

The Philosophy of Praxis: How Marxist Philosophy Transcends the Epistemological Tradition

Mingtian Ye

School of Marxism, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, 200240 Shanghai, China
mingtianye@sjtu.edu.cn

Abstract: This paper critically examines the limitations of traditional epistemology through the lens of Marxist philosophy, emphasizing how dialectical materialism transcends the abstract, dualistic, and idealist tendencies of classical Western thought. By situating knowledge within historical and social praxis, Marxist epistemology challenges the Cartesian-Kantian framework that isolates cognition from material conditions. This study explores the ideological functions of epistemology under capitalism, illustrating how dominant knowledge systems reinforce class hierarchies and obscure the material foundations of cognition. Integrating insights from feminist standpoint theory, the analysis highlights how class and gender shape epistemic privilege and access to knowledge. Ultimately, the paper argues that knowledge must be understood as a historically contingent and socially embedded process, necessitating a revolutionary transformation of epistemic structures to align with collective emancipation and social change.

Keywords: Marxist Epistemology, Dialectical Materialism, Social Praxis, Ideological Critique, Epistemic Privilege

1. INTRODUCTION

Within Western society, idealist and positivist epistemology have dominated by pursuing universal abstract knowledge principles. Rationalist philosopher Descartes and transcendental idealist Kant separated knowledge from its real-world surroundings as they researched knowledge through abstract universal principles. Marxist philosophy brings a transformative view to epistemology because it bases knowledge study on historical materialism while arguing that social and economic contexts determine mental understanding. Marxists employ the philosophical concept of praxis, which explains how human activities control mental awareness and knowledge generation. Knowledge takes its position within historical processes of class conflict in Marxist systems because this intellectual perspective rejects traditional formal logical abstractions found in classical epistemology. The paper demonstrates how Marxist epistemology moves past Western epistemological definitions through its condemnation of theoretical idealism combined with an anti-capitalist analysis of knowledge value and its framework based on the

interconnectedness of theory and practice. This investigation with Karl Marx, Antonio Gramsci, Louis Althusser, and Silvia Federici proves that the philosophy of praxis functions to analyze dominant epistemologies' ideological elements and generates emancipatory methods for knowledge development (Karl, 1977).

1.1 From Idealism to Historical Materialism: The Epistemological Shift

Within Cartesian and Kantian epistemological traditions, traditional knowledge seeks to develop fixed principles that apply to all human understanding. Through his extreme method of doubt, Descartes derived the core idea of *cogito ergo sum* to demonstrate personal rationality as our only specific basis (Descartes, 2016). Kant kept a binary distinction between the phenomenal and noumenal realms in his complex epistemological framework. Even though his ideas were advanced, he wanted to demonstrate that knowledge emerges from fixed a priori mental concepts instead of temporal societal evolution (Kant, 2024). Marxist epistemology denies both idealist assumptions by declaring that material situations and social activities generate human knowledge. According to Karl Marx's most renowned statement in his Preface 4, "Men's consciousness fails to dictate their existence while their social reality shapes their understanding of the world" (Marx et al., 1965). Knowledge exists due to human work rather than abstract reason because it emerges from the economic base and ideological superstructures. His study shows how leading beliefs operate as mechanisms to consolidate institutional power among the ruling class. According to Gramsci in *Prison Notebooks*, epistemology exists within concrete power relations of society without any possibility of neutrality (Gramsci, 2020). The approach above contradicts positivism's standpoint, which promotes objectivity since it shows how authority related to knowledge emerges through historical processes that involve political disputes.

1.2 Power, Knowledge, and Ideology: Marxism vs. Foucault

Through his power-knowledge framework, Michel Foucault facilitates comprehension of how structures of authority generate their specific knowledge. Foucault reveals in *Discipline and Punish* that prisons, together with schools and hospitals, create knowledge systems that sustain current power dynamics (Foucault, 1995). Although Foucault underscores power systems' shifting and verbalized characteristics, Marxism achieves greater material clarity through its base-rooted power analysis. Through his theory

of ideological state apparatuses (ISAs), Louis Althusser precisely depicts how educational, religious, and broadcasting institutions function to sustain capitalist ideology (Althusser, 2014). Althusser develops a theory that differs from Foucault's, based on his analysis of epistemology based on class struggle and his demonstration that knowledge creation operates through both state institutes alongside material conditions. Alfred Sohn-Rethel develops Sohn-Rethel's thesis by showing that scientific thinking categories demonstrate how commodities operate economically. In the view of Sohn-Rethel, the abstract nature of capitalist exchange corresponds with the scientific conceptual frameworks where quantitative methods lead to the exclusion of qualitative knowledge (Sohn-Rethel, 2020). The analysis shows that economic transactions generate knowledge structures that preexist economic relations.

