

## Karl Marx: Human Nature as a Result of Social Relations

### From Karl Marx Works: Economic & Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844

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#### Human Requirements and Division of Labour Under the Rule of Private Property

||XIV| <sup>[35]</sup> (7) We have seen what significance, given socialism, the *wealth* of human needs acquires, and what significance, therefore, both a *new mode of production* and a new *object* of production obtain: a new manifestation of the forces of human nature and a new enrichment of *human* nature. Under private property their significance is reversed: every person speculates on creating a *new* need in another, so as to drive him to fresh sacrifice, to place him in a new dependence and to seduce him into a new mode of *enjoyment* and therefore economic ruin. Each tries to establish over the other an alien power, so as thereby to find satisfaction of his own selfish need. The increase in the quantity of objects is therefore accompanied by an extension of the realm of the alien powers to which man is subjected, and every new product represents a new *potentiality* of mutual swindling and mutual plundering. Man becomes ever poorer as man, his need for money becomes ever greater if he wants to master the hostile power. The power of his money declines in inverse proportion to the increase in the volume of production: that is, his neediness grows as the *power* of money increases.

The need for money is therefore the true need produced by the economic system, and it is the only need which the latter produces. The *quantity* of money becomes to an ever greater degree its sole *effective* quality. Just as it reduces everything to its abstract form, so it reduces itself in the course of its own movement to *quantitative* being. *Excess* and *intemperance* come to be its true norm.

Subjectively, this appears partly in the fact that the extension of products and needs becomes a *contriving* and ever-calculating subservience to inhuman, sophisticated, unnatural and imaginary appetites. Private property does not know how to change crude need into human need. Its *idealism is fantasy, caprice and whim*; and no eunuch flatters his despot more basely or uses more despicable means to stimulate his dulled capacity for pleasure in order to sneak a favour for himself than does the industrial eunuch – the producer – in order to sneak for himself a few pieces of silver, in order to charm the golden birds, out of the pockets of his dearly beloved neighbours in Christ. He puts himself at the service of the other's most depraved fancies, plays the pimp between him and his need, excites in him morbid appetites, lies in wait for each of his weaknesses – all so that he can then demand the cash for this service of love. (Every product is a bait with which to seduce away the other's very being, his money; every real and possible need is a weakness which will lead the fly to the glue-pot. General exploitation of communal human nature, just as every imperfection in man, is a bond with heaven – an avenue giving the priest access to his heart; every need is an opportunity to approach one's neighbour under the guise of the utmost amiability and to say to him: Dear friend, I give you what you need, but you know the *conditio sine qua non*; you know the ink in which you have to sign yourself over to me; in providing for your pleasure, I fleece you.)

This estrangement manifests itself in part in that the sophistication of needs and of the means (of their satisfaction) on the one side produces a bestial barbarisation, a complete, crude,

abstract simplicity of need, on the other; or rather in that it merely reproduces itself in its opposite. Even the need for fresh air ceases to be a need for the worker. Man returns to a cave dwelling, which is now, however, contaminated with the pestilential breath of civilisation, and which he continues to occupy only *precariously*, it being for him an alien habitation which can be withdrawn from him any day – a place from which, if he does not pay, he can be thrown out any day. For this mortuary he has to pay. A dwelling in the light, which Prometheus in Aeschylus designated as one of the greatest boons, by means of which he made the savage into a human being, ceases to exist for the worker. Light, air, etc. – the simplest animal cleanliness – ceases to be a need for man. Filth, this stagnation and putrefaction of man – the *sewage* of civilisation (speaking quite literally) – comes to be the *element of life* – for him. Utter, unnatural depravation, putrefied nature, comes to be *his life-element*. None of his senses exist any longer, and (each has ceased to function) not only in its human fashion, but in an inhuman fashion, so that it does not exist even in an animal fashion. The crudest *methods (and instruments)* of human labour are coming back: the *treadmill* of the Roman slaves, for instance, is the means of production, the means of existence, of many English workers. It is not only that man has no human needs – even his animal needs cease to exist. The Irishman no longer knows any need now but the need to *eat*, and indeed only the need to eat *potatoes and scabby potatoes* at that, the worst kind of potatoes. But in each of their industrial towns England and France have already a little Ireland. The savage and the animal have at least the need to hunt, to roam, etc. – the need of companionship. The simplification of the machine, of labour is used to make a worker out of the human being still in the making, the completely immature human being, the child – whilst the worker has become a neglected child. The machine accommodates itself to the *weakness* of the human being in order to make the weak human being into a machine.

<How the multiplication of needs and of the means (of their satisfaction) breeds the absence of needs and of means is demonstrated by the political economist (and by the capitalist: in general it is always empirical businessmen we are talking about when we refer to political economists, (who represent) their *scientific* creed and form of existence) as follows:

(1) By reducing the worker's need to the barest and most miserable level of physical subsistence, and by reducing his activity to the most abstract mechanical movement; thus he says: Man has no other need either of activity or of enjoyment. For he declares that this life, *too*, is *human* life and existence.

(2) By *counting the most meagre* form of life (existence) as the standard, indeed, as the general standard – general because it is applicable to the mass of men. He turns the worker into an insensible being lacking all needs, just as he changes his activity into a pure abstraction from all activity. To him, therefore, every *luxury* of the worker seems to be reprehensible, and everything that goes beyond the most abstract need – be it in the realm of passive enjoyment, or a manifestation of activity – seems to him a luxury. Political economy, this science of *wealth*, is therefore simultaneously the science of renunciation, of want, of *saving* and it actually reaches the point where it *saves* man the *need* of either fresh air or physical *exercise*. This science of marvellous industry is simultaneously the science of *asceticism*, and its true ideal is the *ascetic* but *extortionate* miser and the *ascetic* but *productive* slave. Its moral ideal is the worker who takes part of his wages to the savings-bank, and it has even found ready-made a servile art which embodies this pet idea: it has been presented, bathed in sentimentality, on the stage. Thus political economy – despite its worldly and voluptuous appearance – is a true moral science, the most moral of all the sciences. Self-renunciation, the renunciation of life and of all human needs, is its principal thesis. The less

you eat, drink and buy books; the less you go to the theatre, the dance hall, the public house; the less you think, love, theorise, sing, paint, fence, etc., the more you *save* – the *greater* becomes your treasure which neither moths nor rust will devour – your capital. The less you are, the less you express your own life, the more you *have*, i.e., the greater is your *alienated* life, the greater is the store of your estranged being. Everything ||XVI| which the political economist takes from you in life and in humanity, he replaces for you in money and in *wealth*; and all the things which you cannot do, your money can do. It can eat and, drink, go to the dance hall and the theatre; it can travel, it can appropriate art, learning, the treasures of the past, political power – all this it can appropriate for you – it can buy all this: it is true *endowment*. Yet being all this, it *wants to do nothing but create itself, buy itself*; for everything else is after all its servant, and when I have the master I have the servant and do not need his servant. All passions and all activity must therefore be submerged in *avarice*. The worker may only have enough for him to want to live, and may only want to live in order to have that.>

It is true that a controversy now arises in the field of political economy. The one side (Lauderdale, Malthus, etc.) recommends luxury and execrates thrift. The other (Say, Ricardo, etc.) recommends thrift and execrates luxury. But the former admits that it wants luxury in order to produce *labour* (i.e., absolute thrift); and the latter admits that it recommends thrift in order to produce *wealth* (i.e., luxury). The Lauderdale-Malthus school has the romantic notion that avarice alone ought not to determine the consumption of the rich, and it contradicts its own laws in advancing *extravagance* as a direct means of enrichment. Against it, therefore, the other side very earnestly and circumstantially proves that I do not increase but reduce my *possessions* by being extravagant. The Say-Ricardo school is hypocritical in not admitting that it is precisely whim and caprice which determine production. It forgets the “refined needs”, it forgets that there would be no production without consumption; it forgets that as a result of competition production can only become more extensive and luxurious. It forgets that, according to its views, a thing’s value is determined by use, and that use is determined by fashion. It wishes to see only “useful things” produced, but it forgets that production of too many useful things produces too large a *useless* population. Both sides forget that extravagance and thrift, luxury and privation, wealth and poverty are equal.

