

The Foundation of Historical Materialism*

[1932]

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The publication of the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts written by Marx in 1844¹ must become a crucial event in the history of Marxist studies. These manuscripts could put the discussion about the origins and original meaning of historical materialism, and the entire theory of 'scientific socialism', on a new footing. They also make it possible to pose the question of the actual connections between Marx and Hegel in a more fruitful and promising way.

Not only does the fragmentary nature of the Manuscripts (substantial sections seem to have been lost and the analysis often breaks off at the crucial points; there are no final drafts ready for publication) necessitate a detailed interpretation constantly relating individual passages to the overall context, but the text also demands an exceptionally high level of technical knowledge on the part of the reader. For, if I may anticipate, we are dealing with a philosophical critique of political economy and its philosophical foundation as a theory of revolution.

It is necessary to place such strong emphasis on the difficulties involved right at the outset, in order to avert the danger that these manuscripts will once again be taken too lightly and hastily put into the usual compartments and schemata of Marx scholarship. This danger is all the greater because all the familiar categories of the subsequent critique of political economy are already found together in this work. But in the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts the original meaning of the basic categories is clearer than ever before, and it

* *Translator's note:* This essay first appeared as 'Neue Quellen zur Grundlegung des Historischen Materialismus' in *Die Gesellschaft* (Berlin) in 1932, as a review of Marx's newly published *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*. Marcuse quotes a great deal from the *Manuscripts*, and in order to make the source of these quotations available to the English-speaking reader I have given page references to the translation by Martin Milligan (Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1970). The choice of this edition does not reflect any preference for Milligan's translation as opposed to others, except that it is currently the fullest, cheapest and most readily available. A few changes have been made in the translation.

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could become necessary to revise the current interpretation of the later and more elaborate critique in the light of its origins. Perhaps this provisional review of the Manuscripts will suffice to show the inadequacy of the familiar thesis that Marx developed from providing a philosophical to providing an economic basis for his theory.

We are dealing with a philosophical critique of political economy, for the basic categories of Marx's theory here arise out of his emphatic confrontation with the philosophy of Hegel (e.g. labour, objectification, alienation, supersession, property). This does not mean that Hegel's 'method' is transformed and taken over, put into a new context and brought to life. Rather, Marx goes back to the problems at the root of Hegel's philosophy (which originally determined his method), independently appropriates their real content and thinks it through to a further stage. The great importance of the new manuscripts further lies in the fact that they contain the first documentary evidence that Marx concerned himself explicitly with Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*, 'the true point of origin and the secret of the Hegelian philosophy' (p. 173).

If Marx's discussion of the basic problems of Hegel's philosophy informed the foundation of his theory it can no longer be said that this foundation simply underwent a transformation from a philosophical to an economic basis and that in its subsequent (economic) form philosophy had been overcome and 'finished' once and for all. Perhaps the foundation includes the philosophical basis in all its stages. This is not invalidated by the fact that its sense and purpose are not at all philosophical but practical and revolutionary: the overthrow of the capitalist system through the economic and political struggle of the proletariat. What must be seen and understood is that economics and politics have become the economic-political basis of the theory of revolution through a quite particular, philosophical interpretation of human existence and its historical realization. The very complicated relationship between philosophical and economic theory and between this theory and revolutionary praxis, which can only be clarified by an analysis of the whole situation in which historical materialism developed, may become clear after a full interpretation of the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*. I only want to introduce this process in my paper. A rough formula which could be used as a starting point would be that the revolutionary critique of political economy itself has a philosophical foundation, just as, conversely, the philosophy underlying it already contains revolutionary praxis. The theory is in itself a practical one; praxis does not only come at the end but is already present in the beginning of the theory. To engage in praxis is not to tread on alien ground, external to the theory.

With these introductory remarks we can proceed to describe the overall content of the Manuscripts. Marx himself describes their purpose as the critique of political economy – a 'positive' critique, and thus one which, by revealing the mistakes of political economy and its inadequacy for the subject, also provides it with a basis to make it adequate for its task. The positive critique of political economy is thus a critical foundation of political economy. Within this critique the idea of political economy is completely transformed: it becomes the science of the necessary conditions for the communist revolution. This revolution itself signifies – quite apart from economic upheavals – a revolution in the whole history of man and the definition of his being: 'This communism ... is the genuine resolution of the conflict between man and nature and between man and man – the true resolution of the strife between existence and essence, between objectification and self-confirmation, between freedom and necessity, between the individual and the species. Communism is the riddle of history solved, and it knows itself to be this solution' (p. 135).

If political economy can gain such central importance it is clear that, from a critical point of view, it must be treated from the outset as more than just another science or specialized scientific field. Instead it must be seen as the scientific expression of a problematic which involves the whole being of man. Thus we must begin by considering more closely what sort of political economy is here subject to criticism.

Political economy is criticized as the scientific justification or concealment of the total 'estrangement' and 'devaluation' of human reality represented in capitalist society – as a science which treats man as 'something unessential' (p. 130) whose whole existence is determined by the 'separation of labour, capital and land', and by an inhuman division of labour, by competition, by private property, etc. (p. 106). This kind of political economy scientifically sanctions the perversion of the historical-social world of man into an alien world of money and commodities; a world which confronts him as a hostile power and in which the greater part of humanity ceases to be anything more than 'abstract' workers (torn away from the reality of human existence), separated from the object of their work and forced to sell themselves as a commodity.

As a result of this 'alienation' of the worker and of labour, the realization of all man's 'essential powers' becomes the loss of their reality; the objective world is no longer 'truly human property' appropriated in 'free activity' as the sphere of the free operation and self-confirmation of the whole of human nature. It is instead a world of objects in private possession which can be owned, used or exchanged and whose seemingly unalterable laws even man must obey – in short, the universal 'domination of dead matter over mankind' (p. 102).

This whole situation has often been described under the headings of 'alienation', 'estrangement' and 'reification' and is a widely known element of Marxist theory. The important point is, however, to see how and from what angle Marx interprets it here at the starting-point of his theory.

At the beginning of his positive critique of political economy, at the point where he takes up the matter of alienation and estrangement, Marx states: 'We proceed from an economic fact of the present' (p. 107). But are alienation and estrangement 'economic facts' like, for example, ground rent or the price of commodities in its dependence on supply and demand or any other 'law' of the process of production, consumption and circulation?

Bourgeois political economy, as criticized here, does not regard alienation and estrangement as such as a fact (the circumstances to which these words refer are covered in the bourgeois theory under quite different headings); for socialist political economy this fact will only 'exist' if and in so far as the theory is placed on the foundation which Marx worked out in the context of the studies we are discussing. We must therefore ask what sort of fact this is (since it is essentially different from all other facts in political economy), and on what basis it becomes visible and can be described as such.

The description of the circumstance of alienation and estrangement seems initially to proceed completely on the ground of traditional political economy and its theorems. Marx significantly starts by dividing his investigation into the three traditional concepts of political economy: 'The Wages of Labour', 'The Profit of Capital' and 'The Rent of Land'. But more important, and a sign pointing in a completely new direction, is the fact that this division into three is soon exploded and abandoned: 'From page xxii to the end of the manuscript Marx wrote across the three columns, disregarding the headings. The text of these six pages (xxii–xxvii) is given in the present book under the title, "Estranged Labour"' (publisher's note, p. 6).

The development of the concept of labour thus breaks through the traditional framework for dealing with problems; the discussion continues with this concept and discovers the new 'fact' which then becomes the basis for the science of the communist revolution. Our interpretation must therefore set out from Marx's concept of labour.

When Marx depicts the manner of labour and the form of existence of the worker in capitalist society – complete separation from the means of production and from the product of his labour which has become a commodity, the balancing of wages around the minimum for mere physical survival, the severance of the worker's labour (performed as 'forced labour' in the capitalist's service) from his 'human reality' – all these features can in themselves still denote simple economic facts. This impression seems to be confirmed by the fact that Marx,

‘by analysis from the concept of alienated labour’, reaches the concept of ‘private property’ (p. 117) and thus the basic concept of traditional political economy.

But if we look more closely at the description of alienated labour we make a remarkable discovery: what is here described is not merely an economic matter. It is the alienation of man, the devaluation of life, the perversion and loss of human reality. In the relevant passage Marx identifies it as follows: ‘the concept of alienated labour, i.e. of alienated man, of estranged labour, of estranged life, of estranged man’ (p. 117).

It is thus a matter of man as man (and not just as worker, economic subject and the like), and of a process not only in economic history but in the history of man and his reality. In the same sense he writes about private property: ‘Just as private property is only the sensuous expression of the fact that man becomes objective for himself and at the same time becomes to himself a strange and inhuman object,...so the positive abolition of private property [is] the sensuous appropriation for and by man of the human essence and of human life’ (pp. 138ff.).

It is not because Marx is limited by a particular kind of philosophical terminology that he so often speaks here of ‘human essential powers’ and ‘man’s essential being’, or, for example, that he calls ‘the established objective existence of industry ... the open book of man’s essential powers’ or wants to grasp its ‘connection with man’s essential being’ (p. 142) and, in the places quoted above, uses a philosophical framework to describe labour and private property. His interpretation rather attempts to make it clear that the whole critique and foundation of political economy grew explicitly on a philosophical basis and out of a philosophical dispute, and that the philosophical concepts used cannot be regarded as remnants which were later discarded or as a disguise which we can strip off. As the result of an idea about the essence of man and its realization, evolved by Marx in his dispute with Hegel, a simple economic fact appears as the perversion of the human essence and the loss of human reality. It is only on this foundation that an economic fact is capable of becoming the real basis of a revolution which will genuinely transform the essence of man and his world.

