published: 16 April 2026



**Copyright:** © 2026 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

### 1.1.2. The Proletariat as an Independent Political Force

As the fundamental contradiction of capitalism—the conflict between socialized production and private capitalist ownership of the means of production—intensified, it led to the outbreak of economic crises. During this period, large-scale unemployment and dire living conditions affected the working class, which, compounded by earlier exploitation by the bourgeoisie, prompted a series of significant workers' movements in the 1830s and 1840s in several major capitalist nations [2]. Notable uprisings included the Lyons workers' revolts of 1831 and 1834, the British Chartist movement of 1837, and the Silesian textile workers' uprising in 1844. These class struggles signified the emergence of the working class as an independent political force on the historical stage. As a practical movement of the proletariat, these workers' movements profoundly impacted reflections on "practical activity," thereby exerting a lasting influence on the core concept of "practice" expressed in theoretical works. On the other hand, since the proletariat's revolutionary practice at this time still bore a degree of spontaneity, it urgently required guidance from scientific theory. The publication of theoretical works within this framework was a direct response to this call for scientific theory.

## 1.2. Ideological Foundation

### 1.2.1. The Fundamental Completion of the "Two Transformations"

After departing from the *Rheinische Zeitung*, Marx focused on researching and writing the *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, where he argued that civil society shapes the state and law. This work laid the groundwork for his transition towards materialism and communism. In subsequent writings, Marx analyzed the societal role of religion and explored fundamental approaches to its abolition. These efforts marked the completion of his intellectual transformation [3]. Additionally, these works demonstrated Marx's engagement with materialist perspectives, while also surpassing earlier views on religion. This intellectual progression established the basis for his later comprehensive critique of earlier materialist ideas, which became a significant aspect of his theoretical framework.

### 1.2.2. Preliminary Exploration of a New Worldview

In 1844, a significant work was completed that represented a systematic attempt to articulate proletarian theory during a process of intellectual transformation. This work focused on explaining one of its most crucial concepts—alienation of labor. This theory marked the beginning of an effort to understand the entire history of social development through the history of labor [4]. Since labor is the most fundamental practical activity of humanity, the profound analysis of labor alienation also paved the way for the formation of a scientific conception of practice and the revelation of the social essence of humanity, both of which remained central themes in subsequent works. It is thus evident that this preliminary exploration of a new worldview laid a solid foundation for further theoretical advancements.

### 1.2.3. A Complete Reckoning with the Young Hegelians

In February 1845, Marx and Engels co-authored the *Holy Family*, which critically examined speculative idealism and highlighted the determining role of material production in social history. In this work, Marx initially maintained a favorable perspective on certain philosophical ideas, utilizing them as theoretical tools to critique his own earlier views and those of his former associates. Following this comprehensive engagement with the Young Hegelians, Marx's intellectual framework evolved further, leading to a deeper reflection on these philosophical concepts [5]. This progression marked the beginning of Marx's critique of earlier ideas, which ultimately contributed to the development of historical materialism as a scientific approach.

## 2. Textual Framework

The argumentative framework of the *Theses on Feuerbach* can be broadly divided into four main sections:

In the first thesis, Marx begins by clearly stating that the primary flaw of all previous materialism, including Feuerbach's materialism, lies in its understanding of objects, reality, and the sensuous merely in terms of their objective or intuitive forms, rather than as the sensuous activity of human beings, as practice, or from the perspective of the subject. This assertion constitutes the fundamental criterion by which Marx distinguishes between the old and new materialism [6]. Marx argues that while the old materialism acknowledges the primacy of matter, it views humans merely as passive beings, neglecting their agency and creative activity. Although Feuerbach attempts to overcome the abstract nature of Hegel's speculative philosophy by reducing humans to sensuous beings, his conception of sensuousness remains intuitive and passive, rather than practical and active. Marx establishes the central role of practice here, seeing it as the key link between subject and object, thought and existence, thus laying the methodological foundation for the entire Theses.