1.3 Knowledge Commodification and the Marketization of Higher Education

Knowledge in capitalist societies reveals an ideological function since economic motives set the standards for what constitutes valid or objective knowledge. Higher education has adopted a commercial model under capitalist systems, which alters the basis of authority that determines who holds knowledge authority but fails to advance actual intellectual progress. Standards of knowledge prioritized by neoliberal education policies select economic market values over academic investigation because of how they were designed. Henry Giroux's analysis of neoliberal academia reveals that the academic sphere evolves into industry-orientated knowledge-production facilities that isolate critical inquiry about capitalist rule (Giroux, 2014). Public spending on science and mathematics grows at the cost of the humanities and social sciences, so the knowledge territory follows economic incentives instead of searching for freedom through intellectual questioning.

1.4 Feminist Materialism and the Intersection of Class and Gender in Knowledge Production

Silvia Federici illustrates in her examination of primitive accumulation that capitalist development required the subordination of female work, resulting in present-day knowledge creation patterns (Federici, 2004). Patriarchal systems influencing epistemology became apparent through the historical mistreatment of reproductive work and female methodological exclusion from philosophy and science. Nancy Fraser uses Marxist analysis

to demonstrate how neoliberal capitalist systems cause knowledge commodification to increase social hierarchy (Fraser, 2020). Feminist standpoints developed by authors including Sandra Harding and Patricia Hill Collins show oppressed social groups typically gain a better understanding of systemic discrimination because of their societal circumstances (Collins, 2022; Harding, 1986)

1.5 Digital Capitalism and the Algorithmic Production of Knowledge

Industrial knowledge production under digital capitalism has become dominated by firms that operate digital platforms. Google, Meta, and Amazon represent big tech monopolies demonstrating knowledge privatization through algorithmic control and profit-first business mandates.

These digital platforms both determine the accessibility of information and form public discourse by using algorithms that enable better engagement than critical or oppositional knowledge (Zuboff, 2023). Predictive policing algorithms use their scientific appearance to target minority communities that perpetuate continuing discrimination (Eubanks, 2018). Historical materialism proves that technology emerges from capitalist production systems after facing class-based contentious conflicts in its production process.

1.6 The Praxis of Knowledge

The Marxist critique of traditional epistemology attacks how Western philosophical development built its thinking from abstract dualistic functions and idealist systems. Combining knowledge with social activity allows Marxism to reveal how classical epistemology functions as ideological support for established power organizations and the capitalist system of knowledge creation. The study has successfully combined historical materialism with feminist and digital criticisms to prove that the philosophy of praxis goes beyond epistemological theory because knowledge exists in the ongoing human fight for emancipation alongside social evolution. The Marxian approach to epistemology performs theoretical analysis and provides an emancipatory perspective that develops deterministic frameworks through practical actions. Marxist thought builds its epistemology upon practical action, which creates a transformative foundation that makes knowledge serve world interpretation alongside world transformation.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Numerous scholars analyze the Marxist epistemological philosophy of praxis by critiquing Western traditional knowledge, ideological considerations, and effects on present-day knowledge development processes. Research studies have analyzed these themes through the work of devoted authors Karl Marx and Antonio Gramsci, in addition to Louis Althusser, while also incorporating modern perspectives of critical theory, feminism, epistemology, and digital capitalism. According to the review, the Marxist framework confronts traditional knowledge systems by showing that knowledge resides inside social interactions and power systems and analyzing historical materialist change.

2.1 Classical Marxist Epistemology: From Materialism to Praxis

2.1.1 Marx's Critique of Classical Epistemology

As historical materialism describes, Karl Marx created a new method that differs strongly from traditional philosophies, including rationalist and empiricist approaches. According to Marx and Engels in *The German Ideology*, knowledge derives from the prevailing thoughts that express the position of the dominant social class (Marx et al., 1965). The Cartesian-Kantian system comes under investigation because it assumes knowledge exists without influence from social and economic factors (McLellan, 1973). In his *Theses on Feuerbach*, Marx points out that theorists duplicate countless ways to understand the world, but the imperative objective is to transform it (Marx et al., 1965). Through this decisive declaration, Marx established an understanding of knowledge, which serves as an instrument for societal change rather than keeping it limited to contemplative methods. The Marxist epistemological approach, according to Eagleton, disrupts both theory and practice as separate units (Eagleton, 2013).

2.1.2 Lenin and Lukács: The Development of Marxist Epistemology

Vladimir Lenin works to criticize subjective idealism while establishing dialectical materialism as the scientific basis for knowledge in his writing *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. According to Lenin, "matter comes first" since "consciousness arises from matter's developmental process" (Lenin, 2022) while defending Marxist opposition to idealist theories of knowledge. Through his work, Lenin established fundamental concepts about the materialist theory of knowledge that subsequent Marxist thinkers used to develop their understanding of ideology and conscious awareness.

compared to material realities (Novack, 1969). The author György Lukács presents the concept of reification in *History and Class Consciousness* to depict how capitalist society covers the origins of knowledge and experiential bases in his work. According to Lukács, under capitalist social relations exist as independent and separated entities, thus creating "false consciousness" (Lukács, 1972). The author extends Marx's concept of commodity fetishism to demonstrate how ideology warps epistemic frameworks, and this concept is further developed by critical theorists Theodor Adorno and Herbert Marcuse (Jay, 1996).