What we are trying to show is this: from the outset the basic concepts of the critique – alienated labour and private property – are not simply taken up and criticized as economic concepts, but as concepts for a crucial process in human history; consequently the ‘positive abolition’ of private property by the true appropriation of human reality will revolutionize the entire history of mankind. Bourgeois political economy has to be basically transformed in the critique for this very reason: it never gets to see man who is its real subject. It disregards the essence of man and his history and is thus in the profoundest sense not a ‘science of people’ but of non-people and of an inhuman world of objects and commodities. ‘Crude and thoughtless communism’ (p. 133) is just as sharply criticized for the same reason: it too does not centre on the reality of the human essence but operates in the world of things and objects and thus itself remains in a state of ‘estrangement’. This type of communism only replaces individual private property by ‘universal private property’ (p. 132); ‘it wants to destroy everything which is not capable of being possessed by all as private property. It wants to do away by force with talent, etc. For it, the sole purpose of life and existence is direct, physical possession. The task of the labourer is not done away with, but extended to all men’ (pp. 133ff.).

The objections to the absolute economism of Marxist theory, which have been thoughtlessly raised time and again right up to the present day, were already raised here by Marx himself against the crude communism which he opposed: for him the latter is merely the simple ‘negation’ of capitalism and as such exists on the same level as capitalism – but it is precisely that level which Marx wants to abolish.

Before starting our interpretation we need to avert another possible misunderstanding. If Marx’s critique of political economy and his foundation of revolutionary theory are here dealt with as philosophy this does not mean that thereby ‘only theoretical’ philosophical matters will be included, which minimize the concrete historical situation (of the proletariat in

capitalism) and its praxis. The starting point, the basis and the goal of this investigation is precisely the particular historical situation and the praxis which is revolutionizing it. Regarding the situation and praxis from the aspect of the history of man's essence makes the acutely practical nature of the critique even more trenchant and sharp: the fact that capitalist society calls into question not only economic facts and objects but the entire 'existence' of man and 'human reality' is for Marx the decisive justification for the proletarian revolution as a total and radical revolution, unconditionally excluding any partial upheaval or 'evolution'. The justification does not lie outside or behind the concepts of alienation and estrangement – it is precisely this alienation and estrangement itself. All attempts to dismiss the philosophical content of Marx's theory or to gloss over it in embarrassment reveal a complete failure to recognize the historical origin of the theory: they set out from an essential separation of philosophy, economics and revolutionary praxis, which is a product of the reification against which Marx fought and which he had already overcome at the beginning of his critique.

I

In capitalist society labour not only produces commodities (i.e. goods which can be freely sold on the market), but also produces 'itself and the worker as a commodity', the worker becoming 'an ever cheaper commodity the more commodities he creates' (pp. 107ff.). The worker not only loses the product of his own labour and creates alien objects for alien people; he is not only 'depressed spiritually and physically to the condition of a machine' through the increasing division and mechanization of labour, so that 'from being a man [he] becomes an abstract activity and a belly' (p. 68) – but he even has to 'sell himself and his human identity' (p. 70), i.e. he must himself become a commodity in order to exist as a physical subject. So instead of being an expression of the whole man, labour is his alienation; instead of being the full and free realization of man it has become a 'loss of realization'. 'So much does labour's realization appear as loss of realization that the worker loses realization to the point of starving to death' (p. 108).

It should be noted that even in this depiction of the 'economic fact' of alienated labour the simple economic description is constantly broken through: the economic 'condition' of labour is cast back onto the 'existence' of the working man (p. 67); beyond the sphere of economic relations the alienation and estrangement of labour concern the essence and reality of man as 'man' and only for this reason can the loss of the object of labour acquire such central significance. Marx makes this quite clear when he states that the 'fact' he has just described is the 'expression' of a more general state of affairs: 'This fact expresses merely that the object which labour produces – labour's product – confronts it as something alien, as a power independent of the producer. The product of labour is labour which has been embodied in an object, which has become material: it is the objectification of labour' (p. 108), and when he says: 'All these consequences' (of the capitalist economic system) 'result from the fact that the worker is related to the product of his labour as to an alien object' (ibid.). The economic fact of estrangement and reification² is thus grounded in a particular attitude by man (as a worker) towards the object (of his labour). 'Alienated labour' must now be understood in the sense of this kind of relation of man to the object, and no longer as a purely economic condition. 'The alienation of the worker in his product means not only that his labour becomes an object, an external existence, but that it exists outside him, independently, as something alien to him, and that it becomes a power on its own confronting him. It means that the life which he has conferred on the object confronts him as something hostile and alien' (pp. 108ff.). And it will further be shown that the economic fact of 'private property' too is grounded in the situation of alienated labour, understood as the activity of man: 'Private property is thus the product, the result, the necessary consequence, of alienated labour, of the external relation of the worker to nature and to himself' (p. 117).

An amazing, idealistic distortion of the actual facts seems to have taken place here: an economic fact is supposed to have its roots in a general concept and in the relation of man to the object. 'Private property thus results by analysis from the concept of alienated labour' *ibid.*) – this is Marx, not Hegel, writing! The apparent distortion expresses one of the crucial discoveries of Marx's theory: the breakthrough from economic fact to human factors, from fact (*Tat'sache*) to act (*Tat'handlung*), and the comprehension of fixed 'situations' and their laws (which in their reified form are out of man's power) in motion, in the course of their historical development (out of which they have fallen and become fixed). (Cf. the programmatic introduction of the new approach to the problem on pp. 118–19). We cannot go into the revolutionary significance of this method here; we shall continue to pursue the line of approach outlined at the beginning.

If the concept of alienated labour includes the relation of man to the object (and, as we shall see, himself) then the concept of labour as such must also cover a human activity (and not an economic condition). And if the alienation of labour signifies the total loss of realization and the estrangement of the human essence then labour itself must be grasped as the real expression and realization of the human essence. But that means once again that it is used as a philosophical category. Despite the above development of the subject we would be loth to use the often misused term ontology in connection with Marx's theory, if Marx himself had not expressly used it here: thus he says that only 'through the medium of private property does the ontological essence of human passion come into being, in its totality as in its humanity',³ and he suggests that 'man's feelings, passions, etc., are not merely anthropological phenomena ... but truly ontological affirmations of being (of nature)' (*ibid.*).⁴

Marx's positive definitions of labour are almost all given as counter-concepts to the definition of alienated labour, and yet the ontological nature of this concept is clearly expressed in them. We shall extract three of the most important formulations: 'Labour is man's coming-to-be for himself within alienation, or as alienated man' (p. 177), it is 'man's act of self-creation or self-objectification' (p. 188), 'life-activity, productive life itself' (p. 113). All three of these formulations, even if they did not occur within the context of Marx's explicit examination of Hegel, would still point to Hegel's ontological concept of labour.⁵ The basic concept of Marx's critique, the concept of alienated labour, does in fact arise from his examination of Hegel's category of objectification, a category developed for the first time in the *Phenomenology of Mind* around the concept of labour.⁶ The *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* are direct evidence of the fact that Marx's theory has its roots in the centre of Hegel's philosophical problematic.

We can deduce the following from these definitions of labour: labour is 'man's act of self-creation', i.e. the activity through and in which man really first becomes what he is by his nature as man. He does this in such a way that this becoming and being are there for himself, so that he can know and 'regard' himself as what he is (man's 'becoming-for-himself'). Labour is a knowing and conscious activity: in his labour man relates to himself and to the object of his labour; he is not directly one with his labour but can, as it were, confront it and oppose it (through which, as we shall see, human labour fundamentally distinguishes itself as 'universal' and 'free' production from the 'unmediated' production of, for example, the nest-building animal). The fact that man in his labour is there 'for himself' in objective form is closely related to the second point: man is an 'objective' or, more exactly, an 'objectifying' being. Man can only realize his essence if he realizes it as something objective, by using his 'essential powers' to produce an 'external', 'material', objective world. It is in his work in this world (in the broadest sense) that he is real and effective. 'In creating a world of objects by his practical activity, in his work upon inorganic nature, man proves himself a conscious species being ...' (p. 113). In this activity man shows himself as the human being he is according to his 'species' as distinct from animal, vegetable and inorganic being (we will examine the central concept of objectification at a later stage below). Labour, understood in this way, is the specifically human 'affirmation of

being' in which human existence is realized and confirmed.

Thus even the most provisional and general characterization of Marx's concept of labour has led far beyond the economic sphere into a dimension in which the subject of the investigation is human existence in its totality. The interpretation cannot progress any further before this dimension has been described. We must first answer the question of how and from what starting-point Marx defines man's existence and essence. The answer to this question is a prerequisite for understanding what is really meant by the concept of estranged labour and for understanding the whole foundation of revolutionary theory.

II

There are two passages in the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts in which Marx gives an explicit definition of man, encompassing the totality of human existence: on pages 112–14 and 179–83. Even if they are only a sketchy outline, these passages give a clear enough indication of the real basis of Marx's critique. On several occasions (pp. 135, 137, 181) Marx describes 'positive communism', which will achieve the abolition of estrangement and reification, as 'humanism' – a terminological hint that for him the basis is a particular kind of realization of the human essence. The development of this humanism, as far as it is a positive definition of the human essence, is here primarily influenced by Feuerbach: as early as in the preface we read: 'positive criticism as a whole – and therefore also German positive criticism of political economy – owes its true foundation to the discoveries of Feuerbach' (p. 236, note 3), and 'it is only with Feuerbach that positive, humanistic and naturalistic criticism begins' (p. 64). Later the 'establishment of true materialism and of real science' is described as Feuerbach's 'great achievement' (p. 172). In our interpretation, however, we shall not follow the road of philosophical history and trace the development of 'humanism' from Hegel through Feuerbach to Marx, but attempt to unfold the problem from Marx's text itself.

