



ARTIFICIAL SELECTION IN THE INDUSTRY OF PUBLICATIONS: A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SURVEY ON THE ECONOMIC MANUSCRIPTS OF KARL MARX AND FRIEDRICH ENGELS IN TURKISH

Altug Yalcintas

Department of Economics, Faculty of Political Sciences, Ankara University
Ankara / Turkey

altug.yalcintas@politics.ankara.edu.tr

Abstract

Joseph Alois Schumpeter's History of Economic Analysis was published in 1954, four years after Schumpeter died. The author's wife, Elizabeth Schumpeter, edited, corrected, and modified her husband's manuscripts until the book went into print. Elisabeth Nietzsche reedited and republished many books of her brother, Friedrich Nietzsche, after her brother's death. Likewise, many of the philosophical writings of Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and Ludwig Wittgenstein, a number of novels by Franz Kafka, Leo Tolstoy, and Mark Twain, a few of Edgar Allan Poe's poems, many manuscripts by Virginia Woolf, and the diaries of Anna Frank were published posthumously under the editorship of several scholars. In this essay, I ask the following question: How should intellectual historians assess posthumously published manuscripts? To be more precise, is it really significant for readers to certainly know that posthumously published articles and books represent the original views of their authors? In order to account for the divergence and lack of parallelism between the lives of authors and the lives of ideas, I propose an evolutionary perspective on the intellectual history of ideas. I claim that lives of intellectual products, such as articles and books, as well as buildings, sculptures, and paintings, have lives of their own independent from the lives of their authors and creators. Secondly, I claim that ideas are not always naturally selected in the sense that ideas in intellectual history are often isolated from other ideas in the hands of intellectual networks, publishing houses, and editors. There are too many humanly factors that cause some ideas to be survived artificially. In other words, ideas are more often than not reproduced by virtue of being published and republished by unauthorized publishing companies and, as a consequence, evolve in such ways that "powerful" (or "fit") ideas are artificially kept up and running. Under the conditions of artificial selection, ideas are modified (or "developed"), not by their authors or creators but by editors and publishing companies, without the approval of their authors and creators. These publications survive the challenges of intellectual life "unnaturally" in the sense that many intellectual challenges are domesticated and thus errors, misinterpretations, and flaws are systematically reproduced.

In order to test the plausibility of the claim that ideas are often artificially selected, I conduct a bibliographical survey on the economic manuscripts of Marx and Engels that have been translated into Turkish from the 1930s to date. My findings suggest that great majority of economic manuscripts of Marx and Engels have been artificially selected in the sense that their works have not only been "translated" but also modified in various ways by editors and publication houses. Some of my findings are the following: one of the first Turkish translations of Marx's works was published in 1933. It was only 128 pages. Many of the works of Marx and Engels, such as Grundrisse, have been only published in shortened forms, followed by prefaces or subtexts that often include irrelevant, arbitrary, and erroneous information about the authors and their publications. The most available Turkish translations of Capital and Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, amongst others, were translated from their English or French editions. In many book stores across the country, several books, the authors of which are claimed to be Marx and Engels, have been published under the following titles: Sociology and Philosophy (1975), Secret Diplomacy in the Eighteenth Century (1992), Woman and Family (1992).





References

- [1]. A. Diquattro. 2011. "MEGA² and the New Marx Scholarship" *Science and Society* 75 (2): 262 – 266.
- [2]. D. Hull. 1988. *Science as a Process: An Evolutionary Account of the Social and Conceptual Development of Science* (Chicago: Chicago University Press).
- [3]. E. Wendling. 2005. "Comparing the Two Editions of Marx – Engels Collected Works" *Socialism and Democracy* 19 (1): 181 – 189.
- [4]. E. Wilner. 2006. "Darwin's Artificial Selection as an Experiment" *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Biological and Medical Sciences* 37: 26 – 40.
- [5]. G. Hodgson. 2002. "Darwinsim in Economics: From Analogy to Ontology" *Journal of Evolutionary Economics* 12: 259 – 281.
- [6]. J. Diamond. 2002. "Evolution, Consequences and Future of Plant and Animal Domestication" *Nature* 418: 700 – 707.
- [7]. J. Goody. 1977. *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- [8]. J. K. Conner. 2003. "Artificial Selection: A Powerful Tool for Ecologists" *Ecology* 84 (7): 1650 – 1660.
- [9]. K. Anderson. 1998. "Uncovering Marx's Yet Unpublished Writings" *Critique* 30 / 31: 179 – 197.
- [10]. M. Musto. 2010. "Marx is Back: The Marx – Engels Gesamtausgabe (MEGA) Project" *Rethinking Marxism* 22 (2): 290 – 291.
- [11]. M. Ruse. 1975. "Charles Darwin and Artificial Selection" *Journal of the History of Ideas* 36 (2): 339 – 350.
- [12]. R. Braun. 1987. "Capital's Last Chapter" *History of Political Economy* 19 (2): 299 – 310.
- [13]. R. Collins. 1998. *Sociology of Philosophies: A Global Theory of Intellectual Change* (Harvard University Press).
- [14]. R. Hecker. 2009. "The MEGA Project: An Edition between a Scientific Claim and the Dogmas of Marxism – Leninism" *Critique* 29 (1): 188 – 195.
- [15]. R. Hecker. 2010. "The History and Meaning of the MEGA Project from Its Inception until 1990" *Marxism* 21: 281 – 292.
- [16]. R. Rosdolsky. 1989. *The Making of Marx's 'Capital'* (London: Pluto Press).
- [17]. S. G. Sterrett. 2002. "Darwin's Analogy between Artificial and Natural Selection" *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Medical Sciences* 33: 151 – 168.
- [18]. Z. Kenessey. 1991. "Why *Kapital* Remained Unfinished" in W. J. Barber (der.) *Perspectives on the History of Economic Thought, Vol V: Themes in Pre-Classical, Classical, and Marxian Economics* (EE): 119 – 133.