The second section, comprising the second to fifth theses, focuses on the critique of the epistemology of old materialism and Feuerbach's view on religion. The second thesis addresses the problem of epistemology, asserting that the question of whether human thought possesses truth is not a theoretical issue but a practical one, emphasizing that the standard of truth can only exist within practice [7]. This completely overturns the static dualism of subject and object in traditional epistemology. The third thesis critiques the old materialist view that environment and education play the determining role, pointing out that this doctrine inevitably leads to the idolization of exceptional individuals while forgetting that it is humans who change the environment, and that educators themselves are also educated, thereby introducing the practice-oriented perspective into the domain of social history. The fourth thesis specifically analyzes Feuerbach's critique of religion, acknowledging his achievement in reducing the religious world to the secular, but pointing out that he is content only with exposing the secular basis of religion, failing to further explain how this basis gives rise to the alienation of religion, and neglecting the fact that the root of religious alienation lies in the very contradictions of the secular world. The fifth thesis reveals that although Feuerbach is dissatisfied with abstract thinking and appeals to sensuous intuition, he still fails to conceive of sensuousness as the practical, human activity of sensibility, further highlighting the intuitive flaw in his materialism.

The third section, comprising the sixth to ninth theses, delves into a critique of Feuerbach's humanistic historical view and systematically presents Marxist views on the essence of humanity. The sixth thesis serves as the foundation of this section, where Marx explicitly asserts that human essence is not an abstract quality inherent in individual humans, but in its reality, it is the sum of all social relations. This famous statement fundamentally transcends Feuerbach's humanistic position, which understood human essence as an abstract "species consciousness" of human beings [3]. The seventh thesis further points out that Feuerbach failed to see that religious sentiment itself is a product of society, and the abstract individual he analyzed actually belongs to a specific social form. The eighth thesis applies the concept of practice to the view of social history, proposing that all social life is essentially practical. Anything that leads theory towards mystical or obscure notions can be rationally resolved in human practice and the understanding of such practice. The ninth thesis summarizes by stating that intuitive materialism can at most achieve an intuition of the individual and civil society but fails to grasp the totality and historicity of social relations.

The fourth section, consisting of the tenth and eleventh theses, elaborates on the class foundation, historical mission, and fundamental characteristics of new materialism. The tenth thesis clearly distinguishes that the basis of old materialism is civil society, while the basis of new materialism is human society or the human side of society, revealing the fundamental differences between the two forms of materialism in terms of class attributes and value orientation [1]. The eleventh thesis concludes with the striking assertion:

"Philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it." This proposition not only represents a fundamental transformation of the entire Western philosophical tradition but also epitomizes the practical character of Marxist philosophy, marking the completion of Marx's philosophical shift from explaining the world to changing it.

Thus, through critique, Marx completes the proposal and explanation of the "new materialism" program, addressing the fundamental issue of historical views, namely the relationship between social existence and social consciousness. He further clarifies the foundational position and decisive significance of practice in epistemology, "containing the genius germination of a new worldview."

### 3. Core Ideas

#### 3.1. *The Theory of Practice*

"Practice" is the central thread running through the Theses, clearly outlining Marx's scientific conception of practice. From the outset, the Theses directly points out the fundamental flaw of old materialism, which is its lack of understanding of the significance of practice and its tendency to understand reality only in terms of "objective or intuitive forms." Through critical discussions of religion, the truth of human thought, environment and education, and the human being, the Theses emphasize that the social roots of religion are inseparable from the "secular family," the truth of human thought must be tested in practice, and the relationship between environment and education is one of mutual unity with human practice, not a divided, dichotomous one. This further elaborates and strengthens the understanding of the essential nature of social life as practice, scientifically explaining the social essence of humanity and correctly stating that social practice is the driving force of historical development. In the conclusion of the eleventh thesis, the Theses ends with a succinct yet powerful statement, terminating the old materialist philosophers' limited approach to interpreting the world through intuition [4]. It sharply points out that the "way of interpreting the world" must be transformed into "changing the world," guiding the transformation of the existing world through a new materialist perspective on practice. This leads the proletariat to courageously change unjust social forms through revolutionary practice in class struggle, paving the way for a new social structure and the future of humanity.

In summary, the Theses positions practice as both the core and foundation, developing old materialist practice into new materialism. It emphasizes the paramount importance of practice, and the scientific understanding and comprehensive elaboration of practice form the fundamental distinction between Marxist philosophy and other traditional philosophies [2].

#### 3.2. *The Theory of Human Essence*

Based on the core idea that the essence of social life is practice, Marx addresses the question of human essence by emphasizing the importance of social relations formed through practice. Earlier materialist perspectives, by failing to recognize the essence of social life as practice, overlooked the significance of these social relations. Consequently, Feuerbach viewed human essence as the "essence of religion," interpreting it as an abstract "species" and mistakenly believing he had moved beyond abstract speculation, while inadvertently reverting to idealism in his understanding of society. In contrast, Marx, grounded in the practical realities of social life, argued that Feuerbach's concept of "religious sentiment" is actually a product of societal conditions. By focusing on social practice, Marx defined human essence as the sum of all social relations, asserting that human essence should be understood in this practical and relational context [8].