'Man is a species being, not only because in practice and in theory he adopts the species as his object (his own as well as those of other things), but – and this is only another way of expressing it – also because he treats himself as the actual, living, species; because he treats himself as a universal and therefore a free being' (p. 112). The definition of man as a 'species being' has done a lot of damage in Marx-scholarship; our passage is so valuable because it exposes the real origins of Marx's concept of 'species'. Man is a 'species being', i.e. a being which has the 'species' (his own and that of the rest of existence) as its object. The species of a being is that which this being is according to its 'stock' and 'origin'; it is the 'principle' of its being that is common to all the particular features of what it is: the general essence of this being. If man can make the species of every being into his object, the general essence of every being can become objective for him: he can possess every being as that which it is in its essence. It is for this reason (and this is expressed in the second half of the sentence quoted) that he can relate freely to every being: he is not limited to the particular actual state of the being and his immediate relationship to it, but he can take the being as it is in its essence beyond its immediate, particular, actual state; he can recognize and grasp the possibilities contained in every being; he can exploit, alter, mould, treat and take further ('pro-duce') any being according to its 'inherent standard' (p. 114). Labour, as the specifically human 'life activity', has its roots in man's nature as a 'species being'; it presupposes man's ability to relate to the 'general' aspect of objects and to the possibilities contained in it. Specifically human freedom has its roots in man's ability to relate to his own species: the self-realization and 'self-creation' of man. The relationship of man as a species being to his objects is then more closely defined by means of the concept of free labour (free productions).

Man as a species being is a 'universal' being: every being can for him become objective in its 'species character'; his existence is a universal relationship to objectivity. He has to include these 'theoretically' objective things in his praxis; he must make them the object of his

‘life activity’ and work on them. The whole of ‘nature’ is the medium of his human life; it is man’s means of life; it is his prerequisite, which he must take up and reintroduce into his praxis. Man cannot simply accept the objective world or merely come to terms with it; he must appropriate it; he has to transform the objects of this world into organs of his life, which becomes effective in and through them. ‘The universality of man appears in practice precisely in the universality which makes all nature his inorganic body – both inasmuch as nature is (1) his direct means of life and (2) the material, the object, and the instrument of his life activity. Nature is man’s inorganic body – nature, that is, in so far as it is not itself the human body’ (p. 112).

The thesis of nature as a means for man implies more than merely that man is dependent simply for his physical survival on objective, organic and inorganic nature as a means of life, or that under the direct pressure of his ‘needs’ he ‘produces’ (appropriates, treats, prepares, etc.) the objective world as objects for food, clothing, accommodation, etc. Marx here explicitly speaks of ‘spiritual, inorganic nature’, ‘spiritual nourishment’ and ‘man’s physical and spiritual life’ (p. 112). This is why the universality of man – as distinct from the essentially limited nature of animals – is freedom, for an animal ‘produces only under the dominion of immediate physical need’ while man ‘only truly produces in freedom therefrom’ (p. 113). An animal thus only produces itself and ‘what it immediately needs for itself or its young. It produces one-sidedly, whilst man produces universally’ (ibid.). Man does not have objects merely as the environment of his immediate life activity and does not treat them merely as objects of his immediate needs. He can ‘confront’ any object and exhaust and realize its inner possibilities in his labour. He can produce ‘in accordance with the laws of beauty’ and not merely in accordance with the standard of his own needs (p. 114). In this freedom man reproduces ‘the whole of nature’, and through transformation and appropriation furthers it, along with his own life, even when this production does not satisfy an immediate need. Thus the history of human life is at the same time essentially the history of man’s objective world and of ‘the whole of nature’ (‘nature’ in the wider sense given to this concept by Marx, as also by Hegel).⁷ Man is not in nature; nature is not the external world into which he first has to come out of his own inwardness. Man is nature. Nature is his ‘expression’, ‘his work and his reality’ (p. 114). Wherever we come across nature in human history it is ‘human nature’ while man for his part is always ‘human nature’ too. We can thus see provisionally to what extent consistent ‘humanism’ is immediately ‘naturalism’ (pp. 135, 181).

On the basis of the unity thus achieved between man and nature Marx moves towards the crucial definition of objectification, through which the specifically human relationship to objectivity, the human way of producing, is more concretely determined as universality and freedom. Objectification – the definition of man as an ‘objective being’ – is not simply a further point appended to the definition of the unity of man and nature, but is the closer and deeper foundation of this unity. (Objectification as such belongs – like his participation in nature – to the essence of man, and can thus not be ‘superseded’; according to revolutionary theory only a particular form of objectification – reification, ‘estrangement’- can and must be superseded.)

As a natural being man is an ‘objective being’, which for Marx is a ‘being equipped and endowed with objective (i.e. material) essential powers’ (p. 180), a being who relates to real objects, ‘acts objectively’, and ‘can only express his life in real, sensuous objects’ (pp. 181ff.). Because the power of his being thus consists in living out (i.e. through and in external objects) everything he is, his ‘self-realization’ at the same time means ‘the establishment of a real, objective world, which is overpowering because it has a form external to him and is thus not part of his being’ (p. 180). The objective world, as the necessary objectivity of man, through the appropriation and supersession of which his human essence is first ‘produced’ and ‘confirmed’, is part of man himself. It is real objectivity only for self-realizing man, it is the ‘self-objectification’ of man, or human objectification. But this same objective world, since it is real objectivity, can appear as a precondition of his being which does not belong to his being, is

beyond his control, and is 'overpowering'. This conflict in the human essence – that it is in itself objective – is the root of the fact that objectification can become reification and that externalization can become alienation. It makes it possible for man completely to 'lose' the object as part of his essence and let it become independent and overpowering. This possibility becomes a reality in estranged labour and private property.

Marx then attempts to implant objectification and the conflict appearing within it even more deeply into the definition of man. 'An objective being ... would not act objectively if the quality of objectivity did not reside in the very nature of his being. He creates, posits objects alone, because he is posited by objects – because at bottom he is nature' (p. 180). The quality of being posited by objects is, however, the fundamental determinant of 'sensuousness' (to have senses, which are affected by objects) and thus Marx can identify objective being with sensuous being, and the quality of having objects outside oneself with the quality of being sensuous: 'To be sensuous, i.e. real, is to be an object of the senses, a sensuous object, and therefore to have objects outside oneself which are subject to the operations of one's senses', and this passage: 'To be objective, natural and sensuous, and at the same time to have object, nature and sense outside oneself, or oneself to be object, nature and sense for a third party, is one and the same thing' (p. 181). (The second identification also included here will be discussed below.) Thereby 'sensuousness' for Marx moves into the centre of his philosophical foundation: 'Sensuousness (see Feuerbach) must be the basis of all science' (p. 143).

It is already clear from the above deduction that 'sensuousness' is here an ontological concept within the definition of man's essence and that it comes before any materialism or sensualism. The concept of sensuousness here taken up by Marx (via Feuerbach and Hegel) goes back to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. There it is said that sensuousness is the human perception through which alone objects are given to us. Objects can only be given to man in so far as they 'affect' to him. Human sensuousness is affectibility.⁸ Human perception as sensuousness is receptive and passive. It receives what it is given, and it is dependent on and needs this quality of being given. To the extent to which man is characterized by sensuousness he is 'posited' by objects, and he accepts these prerequisites through cognition. As a sensuous being he is an affixed, passive and suffering being.

In Feuerbach, to whom Marx explicitly refers in the passage quoted, the concept of sensuousness originally tends in the same direction as in Kant. In fact when Feuerbach, in opposition to Hegel, wants to put the receptivity of the senses back at the starting-point of philosophy, he initially almost appears as the preserver and defender of Kantian criticism against 'absolute idealism'. 'Existence is something in which not only I, but also the others, and especially the object, participate.'⁹ 'Only through the senses does an object in the true sense become given – not through thinking for itself'; 'an object is given not to my Ego but to my non-Ego, for only where I am passive does the conception of an activity existing outside me, i.e. objectivity, come into being' (ibid., pp. 321ff.). This accepting, passive being with needs, dependent on given things, which finds its expression in man's sensuousness, is developed by Feuerbach into the 'passive principle' (ibid., pp. 257ff.) and placed at the apex of his philosophy – although he goes in a direction quite different from that of Kant. The definition of man as purely a passive being 'with needs' is the original basis for Feuerbach's attack on Hegel and his idea of man as a purely free, creative consciousness: 'only a passive being is a necessary being. Existence without needs is superfluous existence ... A being without distress is a being without ground ... A non-passive being is a being without being. A being without suffering is nothing other than a being without sensuousness and matter' (ibid., pp. 256f.).

The same tendency to go back to sensuousness is now also discernible in Marx – a tendency to comprehend man's being defined by needs and his dependence on pre-established objectivity by means of the sensuousness in his own being. This tendency in turn is subject to the aim of achieving a real, concrete picture of man as an objective and natural being, united with the world, as opposed to Hegel's abstract 'being', freed from pre-established 'naturalness',

which posits both itself and all objectivity. In line with Feuerbach, Marx says: ‘as a natural, corporeal, sensuous, objective being [man] is a passive, conditioned and limited creature’ (p. 181) and: ‘To be sensuous is to be passive. Man as an objective, sensuous being is therefore a passive being – and because he feels what he suffers, a passionate being’ (p. 182). Man’s passion, his real activity and spontaneity is ascribed to his passivity and neediness, in so far as it is an aspiration to a pre-established object existing outside him: ‘Passion is the essential force of man energetically bent on its object’ (p. 182).¹⁰ And: ‘The rich man is simultaneously the man in need of a totality of human manifestations of life – the man in whom his own realization exists as an inner necessity, as need’ (p. 144).