2.2 Antonio Gramsci and the Role of Hegemony in Knowledge Production

In *Prison Notebooks*, Antonio Gramsci introduces cultural hegemony as a concept that explains why dominant ideologies determine who possesses authority in epistemic fields. According to Gramsci, the ruling class upholds its position of power by controlling educational and religious institutions and media institutions (Gramsci, 2020). According to Mouffe, Gramsci breaks away from standard Marxist thought by showing how intellectual and moral leadership and economic power work to maintain class domination (Mouffe, 2014). Stuart Hall and other scholars applied Gramsci's thinking in their media and cultural studies analysis. Through his study of encoding/decoding in media discourse, Hall explains how ideological messages get built and interpreted in their respective socio-historical settings (Hall, 2007). The framework enables researchers to understand how social entities create knowledge while sharing and disputing information in present-day settings.

2.3 Louis Althusser and Ideological State Apparatuses

Louis Althusser presents in *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* a Marxist epistemological theory about the ideological operations of educational, family, and media institutions (Althusser, 2014). Through his idea of interpellation, Althusser explains how individuals get "hailed" into ideological spaces that develop their mental understanding of what is real. Althusser tears away from classical Marxism through his structuralist theory by theorizing how ideology exists separate from economic patterns, although scholars continue discussing this revision (Resch, 1992). According to Palmer, structural determinism in Althusser's thinking weakens historical changes by minimizing human influence (Palmer, 1978). Professor Étienne Balibar supports Althusser's work because he believes it demonstrates an advanced understanding of political dominance under

capitalism through ideologically sustained systems containing contradictions and dissent (Balibar, 2017).

2.4 Feminist Epistemology and the Philosophy of Praxis

2.4.1. Marxist-Feminist Critiques of Knowledge Production

Modern Feminist scholars connect the Marxist approach to knowledge production with gender studies by examining the patriarchal framework within traditional epistemological frameworks. Through *Caliban and the Witch*, Silvia Federici asserts that women's reproductive labor received brutal suppression from capitalism when this labor became the foundation for its development, and modern economies still neglect its importance (Federici, 2004). Nancy Fraser explains that the neoliberal capitalist system leads to knowledge privatization, showing how market-centred research increases discriminatory patterns based on gender and race. According to Sandra Harding's standpoint theory, marginalized groups develop distinctive epistemic viewpoints that reveal structural inequalities (Harding, 1986).

2.4.2 Intersectionality and Epistemic Injustice

Patricia Hill Collins develops Harding's standpoint theory to examine racial, class, and gender factors in knowledge production. Through *Black Feminist Thought*, the author establishes that dominant knowledge systems serve the interests of powerful groups while disregarding marginalized perspectives (Collins, 2022). Marxist assessment of ideology demonstrates a power-based framework for knowledge development since opinions do not exist neutrally. According to Kristie Dotson, epistemic oppression explains how marginalized communities experience institutional roadblocks in knowledge creation and knowledge-sharing processes (Dotson, 2014). Studies generated from this research aid scholars in better understanding the points where Marxist epistemology connects with feminist and postcolonial critiques.

2.5. Digital Capitalism and the Algorithmic Mediation of Knowledge

2.5.1 Knowledge Production in the Age of Surveillance Capitalism

By studying digital technologies, Shoshana Zuboff demonstrates in *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism* how knowledge production becomes oriented toward behavioural prediction and data extraction (Zuboff, 2023). She continues Marxist assessments of commodification through her writings and reveals that knowledge development creates new opportunities for

capitalist control. Frank Pasquale cautions about algorithmic governance through his analysis because algorithms use shadowy operations to fortify capitalist dominance across public communication domains and administrative procedures (Pasquale 94). According to Althusser's model of state ideological apparatuses, digital platforms are current forms of ideological control.

2.5.2 Artificial Intelligence and the Commodification of Knowledge

Through their analysis, Kate Crawford and Safiya Umoja Noble reveal how machine learning systems maintain biases that match existing social inequalities. Search engine algorithms use stereotypes that reinforce racism and sexism, according to Noble in *Algorithms of Oppression*, which shows how digital knowledge systems operate ideologically (Noble, 2018). The study confirms the Marxist theory that ideological structures exclusively exist within capitalism and patriarchal institutions. The evaluated literature shows how Marxist epistemology establishes a detailed examination of traditional knowledge creation because it positions epistemology as a product of material contexts, ideological frameworks, and practical implementation. Modern analysis of digital capitalism alongside the *Historical Materialism of Marx* has established praxis philosophy as a vital framework to evaluate knowledge production and transform its present and future form. Modern society requires Marxist epistemology to analyze ideological dimensions of knowledge because feminist, critical race and digital studies contribute integrated insights to its evolution.