Thus, through the concept of practice, Marx moved beyond the metaphysical and abstract interpretations of human essence, achieving a comprehensive transformation of this concept [2].

### 3.3. *The Theory of Religion*

Marx conducted a profound critique of the epistemology of religion, which posited that religion originated from moral sentiments intuitively derived from nature. This perspective argued that the foundation of religion's existence contained no inherent contradictions and that the abolition of religious illusions was merely a matter of moral awakening and intellectual consciousness [1]. Marx acknowledged the division of the world into religious and secular realms but critiqued this view for neglecting the crucial role of practice, which he argued ultimately led back to idealism.

For Marx, practice is the essence of social life, and religion is viewed as a product of irrational social practices. Within the realm of social practice, the oppression and exploitation imposed by the ruling class on the oppressed classes compel the latter to seek ideological solace and remedies. This dynamic causes religion to become an ideological illusion, serving as a form of comfort for the oppressed and, in some respects, a passive protest against the ruling class.

Marx delved deeper than earlier perspectives to explore the social roots of the origin and development of religion. He highlighted the revolutionary significance of social practice in addressing the issue of religion, thereby enabling a real and thorough critique of religion within the framework of practical activity.

## 4. The Value of the Text

### 4.1. *The Theses on Feuerbach as the Foundation of Marxist Philosophy*

The *Theses on Feuerbach* introduced the concept of "new materialism" and, through critique and analysis, emphasized its proletarian and practical nature. It deeply explored the defining characteristics of this new materialism and established a scientific understanding of practice, thereby laying the groundwork for historical materialism and the broader framework of Marxist philosophy. In this context, *The German Ideology* became a pivotal work that marked the foundational development of historical materialism. It provided a more detailed and systematic elaboration of the ideas presented in the *Theses*. By adopting a scientific perspective on practice, this work addressed key issues in the philosophy of history, aligning with the emphasis on the "scientific view of practice" introduced in the *Theses*.

The *Theses on Feuerbach* can be regarded as the initial step in the formulation of historical materialism. By identifying practice as the central and primary concept of historical materialism, it played a crucial role in shaping the foundational principles of Marxist philosophy.

### 4.2. *The Theses on Feuerbach Enriching the Marxist Theoretical System*

The Marxist theoretical system encompasses Marxist philosophy, Marxist political economy, and scientific socialism. The *Theses on Feuerbach* significantly contributed to the advancement of Marxist philosophy and holds an essential role in the progression of both Marxist political economy and scientific socialism [3].

#### 4.2.1. The Theses on Feuerbach and the Development of Marxist Political Economy

The *Theses on Feuerbach* critiques erroneous views on the relationship between the environment and humanity, as well as the understanding of religion, indirectly addressing the social relations of labor and capital oppression in capitalist society. For instance, the third thesis critiques the old materialism's separation of environment, education, and humanity, emphasizing that the environment is unified with human practice. It argues that humans are both products of the environment and agents of change within it, suggesting that the alienated environment shaped by the factory system in capitalist society could be overcome through revolutionary practice in class struggle [9]. Additionally, the sixth thesis, while rejecting the notion of "abstract humanity," highlights the distortion of human "species essence" in alienated labor, asserting that only through the transformation of social relations via practice can human essence be restored.

By examining human essence within the social context, the roots of religious phenomena are located in the oppression and exploitation of the ruling class over the subordinate class, revealing the social origins of religion. During Marx's time, frequent economic crises and a rising workers' movement intensified the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in capitalist society [3]. In this context, people's belief in religion emerged as a response to the seemingly equal and fair, yet exploitative and oppressive, labor-capital relations. The Theses, by linking religious social relations with the development of productive forces, increasing labor division, and the ensuing class struggles, provide conclusions that reflect the economic relationships in society.

Thus, *The Theses on Feuerbach*, through a dual critique, further demonstrates the extreme imbalance between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie under capitalist private ownership. It supports the arguments on alienated labor presented in earlier works and significantly contributed to the development of Marxist political economy [10].