We can now understand why Marx emphasizes that ‘man’s feelings, passions, etc.... are truly ontological affirmations of being of [nature]’ (p. 165). The distress and neediness which appear in man’s sensuousness are no more purely matters of cognition than his distress and neediness, as expressed in estranged labour, are purely economic. Distress and neediness here do not describe individual modes of man’s behaviour at all; they are features of his whole existence. They are ontological categories (we shall therefore return to them in connection with a large number of different themes in these Manuscripts).

It was necessary to give such an extensive interpretation of the concept of sensuousness in order to point once again to its real meaning in opposition to its many misinterpretations as the basis of materialism. In developing this concept Marx and Feuerbach were in fact coming to grips with one of the crucial problems of ‘classical German philosophy’. But in Marx it is this concept of sensuousness (as objectification) which leads to the decisive turn from classical German philosophy to the theory of revolution, for he inserts the basic traits of practical and social existence into his definition of man’s essential being. As objectivity, man’s sensuousness is essentially practical objectification, and because it is practical it is essentially a social objectification.

III

We know from Marx’s Theses on Feuerbach that it is precisely the concept of human praxis that draws the line of demarcation between himself and Feuerbach. On the other hand, it is through this (or more exactly, through the concept of labour) that he reaches back beyond Feuerbach to Hegel: ‘The outstanding achievement of Hegel’s Phenomenology and of its final outcome ... is thus ... that Hegel ... grasps the essence of labour and comprehends objective man – true, because real man – as the outcome of man’s own labour’ (p. 177). Things are thus not as simple as we would expect; the road from Feuerbach to Marx is not characterized by a straight rejection of Hegel. Instead of this, Marx, at the origins of revolutionary theory, once again appropriates the decisive achievements of Hegel on a transformed basis.

We saw that man’s sensuousness signified that he is posited by pre-established objects and therefore also that he has a given, objective world, to which he relates ‘universally’ and ‘freely’. We must now describe more closely the way in which he possesses and relates to the world.

In Feuerbach man’s possession of, and relation to, the world remains essentially theoretical, and this is expressed in the fact that the way of relating, which really permits ‘possession’ of reality, is ‘perception’.¹¹ In Marx, to put it briefly, labour replaces this perception, although the central importance of the theoretical relation does not disappear: it is combined with labour in a relationship of dialectical interpenetration. We have already suggested above that Marx grasps labour, beyond all its economic significance, as the human ‘life-activity’ and the genuine realization of man. We must now present the concept of labour in its inner connection to the definition of man as a ‘natural’ and ‘sensuous’ (objective) being. We shall see how it is in labour that the distress and neediness, but also the universality and freedom of man, become real.

‘Man is directly a natural being. As a natural being and as a living natural being he is on the one hand endowed with natural powers of life – he is an active natural being. These forces exist in him as tendencies and abilities – as instincts. On the other hand, as a natural, corporeal, sensuous, objective being he is a suffering, conditioned and limited creature.... That is to say, the objects of his instincts exist outside him, as objects independent of him; yet these objects are objects that he needs – essential objects, indispensable to the manifestation and confirmation of his essential powers’ (p. 181). Objects are thus not primarily objects of perception, but of needs, and as such objects of the powers, abilities and instincts of man. It has already been pointed out that ‘need’ is not to be understood only in the sense of physical neediness: man needs ‘a totality of human manifestations of life’ (p. 144). To be able to realize himself he needs to express himself through the pre-established objects with which he is confronted. His activity and his self-affirmation consist in the appropriation of the ‘externality’ which confronts him, and in the transference of himself into that externality. In his labour man supersedes the mere objectivity of objects and makes them into ‘the means of life’. He impresses upon them the form of his being, and makes them into ‘his work and his reality’. The objective piece of finished work is the reality of man; man is as he has realized himself in the object of his labour. For this reason Marx can say that in the object of his labour man sees himself in objective form, he becomes ‘for himself’, he perceives himself as an object. ‘The object of labour is, therefore, the objectification of man’s species life: for he duplicates himself not only, as in consciousness, intellectually, but also actively, in reality, and therefore he contemplates himself in a world that he has created’ (p. 114).

Objectification of the ‘species life’: for it is not the isolated individual who is active in labour, and the objectivity of labour is not objectivity for the isolated individual or a mere plurality of individuals – rather it is precisely in labour that the specifically human universality is realized.

Thus we can already discern the second basic characteristic of objectification: it is essentially a ‘social’ activity, and objectifying man is basically ‘social’ man. The sphere of objects in which labour is performed is precisely the sphere of common life-activity: in and through the objects of labour, men are shown one another in their reality. The original forms of communication, the essential relationship of men to one another, were expressed in the common use, possession, desire, need and enjoyment, etc. of the objective world. All labour is labour with and for and against others, so that in it men first mutually reveal themselves for what they really are.¹² Thus every object on which a man works in his individuality is ‘simultaneously his own existence for the other man, the existence of the other man, and that existence for him’ (p. 136).

If the objective world is thus understood in its totality as a ‘social’ world, as the objective reality of human society and thus as human objectification, then through this it is also already defined as a historical reality. The objective world which is in any given situation pre-established for man is the reality of a past human life, which, although it belongs to the past, is still present in the form it has given to the objective world. A new form of the objective world can thus only come into being on the basis, and through the supersession of an earlier form already in existence. The real human and his world arise first in this movement, which inserts the relevant aspect of the past into the present: ‘History is the true natural history of man’, his ‘act of origin’ (p. 182), ‘the creation of man through human labour’ (p. 145). Not only man emerges in history, but also nature, in so far as it is not something external to and separated from the human essence but belongs to the transcended and appropriated objectivity of man: ‘world history’ is ‘the emergence of nature for man’ (ibid.).

It is only now, after the totality of the human essence as the unity of man and nature has been made concrete by the practical social-historical process of objectification, that we can understand the definition of man as a ‘universal’ and ‘free’ species being. The history of man is at the same time the process of ‘the whole of nature’; his history is the ‘production and

reproduction' of the whole of nature, furtherance of what exists objectively through once again transcending its current form. In his 'universal' relationship¹³ to the whole of nature, therefore, nature is ultimately not a limitation on or something alien outside him to which he, as something other, is subjected. It is his expression, confirmation, activity: 'externality is ... the self-externalizing world of sense open to the light, open to the man endowed with senses' (p. 192).

We now want to summarize briefly the definitions brought together in the concept of man as a universal and free being. Man 'relates' to himself and whatever exists, he can transcend what is given and pre-established, appropriate it and thus give it his own reality and realize himself in everything. This freedom does not contradict the distress and neediness of man, of which we spoke at the beginning, but is based upon it in so far as it is freedom only as the transcendence of what is given and pre-established. Man's 'life-activity' is 'not a determination with which he directly merges' like an animal (p. 113), it is 'free activity', since man can 'distinguish' himself from the immediate determination of his existence, 'make it into an object' and transcend it. He can turn his existence into a 'means' (ibid.), can himself give himself reality and himself 'produce' himself and his 'objectivity'. It is in this deeper sense (and not only biologically) that we must understand the sentence that 'man produces man' (pp. 136, 137) and that human life is genuinely 'productive' and 'life-engendering life' (p. 113).

Thereby Marx's definition returns to its starting-point: the basic concept of 'labour'. It is now clear to what extent it was right to deal with labour as an ontological category. As far as man, through the creation, treatment and appropriation of the objective world, gives himself his own reality, and as far as his 'relationship to the object' is the 'manifestation of human reality' (p. 139), labour is the real expression of human freedom. Man becomes free in his labour. He freely realizes himself in the object of his labour: 'when, for man in society, the objective world everywhere becomes the world of man's essential powers – human reality, and for that reason the reality of his own essential powers – ... all objects become for him the objectification of himself, become objects which confirm and realize his individuality, become his objects: that is, man himself becomes the object' (p. 140).

IV

In the preceding sections we have attempted to present in its context the definition of man underlying the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts and to reveal it as the basis of the critique of political economy. It almost appears, despite all protestations to the contrary, as if we are moving in the field of philosophical investigations, forgetting that these Manuscripts are concerned with the foundation of a theory of revolution and hence ultimately with revolutionary praxis. But we only need to put the result of our interpretation next to its starting point to find that we have reached the point where the philosophical critique in itself directly becomes a practical revolutionary critique.

The fact from which the critique and the interpretation set out was the alienation and estrangement of the human essence as expressed in the alienation and estrangement of labour, and hence the situation of man in the historical facticity of capitalism. This fact appears as the total perversion and concealment of what the critique had defined as the essence of man and human labour. Labour is not 'free activity' or the universal and free self-realization of man, but his enslavement and loss of reality. The worker is not man in the totality of his life-expression, but a non-person, the purely physical subject of 'abstract' activity. The objects of labour are not expressions and confirmations of the human reality of the worker, but alien things, belonging to someone other than the worker – 'commodities'. Through all this the existence of man does not become, in estranged labour, the 'means' for his self-realization. The reverse happens: man's self becomes a means for his mere existence. The pure physical existence of the worker is the goal which his entire life-activity serves. 'As a result, therefore, man [the worker] only

feels himself freely active in his animal functions – eating, drinking, procreating, or at most in his dwelling and in dressing-up, etc., and in his human functions he no longer feels himself to be anything but an animal. What is animal becomes human and what is human becomes animal’ (p. 111).