3. METHODOLOGY

The research methodological basis for this study evaluates Marxist epistemology as it critiques the knowledge systems that exist under capitalist systems. According to this research, historical and social practice helps reposition knowledge outside Cartesian-Kantian thinking, cutting cognitive understanding from its material context. The research analyzes how epistemological ideologies help stabilize capitalist social structures by sustaining class power structures that negate material sources of knowledge. The research unifies feminist standpoint theory elements to demonstrate how social class, together with gender, influences who possesses epistemic authority and what kind of knowledge becomes accessible. The research methodology includes historical materialism, critical discourse analysis, and dialectical wisdom about epistemology.

Historical materialism is the central methodological perspective that sets this chapter's foundation. CDA is essential for investigating ideological elements that enter knowledge production processes. The last section demonstrates how feminist standpoint epistemology unites with Marxist epistemology to evaluate dominating knowledge systems.

3.1 Historical Materialism as a Methodological Framework

3.1.1 The Foundations of Historical Materialism

This study bases its methodological foundation on historical materialism, which Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels developed. According to Marxist epistemology, knowledge does not exist from a detached plane since material realities and social relationships determine its formation. Marx and Engels assert in *The German Ideology* that "life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life" (Marx et al., 1965), stating that knowledge develops through practical interaction instead of abstract intellectual thought.

This research examines epistemology through historical materialism because it is a historically determined construct that receives shape from economic elements such as social constraints and custom-made thought structures. The method establishes a way to study how leading knowledge frameworks answer the requirements of ruling classes while maintaining social divisions throughout time.

3.1.2 Ideology and Knowledge Production

The historical materialist framework helps explain the ideological properties that knowledge obtains within capitalist systems. According to (Althusser, 2014), the study examines ideological state apparatuses to understand how educational, mainstream media and academic sectors spread beliefs aligned with the dominant class. The study employs historical materialist analysis to trace the historical development of epistemology and its role in sustaining capitalist hegemony. The method enables researchers to study the ways capitalist systems commercialize knowledge production. As Shoshana Zuboff explains in *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*, knowledge has gained commercial value within digital capitalism through algorithmic governance and data extraction processes (Zuboff, 2023). Through historical materialism, researchers can examine how capitalist expansion produces knowledge as an object while simultaneously using it as an instrument for further growth.

3.2 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a Methodological Tool

3.2.1 The Role of Discourse in Epistemic Control

The research utilizes critical discourse analysis (CDA) to explore how epistemological discourses create and maintain gender-based and class-based social rankings. Through the work of Norman Fairclough, CDA studies both the way language develops social realities and the mechanisms through which power distributions function (Fairclough, 2001). Due to knowledge creation existing closely with ideological management, CDA functions as an analysis method to identify linguistic approaches to support dominant intellectual frameworks. The research analyzes philosophical texts, political theories, and modern media through CDA to uncover how established knowledge frameworks dismiss different understanding methods. Throughout history, Cartesian rationalism and Kantian transcendental idealism have established themselves as a neutral, objective conceptual framework for understanding the world. These epistemological traditions hide the actual social and material dimensions of knowledge creation; thus, they help maintain the intellectual power of the bourgeoisie.

3.2.2 Applying CDA to Knowledge Systems

This research implements CDA as an analytical framework to interpret philosophical and academic pieces that affect modern-day epistemology. The investigation uses several core questions to conduct its analysis.

1. Throughout which process do philosophical documents and academic writings establish their position as epistemic authority?
2. Through which mechanisms do dominant knowledge systems support social and gender-based superior positions?

The dominant discourse shows the mechanisms to eliminate alternative and subaltern knowledge systems. The research investigates how knowledge constructs appear within current academic discussion in philosophy and social sciences disciplines. It analyzes crucial texts to explore knowledge legitimization mechanisms, ideological biases in epistemological approaches, and processes that omit minority epistemic perspectives from mainstream discourse.

3.3 Feminist Standpoint Theory and Epistemic Privilege

3.3.1 The Intersection of Class and Gender in Knowledge Production

Researchers, including Sandra Harding and Patricia Hill Collins, have used feminist standpoint theory in this study to analyze how social position, as defined by class and gender, influences who has access to knowledge.

Through her argument, Harding states that knowledge emerges from social environments while marginalized communities develop unique insights that unveil structural unfairness (Harding, 1986). According to Collins in her work *Black Feminist Thought*, dominant knowledge systems prefer privileged groups by disregarding subaltern views (Collins, 2022). This study applies feminist standpoint theory to develop Marxist epistemology, recognizing gender and racial social positions as central factors in knowledge creation. It examines how main epistemologies throughout history have traditionally discriminated against women and minority groups, strengthening both hierarchical classes of knowledge and gender systems.