And you must not only stint the gratification of your immediate senses, as by stinting yourself on food, etc.: you must also spare yourself all sharing of general interests, all sympathy, all trust, etc., if you want to be economical, if you do not want to be ruined by illusions.

<You must make everything that is yours *saleable*, i.e., useful. If I ask the political economist: Do I obey economic laws if I extract money by offering my body for sale, by surrendering it to another’s lust? (The factory workers in France call the prostitution of their wives and daughters the *nth* working hour, which is literally correct.) – Or am I not acting in keeping with political economy if I sell my friend to the Moroccans? (And the direct sale of men in the form of a trade in conscripts, etc., takes place in all civilised countries.) – Then the political economist replies to me: You do not transgress my laws; but see what Cousin Ethics and Cousin Religion have to say about it. My *political economic* ethics and religion have nothing to reproach you with, but – But whom am I now to believe, political economy or ethics? – The ethics of political economy is *acquisition*, work, thrift, sobriety – but political economy promises to satisfy my needs. – The political economy of ethics is the opulence of a good conscience, of virtue, etc.; but how can I live virtuously if I do not live? And how can I have a good conscience if I do not know anything? It stems from the very nature of estrangement that each sphere applies to me a different and opposite yardstick – ethics one and political

economy another; for each is a specific estrangement of man and> ||XVII| focuses attention on a particular field of estranged essential activity, and each stands in an estranged relation to the other. Thus M. *Michel Chevalier* reproaches Ricardo with having ignored ethics. But Ricardo is allowing political economy to speak its own language, and if it does not speak ethically, this is not Ricardo's fault. M. Chevalier takes no account of political economy insofar as he moralises, but he really and necessarily ignores ethics insofar as he practises political economy. The relationship of political economy to ethics, if it is other than an arbitrary, contingent and therefore unfounded and unscientific relationship, if it is not being posited for the sake of *appearance* but is meant to be *essential*, can only be the relationship of the laws of political economy to ethics. If there is no such connection, or if the contrary is rather the case, can Ricardo help it? Moreover, the opposition between political economy and ethics is only an *apparent* opposition and just as much no opposition *as it is* an opposition. All that happens is that political economy expresses moral laws in *its own way*.

<Frugality as the principle of political economy is *most brilliantly* shown in its *theory of population*. There are too *many* people. Even the existence of men is a pure luxury; and if the worker is "*ethical*", he will be *sparing* in procreation. (Mill suggests public acclaim for those who prove themselves continent in their sexual relations, and public rebuke for those who sin against such barrenness of marriage .... Is this not ethics, the teaching of asceticism?) The production of people appears as public destitution.>

The meaning which production has in relation to the rich is seen *revealed* in the meaning which it has for the poor. Looking upwards the manifestation is always refined, veiled, ambiguous – outward appearance; downwards, it is rough, straightforward, frank – the real thing. The worker's *crude* need is a far greater source of gain than the *refined* need of the rich. The cellar dwellings in London bring more to those who let them than do the palaces; that is to say, with reference to the landlord they constitute *greater wealth*, and thus (to speak the language of political economy) greater *social* wealth.

Industry speculates on the refinement of needs, it speculates however just as much on their *crudeness*, but on their artificially produced crudeness, whose true enjoyment, therefore, is *self-stupefaction* – this *illusory* satisfaction of need this civilisation contained within the crude barbarism of need. The English gin shops are therefore the *symbolical* representations of private property. Their luxury reveals the true relation of industrial luxury and wealth to man. They are therefore rightly the only Sunday pleasures of the people which the English police treats at least mildly.||XVII||

||XVIII| <sup>[36]</sup> We have already seen how the political economist establishes the unity of labour and capital in a variety of ways: (1) Capital is *accumulated labour*. (2) The purpose of capital within production – partly, reproduction of capital with profit, partly, capital as raw material (material of labour), and partly, as an automatically *working instrument* (the machine is capital directly equated with labour) – is *productive labour*. (3) The worker is a capital. (4) Wages belong to costs of capital. (5) In relation to the worker, labour is the reproduction of his life-capital. (6) In relation to the capitalist, labour is an aspect of his capital's activity.

Finally, (7) the political economist postulates the original unity of capital and labour as the unity of the capitalist and the worker; this is the original state of paradise. The way in which these two aspects, ||XIX| as two persons, confront each other is for the political economist an *accidental* event, and hence only to be explained by reference to external factors. (See, Mill.)

The nations which are still dazzled by the sensuous glitter of precious metals, and are therefore still fetish-worshippers of metal money, are not yet fully developed money-nations. Contrast of France and England.

The extent to which the solution of theoretical riddles is the task of practice and effected through practice, the extent to which true practice is the condition of a real and positive theory, is shown, for example, in *fetishism*. The sensuous consciousness of the fetish-worshipper is different from that of the Greek, because his sensuous existence is different. The abstract enmity between sense and spirit is necessary so long as the human feeling for nature, the human sense of nature, and therefore also the *natural* sense of man, are not yet produced by man's own labour.

*Equality* is nothing but a translation of the German “*Ich = Ich*” <sup>[37]</sup> into the French, i.e., political form. Equality as the *basis* of communism is its political justification, and it is the same as when the German justifies it by conceiving man as *universal self-consciousness*. Naturally, the transcendence of the estrangement always proceeds from that form of the estrangement which is the dominant power: in Germany, *self-consciousness*; in France, *equality*, because it is politics; in England, real, material, *practical* need taking only itself as its standard. It is from this standpoint that Proudhon is to be criticised and appreciated.

If we characterise *communism* itself because of its character as negation of the negation, as the appropriation of the human essence through the intermediary of the negation of private property – as being not yet the true, self-originating position but rather a position originating from private property (...) in old-German fashion – in the way of Hegel's phenomenology – (...) finished as a *conquered moment* and (...) one might be satisfied by it, in his consciousness (...) of the human being only by real [...] transcendence of his thought now as before since with him therefore the real estrangement of the life of man remains, and remains all the more, the more one is conscious of it as such, hence it (the negation of this estrangement) can be accomplished solely by bringing about communism.