#### 4.2.2. The Theses on Feuerbach and the Development of Scientific Socialism

In *The Theses on Feuerbach*, Marx establishes the foundation of a new materialism centered on "human society or the human side of society," repeatedly emphasizing "revolutionary practice." From this dialectical perspective on practice, he articulates the historical aim of new materialism, which opposes the foundation of old materialism in "civil society." Consequently, new materialism inherently challenges civil society [11]. To overcome civil society, it becomes necessary to transform the world through "revolutionary practice." The Theses delineates its theoretical mission by providing the proletariat with intellectual tools and actionable guidelines, urging the working class to unite against unjust systems and dismantle the class-based structures of oppression and exploitation that constrain humanity, thereby advancing toward a more equitable society.

Thus, *The Theses on Feuerbach* guides the proletariat in overcoming their constraints through practical means, offering a pathway for the establishment of a more just and equitable society. In doing so, it enriches the discourse on societal transformation and revolutionary practice, thereby contributing to the development of scientific socialism [5].

#### 4.3. The Theses on Feuerbach Providing Scientific Guidance for the Workers' Movement

*The Theses on Feuerbach* emerged during a period of intensified workers' movements. Whether influenced by significant workers' uprisings or the widespread revolutions of 1848 in Europe, the Theses emphasized revolutionary practice and critiqued the limitations of old materialism, addressing the deficiencies of idealism. This provided the workers' movement with a theoretical foundation grounded in practice, empowering the proletariat to confidently raise the banner of resistance and overcome the societal constraints of oppression [12].

### 5. Academic Frontiers

Earlier scholars studying *The Theses on Feuerbach* often focused on specific details, emphasizing the elaboration of particular core ideas within the text. This article selects representative works from various studies that analyze these core ideas individually and provides an overview of their contributions [13].

#### 5.1. Research on the Concept of Practice in The Theses

One scholar argues that *The Theses* introduces practice as the fundamental distinction between the old and new philosophies, while *The German Ideology* presents the idea of changing the world from the perspective of "practical materialism." This perspective particularly emphasizes the importance of "critique" in *The Theses*. It is contended that, in Marx's view, practice inherently possesses a critical nature—it is a critique of all idealism, a critique of all old materialism, a critique of all unjust social systems, and a critique of all oppression, exploitation, superstition, and blind conformity. It is precisely because Marx's conception of practice is deeply critical that *The Theses*

clearly concludes, based on practice, that "the point is to change the world," urging the proletariat to employ critical revolutionary practice to resist the alienating forces and contradictions of capitalist society, thus advancing toward a future envisioned as free from such contradictions.

Another scholar explores the internal logic and dual implications of the scientific concept of practice revealed in *The Theses* from the differing foundations of old and new materialism. Using *The Theses* as the basis for analysis and drawing upon a wide range of Marxist works, it is concluded that Marx's conception of practice encompasses three key aspects: practice as the fundamental mode of human existence, practice as the sole standard for testing the truth of knowledge, and practice as the only means of changing the world. On this foundation, the significance and value of Marx's concept of practice are examined from both historical and contemporary perspectives, clearly outlining its guiding implications for the development of human society.

In summary, regardless of the perspective from which it is approached, discussions of practice in *The Theses* are widely acknowledged and affirmed, further illustrating the important role that the "scientific concept of practice" in *The Theses* plays in refining the materialist conception of history.

### *5.2. Research on the Concept of Human Essence in The Theses on Feuerbach*

A scholar traces the historical development of Western philosophy's understanding of human essence to examine the scientific and rational foundations of Marx's concept of human essence in *The Theses*. It is asserted that, based on human sensory and practical activity, *The Theses* thoroughly critiques old materialism, including Feuerbach's philosophy, achieving a transcendence of its inherent theories on human essence. Furthermore, reflections on contemporary China highlight the critical role of human subjectivity in the path of modernization, critiquing the "absence of the people as subjects" in certain political thought traditions. This approach represents a profound application and interpretation of Marx's theory of human essence in the context of *The Theses* [14].

Other scholars also connect the theory of human essence in *The Theses* with China's development. They argue that the idea from *The Theses*—"human essence is the sum of all social relations"—aligns with the educational principle of "student-centered" ideological and political education in universities. They advocate for integrating individuals into specific social relations in teaching, emphasizing the impact of society in the educational process. This interpretation successfully applies Marx's theory of human essence to guide the development of ideological and political education in higher education institutions.

In summary, research on the theory of human essence in *The Theses* is often situated within the context of democratic politics and educational practices, exploring its implications for development. This approach reflects the logical tendency of the sinicization of Marxism [15].