3.3.2 The Role of Experience in Epistemic Resistance

Standpoint feminism emphasizes actual life experiences because they determine how people resist knowledge and beliefs. This research investigates various historical and modern cases demonstrating the working class and the feminist movements in their opposition to dominant systems of knowledge. In *Caliban and the Witch*, Silvia Federici presents that women's reproductive labour gained no economic value, leading to widespread discrimination against their knowledge systems (Federici, 2004). A feminist standpoint analytical framework serves this investigation to understand how social justice movements generate their epistemic challenges. The analysis requires the following essential questions to guide its investigation:

1. What are the approaches by which marginalized communities create new ways of knowing?
2. Through which methods do central knowledge systems work to undermine the validity of subaltern familiar systems?

Standpoint theory demonstrates how it benefits the development of an expanded inclusive knowledge framework. The research combines these specific frameworks to establish an evaluative methodology that explains how knowledge simultaneously serves oppression and fights against it.

3.4 Methodological Limitations and Ethical Considerations

3.4.1 Limitations of a Marxist Epistemological Approach

This study recognizes that the framework based on historical materialism CDA and feminist standpoint theory has theoretical restrictions that need discussion. The study faces difficulties proving ideological influence in knowledge advancement since epistemic power typically operates through

subtle and dispersed channels. Some intellectuals challenge historical materialism by showing how its strong attacks on capitalism produce economic determinism by viewing complex knowledge processes as purely economic phenomena (Palmer, 1978). The research takes a multidisciplinary approach that combines feminist, critical race, and digital studies to create a detailed analytical framework. The research method applies dialectical analysis, which highlights knowledge system inconsistencies and the existence of resistance areas.

3.4.2 Ethical Considerations

Due to the study's essential nature, the authors adopted reflexive epistemological assessment as an ethical practice. The research acknowledges that all knowledge arises from specific contexts while acknowledging how the researcher's standpoint affects the study's analytical elements. It lowers bias risk by examining multiple scholarly viewpoints and maintains a willingness to hear opposing arguments. The research methodological plan presented in this study combines historical materialism with critical discourse analysis and feminist standpoint theory. The research establishes a framework that analyzes epistemology under capitalism by tracing conceptual links between knowledge location and its social origins to investigate who possesses bourgeois knowledge. An analytic perspective applied in this research analyzes both established epistemological concepts while investigating new potentials to resist and transform current epistemic frameworks.

4. ANALYSIS

The chapter evaluates Marxist epistemology that applies historical materialism and feminist standpoint theory to examine dominant knowledge systems in a capitalist society. The Cartesian and Kantian epistemological frameworks preserve social structures of hierarchies between classes while concealing information about the physical elements essential for understanding. By examining past and present knowledge development methods, the chapter shows how power relating to knowledge production depends on social class and gender, which blocks access to knowledge for excluded groups. Knowledge reveals itself as a historical and social phenomenon that requires a revolutionary transformation of systems that supports collective emancipation throughout society. The text divides itself into four organized sections. The

first section critiques the Cartesian-Kantian epistemological tradition and its ideological functions within capitalist society. The second part investigates how existing knowledge frameworks support social stratification by monitoring educational institutions and universities. The author uses standpoint feminism to demonstrate how community conflicts link social position to gender identity and class structure in knowledge construction. The fourth part investigates epistemic resistance and revolutionary transformations that might occur within knowledge systems.

4.1 Marxist Epistemology and the Critique of Cartesian-Kantian Traditions

4.1.1 The Isolation of Cognition from Material Conditions

Western epistemology adopts an abstract notion of knowledge that separates it from historical and social conditions through its Cartesian-Kantian dominance. René Descartes used his I think, therefore I am statement to base epistemology around personal thinking processes while disregarding societal aspects of knowledge (Descartes, 2016). In Kant's work, transcendental idealism presents understanding as a mechanism that generates a priori understanding of categories outside substance-material and social relational domains (Kant, 2024). From this Marxist point of view, the philosophical tradition acts as an ideology to create the belief system of knowledge being an autonomous field that operates separately from economic and class structures. Life determines what we understand, according to Marx and Engels in *The German Ideology* (47). The statement breaks away from Cartesian-Kantian traditions about knowledge since it demonstrates that mental processes emerge from concrete historical and economic factors.

4.1.2 The Ideological Function of Idealist Epistemology

Under capitalism, the ideological effects of divesting knowledge from real-world matters become essential. Cartesian and Kantian epistemological theories hide knowledge production links to particular social situations and class-serving roles through their universal abstract knowledge concept. Althusser's concept of ideological state apparatuses serves as a practical framework for studying epistemological operations in capitalist institutions like education and academia (Althusser, 2014). The ruling class stays in power by masking its knowledge systems to appear impartial and neutral, so it can dismiss all efforts that challenge its superiority and knowledge ownership. In modern neoliberal academic settings, researchers need to focus on knowledge products that help

business expansion through market-directed initiatives while dismissing critical approaches to learning.