In order to abolish the *idea* of private property, the *idea* of communism is quite sufficient. It takes actual communist action to abolish actual private property. History will lead to it; and this movement, which *in theory* we already know to be a self-transcending movement, will constitute in actual fact a very rough and protracted process. But we must regard it as a real advance to have at the outset gained a consciousness of the limited character as well as of the goal of this historical movement – and a consciousness which reaches out beyond it.

When communist *artisans* associate with one another, theory, propaganda, etc., is their first end. But at the same time, as a result of this association, they acquire a new need – the need for society – and what appears as a means becomes an end. In this practical process the most splendid results are to be observed whenever French socialist workers are seen together. Such things as smoking, drinking, eating, etc., are no longer means of contact or means that bring them together. Association, society and conversation, which again has association as its end, are enough for them; the brotherhood of man is no mere phrase with them, but a fact of life, and the nobility of man shines upon us from their work-hardened bodies.

||XX| <When political economy claims that demand and supply always balance each other, it immediately forgets that according to its own claim (theory of population) the supply of *people* always exceeds the demand, and that, therefore, in the essential result of the whole production process – the existence of man – the disparity between demand and supply gets its most striking expression.

The extent to which money, which appears as a means, constitutes true *power* and the sole *end* – the extent to which in general *the means* which turns me into a being, which gives me possession of the alien objective being, is an *end in itself* ... can be clearly seen from the fact that landed property, wherever land is the source of life, and *horse* and sword, wherever these are the *true means of life*, are also acknowledged as the true political powers in life. In the Middle Ages a social estate is emancipated as soon as it is allowed to carry the *sword*. Amongst nomadic peoples it is the *horse* which makes me a free man and a participant in the life of the community.

We have said above that man is regressing to the *cave dwelling*, etc. – but he is regressing to it in an estranged, malignant form. The savage in his cave – a natural element which freely offers itself for his use and protection – feels himself no more a stranger, or rather feels as much at home as a *fish* in water. But the cellar dwelling of the poor man is a hostile element, "a dwelling which remains an alien power and only gives itself up to him insofar as he gives up to it his own blood and sweat" – a dwelling which he cannot regard as his own hearth – where he might at last exclaim: "Here I am at home" – but where instead he finds himself *in someone else's* house, in the house of a *stranger* who always watches him and throws him out if he does not pay his rent. He is also aware of the contrast in quality between his dwelling and a human dwelling that stands in the *other* world, in the heaven of wealth.

Estrangement is manifested not only in the fact that *my* means of life belong to *someone else*, that which I desire is the inaccessible possession of *another*, but also in the fact that everything is itself something different from itself – that my activity is *something else* and that, finally (and this applies also to the capitalist), all is under (the sway) of *inhuman* power.

There is a form of inactive, extravagant wealth given over wholly to pleasure, the enjoyer of which on the one hand *behaves* as a mere *ephemeral* individual frantically spending himself to no purpose, and also regards the slave-labour of others (human *sweat and blood*) as the prey of his cupidity. He therefore knows man himself, and hence also his own self, as a sacrificed and futile being. With such wealth contempt of man makes its appearance, partly as arrogance and as squandering of what can give sustenance to a hundred human lives, and partly as the infamous illusion that his own unbridled extravagance and ceaseless, unproductive consumption is the condition of the other's labour and therefore of his *subsistence*. He regards the realisation of the *essential powers* of man only as the realisation of his own excesses, his whims and capricious, bizarre notions. This wealth which, on the other hand, again knows wealth as a mere means, as something that is good for nothing but to be annihilated and which is therefore at once slave and master, at once magnanimous and base, capricious, presumptuous, conceited, refined, cultured and witty – this wealth has not yet experienced *wealth* as an utterly *alien power* over itself: it sees in it, rather, only its own power, and (not) a wealth but *enjoyment* (is its final) aim.

This [...] ||XXI| and the glittering illusion about the nature of wealth, blinded by sensuous appearances, is confronted by the *working, sober, prosaic, economical* industrialist who is quite enlightened about the nature of wealth, and who, while providing a wider sphere for the

other's self – indulgence and paying fulsome flatteries to him in his products (for his products are just so many base compliments to the appetites of the spendthrift), knows how to appropriate for himself in the only *useful* way the other's waning power. If, therefore, industrial wealth appears at first to be the result of extravagant, fantastic wealth, yet its motion, the motion inherent in it, ousts the latter also in an active way. For the fall in the *rate of interest* is a necessary consequence and result of industrial development. The extravagant rentier's means therefore dwindle day by day in *inverse* proportion to the increasing possibilities and pitfalls of pleasure. Consequently, he must either consume his capital, thus ruining himself, or must become an industrial capitalist.... In the other hand, there is a direct, constant rise in the *rent of land* as a result of the course of industrial development; nevertheless, as we have already seen, there must come a time when landed property, like every other kind of property, is bound to fall within the category of profitably self-reproducing capital – and this in fact results from the same industrial development. Thus the squandering landowner, too, must either consume his capital, and thus be ruined, or himself become the farmer of his own estate – an agricultural industrialist.

The diminution in the interest on money, which Proudhon regards as the annulling of capital and as a tendency to socialise capital, is therefore in fact rather only a symptom of the total victory of working capital over squandering wealth – i.e., the transformation of all private property into industrial capital. It is a total victory of private property over all those of its qualities which are still in *appearance* human, and the complete subjection of the owner of private property to the essence of private property – labour. To be sure, the industrial capitalist also takes his pleasures. He does not by any means return to the unnatural simplicity of need; but his pleasure is only a side-issue – recreation – something subordinated to production; at the same time it is a *calculated* and, therefore, itself an *economical* pleasure. For he debits it to his capital's expense account, and what is squandered on his pleasure must therefore amount to no more than will be replaced with profit through the reproduction of capital. Pleasure is therefore subsumed under capital, and the pleasure-taking individual under the capital-accumulating individual, whilst formerly the contrary was the case. The decrease in the interest rate is therefore a symptom of the annulment of capital only inasmuch as it is a symptom of the growing domination of capital – of the estrangement which is growing and therefore hastening to its annulment. This is indeed the only way in which that which exists affirms its opposite.>

The quarrel between the political economists about luxury and thrift is, therefore, only the quarrel between that political economy which has achieved clarity about the nature of wealth, and that political economy which is still afflicted with romantic, anti-industrial memories. Neither side, however, knows how to reduce the subject of the controversy to its simple terms, and neither therefore can make short work of the other. |XXI|

||XXXIV| <sup>[38]</sup> Moreover, *rent of land qua* rent of land has been overthrown, since, contrary to the argument of the Physiocrats which maintains that the landowner is the only true producer, modern political economy has proved that the landowner as such is rather the only completely unproductive rentier. According to this theory, agriculture is the business of the capitalist, who invests his capital in it provided he can expect the usual profit. The claim of the Physiocrats – that landed property, as the sole productive property, should alone pay state taxes and therefore should alone approve them and participate in the affairs of state – is transformed into the opposite position that the tax on the rent of land is the only tax on unproductive income, and is therefore the only tax not detrimental to national production. It

goes without saying that from this point of view also the political privilege of landowners no longer follows from their position as principal tax-payers.

