

Fachbegriffe des strukturalen Marxismus von Louis Althusser u.a.

Ich dokumentiere hier das von Peter Schöttler erstellte Glossar zur deutschen Übersetzung des Aufsatz von Etienne Balibar *Sur la Dialectique historique* (*Über historische Dialektik*) sowie das von Ben Brewster zur englischen Ausgabe des Buches von Louis Althusser *Pour Marx* (*For Marx*; die dt. Ausgabe *Für Marx* enthält kein Glossar).

Vorangestellt ist eine integrierte Liste der Stichwörter des von Schöttler erstellten Glossars sowie der deutschen Äquivalente der Stichwörter des englischen Glossars.

Abstrakt ----> [Abstract](#)

Allgemeinheit I, II und III ----> [Generalities I, II and III](#)

Aufhebung ----> [Supersession](#)

Bewußtsein ----> [Consciousness](#)

dezentrierte Struktur ----> [Structure, decentred](#)

Dialektik des Bewußtseins ----> [Dialectic of Consciousness](#)

Dialektischer und historischer Materialismus ----> [Materialism, Dialectical and historical](#)

Empirizismus ----> [Empiricism](#)

Entfremdung ----> [Alienation](#)

Epistemologischer Bruch ----> [Break, epistemological](#)

Erkenntnis ----> [Knowledge](#)

Ganzes vgl. [Totality](#)

Gedanken-Konkretum / Real-Konkretum ----> [Concrete-in-thought / Real-Concrete](#)

Gesellschaftsformation ----> [Formation, social](#)

Humanismus ----> [Humanism](#)

Ideologie ----> [Ideology](#)

[Ideologische Apparate, ideologischer Effekt](#)

immer-schon-Gegebenes / ‚schon gegebenes‘, komplexes, strukturiertes Ganzes vgl. [Structure, ever-pre-given](#) (ausschließlich Verweis auf: [Structure in Dominance](#))

Konjunktur ----> [Conjuncture](#) und [Konjunktur, theoretische, politische, historische](#)

Lektüre/Lesen ----> [Reading](#)

Marx' Werke der Jugend (Jugendwerke), der Reifung und der Reife ----> [Works of Marx, early, transitional, mature](#)

Negation der Negation ----> [Negation of the negation](#)

,Philosophie' / Philosophie ----> ['Philosophy' / philosophy](#)

Praxis, ökonomische, politische, ideologische, theoretische ----> [Practice, economic, political, ideological, theoretical](#) und [Praktizieren, Praxen](#).

Problematik ----> [Problematic](#)

[Produzieren](#)

spezifische Wirksamkeit ----> [Effectivity, specific](#)

Spontaneität ----> [Spontaneity](#)

Struktur mit Dominante ----> [Structure in Dominance](#)

Superstruktur/Suprastruktur siehe: [Überbau](#) (die frz. Übersetzung für „Überbau“ [*superstructure*] wurde in deutschen Althusser-Ausgaben teilweise falsch als „Superstruktur“ ins Deutsche zurückübersetzt [z.B.: *Für Marx*, Suhrkamp: FfM, 1968, 79; Althusser/Balibar, *Das Kapital lesen*, Reinbek, 1972, 445 <Sachregister>])

Theorie, ,Theorie', THEORIE ----> [Theory, ,theory', THEORY](#)

Totalität ----> [Totality](#)

Überbau/Struktur ----> [Superstructure/Structure](#)

Überdeterminierung ----> [Overdetermination](#)

ungleiche Entwicklung / ungleicher Prozeß ----> [Development, uneven](#) und [ungleicher Prozeß](#)

Verdichtung, Verschiebung und Fusion von Widersprüchen ----> [Contradictions, Condensation, displacement and fusion of](#)

Widerspruch ----> [Contradiction](#)

Wissenschaft ----> [Science](#) (ausschließlich Verweis auf: [Ideology](#) und [Practice](#))

Glossary

[Quelle: <http://www.marx2mao.com/Other/FM65ii.html#Glossary>; neu formatiert und verlinkt, aber nicht auf Übereinstimmung mit der gedruckten Fassung überprüft. [TaP](#)]

ABSTRACT (*abstrait*). For Althusser, the theoretical opposition between the abstract and the concrete lies wholly in the realm of theory. The abstract is the starting-point for theoretical practice, its Generality I (q.v.), while the concrete is its

end-point (Generality III). The common theoretical view that regards theory as abstract and reality as concrete is characteristic of the works of Feuerbach and of Marx's own youth.