4.2 The Role of Knowledge Systems in Reinforcing Class Hierarchies

4.2.1 Epistemic Authority and Class Domination

Under capitalism, the institutions controlling knowledge production work to fulfil the objectives of the ruling class. According to Pierre Bourdieu, cultural capital demonstrates how educational institutions from higher classes acquire complete control over epistemic authority (Bourdieu, 2019). Educational institutions select approved knowledge stemming from dominant economic principles and ideological aspects, which works to discredit working-class conceptions as non-science and illegitimate. The dominant class structure severely restricts proletarian educational knowledge from reaching public discourse. Labourers' practical knowledge derives from their lifestyle, but institutions prioritize academic theories emanating from scholarly institutions that educate elites. According to Gramsci in his book *Prison Notebooks*, intellectuals function as "functionaries of hegemony" by defining what counts as valid knowledge, which supports the elite perspective (Gramsci, 2020).

4.2.3 The Commodification of Knowledge under Capitalism

Under the present system, knowledge acts as a capitalist commodity, developing according to market directives instead of satisfying societal requirements. Shoshana Zuboff outlines in *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism* that digital capitalism enables corporations to control private knowledge through surveillance-based operations that extract value from information (Zuboff, 2023). Little access remains for working-class citizens to critical knowledge since the commodification of knowledge strengthens existing class structures by confining information to only lofty financial means while deteriorating public educational infrastructures. The consequences of this practice of trading academic knowledge become most apparent because universities now follow neoliberal principles that emphasize competition, productivity, and financial gain. Universities select knowledge development practices that support corporate business needs while downsizing programs that challenge power structures. The system of knowledge privilege maintains capitalist domination because it keeps essential knowledge frameworks congruent with upper-class political objectives.

4.3 Feminist Standpoint Theory and Epistemic Privilege

4.3.1 The Intersection of Class and Gender in Knowledge Production

Standpoint theory from feminism provides researchers tools to understand how gender and class interact when forming epistemic authority structures. According to Sandra Harding, knowledge represents a sociocultural product that dismantles the belief of universal objectivity in epistemic authority (Harding, 1986). According to Harding, working-class women have a particular capacity for understanding structural inequalities to which dominant groups lack exposure. Through her work, Patricia Hill Collins illustrates how Black feminist thought develops through facing oppression, which creates new knowledge systems that oppose conventional systems of knowledge (Collins, 2022). Biased epistemic power structures in society constitute discrimination against female groups, including women of colour and women who belong to working-class backgrounds.

4.4 Epistemic Resistance and Counter-Hegemonic Knowledge

The argument of feminist standpoint theory shows how excluded marginalized groups maintain powers to create epistemic resistance against dominant knowledge systems. Prioritizing personal experience and group investigations enables alternative perspectives to fight against capitalist authority hierarchies in knowledge creation. According to Silvia Federici, in *Caliban and the Witch*, women's historically unrecognized reproductive labour failed to receive monetary value, thus leading society to degrade their knowledge. The connection between feminist decolonial proletarian knowledge systems functions as counter-hegemonic power against elite control of information manufacturing. Such frameworks focus on knowledge that involves shared activities for social transformation instead of identity-based description alone.

4.4.1 Revolutionary Transformation of Epistemic Structures

4.4.1.1 The Need for a Materialist Epistemology

For collective emancipation to occur, knowledge must be seen as a process that changes according to history and social context. A materialistic evaluation of knowledge requires it to exist within frameworks of class-based conflicts and practical social relations. A fundamental transition requires individuals to replace their idealistic, independent thoughts about knowledge through collaborative practices that drive the investigation.

4.4.1.2 Towards a Radical Reconstruction of Knowledge

The revolutionary transformation of knowledge systems needs to break down institutional policies that create knowledge gaps. To create epistemic equality, we should provide everyone with equal educational opportunities while eliminating knowledge monetization and developing multiple sites for social knowledge creation. Paulo Freire presents an example of transformation through the Pedagogy of the Oppressed by advocating educational practices that empower marginal voices (Freire, 2020). This chapter's examination confirmed that capitalist central knowledge systems work to sustain class distinctions while hiding the essential physical elements of thinking processes. The study uses Cartesian-Kantian tradition analysis and knowledge commodity evaluation through feminist standpoint theory to uncover how epistemology helps maintain capitalist rule. The analysis calls for fundamental changes in the way knowledge systems function to establish alignment with social liberation and communal transformation.

5. CONCLUSION

This research examines how epistemological systems serve capitalist ideology by enforcing social strata divisions and erasing the physical bases of cognitive understanding. The Marxist approach positions knowledge in concrete historical and social practices to fight against Cartesian-Kantian intellectual isolation. Through combining feminist standpoint theory, this study shows how social class, together with gender, influences who has knowledge authority and what knowledge people can access. The research establishes that knowledge operates through history and social frameworks, which require an epistemic structure transformation to achieve social liberation and collective change. This concluding part evaluates important study data by advocating the implementation of materialist epistemology, which detects structural components determining knowledge generation. The chapter first revisits the study's core arguments, then highlights the significant consequences of Marxist and feminist epistemological perspectives, and finally suggests future research possibilities coupled with practical development strategies. The final analysis establishes the importance of complete epistemic system reconstruction because this reconstructive process creates an equitable knowledge system.