Everything which Proudhon conceives as a movement of labour against capital is only the movement of labour in the determination of capital, of *industrial capital*, against capital not consumed as capital, i.e., not consumed industrially. And this movement is proceeding along its triumphant road – the road to the victory of *industrial capital*. It is clear, therefore, that only when *labour* is grasped as the essence of private property, can the economic process as such be analysed in its real concreteness.

*Society*, as it appears to the political economist, is *civil society* <sup>[39]</sup> in which every individual is a totality of needs and only ||XXXV| exists for the other person, as the other exists for him, insofar as each becomes a means for the other. The political economist reduces everything (just as does politics in its *Rights of Man*) to man, i.e., to the individual whom he strips of all determinateness so as to class him as capitalist or worker.

The *division of labour* is the economic expression of the *social character of labour* within the estrangement. Or, since *labour* is only an expression of human activity within alienation, of the manifestation of life as the alienation of life, the *division of labour*, too, is therefore nothing else but the *estranged, alienated* positing of human activity as a *real activity of the species* or as *activity of man as a species-being*.

As for the *essence of the division of labour* – and of course the division of labour had to be conceived as a major driving force in the production of wealth as soon as *labour* was recognised as the *essence of private property* – i.e., as for the *estranged and alienated form of human activity as an activity of the species* – the political economists are very vague and self-contradictory about it.

*Adam Smith*: “This *division of labour* [...] is not originally the effect of any human wisdom [...]. It is the necessary, [...] slow and gradual consequence of [...] the propensity to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another. [...] This propensity” to trade is probably a - necessary consequence of the use of reason and of speech [...]. It is common to all men, and to be found in no other race of animals.” The animal, when it is grown up, is entirely independent. “Man has almost constant occasion for the help of others, and it is in vain for him to expect it from their benevolence only. He will be more likely to prevail if he can appeal to their personal interest, and show them that it-is for their own advantage to do for him what he requires of them. [...] We address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages. [...]

“As it is by treaty, by barter, and by purchase that we obtain from one another the greater part of those mutual good offices which we stand in need of, so it is this same trucking disposition which originally gives occasion to the *division of labour*. In a tribe of hunters or shepherds a particular person makes bows and arrows, for example, with more readiness and dexterity than any other. He frequently exchanges them for cattle or for venison with his companions; and he finds at last that he can in this manner get more cattle and venison than if he himself went to the field to catch them. From a regard to his own interest, therefore, the making of bows, etc., grows to be his chief business [...]

“The difference of natural talents in different men [...] is not [...] so much the cause as the effect of the *division of labour*.... Without the disposition to truck [...] and exchange, every



man must have procured to himself every necessary and conveniency of life [...] All must have had [...] the same work to do, and there could have been no such difference of employment as could alone give occasion to any great difference of talents.

“As it is this disposition which forms that difference of talents among men so it is this same disposition which renders that difference useful. Many tribes of animals [... 1 of the same species derive from nature a much more remarkable distinction of genius, than what, antecedent to custom and education, appears to take place among men. By nature a philosopher is not in talent and in intelligence half so different from a street porter, as a mastiff is from a greyhound, or a greyhound from a spaniel, or this last from a shepherd’s dog. Those different tribes of animals, however, though all of the same species, are of scarce any use to one another. The mastiff cannot add to the advantages of his strength ||XXXVI| by making use of the swiftness of the greyhound, etc. The effects of these different talents or grades of intelligence, for want of the power or disposition to barter and exchange, cannot be brought into a common stock, and do not in the least contribute to the better accommodation and conveniency of the species. Each animal is still obliged to support and defend itself, separately and independently, and derives no sort of advantage from that variety of talents with which nature has distinguished its fellows. Among men, on the contrary, the most dissimilar geniuses are of use to one another; the different produces of their respective talents, by the general disposition to truck, barter, and exchange, being brought, as it were, into a common stock, where every man may purchase whatever part of the produce of other men’s industry he has occasion for. [...]

“As it is the power of exchanging that gives occasion to the division of labour, so the extent of this division must always be limited by the extent of that power, or, in other words, by the extent of the market. When the market is very small, no person can have any encouragement to dedicate himself entirely to one employment, for want of the power to exchange all that surplus part of the produce of his own labour, which is over and above his own consumption, for such parts of the produce of other men’s labour as he has occasion for ...”

In an *advanced state* of society “every man thus lives by exchanging and becomes in some measure a merchant, and the society itself grows to be what is

properly a commercial society.” (See Destutt de Tracy [, *Éléments d'idéologie*, Paris, 1826, pp. 68 and 78]: “Society is a series of reciprocal exchanges; commerce contains the whole essence of society.”) ... The accumulation of capitals mounts with the division of labour, and vice versa.”

So much for Adam Smith.

“If every family produced all that it consumed, society could keep going although no exchange of any sort took place; without being fundamental, exchange is indispensable in our advanced state of society. The division of labour is a skilful deployment of man’s powers; it increases society’s production-its power and its pleasures-but it curtails, reduces the ability of every person taken individually. Production cannot take place without exchange.”

Thus J. B. Say.

“The powers inherent in man are his intelligence and his physical capacity for work. Those which arise from the condition of society consist of the capacity to *divide up labour* and to

*distribute different jobs amongst different People ... and the power to exchange mutual services and the products which constitute these means. The motive which impels a man to give his services to another is self-interest- he requires a reward for the services rendered. The right of exclusive private property is indispensable to the establishment of exchange amongst men.” “Exchange and division of labour reciprocally condition each other.”*

Thus *Skarbek*.

Mill presents developed exchange – trade – as a consequence of the division of labour.

“The agency of man can be traced to very simple elements. He can, in fact, do nothing more than produce motion. He can move things towards one another, and he can separate them from one another: ||XXXVII| the properties of matter perform all the rest.” “In the employment of labour and machinery, it is often found that the effects can be increased by skilful distribution, by separating all those operations which have any tendency to impede one another, and by bringing together all those operations which can be made in any way to aid one another. As men in general cannot perform many different operations with the same quickness and dexterity with which they can by practice learn to perform a few, it is always an advantage to limit as much as possible the number of operations imposed upon each. For dividing labour, and distributing the powers of men and machinery, to the greatest advantage, it is in most cases necessary to operate upon a large scale; in other words, to produce the commodities in greater masses. It is this advantage which gives existence to the great manufactories; a few of which, placed in the most convenient situations, frequently supply not one country, but many countries, with as much as they desire of the commodity produced.”

Thus *Mill*.

The whole of modern political economy agrees, however, that division of labour and wealth of production, division of labour and accumulation of capital, mutually determine each other; just as it agrees that only private property which is *at liberty* to follow its own course can produce the most useful and comprehensive division of labour.

*Adam Smith's* argument can be summarised as follows: Division of labour bestows on labour infinite productive capacity. It stems from the *propensity to exchange and barter*, a specifically human propensity which is probably not accidental, but is conditioned by the use of reason and speech. The motive of those who engage in exchange is not *humanity* but *egoism*. The diversity of human talents is more the effect than the cause of the division of labour, i.e., of exchange. Besides, it is only the latter which makes such diversity useful. The particular attributes of the different breeds within a species of animal are by nature much more marked than the degrees of difference in human aptitude and activity. But because animals are unable to engage in *exchange*, no individual animal benefits from the difference in the attributes of animals of the same species but of different breeds. Animals are unable to combine the different attributes of their species, and are unable to contribute anything to the common advantage and comfort of the species. It is otherwise with men, amongst whom the most dissimilar talents and forms of activity are of use to one another, *because* they can bring their different products together into a common stock, from which each can purchase. As the division of labour springs from the propensity to *exchange*, so it grows and is limited by the *extent of exchange* – *by the extent of the market*. In advanced conditions, every man is a *merchant*, and society is a *commercial society*.