We have seen that Marx describes this estrangement and loss of reality as the ‘expression’ of a total perversion of the behaviour of man as man: in his relationship to the product of his labour as an ‘alien object exercising power over him’ and simultaneously in the relationship of the worker to his own activity as ‘an alien activity not belonging to him’ (ibid.). This reification is by no means limited to the worker (even though it affects him in a unique way); it also affects the non-worker – the capitalist. The ‘dominion of dead matter over man’ reveals itself for the capitalist in the state of private property and the manner in which he has and possesses it. It is really a state of being possessed, of being had, slavery in the service of property. He possesses his property not as a field of free self-realization and activity but purely as capital: ‘Private property has made us so stupid and one-sided that an object is only ours when we have it – when it exists for us as capital, or when it is directly possessed, eaten, drunk, worn, inhabited, etc., – in short, when it is used by us ... the life which they [realizations of possession] serve as means is the life of private property, labour, and conversion into capital’ (p. 139). (We shall return to the definition of ‘true possession’ underlying this description of ‘false property’ below.)

If historical facticity thus reveals the total perversion of all the conditions given in the definition of the human essence, does it not prove that this definition lacks content and sense, and that it is only an idealistic abstraction, which does violence to historical reality? We know the cruel derision with which, in his *German Ideology*, which appeared only a year after these Manuscripts, Marx destroyed the idle talk of the Hegelians, such people as Stirner and the ‘true socialists’, about the essence, the man, etc. Did Marx himself, in his definition of the human essence, give in to this idle chatter? Or does a radical change take place in Marx’s fundamental views between our Manuscripts and the *German Ideology*?

There is indeed a change, even if it is not in his fundamental views. It must be emphasized again and again that in laying the foundations of revolutionary theory Marx is fighting on various fronts: on the one hand against the pseudo-idealism of the Hegelian school, on the other against reification in bourgeois political economy, and then again against Feuerbach and pseudo-materialism. The meaning and the purpose of his fight thus varies according to the direction of his attack and defence. Here, where he is principally fighting reification in political economy, which turns a particular kind of historical facticity into rigid ‘eternal’ laws and so-called ‘essential relationships’, Marx presents this facticity in contrast to the real essence of man. But in doing this he brings out its truth, because he grasps it within the context of the real history of man and reveals the necessity of its being overcome.

These changes, then, result from shifts in the terrain of the conflict. But the following point is still more decisive. To play off essence (the determinants of ‘the’ man) and facticity (his given concrete historical situation) against each other is to miss completely the new standpoint which Marx had already assumed at the outset of his investigations. For Marx essence and facticity, the situation of essential history and the situation of factual history, are no longer separate regions or levels independent of each other: the historical experience of man is taken up into the definition of his essence. We are no longer dealing with an abstract human essence, which remains equally valid at every stage of concrete history, but with an essence which can be defined in history and only in history. (It is therefore quite a different matter when Marx speaks of the ‘essence of man’, as opposed to Bruno Bauer, Stirner and Feuerbach!)¹⁴ The fact that despite or precisely because of this it is always man himself that matters in all man’s historical praxis is so self-evident that it is not worth discussing for Marx, who grew up in a direct relationship with the most lively period of German philosophy (just as the opposite seems to have become self-evident for the epigones of Marxism). Even in Marx’s extremely

bitter struggle with German philosophy in the period of its decline, a philosophical impetus lives on which only complete naïveté could misconstrue as a desire to destroy philosophy altogether.

The discovery of the historical character of the human essence does not mean that the history of man's essence can be identified with his factual history. We have already heard that man is never directly 'one with his life-activity'; he is, rather, 'distinct' from it and 'relates' to it. Essence and existence separate in him: his existence is a 'means' to the realization of his essence, or – in estrangement – his essence is a means to his mere physical existence (p. 113). If essence and existence have thus become separated and if the real and free task of human praxis is the unification of both as factual realization, then the authentic task, when facticity has progressed so far as totally to pervert the human essence, is the radical abolition of this facticity. It is precisely the unerring contemplation of the essence of man that becomes the inexorable impulse for the initiation of radical revolution. The factual situation of capitalism is characterized not merely by economic or political crisis but by a catastrophe affecting the human essence; this insight condemns any mere economic or political reform to failure from the outset, and unconditionally requires the cataclysmic transcendence of the actual situation through total revolution. Only after the basis has been established in this way, so firmly that it cannot be shaken by any merely economic or political arguments, does the question of the historical conditions and the bearers of the revolution arise: the question of the theory of class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Any critique which only pays attention to this theory, without coming to grips with its real foundation, misses the point.

We shall now look at the Manuscripts to see what they contribute to the preparation of a positive theory of revolution and how they treat the real supersession of reification, the supersession of alienated labour and of private property. We shall once again limit ourselves to the basic state of affairs expressed in the economic and political facts. What also belongs to this positive theory of revolution is – as we shall show – an investigation of the origin of reification: an investigation of the historical conditions and emergence of private property. Two main questions must therefore be answered: 1. How does Marx describe the accomplished supersession of private property, i.e. the state of the human essence after the total revolution? 2. How does Marx handle the problem of the origin of private property or the emergence and development of reification? Marx himself explicitly asked both these questions: the answer is given mainly on pages 115–17 and 135–42.

The total estrangement of man and his loss of reality had been traced back to the alienation of labour. In the analysis, private property had been revealed as the manner in which alienated labour 'must express and present itself in real life' (p. 115) and as the 'realization of alienation' (p. 117) (we shall return to the close connection between alienated labour and private property below). The supersession of alienation, if it is to be a genuine supersession (and not merely 'abstract' or theoretical), must supersede the real form of alienation (its 'realization'); and so 'the entire revolutionary movement necessarily finds both its empirical and its theoretical basis in the movement of private property – more precisely, in that of the economy' (p. 136).

Through this connection with alienated labour private property is already more than a specific economic category: this extra element in the concept of private property is sharply emphasized by Marx: 'Material, immediately sensuous private property is the material, sensuous expression of estranged human life. Its movement – production and consumption – is the sensuous revelation of the movement of all production until now, i.e. the realization of the reality of man' (pp. 136ff.). Through the explanatory 'i.e. the realization ... of man' which he adds Marx expressly emphasizes the fact that 'production', of which the movement of private property is the 'revelation', is not economic production but the self-producing process of the whole of human life (as interpreted above). The extent to which private property expresses the movement of estranged human life is more closely described in the following passage: 'Just as

private property is only the sensuous expression of the fact that man becomes objective for himself and at the same time becomes to himself a strange and inhuman object: just as it expresses the fact that the assertion of his life is the alienation of his life, that his realization is his loss of reality ... so the positive transcendence of private property ...' is more than economic transcendence: namely the positive 'appropriation' of the whole of human reality (pp. 138ff.). Private property is the real expression of the way in which estranged man objectifies himself, 'produces' himself and his objective world and realizes himself in it. Private property therefore constitutes the realization of an entire form of human behaviour and not just a given physical 'state' external to man,¹⁵ or 'a merely objective being' (p. 128).

But if an estranged form of behaviour which has lost reality is thus realized in private property, then private property itself can only represent an estranged and unreal form of true and essential human behaviour. There must therefore be two real 'forms' of property: an estranged and a true form, a property which is merely private and a property which is 'truly human' (p. 119).¹⁶ There must be a form of 'property' belonging to the essence of man, and positive communism, far from meaning the abolition of all property, will be precisely the restoration of this truly human form of property.

How can one 'define the general nature of private property, as it has arisen as a result of estranged labour, in its relation to truly human and social property' (p. 118)? The answer to this question must at the same time make clear the meaning and goal of the positive supersession of private property. 'The meaning of private property – apart from its estrangement – is the existence of essential objects for man, both as objects of gratification and as objects of activity' (p. 165).

This is the most general positive definition of true property: the availability and usability of all the objects which man needs for the free realization of his essence. This availability and usability is realized as property – which is by no means self-evident, but is based on the idea that man never simply and directly has what he needs, but only really possesses objects when he has appropriated them. Thus the purpose of labour is to give to man as his own possessions objects which have been treated and to make them into a world through which he can freely engage in activity and realize his potentialities. The essence of property consists in 'appropriation'; a particular manner of appropriation and realization through appropriation is the basis of the state of property, and not mere having and possessing. We must now more closely define this new concept of appropriation and property which underlies Marx's analysis.

We have seen how private property consists in an untrue mode of having and possessing objects. In conditions of private property an object is 'property' when it can be 'used'; and this use consists either in immediate consumption or in its capacity to be turned into capital. 'Life-activity' stands in the service of property instead of property standing in the service of free life-activity; it is not the 'reality' of man which is appropriated but objects as things (goods and commodities) and even this kind of appropriation is 'one-sided': it is limited to the physical behaviour of man and to objects which can immediately 'gratify' or be turned into capital. In contrast to this, 'true human property' is now described in its true appropriation: 'the sensuous appropriation for and by man of the human essence and of human life, of objective man, of human achievements – should not be conceived merely in the sense of immediate, one-sided gratification – merely in the sense of possession, of having. Man appropriates his total essence in a total manner, that is to say, as a whole man.' This total appropriation is then more closely described: 'Each of his human relations to the world – seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling, thinking, observing, experiencing, wanting, acting, loving – in short, all the organs of his individual being ... are in their objective orientation or in their orientation to the object, the appropriation of that object' (pp. 138–9).

Beyond all economic and legal relations, appropriation as the basis of property thus becomes a category which comprehends the universal and free relationship of man to the

objective world: the relationship to the object which is becoming one's own is 'total' – it 'emancipates' all the human senses. The whole man is at home in the whole objective world which is 'his work and his reality'. The economic and legal supersession of private property is not the end, but only the beginning of the communist revolution. This universal and free appropriation is labour, for as we saw, the specifically human relationship to the object is one of creating, positing, forming. But in this case labour would no longer be an alienated and reified activity, but all-round self-realization and self-expression.