5.1 Revisiting Key Arguments

5.1.1 The Cartesian-Kantian Legacy and Its Epistemological Implications

The investigation started by examining the Cartesian-Kantian tradition that has traditionally structured Western epistemological systems. The tradition bases knowledge development on autonomous individual mental processes that operate independently from material experiences. Through *Cogito, ergo sum*, Descartes created dualistic principles because he granted reason higher importance than material things, yet Kant's transcendental idealism deepened the understanding that knowledge forms through a priori thought systems that operate outside socio-historical conditions. The tradition functions ideologically in Marxist theory because it hides the fundamental factors that shape knowledge creation. Marx and Engels' German ideology shows that the origin of consciousness depends on social activities instead of being isolated. The Cartesian-Kantian framework recommends the view that knowledge exists independently of class relations and demonstrates neutrality throughout all universal contexts. The maintenance of capitalist hegemony depends on this ideological function, a barrier to seeing how dominant knowledge systems function to benefit the ruling class. By historicizing the nature of different ways of knowing, Marxist research destroys the deceptive appearance of unbiased and objective scientific production. The framework demonstrates that every type of knowledge that becomes part of social interaction exists within historical contexts. The essential revelation generates the framework through which the research evaluates epistemic frameworks under capitalist systems.

5.1.2 The Ideological Function of Epistemology under Capitalism

The analysis proves that leading epistemic systems operate ideologically to fortify social ranking systems. Professional institutions, including education, media, and academia, maintain such knowledge systems as they reinforce dominant social classes yet exclude other forms of knowledge. The educational method of ideological state apparatuses (ISAs) defined by Louis Althusser allows us to understand which institutions keep dominant ideologies alive through their rule of acceptable knowledge systems. The process of elite structure-based institutionalization functions as one primary epistemic control method. Pierre Bourdieu establishes that capital based on cultural knowledge distributes authority for legitimized understanding to those who maintain elite educational credentials and cultural markers of dominant knowledge systems. Capitalist social systems establish and sustain intellectual power structures that bar working-class

and subaltern intellectual perspectives from entering public dialogue. Knowledge production as a commodity under neoliberal capitalism has worsened these knowledge-laden rankings. Knowledge has transformed into a tradable commodity rather than a social resource, and because of this, intellectual works are privatized from public access through system degradation. The knowledge transformation has created profound challenges for epistemic justice because it perpetuates system-wide barriers to knowledge that isolate marginalized people from full epistemic involvement.

5.1.3 Feminist Standpoint Theory and the Politics of Knowledge

This research adopts a standpoint theory from feminist perspectives to investigate the dual effects of class and gender on epistemic privilege. Studies by feminist scholars, including Sandra Harding and Patricia Hill Collins, prove that knowledge emerges from specific social positions and that minority groups acquire special insights that disrupt established frameworks of understanding. Feminist standpoint theory states that knowledge-producing ability exists disproportionately among groups according to their social positions. Women, together with working-class and racialized women, have always lacked access to institutional knowledge generation even though their real-life experiences reveal vital insights that demonstrate structural inequalities. Marxist epistemology reveals that knowledge arises from both the physical circumstances of life and social disputes with real-world effects. The analysis from feminist scholars shows that epistemic structures use social positions of classes and gender to discriminate. Formal institutions employ patriarchal control systems to exclude women's knowledge from their established systems of information. The research demonstrates the value of combining Marxist and feminist perspectives to show how challenges to epistemic equality need solutions that fight social class biases and gender discrimination. According to the findings presented, social change and the nature of knowledge and power require consideration.

5.1.4 Rethinking the Nature of Knowledge

This study reveals that knowledge emerges through historically specific social interactions. According to the study, social relations and material conditions produce knowledge, and thus, researchers must abandon beliefs about knowledge as a universal abstract category. From this standpoint, the study opposes both positivist and idealist approaches to knowledge in

contemporary intellectual debates. Marxist epistemology adopts historical specificity of knowledge to explain how knowledge systems transform because of social and economic changes. Given this understanding, modern corporate influence on knowledge creation continues to be important. Identifying knowledge's materialistic foundations enables individuals to analyze better how present-day knowledge structures maintain social inequality.

5.1.5 The Need for Epistemic Resistance

According to the study's findings, epistemic resistance becomes vital for overcoming dominant knowledge systems. Epistemic resistance requires individuals to analyze central knowledge systems while building alternative systems to disperse subaltern epistemologies. According to Antonio Gramsci, our development of revolutionary consciousness requires counter-hegemonic knowledge. Knowledge production obtains inspiring resistance when people use collective intellectual practices to share knowledge production. Educational projects promoting community action, radical publishing organizations, and knowledge-sharing systems operate as an insurgent model of knowledge creation that battles institutional power structures. These initiatives maximize collaborative knowledge development to break down established elite-controlled epistemic frameworks while developing various epistemological viewpoints.