Say regards *exchange* as accidental and not fundamental. Society could exist without it. It becomes indispensable in the advanced state of society. Yet *production* cannot take place *without it*. Division of labour is a *convenient, useful* means – a skilful deployment of human powers for social wealth; but it reduces the *ability of each person taken individually*. The last remark is a step forward on the part of Say.

Skarbek distinguishes the *individual powers inherent in man* – intelligence and the physical capacity for work – from the powers *derived from society* – exchange and *division of labour*, which mutually condition one another. But the necessary premise of exchange is *private property*. Skarbek here expresses in an objective form what Smith, Say, Ricardo, etc., say when they designate *egoism and self-interest* as the basis of exchange, and *buying and selling* as the *essential and adequate* form of exchange.

Mill presents *trade* as the consequence of the *division of labour*. With him human activity is reduced to *mechanical motion*. Division of labour and use of machinery promote wealth of production. Each person must be entrusted with as small a sphere of operations as possible. Division of labour and use of machinery, in their turn, imply large-scale production of wealth, and hence of products. This is the reason for large manufactories.

[XXXVIII] The examination of *division of labour* and *exchange* is of extreme interest, because these are *perceptibly alienated* expressions of human activity and essential power as a *species* activity and species power.

To assert that *division of labour and exchange* rest on *private property* is nothing but asserting that *labour* is the essence of private property – an assertion which the political economist cannot prove and which we wish to prove for him. Precisely in the fact that *division of labour and exchange* are aspects of private property lies the twofold proof, on the one hand that *human life* required *private property* for its realisation, and on the other hand that it now requires the supersession of private property.

*Division of labour and exchange* are the *two phenomena* which lead the political economist to boast of the social character of his science, while in the same breath he gives unconscious expression to the contradiction in his science – the motivation of society by unsocial, particular interests.

The factors we have to consider are: Firstly, the *propensity to exchange* – the basis of which is found in egoism – is regarded as the cause or reciprocal effect of the division of labour. Say regards exchange as not *fundamental* to the nature of society. Wealth – production – is explained by division of labour and exchange. The impoverishment of individual activity, and its loss of character as a result of the division of labour, are admitted. Exchange and division of labour are acknowledged as the sources of the great *diversity of human talents* – a diversity which in its turn becomes *useful* as a result of exchange. Skarbek divides man's essential powers of production – or productive powers – into two parts: (1) those which are individual and inherent in him – his intelligence and his special disposition, or capacity, for work; and (2) those *derived* from society and not from the actual individual – division of labour and exchange.

Furthermore, the division of labour is limited by the market. Human labour is simple *mechanical* motion: the main work is done by the material properties of the objects. The fewest possible operations must be apportioned to any one individual. Splitting-up of labour

and concentration of capital; the insignificance of individual production and the production of wealth in large quantities. Meaning of free private property within the division of labour. |XXXVIII|

[...]

### **Critique of Hegel's Philosophy in General [Manuscript], 1844**

||XI| (6) This is perhaps the place at which, by way of explanation and justification, we might offer some considerations in regard to the Hegelian dialectic generally and especially its exposition in the *Phänomenologie* and *Logik* and also, lastly, the relation (to it) of the modern critical movement. <sup>[42]</sup>

So powerful was modern German criticism's preoccupation with the past – so completely was its development entangled with the subject-matter – that here prevailed a completely uncritical attitude to the method of criticising, together with a complete lack of awareness about the *apparently formal*, but really *vital* question: how do we now stand as regards the Hegelian *dialectic*? This lack of awareness about the relationship of modern criticism to the Hegelian philosophy as a whole and especially to the Hegelian dialectic has been so great that critics like *Strauss* and *Bruno Bauer* still remain within the confines of the Hegelian logic; the former completely so and the latter at least implicitly so in his *Synoptiker* (where, in opposition to *Strauss*, he replaces the substance of “abstract nature” by the “self-consciousness” of abstract man), and even in *Das entdeckte Christenthum*. Thus in *Das entdeckte Christenthum*, for example, you get:

“As though in positing the world, self-consciousness does not posit that which is different [from itself] and in what it is creating it does not create itself, since it in turn annuls the difference between what it has created and itself, since it itself has being only in creating and in the movement – as though its purpose were not this movement?” etc.; or again: “They” (the French materialists) “have not yet been able to see that it is only as the movement of self-consciousness that the movement of the universe has actually come to be for itself, and achieved unity with itself.” [Pp. 113, 114-15.]

Such expressions do not even show any verbal divergence from the Hegelian approach, but on the contrary repeat it word for word.

||XII| How little consciousness there was in relation to the Hegelian dialectic during the act of criticism (*Bauer*, the *Synoptiker*), and how little this consciousness came into being even after the act of material criticism, is proved by *Bauer* when, in his *Die gute Sache der Freiheit*, he dismisses the brash question put by Herr Gruppe – “What about logic now?” – by referring him to future critics. <sup>[43]</sup>

But even now – now that *Feuerbach* both in his *Thesen* in the *Anekdoten* and, in detail, in the *Philosophie der Zukunft* has in principle overthrown the old dialectic and philosophy; now that that school of criticism, on the other hand, which was incapable of accomplishing this, has all the same seen it accomplished and has proclaimed itself pure, resolute, absolute criticism that has come into the clear with itself; now that this criticism, in its spiritual pride, has reduced the whole process of history to the relation between the rest of the world and itself (the rest of the world, in contrast to itself, falling under the category of “the masses”) and dissolved all dogmatic antitheses into the *single* dogmatic antithesis of its own cleverness

and the stupidity of the world – the antithesis of the critical Christ and Mankind, the “*rabble*”; now that daily and hourly it has demonstrated its own excellence against the dullness of the masses; now, finally, that it has proclaimed the critical *Last Judgment* in the shape of an announcement that the day is approaching when the whole of decadent humanity will assemble before it and be sorted by it into groups, each particular mob receiving its *testimonium paupertatis*; now that it has made known in print its superiority to human feelings as well as its superiority to the world, over which it sits enthroned in sublime solitude, only letting fall from time to time from its sarcastic lips the ringing laughter of the Olympian Gods – even now, after all these delightful antics of idealism (i.e., of Young Hegelianism) expiring in the guise of criticism – even now it has not expressed the suspicion that the time was ripe for a critical settling of accounts with the mother of Young Hegelianism – the Hegelian dialectic – and even had nothing to say about its critical attitude towards the Feuerbachian dialectic. This shows a completely uncritical attitude to itself.

*Feuerbach* is the only one who has a *serious, critical* attitude to the Hegelian dialectic and who has made genuine discoveries in this field. He is in fact the true conqueror of the old philosophy. The extent of his achievement, and the unpretentious simplicity with which he, Feuerbach, gives it to the world, stand in striking contrast to the opposite attitude [of the others].