ALIENATION (*aliénation, Entäußerung*). An ideological concept used by Marx in his Early Works (q.v.) and regarded by the partisans of these works as the key concept of Marxism. Marx derived the term from Feuerbach's anthropology where it denoted the state of man and society where the essence of man is only present to him in the distorted form of a god, which, although man created it in the image of his essence (the species-being), appears to him as an external, pre-existing creator. Marx used the concept to criticize the State and the economy as confiscating the real self-determining labour of men in the same way. In his later works, however, the term appears very rarely, and where it does it is either used ironically, or with a different conceptual content (in *Capital*, for instance).

BREAK, EPISTEMOLOGICAL (*coupure épistémologique*). A concept introduced by Gaston Bachelard in his *La Formation de l'esprit scientifique*, and related to uses of the term in studies in the history of ideas by Canguilhem and Foucault (see Althusser's [Letter to the Translator](#), p. 257). It describes the leap from the pre-scientific world of ideas to the scientific world; this leap involves a radical break with the whole pattern and frame of reference of the pre-scientific (ideological) notions, and the construction of a new pattern (problematic q.v.). Althusser applies it to Marx's rejection of the Hegelian and Feuerbachian ideology of his youth and the construction of the basic concepts of dialectical and historical materialism (q.v.) in his later works.

CONCRETE-IN-THOUGHT / REAL-CONCRETE (*concret-de-pensée / concret-réel*). In Feuerbach's ideology, the speculative abstract (q.v.), theory, is opposed to the concrete, reality. For the mature Marx, [250] however, the theoretical abstract and concrete both exist in thought as Generalities I and III (q.v.). The concrete-in-thought is produced wholly in thought, whereas the real-concrete 'survives independently outside thought before and after' (Marx).

CONJUNCTURE (*conjoncture*). The central concept of the Marxist science of politics (cf. Lenin's 'current moment'); it denotes the exact balance of forces, state of overdetermination (q.v.) of the contradictions at any given moment to which political tactics must be applied.

CONSCIOUSNESS (*conscience*). A term designating the region where ideology is located ('false consciousness') and superseded ('true consciousness'), contaminated by the pre-Marxist ideology of the Young Marx. In fact, Althusser argues, ideology is profoundly *unconscious* – it is a structure imposed involuntarily on the majority of men.

CONTRADICTION (*contradiction*). A term for the articulation of a practice (q.v.) into the complex whole of the social formation (q.v.). Contradictions may be antagonistic or non-antagonistic according to whether their state of overdetermination (q.v.) is one of fusion or condensation, or one of displacement (q.v.).

CONTRADICTIONS, CONDENSATION, DISPLACEMENT AND FUSION OF (*condensation, déplacement et fusion des contradictions*). Condensation and displacement were used by Freud to indicate the two ways dream-thoughts are represented in the dream-work – by the compression of a number of dream-thoughts into one image, or by transferring psychical intensity from one image to another. Althusser uses the analogy of these processes of psychical overdetermination to denote the different forms of the overdetermination (q.v.) of contradictions in the Marxist theory of history. In periods of stability the essential contradictions of the social formation are neutralized by displacement; in a revolutionary situation, however, they may condense or fuse into a revolutionary rupture.

DEVELOPMENT, UNEVEN (*développement inégal*). A concept of Lenin and Mao Tse-tung: the overdetermination (q.v.) of all the contradictions in a social formation (q.v.) means that none can develop simply; the different overdeterminations in different times and places result in quite different patterns of social development.