### *5.3. Research on the Religious Theory in The Theses on Feuerbach*

Scholars analyzing Marx's earlier works that reflect his views on religion provide a detailed account of the evolution of his religious views in *The Theses* and *The German Ideology*. In analyzing the religious perspective in *The Theses*, it is noted that at this stage, the concept of religion becomes more scientifically structured. However, Marx's treatment of "human social relations, class, religious sentiment, and social relations" offers further elaboration, which requires a deeper analysis of religion. This development was subsequently expanded and refined in *The German Ideology*. Through comparative analysis, it is argued that Marx's religious thought evolves in tandem with the social and economic developments of the time, progressively revealing the social roots of religion based on historical materialism. It is concluded that religion will inevitably disappear as the material conditions of its existence change, a process that will naturally occur when humanity enters a communist society.

In conclusion, studies of *The Theses on Feuerbach* tend to take a focused approach, analyzing specific core ideas through textual comparison or theoretical application [13]. This methodological tendency further underscores the richness of *The Theses*, which, though concise, carries profound intellectual depth. The robust theoretical foundation supporting *The Theses* generated significant impact at the time and continues to influence the modern era. It rightfully holds a prominent place in the history of Marxist development. However, academic evaluation and reflection on *The Theses* often remain surface-level, with a lack of deep engagement with contemporary issues. Therefore, the next section of this article will directly confront the objective reality of the rapid advancement of modern science and technology, offering a more profound reflection on *The Theses*.

## 6. Unresolved Issues

### 6.1. *The Hollowing Out of the Value of Practice under the Hegemony of Technological Rationality*

In *The Theses on Feuerbach*, Marx elevates practice to a high status, asserting that human activity should not be viewed merely as sensory or intuitive; instead, it should be understood as an objective, practical activity, strongly embodying a value-oriented approach to practice [4].

However, in modern society, due to the widespread dominance of instrumental rationality, practice itself has become highly instrumentalized. When technological practices are measured solely by efficiency, countless fabricated "scientific fantasies" emerge to secure significant government funding, only to result in futile efforts. When economic practices are driven solely by profit, the market economy becomes chaotic, obscuring the inherent value of economic practice in favor of profit supremacy. When political practice becomes subjugated to technical governance, "administration for the sake of administration" leads to excessive bureaucracy, distorting the essence of human freedom. This "devaluation" of practice results in a loss of its meaningful existence. Under the conditions of modernity, people, in their pursuit of the prosperity of means, often forget the end, leaving the value of practice itself in question. How, then, can the value of practice be reconstructed?

It is essential to return to the "critical" essence of practice [16]. Marx's exposition of practice unfolds within a dynamic of critique, advocating the use of practice to eliminate unreasonable ideas and social realities. In the present day, practice should likewise be used to critique the dominance of technological rationality, clarifying that practice itself is inherently critical. Thus, in technological practice, it critiques the single standard of efficiency; in economic practice, it leads people to resist unfairly profit-driven behaviors; and in political practice, it calls for individuals to exercise subjective agency, seeking spaces for flexibility and adaptation within institutional frameworks. By returning to the critical essence of practice, it becomes possible to break through the apparent void created by technological rationality, making practice a powerful tool for diagnosing the challenges of the era and providing effective solutions, reaffirming both its presence and its rich value connotations.

### 6.2. *The Confirmation of Human Social Essence in the Posthuman Context*

Marx asserts that human essence is the "sum of all social relations," emphasizing that humans are concrete beings whose essence is explained through the interactive activities between social relations and objectification.

In contemporary society, the rapid advancement of information technology, virtual technology, biotechnology, artificial intelligence, and brain-machine interface technologies has introduced the concept of "posthumanism." When artificial intelligence replaces humans in various labor practices, such as AI-generated art or autonomous driving, questions arise about whether these purely technological entities should be considered "human." Similarly, when genetic editing technology intervenes in human

modification, the relationship between practice and humanity becomes uncertain. In this context, the definition of humanity, altered not by social practice but by technological changes, faces unprecedented challenges in confirming its social essence.

It is essential to uphold the social essence of humanity. Artificial intelligence's "practice" should be viewed as an extension of human practice, as it is a product of human rationality encoded into algorithms. Its "motion" lacks autonomous subjectivity and cannot be considered true human practice [17, 18]. Human social essence involves an interactive process—the collision between human subjective agency and objective reality—while purely technological entities operate under algorithmic control without awareness.

Furthermore, within the framework of "interaction between environment and human," ethical practices of "human-machine coexistence" should be established. This coexistence must emphasize harmonious interaction, rejecting the notion of technology as a force of alienation opposed to humanity. Instead, practical rules for human-machine collaboration should be designed. For example, genetic editing technology, despite current opposition, should be recognized as a tool that enhances human potential for better development within future social practices. Consider a cancer patient utilizing this technology to cure their disease—this would enable a more positive interaction with society. Here, technology and humanity are not in binary opposition but coexist harmoniously, ensuring that technology serves the free and comprehensive development of human beings.