Feuerbach’s great achievement is:

- (1) The proof that philosophy is nothing else but religion rendered into thought and expounded by thought, i.e., another form and manner of existence of the estrangement of the essence of man; hence equally to be condemned;
- (2) The establishment of *true materialism* and of *real science*, by making the social relationship of “man to man” the basic principle of the theory;
- (3) His opposing to the negation of the negation, which claims to be the absolute positive, the self-supporting positive, positively based on itself.

Feuerbach explains the Hegelian dialectic (and thereby justifies starting out from the positive facts which we know by the senses) as follows:

Hegel sets out from the estrangement of substance (in logic, from the infinite, abstractly universal) – from the absolute and fixed abstraction; which means, put popularly, that he sets out from religion and theology.

*Secondly*, he annuls the infinite, and posits the actual, sensuous, real, finite, particular (philosophy, annulment of religion and theology).

*Thirdly*, he again annuls the positive and restores the abstraction, the infinite – restoration of religion and theology.

Feuerbach thus conceives the negation of the negation *only* as a contradiction of philosophy with itself – as the philosophy which affirms theology (the transcendent, etc.) after having denied it, and which it therefore affirms in opposition to itself.

The positive position or self-affirmation and self-confirmation contained in the negation of the negation is taken to be a position which is not yet sure of itself, which is therefore burdened with its opposite, which is doubtful of itself and therefore in need of proof, and which, therefore, is not a position demonstrating itself by its existence – not an acknowledged ||XIII| position; hence it is directly and immediately confronted by the position of sense-certainty based on itself. [Feuerbach also defines the negation of the negation, the definite concept, as thinking surpassing itself in thinking and as thinking wanting to be directly awareness, nature, reality. – *Note by Marx* <sup>[44]</sup>]

But because Hegel has conceived the negation of the negation, from the point of view of the positive relation inherent in it, as the true and only positive, and from the point of view of the negative relation inherent in it as the only true act and spontaneous activity of all being, he has only found the *abstract, logical, speculative* expression for the movement of history, which is not yet the *real* history of man as a given subject, but only the *act of creation*, the *history of the origin* of man.

We shall explain both the abstract form of this process and the difference between this process as it is in Hegel in contrast to modern criticism, in contrast to the same process in Feuerbach's *Wesen des Christenthums*, or rather the *critical* form of this in Hegel still uncritical process.

Let us take a look at the Hegelian system. One must begin with Hegel's *Phänomenologie*, the true point of origin and the secret of the Hegelian philosophy.

### ***Phenomenology.***

#### **A. *Self-consciousness.***

**I. *Consciousness.*** (a) Certainty at the level of sense-experience; or the “this” and *meaning*. (b) *Perception*, or the thing with its properties, and *deception*. (g) Force and understanding, appearance and the supersensible world.

**II. *Self-consciousness.*** The truth of certainty of self. (a) Independence and dependence of self-consciousness; mastery and servitude. (b) Freedom of self-consciousness. Stoicism, scepticism, the unhappy consciousness.

**III. *Reason.*** Reason's certainty and reason's truth. (a) Observation as a process of reason. Observation of nature and of self-consciousness. (b) Realisation of rational self-consciousness through its own activity. Pleasure and necessity. The law of the heart and the insanity of self-conceit. Virtue and the course of the world. (c) The individuality which is real in and for itself. The spiritual animal kingdom and the deception or the real fact. Reason as lawgiver. Reason which tests laws.

#### **B. *Mind.***

**I. *True* mind, ethics. II. Mind in self-estrangement, culture. III. Mind certain of itself, morality.**

**C. *Religion.*** *Natural* religion; *religion of art*; *revealed* religion.

#### D. *Absolute knowledge.*

Hegel's *Encyclopädie*, beginning as it does with logic, with *pure speculative thought*, and ending with *absolute knowledge* – with the self-conscious, self-comprehending philosophic or absolute (i.e., superhuman) abstract mind – is in its entirety nothing but the *display*, the self-objectification, of the *essence* of the philosophic mind, and the philosophic mind is nothing but the estranged mind of the world thinking within its self-estrangement – i.e., comprehending itself abstractly.

*Logic* – mind's *coin of the realm*, the speculative or *mental value* of man and nature – its essence which has grown totally indifferent to all real determinateness, and hence unreal – is *alienated thinking*, and therefore thinking which abstracts from nature and from real man: *abstract thinking*.

Then: *The externality of this abstract thinking ... nature*, as it is for this abstract thinking. Nature is external to it – its self-loss; and it apprehends nature also in an external fashion, as abstract thought, but as alienated abstract thinking. Finally, *mind*, this thinking returning home to its own point of origin – the thinking which as the anthropological, phenomenological, psychological, ethical, artistic and religious mind is not valid for itself, until ultimately it finds itself, and affirms itself, as *absolute knowledge* and hence absolute, i.e., abstract, mind, thus receiving its conscious embodiment in the mode of existence corresponding to it. For its real mode of existence is *abstraction*.

There is a double error in Hegel.

The **first** emerges most clearly in the *Phänomenologie*, the birth-place of the Hegelian philosophy. When, for instance, wealth, state-power, etc., are understood by Hegel as entities estranged from the *human being*, this only happens in their form as thoughts ... They are thought-entities, and therefore merely an estrangement of *pure*, i.e., abstract, philosophical thinking. The whole process therefore ends with absolute knowledge. It is precisely abstract thought from which these objects are estranged and which they confront with their presumption of reality. The *philosopher* – who is himself an abstract form of estranged man – takes himself as the *criterion* of the estranged world. The whole *history of the alienation process* [*Entäußerungsgeschichte*] and the whole *process of the retraction* of the alienation is therefore nothing but the *history of the production* of abstract (i.e., absolute) ||XVII|<sup>[45]</sup> thought – of logical, speculative thought. The *estrangement*, [*Entfremdung*] which therefore forms the real interest of the transcendence [*Aufhebung*] of this alienation [*Entäußerung*], is the opposition of *in itself* and *for itself*, of *consciousness and self-consciousness*, of *object and subject* – that is to say, it is the opposition between abstract thinking and sensuous reality or real sensuousness within thought itself. All other oppositions and movements of these oppositions are but the *semblance*, the *cloak*, the *exoteric* shape of these oppositions which alone matter, and which constitute the *meaning* of these other, profane oppositions. It is not the fact that the human being *objectifies himself inhumanly*, in opposition to himself, but the fact that he *objectifies himself* [*selbst sich vergegenständlicht*] in *distinction* from and in *opposition* to abstract thinking, that constitutes the posited essence of the estrangement [*Entfremdung*] and the thing to be superseded [*aufzuhebende*].

||XVIII| The appropriation of man's essential powers, which have become objects – indeed, alien objects – is thus in the *first place* only an *appropriation* occurring in *consciousness*, in *pure thought*, i.e., in *abstraction*: it is the appropriation of these objects as *thoughts* and as

*movements of thought*. Consequently, despite its thoroughly negative and critical appearance and despite the genuine criticism contained in it, which often anticipates far later development, there is already latent in the *Phänomenologie* as a germ, a potentiality, a secret, the uncritical positivism and the equally uncritical idealism of Hegel's later works – that philosophic dissolution and restoration of the existing empirical world.