DIALECTIC OF CONSCIOUSNESS (*dialectique de la conscience*). The Hegelian dialectic, or any dialectic where the various elements or moments are externalizations of a single, simple, internal principle, as Rome in Hegel's Philosophy of History is an expression of the abstract legal personality, etc.

EFFECTIVITY, SPECIFIC (*efficacité spécifique*). The character- [251] istic of Marx's later theory: the different aspects of the social formation are not related as in Hegel's dialectic of consciousness (q.v.) as phenomena and essence, each has its precise influence on the complex totality, the structure in dominance (q.v.). Thus base and superstructure (q.v.) must not be conceived as vulgar Marxism conceives them, as essence and phenomenon, the State and ideology are not mere expressions of the economy, they are autonomous within a structured whole where one aspect is dominant, this dominance being determined in the last instance by the economy.

EMPIRICISM (*empirisme*). Althusser uses the concept of empiricism in a very wide sense to include all 'epistemologies' that oppose a given subject to a given object and call knowledge the abstraction by the subject of the essence of the object. Hence the knowledge of the object is part of the object itself. This remains true whatever the nature of the subject (psychological, historical, etc.) or of the object (continuous, discontinuous, mobile, immobile, etc.) in question. So as well

as covering those epistemologies traditionally called 'empiricist', this definition includes classical idealism, and the epistemology of Feuerbach and the Young Marx.

FORMATION, SOCIAL (*formation sociale*). [A concept denoting 'society' so-called. L. A.].[*] The concrete complex whole comprising economic practice, political practice and ideological practice (q.v.) at a certain place and stage of development. Historical materialism is the science of social formations.

* The author's interpolations are indicated by square brackets.

GENERALITIES I, II AND III (*Généralités I, II et III*). In theoretical practice (q.v.), the process of the production of knowledge, Generalities I are the abstract, part-ideological, part-scientific generalities that are the raw material of the science, Generalities III are the concrete, scientific generalities that are produced, while Generalities II are the theory of the science at a given moment, the means of production of knowledge (q.v.).

HUMANISM (*humanisme*). Humanism is the characteristic feature of the ideological problematic (q.v.) from which Marx emerged, and more generally, of most modern ideology; a particularly conscious form of humanism is Feuerbach's anthropology, which dominates Marx's Early Works (q.v.). As a science, however, historical materialism, as exposed in Marx's later works, implies a theoretical anti-humanism. 'Real-humanism' characterizes the works of the break (q.v.): the humanist form is retained, but usages such as 'the ensemble of the social relations' point forward to the concepts of historical materialism. However, the ideology (q.v.) of a socialist [252] society may be a humanism, a proletarian 'class humanism' [an expression I obviously use in a provisional, half-critical sense. L. A.].

IDEOLOGY (*idéologie*). Ideology is the 'lived' relation between men and their world, or a reflected form of this unconscious relation, for instance a 'philosophy' (q.v.), etc. It is distinguished from a science not by its falsity, for it can be coherent and logical (for instance, theology), but by the fact that the practico-social predominates in it over the theoretical, over knowledge. Historically, it precedes the science that is produced by making an epistemological break (q.v.) with it, but it survives alongside science as an essential element of every social formation (q.v.), including a socialist and even a communist society.

KNOWLEDGE (*connaissance*). Knowledge is the product of theoretical practice (q.v.); it is Generalities III (q.v.). As such it is clearly distinct from the practical recognition (*reconnaissance*) of a theoretical problem.

MATERIALISM, DIALECTICAL AND HISTORICAL (*matérialisme, dialectique et historique*). Historicists, even those who claim to be Marxists, reject the classical Marxist distinction between historical and dialectical materialism since they see philosophy as the self-knowledge of the historical process, and hence identify philosophy and the science of history; at best, dialectical materialism is reduced to the historical method, while the science of history is its content. Althusser, rejecting historicism, rejects this identification. For him, historical materialism is the science of history, while dialectical materialism, Marxist philosophy, is the theory of scientific practice (see [THEORY](#)).