In the posthuman context, the social essence of humanity is not dissolved. On the contrary, through reexamining, reflecting on, and accepting technology, this essence is more deeply and comprehensively elucidated [18]. This demonstrates the enduring relevance of Marxist principles, affirming their vitality in contemporary times.

## 7. Conclusion

In conclusion, Karl Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach* remains an indispensable milestone in the trajectory of Marxist thought, representing what Engels famously termed the "genius germination of a new worldview." By situating "practice" at the heart of epistemology and social ontology, Marx successfully transcended the limitations of both the abstract idealism of the Young Hegelians and the passive, intuitive materialism of Feuerbach. The *Theses* did not merely offer a new set of ideas; it inaugurated a fundamental shift in the purpose of philosophy itself—moving from the mere interpretation of the world to the active, revolutionary transformation of it.

This review demonstrates that the core tenets of the *Theses*—the theory of practice, the social essence of humanity, and the critique of religious alienation—continue to provide a robust theoretical framework for understanding the complexities of social relations. However, as we navigate the "New Era" characterized by digital capitalism and the hegemony of technological rationality, the *Theses* faces unprecedented challenges. The "hollowing out" of practice through instrumental efficiency and the "posthuman" blurring of human essence via AI and biotechnology necessitate a creative revitalisation of Marxist principles.

Ultimately, the enduring vitality of the *Theses* lies in its critical spirit. To address contemporary crises, we must return to the "critical-revolutionary" essence of practice to resist the alienating forces of modern technology. By confirming that human essence is the "sum of all social relations," we can ensure that technological progress serves the free development of humanity rather than its subjugation. As we look toward the future, the *Theses on Feuerbach* remains a living document, providing the essential intellectual tools for the proletariat and modern subjects alike to reclaim their agency and continue the unfinished task of changing the world.

## References

1. K. Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach*, vol. 16, Marchen, 2024.
2. Y. Ren and G. Peng, "On the Existential Implication and Practical Value of Theses on Feuerbach," 2021.

3. A. Cornelius-Bell, *Student Activism in Higher Education*, 2021.
4. I. Bruff, "The totalisation of human social practice: Open Marxists and capitalist social relations, Foucauldians and power relations," *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 332-351, 2009.
5. M. Henry and K. McLaughlin, *Marx: A philosophy of human reality*, Indiana University Press, 1983.
6. D. P. Allen, "Is Marxism a philosophy?," *The Journal of Philosophy*, pp. 601-612, 1974.
7. E. Kamenka, "Public/private in Marxist theory and Marxist practice," in *Public and Private in Social Life*, Routledge, pp. 267-279, 2025.
8. R. Kilminster, "Theory and practice in Marx and Marxism," *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplements*, vol. 14, pp. 157-176, 1982.
9. T. K. Pham, "Marxist philosophy and its influence on today's world," *Kalagatos: Revista de Filosofia*, vol. 22, no. 1, p. 8, 2025.
10. V. J. McGill, "Notes on theory and practice in Marxist philosophy," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 217-241, 1944.
11. G. G. Brenkert, "Marx and human rights," *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 55-77, 1986.
12. V. Scatamburlo-D'Annibale, B. A. Brown, and P. McLaren, "Marx and the philosophy of praxis," in *International Handbook of Philosophy of Education*, Cham: Springer International Publishing, pp. 549-567, 2018.
13. E. Engle, "Human rights according to Marxism," *Guild Prac.*, vol. 65, p. 249, 2008.
14. C. Yan-qing, "On the Position of the Idea of Practice in Marxist Philosophy," *Teaching and Research*, no. 2, p. 12, 1997.
15. G. Kitching, *Karl Marx and the Philosophy of Praxis*, Routledge, 2015.
16. C. Lawrence, "Roots of the Marxist Concept of Practice," *Science & Society*, vol. 13, no. 3, pp. 229-242, 1949.
17. T. Bottomore, L. Harris, V. G. Kiernan, and R. Miliband, *The Marxist Thought*, Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1991.
18. T. Tairako, "Philosophy and Practice in Marx," *Hitotsubashi Journal of Social Studies*, vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 47-57, 2002.

**Disclaimer/Publisher's Note:** The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of Publisher and/or the editor(s). Publisher and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.