The inhumanity represented by reification is thus abolished at the point where it was most deeply rooted and dangerous: in the concept of property. Man no longer 'loses' himself in the objective world, and his objectification is no longer reification, if objects are withdrawn from 'one-sided' ownership and possession and remain the work and reality of the one who 'produced' or realized them and himself in them. It is not, however, the isolated individual or an abstract plurality of individuals which has been realized in them, but social man, man as a social being. Man's return to his true property is a return into his social essence; it is the liberation of society.

V

'Man is not lost in his object only when the object becomes for him a human object or objective man. This is possible only when the object becomes for him a social object, he himself for himself a social being, just as society becomes a being for him in this object' (p. 140). There are thus two conditions for breaking through reification as outlined above: the objective relations must become human – i.e. social – relations and they must be recognized and consciously preserved as such. These two conditions are fundamentally interrelated, for the objective relations can only become human and social if man himself is conscious of them as such, i.e. in his knowledge of both himself and the object. Thus we again encounter the central role which a particular kind of insight (man's 'coming-to-be for himself') plays in the foundation of Marx's theory. To what extent can cognition, the recognition of objectification as something social, become the real impulse for the abolition of all reification?

We know that objectification is essentially a social activity and that it is precisely in his objects and in his labour on them that man recognizes himself as a social being. The insight into objectification, which breaks through reification, is the insight into society as the subject of objectification. For there is no such thing as 'society' as a subject outside the individual; Marx expressly warns against playing society as an independent entity off against the individual: 'Above all we must avoid postulating "Society" again as an abstraction vis-à-vis the individual. The individual is the social being. His life, even if it may not appear in the direct form of a communal life in association with others, is therefore an expression and confirmation of social life' (pp. 137–8).

Insight into objectification thus means insight into how and through what man and his objective world as social relations have become what they are. It means insight into the historical-social situation of man. This insight is no mere theoretical cognition or arbitrary, passive intuition, but praxis: the supersession of what exists, making it a 'means' for free self-realization.

This also means that the insight which defines this task is by no means available to everyone: it can only be known by those who are actually entrusted with this task by their historical-social situation (we cannot pursue the way in which the proletariat becomes the bearer of this insight in the situation analysed by Marx: its content is presented at the close of Marx's Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right). It is not a matter of the task for man as such but of a particular historical task in a particular historical situation. It is therefore necessary that 'the transcendence of the estrangement always proceeds from that form of the estrangement which is the dominant power' (p. 154). Because it is dependent on

the conditions pre-established by history, the praxis of transcendence must, in order to be genuine transcendence, reveal these conditions and appropriate them. Insight into objectification as insight into the historical and social situation of man reveals the historical conditions of this situation and so achieves the practical force and concrete form through which it can become the lever of the revolution. We can now also understand how far questions concerning the origin of estrangement and insight into the origin of private property must be an integrating element in a positive theory of revolution.

Marx's handling of the question of the origins of private property shows the pioneering new 'method' of his theory. Marx is fundamentally convinced that when man is conscious of his history he cannot fall into a situation which he has not himself created, and that only he himself can liberate himself from any situation. This basic conviction already finds its expression in the concept of freedom in the Manuscripts. The phrase that the liberation of the working class can only be the work of the working class itself resonates clearly through all the economic explanations; it only enters into 'contradiction' with historical materialism if the latter is falsified into a vulgar materialism. If the relations of production have become a 'fetter' and an alien force determining man, then this is only because man has at some stage himself alienated himself from his power over the relations of production. This is also true if one sees the relations of production as being determined primarily by the given 'natural' forces of production (e.g. climatic or geographical conditions, the condition of the land, the distribution of raw materials) and ignores the fact that all these physical data have always existed in a form historically handed down and have formed a part of particular human and social 'forms of intercourse'. For the situation of man which exists through such pre-existing forces of production only becomes an historical and social situation through the fact that man 'reacts' to what he finds pre-existing, i.e. through the manner in which he appropriates it. In truth these relations of production which have been reified into alien, determining forces are always objectifications of particular social relations, and the abolition of the estrangement expressed in these relations of production can only be total and real if it can account for economic revolution in terms of these human relations. Thus the question of the origin of private property becomes a question of the activity through which man alienated property from himself: 'How, we now ask, does man come to alienate, to estrange, his labour? How is this estrangement rooted in the nature of human development?' And being aware of the crucial importance of this new way of formulating the question, Marx adds: 'We have already gone a long way to the solution of this problem by transforming the question of the origin of private property into the question of the relation of alienated labour to the course of humanity's development. For when one speaks of private property, one thinks of dealing with something external to man. When one speaks of labour, one is directly dealing with man himself. This new formulation of the question already contains its solution' (pp. 118–19).

The answer to this question is not contained in the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts; it is worked out in his later critiques of political economy. The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts do, however, contain a proof within the definition of man's essence that objectification always carries within it a tendency towards reification and labour a tendency towards alienation, so that reification and alienation are not merely chance historical facts. In connection with this it is also shown how the worker even through his alienation 'engenders' the non-worker and thus the domination of private property (pp. 116–17), and how he therefore has his fate in his own hands at the origin of estrangement and not just after liberation.

Marx gives his definition of estrangement as self-estrangement in a reference to the real achievement of Hegel's Phenomenology: 'The real, active orientation of man to himself as a species being ... is only possible through the utilization of all the powers he has in himself and which he has as belonging to a species..., treating these generic powers as objects and this, to begin with, is again only possible in the form of estrangement' (p. 177; my italics).

We fail to find an explanation here as to why this is, to begin with, only possible in the form of estrangement; and it is, strictly speaking, impossible to give one, for we are confronted with a state of affairs that has its roots in man – as an ‘objective’ being – and which can only be revealed as such. It is man’s ‘need’ – as already interpreted above – for objects alien to him, ‘overpowering’ and ‘not part of his being’, to which he must relate as if they were external objects, although they only become real objects through and for him. Objects first confront him directly in an external and alien form and only become human objects, objectifications of man, through conscious historical and social appropriation. The expression of man thus first tends towards alienation and his objectification towards reification, so that he can only attain a universal and free reality through ‘the negation of negation’: through the supersession of his alienation and the return out of his estrangement.

After the possibility of alienated labour has been shown to have its roots in the essence of man the limits of philosophical description have been reached and the discovery of the real origin of alienation becomes a matter for economic and historical analysis. We know that for Marx the starting point for this analysis is the division of labour (cf., for example, p. 159); we cannot go further into this here and shall only look quickly at the way Marx shows that already with the alienation of labour the worker ‘engenders’ the domination of the capitalist and thereby of private property. At the head of this analysis there stands the sentence: ‘Every self-estrangement of man, from himself and from nature, appears in the relation in which he places himself and nature to men other than and differentiated from himself’ (p. 116; *my italics*). We are already acquainted with the context of this sentence: the relation of man to the object on which he works is directly his relation to other men with whom he shares this object and himself as something social. So that although the worker in the self-alienation of his labour ‘possesses’ the object as something alien, overpowering and not belonging to him, this object now here confronts him as an isolated thing, belonging to no one and, as it were, outside humanity. The situation is rather this: ‘If the product of labour does not belong to the worker, if it confronts him as an alien power, then this can only be because it belongs to some other man than the worker’ (p. 115). With the alienation of labour the worker immediately stands as ‘servant’ in the service of a ‘master’: ‘Thus, if the product of his labour ... is for him an alien ... object ... then his position towards it is such that someone else is master of this object, someone who is alien ... If he is related to his own activity as to an unfree activity, then he is related to it as an activity performed in the service, under the dominion, the coercion, and the yoke of another man’ (pp. 116ff.).

It is not a case of a ‘master’ existing first, subordinating someone else to himself, alienating him from his labour, and making him into a mere worker and himself into a non-worker. But nor is it a case of the relationship between domination and servitude being the simple consequence of the alienation of labour. The alienation of labour, as estrangement from its own activity and from its object, already is in itself the relationship between worker and non-worker and between domination and servitude.

These distinctions seem to be of only secondary importance, and they do in fact disappear into the background again in the later, purely economic analysis. Nevertheless they must be expressly emphasized in the context of the Manuscripts, if only for the fact that they are relevant to Marx’s crucial reaction to Hegel. Domination and servitude are here not concepts for particular (pre- or early capitalist) formations, relations of production, etc. They give a general description of the social condition of man in a situation of estranged labour. In this sense they point back to the ontological categories of ‘domination and servitude’ developed by Hegel in his *Phenomenology* (II, pp. 145ff.).¹⁷ We cannot discuss here Marx’s further description of the relation between domination and servitude, but we shall select one important point: ‘everything which appears in the worker as an activity of alienation, of estrangement, appears in the non-worker as a state of alienation, of estrangement’ (p. 119).

We know that the transcendence of estrangement (a state in which both master and

servant find themselves, although not in the same way) can only be based on the destruction of reification, i.e. on the practical insight into the activity of objectification in its historical and social situation. Since it is only in labour and in the objects of his labour that man can really come to understand himself, others and the objective world in their historical and social situation, the master, as a non-worker, cannot come to this insight. Since what is actually a specific human activity appears to him as a material and objective state of affairs, the worker has an (as it were) irreducible advantage over him. He is the real factor of transformation; the destruction of reification can only be his work. The master can only come to this revolutionary insight if he becomes a worker, which, however, would mean transcending his own essence.

From every point of approach and in all directions this theory, arising out of the philosophical critique and foundation of political economy, proves itself to be a practical theory, a theory whose immanent meaning (required by the nature of its object) is particular praxis; only particular praxis can solve the problems peculiar to this theory. 'We see how the resolution of the theoretical antitheses is only possible in a practical way, by virtue of the practical energy of man. Their resolution is therefore by no means merely a problem of understanding, but a real problem of life, which philosophy could not solve precisely because it conceived this problem as merely a theoretical one' (pp. 141–2). We could add to this sentence: which philosophy can solve, however, if it grasps it as a practical problem, i.e. if it transcends itself as 'only theoretical' philosophy, which in turn means, if it really 'realizes' itself as philosophy for the first time.