NEGATION OF THE NEGATION (*négation de la négation*). A Hegelian conception that Marx ‘flirts’ with even in his mature works. It denotes the process of destruction and resumption (supersession/*Aufhebung*. q.v.) whereby the Spirit moves from one stage of its development to another. For Marx, it describes the fact that capitalism, having come into being by the destruction of feudalism, is itself destined to be destroyed by the rise of socialism and communism [this description makes a *metaphorical* use of the notion. L. A.].

OVERDETERMINATION (*surdétermination, Überdeterminierung*)¹ Freud used this term to describe (among other things) the representation of the dream-thoughts in images privileged by their condensation of a number of thoughts in a single image (condensation/*Verdichtung*), or by the transference of psychic energy from a particularly potent thought to apparently trivial images (displacement/*Verschiebung-Verstellung*). Althusser uses the same term to [253] describe the effects of the contradictions in each practice (q.v.) constituting the social formation (q.v.) on the social formation as a whole, and hence back on each practice and each contradiction, defining the pattern of dominance and subordination, antagonism and non-antagonism of the contradictions in the structure in dominance (q.v.) at any given historical moment. More precisely, the overdetermination of a contradiction is the reflection in it of its conditions of existence within the complex whole, that is, of the other contradictions in the complex whole, in other words its uneven development (q.v.).

‘PHILOSOPHY’ / PHILOSOPHY (*philosophie/philosophie*). ‘Philosophy’ (in inverted commas) is used to denote the reflected forms of ideology (q.v.) as opposed to Theory (q.v.). See Althusser’s own ‘Remarks on the Terminology Adopted’ [in [“On the Materialist Dialectic”](#). – *DJR*]* p. 162. Philosophy (without in-

¹ **Anm. TaP:** In der Psychoanalyse bezeichnet der Begriff „Überdeterminierung“ die „Tatsache, daß eine Bildung des Unbewußten – Symptom, Traum etc. – auf eine Vielzahl determinierender Faktoren verweist.“ (Jean Laplanche / J.B. Pontalis: *Das Vokabular der Psychoanalyse*, Suhrkamp: Frankfurt am Main, 1994¹² [frz. Originalausgabe: PUF: Paris, 1967], 544). Zugleich wird betont: „Überdeterminierung heißt jedoch nicht, daß das Symptom oder der Traum einer unbestimmten Zahl von Deutungen zugänglich sind.“ (ebd., 545; vgl. auch: Elisabeth Roudinesco / Michel Plon: *Wörterbuch der Psychoanalyse*. Namen, Länder, Werke, Begriffe, Springer: Wien / New York, 2004 [frz. Originalausgabe: Librairie Arthème Fayard: 1997], 1057 f.).

verted commas) is used in the later written essays to denote Marxist philosophy, i.e., dialectical materialism.

* Einfügung von Marx2Mao.com. Anm. [TaP](#).

PRACTICE, ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, IDEOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL (*pratique économique, politique, idéologique et théorique*). Althusser takes up the theory introduced by Engels and much elaborated by Mao Tse-tung that economic, political and ideological practice are the three practices (processes of production or transformation) that constitute the social formation (q.v.). Economic practice is the transformation of nature by human labour into social products, political practice the transformation of social relations by revolution, ideological practice the transformation of one relation to the lived world into a new relation by ideological struggle. In his concern to stress the distinction between science and ideology (q.v.), Althusser insists that theory constitutes a fourth practice, theoretical practice, that transforms ideology into knowledge with theory. The determinant moment in each practice is the work of production which brings together raw materials, men and means of production – *not* the men who perform the work, who cannot therefore claim to be the subjects of the historical process. Subsidiary practices are also discussed by Althusser, e.g. technical practice (*pratique technique*).