*In the second place*: the vindication of the objective world for man – for example, the realisation that *sensuous* consciousness is not an *abstractly* sensuous consciousness but a *humanly* sensuous consciousness, that religion, wealth, etc., are but the estranged world of *human* objectification, of *man's* essential powers put to work and that they are therefore but the *path* to the true *human* world – this appropriation or the insight into this process appears in Hegel therefore in this form, that *sense, religion, state power, etc.*, are *spiritual* entities; for only *mind* is the *true* essence of man, and the true form of mind is thinking mind, theological, speculative mind.

The *human character* of nature and of the nature created by history – man's products – appears in the form that they are *products* of abstract mind and as such, therefore, phases of *mind – thought-entities*. The *Phänomenologie* is, therefore, a hidden, mystifying and still uncertain criticism; but inasmuch as it depicts man's *estrangement*, even though man appears only as mind, there lie concealed in it *all* the elements of criticism, already *prepared and elaborated* in a manner often rising far above the Hegelian standpoint. The “unhappy consciousness”, the “honest consciousness”, the struggle of the “noble and base consciousness”, etc., etc. – these separate sections contain, but still in an estranged form, the *critical* elements of whole spheres such as religion, the state, civil life, etc. Just as *entities, objects*, appear as thought-entities, so the *subject* is always *consciousness* or *self-consciousness*; or rather the object appears only as *abstract* consciousness, man only as *self-consciousness*: the distinct forms of estrangement which make their appearance are, therefore, only various forms of consciousness and self-consciousness. Just as *in itself* abstract consciousness (the form in which the object is conceived) is merely a moment of distinction of self-consciousness, what appears as the result of the movement is the identity of self-consciousness with consciousness – absolute knowledge – the movement of abstract thought no longer directed outwards but proceeding now only within its own self: that is to say, the dialectic of pure thought is the result. [XVIII]

[XXIII] <sup>[46]</sup> The outstanding achievement of Hegel's *Phänomenologie* 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 – true, because real man – as the outcome of man's *own labour*. The *real, active* orientation of man to himself as a species-being, or his manifestation as a real species-being (i.e., as a human being), is only possible if he really brings out all his *species-powers* – something which in turn is only possible through the cooperative action of all of mankind, only as the result of history – and treats these powers as objects: and this, to begin with, is again only possible in the form of estrangement.

We shall now demonstrate in detail Hegel's one-sidedness and limitations as they are displayed in the final chapter of the *Phänomenologie*, “Absolute Knowledge” – a chapter which contains the condensed spirit of the *Phänomenologie*, the relationship of the *Phänomenologie* to speculative dialectic, and also Hegel's *consciousness* concerning both and their relationship to one another.



Let us provisionally say just this much in advance: Hegel's standpoint is that of modern political economy. <sup>[47]</sup> He grasps *labour* as the *essence* of man – as man's essence which stands the test: he sees only the positive, not the negative side of labour. Labour is *man's coming-to-be* for *himself* within *alienation*, or as *alienated* man. The only labour which Hegel knows and recognises is *abstractly mental* labour. Therefore, that which constitutes the *essence* of philosophy – the *alienation of man who knows himself*, or *alienated science thinking itself* - Hegel grasps as its essence; and in contradistinction to previous philosophy he is therefore able to combine its separate aspects, and to present his philosophy as *the* philosophy. What the other philosophers did – that they grasped separate phases of nature and of abstract self-consciousness, namely, of human life as phases of self-consciousness – is *known* to Hegel as the *doings* of philosophy. Hence his science is absolute.

Let us now turn to our subject.

“*Absolute Knowledge*”. The last chapter of the “*Phänomenologie*”.

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 object. (Positing of man = self-consciousness).

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*, to self-consciousness. The *reappropriation* of the objective essence of man, produced within the orbit of estrangement as something alien, therefore denotes not only the annulment of *estrangement*, but of *objectivity* as well. Man, that is to say, is regarded as a *non-objective, spiritual* being.

The movement of *surmounting the object of consciousness* is now described by Hegel in the following way:

The *object* reveals itself not merely as *returning* into the *self* – this is according to Hegel the *one-sided* way of apprehending this movement, the grasping of only one side. Man is equated with self. The self, however, is only the *abstractly* conceived man – man created by abstraction. Man *is* selfish. His eye, his ear, etc., are *selfish*. In him every one of his essential powers has the quality of *selfhood*. But it is quite false to say on that account “*self-consciousness* has eyes, ears, essential powers”. *Self-consciousness* is rather a quality of human nature, of the human eye, etc.; it is not human nature that is a quality of ||XXIV| *self-consciousness*.

The self-abstracted entity, fixed for itself, is man as *abstract egoist* – *egoism* raised in its pure abstraction to the level of thought. (We shall return to this point later.)

For Hegel the *human being* – *man* – equals *self-consciousness*. All estrangement of the human being is therefore *nothing* but *estrangement of self-consciousness*. The estrangement of self-consciousness is not regarded as an *expression* – reflected in the realm of knowledge and thought – of the *real* estrangement of the human being. Instead, the *actual* estrangement – that which appears real – is according to its *innermost*, hidden nature (which is only brought to light by philosophy) nothing but the *manifestation* of the estrangement of the real human essence, of *self-consciousness*. The science which comprehends this is therefore called *phenomenology*. All reappropriation of the estranged objective essence appears therefore, as

incorporation into self-consciousness: The man who takes hold of his essential being is *merely* the self-consciousness which takes hold of objective essences. Return of the object into the self is therefore the reappropriation of the object.

Expressed in *all its aspects*, the *surmounting of the object of consciousness* means:

- (1) That the object as such presents itself to consciousness as something vanishing.
- (2) That it is the alienation of self-consciousness which posits thinghood.<sup>[48]</sup>
- (3) That this alienation has, not merely a *negative* but a *positive* significance
- (4) That it has this meaning not merely *for us* or intrinsically, but *for self-consciousness itself*.
- (5) *For self-consciousness*, the negative of the object, or its annulling of itself, has *positive* significance – or it *knows* this futility of the object – because of the fact that it alienates itself, for in this alienation it posits *itself* as object, or, for the sake of the indivisible unity of *being-for-self*, posits the object as itself.
- (6) On the other hand, this contains likewise the other moment, that self-consciousness has also just as much superseded this alienation and objectivity and resumed them into itself, being thus *at home* in its other-being *as such*.
- (7) This is the movement of consciousness and this is therefore the totality of its moments.
- (8) Consciousness must similarly be related to the object in the totality of its determinations and have comprehended it in terms of each of them. This totality of its determinations makes the object *intrinsically a spiritual being*; and it becomes so in truth for consciousness through the apprehending of each one of the determinations as *self*, or through what was called above the *spiritual* attitude to them.<sup>[49]</sup>

As to (1): That the object as such presents itself to consciousness as something vanishing – this is the above-mentioned *return of the object into the self*.