Marx calls the practical theory which solves this problem, in so far as it puts man as a historical and social being in the centre, 'real humanism' and identifies it with 'naturalism' to the extent to which, if it is carried through, it grasps the unity of man and nature: the 'naturalness of man' and the 'humanity of nature'. If the real humanism outlined here by Marx as the basis of his theory does not correspond to what is commonly understood as Marx's 'materialism', such a contradiction is entirely in accordance with Marx's intentions: 'here we see how consistent naturalism and humanism distinguishes itself both from idealism and materialism, constituting at the same time the unifying truth of both' (p. 181).

VI

Finally we need to examine briefly Marx's critique of Hegel, which was envisaged as the conclusion of the whole Manuscripts. We can make the discussion brief because we have already gone into Marx's elaboration of the positive foundations of a critique of Hegel (the definition of man as an 'objective', historical and social, practical being) in the context of our interpretation of the critique of political economy.

Marx begins by pointing out the necessity of discussing a question which has still not been adequately answered: 'How do we now stand as regards the Hegelian dialectic?' (p. 170). This question, coming at the conclusion of his positive critique of political economy and the foundation of revolutionary theory, shows how much Marx was aware of working in an area opened up by Hegel and how he experienced this fact – in contrast to almost all the Hegelians and almost all his later followers – as a scientific-philosophical obligation towards Hegel. After briefly dispatching Bruno Bauer, Strauss, etc., whose 'critical critique' makes the need to come to terms with Hegel anything but superfluous, Marx immediately gives his support to Feuerbach: 'the only one who has a serious, critical attitude to the Hegelian dialectic and who has made genuine discoveries in this field' (p. 172). Marx mentions three such discoveries: Feuerbach (1) recognized philosophy (i.e. the purely speculative philosophy of Hegel) as a 'form and manner of existence of the estrangement of the essence of man', (2) established 'true materialism' by making 'the social relationship "of man to man" the basic principle of his theory' and (3) precisely through this principle opposed Hegel's mere 'negation of negation', which does not go beyond negativity, with a 'self-supporting positive, positively based in

itself' (pp. 172ff.). With this enumeration, Marx simultaneously articulated the three main directions of his own critique of Hegel, and it is to these that we now turn.

'One must begin with Hegel's *Phenomenology*, the true point of origin and the secret of the Hegelian philosophy' (p. 173). From the beginning Marx tackles Hegel's philosophy where its origin is still visible in an unconcealed form: in the *Phenomenology*. If at the beginning of the critique it may still have looked as if it was really only a critique of what one is accustomed to regard as Hegel's 'dialectic', we now see that what Marx criticizes as the dialectic is the foundation and actual 'content' of Hegel's philosophy – not its (supposed) 'method'. And while Marx criticizes, he simultaneously extracts the positive aspects, the great discoveries made by Hegel – i.e. only because for Marx there are genuinely positive discoveries in Hegel, on the basis of which he can and must do further work, can and must Hegel's philosophy become for him the subject of a critique. We shall begin with the negative part of his critique – Marx's collation of Hegel's 'mistakes' – so that we can then extract the positive aspects from these negative ones and show that the mistakes are really only mistaken interpretations of genuine and true states of affairs.

In the *Phenomenology* Hegel gives 'speculative expression' to the movement of the history of the 'human essence', but not of its real history, only its 'genetic history' (p. 173). That is, he gives the history of the human essence, in which man first becomes what he is and which has, as it were, always already taken place when the real history of man occurs. Even with this general characterization Marx has grasped the sense of the *Phenomenology* more profoundly and accurately than most interpreters of Hegel. He then proceeds to a critique of the core of Hegel's own problematic: Hegel's philosophical description of the history of the human essence fails at the start, because Hegel from the outset grasps it only as abstract 'self-consciousness' ('thought', 'mind') and thus overlooks its true concrete fullness: 'For Hegel the essence of man – man – equals self-consciousness' (p. 178); the history of the human essence runs its course purely as the history of self-consciousness or even as history within self-consciousness. What Marx had shown to be crucial for the definition of man's essence and what he had put at the centre of his conceptual structure – the 'objectivity' of man, his 'essential objectification' – is precisely what is ominously given a different meaning and perverted by Hegel. The object (i.e. objectivity as such) is in Hegel only an object for consciousness in the very strong sense that consciousness is the 'truth' of the object and that the latter is only the negative side of consciousness: having been 'posited' (created, engendered) by consciousness as its alienation and estrangement, it must also be 'transcended' by consciousness again, or 'taken back' into consciousness. The object is thus, by the nature of its existence, a purely negative thing, a 'nullity' (p. 182); it is merely an object of abstract thought, for Hegel reduces self-consciousness to abstract thought. 'The main point is that the object of consciousness is nothing else but self-consciousness, or that the object is only objectified self-consciousness – self-consciousness as an object.... The issue, therefore, is to surmount the object of consciousness. Objectivity as such is regarded as an estranged human relationship which does not correspond to the essence of man' (p. 178). For Marx, however, objectivity was precisely the human relationship in which man could alone come to self-realization and self-activity; it was 'real' objectivity, the 'work' of human labour and certainly not the object of abstract consciousness. From this standpoint Marx can say that Hegel fixes man as 'a non-objective, spiritual being' (p. 178). This being never exists with genuine objects but always only with the self-posited negativity of itself. It is actually always 'at home with itself' in its 'otherness as such' (p. 183). It is thus ultimately 'non-objective', and 'a non-objective being is a ... non-being' (p. 182).

This also constitutes a critique of the *Phenomenology* in so far as it claims to present the movement of the history of man's essential being. If this being whose history is being presented is a 'non-being', then this history must also be 'inessential' in the full sense of the word. Marx perceives Hegel's discovery of the movement of human history in the movement of

‘objectification as loss of the object, as alienation’ (p. 177) and in the ‘transcendence’ of this alienation as it recurs in many forms in the whole of the *Phenomenology*. But the objectification is only apparent, ‘abstract and formal’, since the object only has ‘the semblance of an object’ and the self-objectifying consciousness remains ‘at home with itself’ in this seeming alienation (pp. 183ff.). Like estrangement itself, its supersession is only a semblance: alienation remains. The forms of estranged human existence which Hegel cites are not forms of estranged real life but only of consciousness and knowledge: what Hegel deals with and supersedes are not ‘real religion, the real state, or real nature, but religion as a subject of knowledge, i.e. Dogmatics; the same with Jurisprudence, Political Science and Natural Science’ (pp. 186–7). Because alienation is thus only superseded in the mind and not in reality, i.e. because ‘this supersession of thought leaves its object standing in reality’, Marx can say the whole *Phenomenology*, and indeed the whole of Hegel’s system in so far as it is based on the *Phenomenology*, remains within estrangement. This comes out in Hegel’s system as a whole in the fact, for example, that ‘nature’ is not grasped as man’s ‘self-externalizing world of sense’ in its existential unity with man or its ‘humanity’, but is taken as externality ‘in the sense of alienation, of a mistake, a defect, which ought not to be’, – a ‘nothing’ (p. 192).

We shall not go into the other features of the negative critique here: they are already familiar from the Critique of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*; e.g. the conversion of mind into an absolute, the hypostatization of an absolute subject as the bearer of the historical process, the inversion of subject and predicate (p. 188), etc. What must be borne in mind is that Marx regards all these ‘inadequacies’ as within a real state of affairs. If Hegel posits the human essence as a ‘non-being’, then it is the non-being of a real being and thus a real non-being; if he has ‘only found the abstract, logical, speculative expression for the movement of history’ (p. 173), then this is still an expression for the movement of real history; if he has described objectification and estrangement in their abstract forms, then he has still seen objectification and estrangement as essential movements of human history. The emphasis of Marx’s critique of Hegel is definitely on the positive part, to which we now proceed.

‘The outstanding achievement of Hegel’s *Phenomenology* and of its final outcome, the dialectic of negativity as the moving and generating principle, is thus first that Hegel conceives the self-creation of man as a process, conceives objectification as loss of the object, as alienation and as transcendence of this alienation; that he thus grasps the essence of labour and comprehends objective man ... as the outcome of man’s own labour’ (p. 177). The full significance of the interpretation of the *Phenomenology* given here by Marx could only be grasped if we unfolded the central problematic of Hegel’s work, which we obviously cannot do here; it would also only then become apparent with what unheard of sureness Marx sees through all the mystifying and mis-leading interpretations (which begin even within Hegel’s work) and gets back to the bedrock of the problems which were raised, for the first time in modern philosophy, in the *Phenomenology*.

In the sentence quoted above Marx has brought together all the discoveries of Hegel which he recognizes as crucial: in what follows we want briefly to explain these, for Marx, ‘positive moments of the Hegelian dialectic’.

The *Phenomenology* presents the ‘self-creation of man’, which means, after what has already been said, the process in which man (as an organic, living being) becomes what he is according to his essence – i.e. human essence. It thus gives the ‘genetic history’ (p. 173) of the human essence or man’s essential history. Man’s ‘act of creation’ is an ‘act of self-genesis’ (p. 188), i.e. man gives his essence to himself: he must first make himself what he is, ‘posit’ himself, and ‘produce’ himself (we have already gone into the meaning of this concept). This history which is given into man’s own hands is grasped by Hegel as a ‘process’ characterized by alienation and its supersession. The process as a whole stands under the title of ‘objectification’. The history of man thus occurs and fulfils itself as objectification: the reality of man consists of creating real objects out of all his ‘species powers’, or ‘the establishing of a real,

objective world' (p. 180). It is this establishing of an objective world which Hegel treats merely as the alienation of 'consciousness' or knowledge, or as the relation of abstract thought to 'thinghood', while Marx grasps it as the 'practical' realization of the whole of man in historical and social labour (ibid.).