PROBLEMATIC (*problématique*). A word or concept cannot be considered in isolation; it only exists in the theoretical or ideological framework in which it is used: its problematic. A related concept can clearly be seen at work in Foucault's *Madness and Civilization* (but see Althusser's [Letter to the Translator](#)). It should be stressed that the problematic is *not* a world-view. It is not the essence of the thought of an individual or epoch which can be deduced from a body of texts by an empirical, generalizing reading; it is centred on the [254] *absence* of problems and concepts within the problematic as much as their presence; it can therefore only be reached by a symptomatic reading (*lecture symptomale* q.v.) on the model of the Freudian analyst's reading of his patient's utterances.

READING (*lecture*). The problems of Marxist theory (or of any other theory) can only be solved by learning to read the texts correctly (hence the title of Althusser's later book, *Lire le Capital*, 'Reading *Capital*'); neither a superficial reading, collating literal references, nor a Hegelian reading, deducing the essence of a corpus by extracting the 'true kernel from the mystified shell', will do. Only a symptomatic reading (*lecture symptomale* -- see [PROBLEMATIC](#)), constructing the problematic, the unconsciousness of the text, is a reading of Marx's work that will allow us to establish the epistemological break that makes possible historical materialism as a science (q.v.).

SCIENCE (*science*). See [IDEOLOGY](#) and [PRACTICE](#).

SPONTANEITY (*spontanéité*). A term employed by Lenin to criticize an ideological and political tendency in the Russian Social-Democratic movement that held that the revolutionary movement should base itself on the 'spontaneous' action of the working class rather than trying to lead it by imposing on this action, by means of a party, policies produced by the party's theoretical work. [For Lenin, the real spontaneity, capacity for action, inventiveness and so on, of the 'masses', was to be respected as *the most precious* aspect of the workers' movement: but at the same time Lenin condemned the 'ideology of spontaneity' (a dangerous ideology) shared by his opponents (populists and 'Socialist Revolutionaries'), and recognized that the *real* spontaneity of the masses was to be sustained and criticized in the mean time in order to 'liberate' it from the influence of bourgeois ideology. L. A.]. In this sense, Lenin argued that to make *concessions* to 'spontaneity' was to hand the revolutionary movement over to the power of bourgeois ideology, and hence to the counter-revolution. Althusser generalizes this by arguing that each practice (q.v.) and its corresponding science must not be left to develop on their own, however successful they may temporarily be, since to do so leaves the field open for an ideology (characteristically pragmatism) to seize hold of the science, and for the counter-revolution to seize the practice. The 'unity of theory and practice' cannot be the simple unity of a reflection, it is the complex one of an epistemological break (q.v.) [in theory. In *political* practice this unity takes another form (not examined in this book). L. A.].

STRUCTURE, DECENTRED (*structure décentrée*). The Hegelian totality (q.v.) presupposes an original, primary essence that lies [255] behind the complex appearance that it has produced by externalization in history; hence it is a structure with a centre. The Marxist totality, however, is never separable in this way from the elements that constitute it, as each is the condition of existence of all the others (see [OVERDETERMINATION](#)); hence it has no centre, only a dominant element, and a determination in the last instance (see [STRUCTURE IN DOMINANCE](#)): it is a decentred structure.

STRUCTURE IN DOMINANCE (*structure à dominante*). The Marxist totality (q.v.) is neither a whole each of whose elements is equivalent as the phenomenon of an essence (Hegelianism), nor are some of its elements epiphenomena of any one of them (economism or mechanism); the elements are asymmetrically related but autonomous (contradictory); one of them is *dominant*. [The economic base '*determines*' ('in the last instance') *which* element is to be *dominant* in a social formation (see *Lire le Capital*). L. A.]. Hence it is a structure in dominance. But the dominant element is not fixed for all time, it varies according to the overdetermination (q.v.) of the contradictions and their uneven development (q.v.). In the social formation this overdetermination is, in the last instance, determined by the

economy (*déterminé en dernière instance de l'économie*). This is Althusser's clarification of the classical Marxist assertion that the superstructure (q.v.) is relatively autonomous but the economy is determinant in the last instance. The phrase 'in the last instance' does not indicate that there will be some ultimate time or ever was some starting-point when the economy will be or was solely determinant, the other instances preceding it or following it: 'the last instance never comes', the structure is always the co-presence of all its elements and their relations of dominance and subordination it is an 'ever- pre-given structure' (*structure toujours-déjà-donnée*).