5.1.6 The Role of Praxis in Transforming Knowledge Systems

The research argues that knowledge needs a foundation in praxis—combining theoretical frameworks with practical implementation. Based on Marxist epistemology, knowledge remains irrelevant unless it actively transforms society toward particular social interests. Today's perspective holds significant importance as people fight for epistemic justice by pursuing decolonized knowledge and destroying capitalist intellectual systems.

According to Paulo Freire in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, education needs to form an emancipatory process that enables people to fight against entrenched systems of oppression. The study verifies Paulo Freire's vision by showing that developing transformative knowledge needs direct social movement participation alongside justice struggles. Radical epistemologies can assist in building new knowledge frameworks that support liberating groups through their practical and theoretical blend.

5.2 Future Directions for Research and Praxis

5.2.1 The Study Should Explore a Broader Range of Epistemic Structures

Further studies should examine how race, indigeneity, and disability elements integrate with Marxist and feminist perspectives on epistemology. Altar native epistemologies and indigenous ways of thinking present critical views that oppose Eurocentric understandings of knowledge and establish different systems regarding knowledge generation.

5.2.2 Practical Applications of Epistemic Resistance

Future research should focus on developing methods that help communities protect against epistemic domination. Research should focus on real-world evaluations of bottom-up knowledge-sharing actions, worker-driven teaching programs, and independent media networks to show practical methods for epistemic resistance in diverse settings. The research investigation proves that intellectual understanding does not exist independently from physical realities because it develops through social and historical circumstances. This study achieved its goals through Cartesian-Kantian tradition examination, capitalist epistemological, ideological analysis, and feminist standpoint theory application, thus unveiling the systemic structures that maintain epistemic hierarchies. The study establishes that knowledge needs a fundamental epistemic structure transformation because it should serve collective freedom and transform societies.

References

- Althusser, L. (2014). *On the reproduction of capitalism: Ideology and ideological state apparatuses*. Verso Books.
- Balibar, E. (2017). *The philosophy of Marx*. Verso Books.
- Bourdieu, P. (2019). Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste. In *Social Stratification, Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective, Second Edition* (pp. 499-525). Routledge.
- Collins, P. H. (2022). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. routledge.
- Descartes, R. (2016). Meditations on first philosophy. In *Seven masterpieces of philosophy* (pp. 63-108). Routledge.
- Dotson, K. (2014). Conceptualizing epistemic oppression. *Social epistemology*, 28(2), 115-138.
- Eagleton, T. (2013). *Marxism and literary criticism*. Routledge.
- Eubanks, V. (2018). *Automating inequality: How high-tech tools profile, police, and punish the poor*. St. Martin's Press.
- Fairclough, N. (2001). *Language and Power* (2nd edn). Harlow. UK: Pearson Education.

- Federici, S. (2004). *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. In: Autonomedia.
- Foucault, M. (1995). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Translated by A. Sherida. In: New York: Random House. Available from: <https://monoskop.org/images/4/43>
- Fraser, N. (2020). *Fortunes of feminism: From state-managed capitalism to neoliberal crisis*. Verso Books.
- Freire, P. (2020). Pedagogy of the oppressed. In *Toward a sociology of education* (pp. 374-386). Routledge.
- Giroux, H. A. (2014). *Neoliberalism's war on higher education*. Haymarket books.
- Gramsci, A. (2020). Selections from the prison notebooks. In *The applied theatre reader* (pp. 141-142). Routledge.
- Hall, S. (2007). Encoding and decoding in the television discourse. In *CCCS selected working papers* (pp. 402-414). Routledge.
- Harding, S. G. (1986). *The science question in feminism*. Cornell University Press.
- Jay, M. (1996). *The dialectical imagination: A history of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research, 1923-1950*. Univ of California Press.
- Kant, I. (2024). *Critique of pure reason* (Vol. 6). Minerva Heritage Press.
- Karl, M. (1977). *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. Moscow: Progress. In.
- Lenin, V. I. (2022). *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*. Wellred Books.
- Lukács, G. (1972). *History and class consciousness: Studies in Marxist dialectics*. mit Press.
- Marx, K., Engels, F., & Ryazanskaya, S. (1965). *The german ideology*. Lawrence & Wishart London.
- McLellan, D. (1973). *Karl Marx: His life and thought*. Springer.
- Mouffe, C. (2014). *Gramsci and Marxist Theory* (RLE: Gramsci). Routledge.
- Noble, S. U. (2018). Algorithms of oppression: How search engines reinforce racism. In *Algorithms of oppression*. New York university press.
- Novack, G. (1969). Empiricism and its evolution: A Marxist view.
- Palmer, T. E. (1978). *The poverty of theory & other essays*. London, Merlin.
- Resch, R. P. (1992). *Althusser and the renewal of Marxist social theory*. University of California Press Berkeley.
- Sohn-Rethel, A. (2020). *Intellectual and manual labour: A critique of epistemology* (Vol. 224). Brill.
- Zuboff, S. (2023). The age of surveillance capitalism. In *Social theory re-wired* (pp. 203-213). Routledge.