Hegel defines the relation of knowledge to the objective world in such a way that this objectification is simultaneously the loss of the object, i.e. the loss of reality or estrangement, so that, 'to begin with, [it] is again only possible in the form of estrangement' (p. 177). That is to say: knowledge, in the process of becoming objective, initially loses itself in its objects: they confront it as something alien and other, in the form of an external world of things and matters which have lost their inner connection with the consciousness which has expressed itself in them and now continue as a power independent of consciousness. In the *Phenomenology*, for example, morality and right, the power of the state and wealth appear as estranged objective worlds and it is here that Marx accuses Hegel of dealing with these worlds only as 'worlds of thought' and not as real worlds (pp. 174ff.), since for Hegel they are externalizations of 'Mind' only and not of real, total human existence.

Although objectification consists initially in the loss of the object or estrangement, it is precisely this estrangement which in Hegel becomes the recovery of true being. 'Hegel conceives man's self-estrangement, the alienation of man's essence, man's loss of objectivity and his loss of realness as self-discovery, change of his nature, objectification and realization' (pp. 187–8). The human essence – always conceived in Hegel as exclusively knowledge – is such that it must not only express but alienate itself, not only objectify itself but lose its object, to be able to discover itself. Only if it has really lost itself can it come to itself, only in its 'otherness' can it become what it is 'for itself'. This is the 'positive meaning' of negation, 'the dialectic of negativity as the moving and generating principle' (p. 177). We should have to go into the foundations of Hegel's ontology to justify and clarify this assertion: here we need only show how Marx interprets this discovery by Hegel.

Through the positive concept of negation just referred to, Hegel conceives 'labour as man's act of self-genesis' (p. 188); 'he grasps labour as the essence of man – as man's essence in the act of proving itself' (p. 177). With reference to this Marx goes so far as to say: 'Hegel's standpoint is that of modern political economy' (ibid.) – a seemingly paradoxical statement in which, however, Marx summarizes the colossal, almost revolutionary concreteness of Hegel's *Phenomenology*. If labour is here defined as man's essence in the act of proving itself this obviously refers to labour not purely as an economic, but as an 'ontological' category, as Marx defines it in this very passage: 'Labour is man's coming-to-be for himself within alienation, or as alienated man' (p. 177). How does it come about that Marx should take precisely the category of labour to interpret Hegel's concept of objectification as self-discovery in estrangement and of realization in alienation?

It is not only because Hegel uses labour to reveal the objectification of the human essence and its estrangement, or because he depicts the relation of the labouring 'servant' to his world as the first 'supersession' of estranged objectivity (II, pp. 146 ff.). It is not only because of this; although the fact that this is viewed as the real beginning of human history in the *Phenomenology* is neither a coincidence nor the result of a purely arbitrary decision, but expresses the innermost direction of the entire work. Marx has thereby – albeit in an exaggerated form – discovered the original meaning of the history of the human essence as it is elaborated in the *Phenomenology* in the form of the history of self-consciousness. It is praxis, free self-realization, always taking up, superseding and revolutionizing pre-established 'immediate' facticity. It has already been pointed out that Marx holds Hegel's real mistake to be the substitution of 'Mind' for the subject of this praxis. Hence for Marx, 'the only labour which Hegel knows and recognizes is abstract mental labour' (p. 177). But this does not alter the fact that Hegel grasped labour as man's essence in the act of proving itself – a fact which retains its vital importance: despite the 'spiritualization' of history in the *Phenomenology*, the

actual leading concept through which the history of man is explicated is transforming 'activity' (II, pp. 141, 196, 346, 426, etc.).

If the inner meaning of objectification and its supersession is thus praxis, then the various forms of estrangement and their supersession can also be more than mere 'examples' taken out of real history and put alongside each other with no necessary connection. They must have their roots in human praxis and be an integral part of man's history. Marx expresses this insight in the sentence that Hegel has found 'speculative expression for the movement of history' (p. 173) – a sentence which (as already stated) must be understood positively just as much as negatively and critically. And if the forms of estrangement are rooted as historical forms in human praxis itself, they cannot be regarded simply as abstract theoretical forms of the objectivity of consciousness; under this logical-speculative 'disguise' they must have ineluctable practical consequences, they must of necessity be effectively superseded and 'revolutionized'. A critique must lie hidden already in the *Phenomenology*: critique in the revolutionary sense which Marx gave to this concept. 'The *Phenomenology* is, therefore, an occult critique – still to itself obscure and mystifying: but inasmuch as it keeps steadily in view man's estrangement ... there lie concealed in it all the elements of the critique already prepared and elaborated in a manner often rising far above the Hegelian standpoint'. In its separate sections it contains 'the critical elements of whole spheres such as religion, the state, civil life, etc. – but still in an estranged form' (p. 176).

Thereby Marx has expressed in all clarity the inner connection between revolutionary theory and Hegel's philosophy. What seems amazing, as measured by this critique – which is the result of a philosophical discussion – is the decline of later interpretations of Marx (even – sit venia verbo – those of Engels!) by people who believed they could reduce Marx's relationship to Hegel to the familiar transformation of Hegel's 'dialectic', which they also completely emptied of content.

These suggestions will have to suffice; above all we cannot go into the question if and how the 'mistakes' with which Marx charges Hegel can really be attributed to him. It has perhaps become clear through this paper that the discussion really starts at the centre of Hegel's problematic. Marx's critique of Hegel is not an appendage of the preceding critique and foundation of political economy, for his examination of political economy is itself a continuous confrontation with Hegel.

1. Volume 3 of the first section of the Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe (MEGA). They appeared almost simultaneously under the title *Nationalökonomie und Philosophie* in Kröner's Pocket Editions, Volume 91 (K. Marx, *Der Historische Materialismus. Die Frühschriften I*) pp. 283ff. This edition does not include the piece printed as the First Manuscript in MEGA, which is essential for an understanding of the whole. The reading of the text is at variance with MEGA in numerous instances.

2. 'Reification' denotes the general condition of 'human reality' resulting from the loss of the object of labour and the alienation of the worker which has found its 'classical' expression in the capitalist world of money and commodities. There is thus a sharp distinction between reification and objectification (the latter will be discussed more fully below). Reification is a specific ('estranged', 'untrue') mode of objectification.

3. p. 165 (my italics).

4. Cf. the passage in Feuerbach which clearly underlies the sentence quoted: 'Human feelings thus do not have an empirical, anthropological significance in the sense of the old transcendental philosophy; they have an ontological, metaphysical significance' (*Grundsätze*

der Philosophie der Zukunft, §33; Sämtliche Werke II, 1846, p. 324).

5. Cf. for example: Being-for-itself 'comes into its own through labour'. In labour the consciousness of the worker 'is externalized and passes into the condition of permanence', 'in working, consciousness, as the form of the thing formed, becomes an object for itself' (Phenomenology of Mind, trans. J. B. Baillie, London, 1966, pp. 238–40).

6. For these connections I must refer the reader to the extensive interpretation of Hegel's concept of labour in my book, Hegels Ontologie und die Grundlegung einer Theorie der Geschichtlichkeit. Cf. Hegel's definition of labour in the new edition of the Jenenser Realphilosophie II (Leipzig, 1931, especially pp. 213ff.).

7. Cf. Phenomenology of Mind, p. 220, the concept of 'inorganic nature', and pp. 234ff. of my book Hegels Ontologie, etc.

8. Second impression, B. 33.

9. Feuerbach, Sämtliche Werke II, p. 309.

10. The ontological concept of passion is found similarly in Feuerbach (Werke II, p. 323).

11. e.g. Werke II, pp. 258, 337. The indications of a more profound definition, which doubtless exist in Feuerbach, are not followed through. Cf., for example, the concept of 'resistance' II, pp. 321ff.), etc.

12. Cf. the comprehensive formulation in The Holy Family: 'that the object as being for man or as the objective being of man is at the same time the existence of man for other men, his human relation to other men, the social relation of man to man' (The Holy Family, Moscow, 1956, p. 60).

13. Feuerbach: 'Man is not a particular being like the animal, but a universal being, thus not a limited and unfree but an unlimited and free being, for universality, absence of limitations, and freedom are inseparable. And this freedom does not for example exist in a particular capacity ... but extends over his whole being' (Werke, II, p. 342).

14. The German Ideology says of the critique in the Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher: 'Since at that time this was done in philosophical phraseology, the traditionally occurring philosophical expressions such as 'human essence', 'species' etc., gave the German theoreticians the desired excuse for ... believing that here again it was a question merely of giving a new turn to their theoretical garments ...' (The German Ideology, Moscow, 1968, p. 259).

15. This turn from a state outside men to a human relation again illustrates the new problematic of Marx's theory: his penetration through the veil of abstract reification towards the comprehension of the objective world as the field of historical-social praxis. Marx emphasizes that this way of posing the question had already entered traditional political economy when Adam Smith recognized labour as the 'principle' of economics, but its real sense was immediately completely concealed again since this kind of political economy 'merely formulated the laws of estranged labour' (p. 117; my italics).

16. Marx directs his heaviest attacks in the German Ideology precisely against the concept of 'truly human property' (particularly in his polemic against the 'true socialists', op. cit., pp. 516ff.); here, within Marx's foundation of the theory of revolution, this concept obviously has a significance quite different from that in Stirner and the 'true socialists'.

17. I have gone into this in my essay 'Zum Problem der Dialektik' (Die Gesellschaft, 12, 1931).