STRUCTURE, EVER-PRE-GIVEN (*structure toujours-déjà-donnée*).

See [STRUCTURE IN DOMINANCE](#).

SUPERSESSION (*depassement, Aufhebung*). A Hegelian concept popular among Marxist-humanists, it denotes the process of historical development by the destruction and retention at a higher level of an old historically determined situation in a new historically determined situation – e.g. socialism is the supersession of capitalism, Marxism a supersession of Hegelianism. Althusser asserts that it is an ideological concept, and he substitutes for it that of the historical transition, or, in the development of a science, by the epistemological break (q.v.).

SUPERSTRUCTURE / STRUCTURE (*superstructure/structure*). In classical Marxism the social formation (q.v.) is analysed into the components economic structure – determinant in the last instance – and [256] relatively autonomous superstructures: (1) the State and law; (2) ideology. Althusser clarifies this by dividing it into the structure (the economic practice) and the superstructure (political and ideological practice). The relation between these three is that of a structure in dominance (q.v.), determined in the last instance by the structure.

THEORY, 'THEORY', THEORY (*théorie, 'théorie', Théorie*). For Althusser theory is a specific, scientific theoretical practice (q.v.). In Chapter 6 '[On the Materialist Dialectic](#)', a distinction is also made between 'theory' (in inverted commas), the determinate theoretical system of a given science, and Theory (with a capital T), the theory of practice in general, i.e. dialectical materialism (q.v.). [In a few words in the preface to the Italian translation of *Lire le Capital*, reproduced in the new French edition of the book, and to be published in the English translation (New Left Books), I have pointed out that I now regard my definition of philosophy (Theory as 'the Theory of theoretical practice') as a unilateral and, in consequence, *false* conception of dialectical materialism. Positive indications of the new definition I propose can be found: (1) in an interview published in *L'Unità* in February 1968 and reproduced in the Italian translation of *Lire le Capital* (Feltrinelli) and in *La Pensée* (April 1968); (2) in *Lénine et la philosophie*, the text of a lecture I gave to the Société Française de Philosophie in February 1968, and published

under the same title by François Maspero in January 1969. The new definition of philosophy can be resumed in three points: (1) philosophy ‘represents’ the class struggle in the realm of *theory*, hence philosophy is neither a science, nor a pure theory (Theory), but a *political practice of intervention* in the realm of theory; (2) philosophy ‘represents’ scientificity in the realm of political practice, hence philosophy is not *the* political practice, but a theoretical practice of intervention in the realm of politics; (3) philosophy is an original ‘instance’ (differing from the instances of *science* and *politics*) that represents the one instance alongside (*au-près de*) the other, in the form of a specific intervention (political-theoretical). L. A.].

TOTALITY (*totalité, Totalität*). An originally Hegelian concept that has become confused by its use by all theorists who wish to stress the whole rather than the various parts in any system. However, the Hegelian and the Marxist totalities are quite different.² The Hegelian totality is the essence behind the multitude of its phenomena, but the Marxist totality is a decentred structure in dominance (q.v.).

WORKS OF MARX, EARLY, TRANSITIONAL AND MATURE (*Œuvres de jeunesse, de maturation et de la maturité de Marx*). Althusser rejects the view that Marx’s works form a theoretical unity. He [257] divides them as follows: Early Works (up to 1842); Works of the Break (*Œuvres de la Coupure* – 1845); Transitional Works (1845-47); Mature Works (1857-83). It should be remembered, however, that the epistemological break (q.v.) can neither be *punctual*, nor made once and for all: it is to be thought as a ‘continuous break’, and its criticism applies even to the latest of Marx’s works, which ‘flirt’ with Hegelian expressions and contain pre-Marxist ‘survivals’.

A Letter to the Translator

Thank you for your glossary; what you have done in it is *extremely* important from a political, educational and theoretical point of view. I offer you my warmest thanks.

I return your text with a whole series of corrections and interpolations (some of which are fairly long and important, you will see why).

A minor point: you refer twice to Foucault and once to Canguilhem *vis-à-vis* my use of ‘break’ and, I think, of ‘problematic’. I should like to point out that Canguilhem has lived and thought in close contact with the work of Bachelard for many years, so it is not surprising if he refers somewhere to the term ‘epistemological break’, although this term is rarely to be found as such in Bachelard’s texts (on the other hand, if the term is uncommon, the *thing* is there all the time from a certain point on in Bachelard’s work). But Canguilhem has not used this concept *system-*

² **Ann. TaP:** Noch deutlich äußerte sich Althusser in einem späteren Text: „Wenn ich mir erlauben darf, etwas provozierend zu sein, so scheint mir, daß man Hegel die Kategorie *Totalität* überlassen kann und für Marx die Kategorie des *Ganzen* beanspruchen sollte.“ (Louis Althusser, *Ist es einfach, in der Philosophie Marxist zu sein?* [1975], in: ders., *Ideologie und Ideologische Staatsapparate. Aufsätze zur marxistischen Theorie*, VSA: Hamburg/Westberlin, 1977, 51 - 88 [65] – Hv. i.O.)

atically, as I have tried to do. As for Foucault, the uses he explicitly or implicitly makes of the concepts 'break' and 'problematic' are echoes either of Bachelard, or of my own systematic 'use' of Bachelard (as far as 'break' is concerned) and of what I owe to my unfortunate friend Martin (for 'problematic'). I am not telling you this out of 'author's pride' (it means nothing to me), but out of respect both for the authors referred to and for the readers.

As for these authors: *Canguilhem's* use of the concept 'break' differs from mine, although his interpretation does tend in the same direction. In fact, this should be put the other way round: *my debt to Canguilhem is incalculable*, and it is my interpretation that tends in the direction of his, as it is a *continuation* of his, going beyond the point where his has (for the time being) stopped. *Foucault*: his case is quite different. He was a pupil of mine, and 'something' from my writings has passed into his, including certain of my formulations. But (and it must be said, concerning as it does his own philosophical personality) under his pen and in his thought even the meanings he gives to formulations he has borrowed from me are transformed into another quite different meaning than my own. Please take these corrections into account; I entrust them to you in so far as they may enlighten the English reader [258] (who has access in particular to that *great work, Madness and Civilization*), and guide him in his references.

Much more important are the corrections I have suggested for some of your rubrics. In most cases they are merely *corrections* (precisions) which do not affect the state of the theoretical concepts that figure in the book (*For Marx*). They cast a little more light on what you yourself have very judiciously clarified. But in other cases they are corrections of a different kind: bearing on a certain point in Lenin's thought, for example (my interpolation on the question of spontaneity). And finally, in other cases (see my last interpolation), I have tried to give some hints to guide the English reader in the road I have travelled since the (now quite distant) publication of the articles that make up *For Marx*. You will understand why I am so *insistent* on all these corrections and interpolations. I urge you to give them a place in your glossary, and add that (1) I have myself gone over the text of the glossary line by line, and (2) I have made changes in matters of detail (which need not be indicated) and a few *important interpolations*.

As a result, everything should be perfectly dear. And we shall have removed the otherwise inevitable snare into which readers of 1969 would certainly have 'fallen', if they were allowed to believe that the author of texts that appeared one by one between 1960 and 1965 has *remained in the position* of these old articles whereas time has not ceased to pass. ... You can easily imagine the theoretical, ideological and political misunderstandings that could not but have arisen from this 'fiction', and how much time and effort would have had to be deployed to 'remove' these misunderstandings. The procedure I suggest has the advantage that it removes any misunderstanding of this kind *in advance*, since, *on the one hand*, I leave the system of concepts of 1960 to 1965 as it was, while *on the other*, I indicate the *essential point* in which I have developed in the intervening years – since, *finally*, I

give *references* to the new writings that contain the new definition of philosophy that I now hold, and I summarize the *new conception* which I have arrived at (provisionally – but what is not provisional?).

LOUIS ALTHUSSER

Glossar zu Balibar: Über historische Dialektik

[Quelle: Peter Schöttler, Glossar (zu Etienne Balibar, Über historische Dialektik. Kritische Anmerkungen zu *Lire le Capital*, in: Axel Honneth / Urs Jaeggi <Hg.>: Theorien des historischen Materialismus, Frankfurt am Main, 1977, 293-342), in: ebd. 342-343 – das erste Stichwort („Entfernte Grundlagen“), das nur für diesen speziellen Aufsatz relevant, aber nicht von weitergehender theoretischer Bedeutung ist, habe ich weggelassen. [TaP](#)]

Ideologische Apparate, ideologischer Effekt: B. nimmt hier Bezug auf die von L. Althusser entwickelten Thesen zur Ideologie-Theorie, aus denen folgt, daß Ideologien nicht als »Bewußtseinsformen« zu begreifen sind, sondern »materiell« in bestimmten *Praxisformen, Ritualen, Apparaten* (ideologischen Staatsapparaten) usw. existieren. Bestimmte Praxisformen, Rituale usw., die in bestimmten Apparaten verankert sind, produzieren ihrerseits bestimmte ideologische *Effekte*. (Vgl. Althusser, a.a.O., sowie auch M. Pêcheux, *Les vérités de La Palice*, Paris 1974).

Konjunktur, theoretische, politische, historische: gemeint ist der von Lenin so bezeichnete »gegenwärtige Augenblick«, d.h. ein jeweils aktuelles Kräfteverhältnis von Elementen, die in einer konkreten historisch-politischen oder auch theoretischen Situation zusammentreffen. Insofern verweist dieser Begriff unmittelbar auf den von Althusser geprägten Begriff der *Überdeterminierung* (Vgl. L. Althusser, *Für Marx*, Frankfurt/Main 1968, S. 52 ff.).

Praktizieren, Praxen: B. geht nicht von einem totalisierenden, sondern von einem differenzierenden Praxis-Begriff aus, der die jeweilige Besonderheit einzelner Praxisformen oder *Praxen (pratiques)* zu denken versucht. So sind z. B. ökonomische, politische, ideologische und theoretische Formen von Praxis zu unterscheiden. Auch läßt sich davon sprechen, daß eine theoretische Problematik »*praktiziert*« wird. (Vgl. *Für Marx*, a.a.O., S. 104 f.)

Produzieren: B. verwendet diesen Ausdruck nicht nur im ökonomischen sondern auch im theoretischen Sinne; theoretische Praxis ist *Produktion* von Erkenntnis (so bereits Marx in der berühmten »Einleitung« von 1857), ideologische Praxis ist *Produktion* von ideologischen Effekten usw.

Ungleicher Prozeß: im Anschluß an Althusser (und Lenin) geht B. davon aus, daß dialektische Widersprüche und Prozesse stets »komplex« und »ungleich« (bzw. »ungleichzeitig«) sind. Dialektische Gegensatzpaare befinden sich nie in einem »reinen« Zustand der »Entsprechung« (A ist Ausdruck von B), bzw. der »einfachen« Determinierung (von A durch B), sondern sind stets dem anderen gegenüber verschoben bzw. *mehrfach* determiniert. Althusser hat diese *ungleiche* Struktur des Widerspruchs daher als *Überdeterminierung* bezeichnet. (Vgl. Widerspruch und Überdeterminierung. Von der *Ungleichheit* der Ursprünge, in: *Für Marx*, a.a.O., S. 52 ff.)

Peter Schöttler