As to (2): The *alienation of self-consciousness* posits *thinghood*. Because man equals self-consciousness, his alienated, objective essence, or *thinghood*, equals *alienated self-consciousness*, and *thinghood* is thus posited through this alienation (*thinghood* being *that* which is an *object for man* and an object for him is really only that which is to him an essential object, therefore his *objective* essence. And since it is not *real man*, nor therefore *nature* – man being *human nature* – who as such is made the subject, but only the abstraction of man – self-consciousness – *thinghood* cannot be anything but alienated self-consciousness). It is only to be expected that a living, natural being equipped and endowed with objective (i.e., material) essential powers should have real natural objects of his essence; and that his self-alienation should lead to the positing of a *real*, objective world, but within the framework of *externality*, and, therefore, an overwhelming world not belonging to his own essential being. There is nothing incomprehensible or mysterious in this. It would be mysterious, rather, if it were otherwise. But it is equally clear that a *self-consciousness* by its alienation can posit only *thinghood*, i.e., only an abstract thing, a thing of abstraction and not a *real* thing. It is ||XXVI|<sup>[50]</sup> clear, further, that *thinghood* is therefore utterly without any *independence*, any *essentiality* vis-à-vis self-consciousness; that on the contrary it is a mere

creature – something *posited* by self-consciousness. And what is posited, instead of confirming itself, is but confirmation of the act of positing which for a moment fixes its energy as the product, and gives it the *semblance* – but only for a moment – of an independent, real substance.

|| Whenever real, corporeal *man*, man with his feet firmly on the solid ground, man exhaling and inhaling all the forces of nature, *posits* his real, objective *essential powers* as alien objects by his externalisation, it is not the *act of positing* which is the subject in this process: it is the subjectivity of *objective essential powers*, whose action, therefore, must also be something objective. An objective being acts objectively, and he would not act objectively if the objective did not reside in the very nature of his being. He only creates or posits objects, because he is posited by objects – because at bottom he is *nature*. In the act of positing, therefore, this objective being does not fall from his state of “pure activity” into *a creating of the object*; on the contrary, his *objective* product only confirms his *objective* activity, his activity as the activity of an objective, natural being.

Here we see how consistent naturalism or humanism is distinct from both idealism and materialism, and constitutes at the same time the unifying truth of both. We see also how only naturalism is capable of comprehending the action of world history.

<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, vital powers* – 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, like animals and plants. 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. To say that man is a *corporeal, living, real, sensuous, objective* being full of natural vigour is to say that he has *real, sensuous objects* as the object of his being or of his life, or that he can only *express* his life in real, sensuous objects. *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.>

*Hunger* is a natural *need*; it therefore needs a *nature* outside itself, an *object* outside itself, in order to satisfy itself, to be stilled. Hunger is an acknowledged need of my body for an *object* existing outside it, indispensable to its integration and to the expression of its essential being. The sun is the *object* of the plant – an indispensable object to it, confirming its life – just as the plant is an object of the sun, being an *expression* of the life-awakening power of the sun, of the sun’s *objective essential power*.

A being which does not have its nature outside itself is not a *natural* being, and plays no part in the system of nature. A being which has no object outside itself is not an objective being. A being which is not itself an object for some third being has no being for its *object*; i.e., it is not objectively related. Its being is not objective.

||XXVII| A non-objective being is a *non-being*.

Suppose a being which is neither an object itself, nor has an object. Such a being, in the first place, would be the *unique* being: there would exist no being outside it – it would exist solitary and alone. For as soon as there are objects outside me, as soon as I am not *alone*, I am

*another* – *another reality* than the object outside me. For this third object I am thus a *different reality* than itself; that is, I am *its* object. Thus, to suppose a being which is not the object of another being is to presuppose that *no* objective being exists. As soon as I have an object, this object has me for an object. But a *non-objective* being is an unreal, non-sensuous thing – a product of mere thought (i.e., of mere imagination) – an abstraction. To be *sensuous*, that is, to be really existing, means to be an object of sense, to be a *sensuous* object, to have sensuous objects outside oneself – objects of one's sensuousness. To be sensuous is to *suffer*.

Man as an objective, sensuous being is therefore a *suffering* being – and because he feels that he suffers, a *passionate* being. Passion is the essential power of man energetically bent on its object.

<But man is not merely a natural being: he is a *human* natural being. That is to say, he is a being for himself. Therefore he is a *species-being*, and has to confirm and manifest himself as such both in his being and in his knowing. Therefore, *human* objects are not natural objects as they immediately present themselves, and neither is *human sense* as it immediately *is* – as it is objectively – *human* sensibility, human objectivity. Neither nature objectively nor nature subjectively is directly given in a form adequate to the *human* being.> And as everything natural has to *come into being*, *man* too has his act of origin – *history* – which, however, is for him a known history, and hence as an act of origin it is a conscious self-transcending act of origin. History is the true natural history of man (on which more later).

Thirdly, because this positing of thinghood is itself only an illusion, an act contradicting the nature of pure activity, it has to be cancelled again and thinghood denied.

*Re 3, 4, 5 and 6.* (3) This externalisation [*Entäußerung*] of consciousness has not merely a *negative* but a *positive* significance, and (4) it has this meaning not merely *for us* or intrinsically, but for consciousness itself. *For consciousness* the negative of the object, its annulling of itself, has *positive* significance – i.e., consciousness *knows* this nullity of the object – because it alienates *itself*; for, in this alienation it *knows* itself as object, or, for the sake of the indivisible unity of *being-for-itself*, the object as itself. (6) On the other hand, there is also this other moment in the process, that consciousness has also just as much superseded this alienation and objectivity and resumed them into itself, being thus *at home* in its *other-being as such*.

As we have already seen, the appropriation of what is estranged and objective, or the annulling of objectivity in the form of *estrangement* (which has to advance from indifferent strangeness to real, antagonistic estrangement), means likewise or even primarily for Hegel that it is *objectivity* which is to be annulled, because it is not the *determinate* character of the object, but rather its *objective* character that is offensive and constitutes estrangement for self-consciousness. The object is therefore something negative, self-annulling – a *nullity*. This nullity of the object has not only a negative but a *positive* meaning for consciousness, since this nullity of the object is precisely the *self-confirmation* of the non-objectivity, of the ||XXVIII| *abstraction* of itself. *For consciousness itself* the nullity of the object has a positive meaning because it *knows* this nullity, the objective being, as *its self-alienation*; because it knows that it exists only as a result of its own self-alienation....

The way in which consciousness is, and in which something is for it, is *knowing*. Knowing is its sole act. Something therefore comes to be for consciousness insofar as the latter *knows* this *something*. Knowing is its sole objective relation.

It ,consciousness, then, knows the nullity of the object (i.e., knows the non-existence of the distinction between the object and itself, the non-existence of the object for it) because it knows the object as its *self-alienation*; that is, it knows itself – knows knowing as object – because the object is only the *semblance* of an object, a piece of mystification, which in its essence, however, is nothing else but knowing itself, which has confronted itself with itself and hence has confronted itself with a *nullity* – a something which has *no* objectivity outside the knowing. Or: knowing knows that in relating itself to an object it is only *outside* itself – that it only externalises itself; that *it itself* only *appears* to itself as an object – or that that which appears to it as an object is only itself.

On the other hand, says Hegel, there is here at the same time this other moment, that consciousness has just as much annulled and reabsorbed this externalisation and objectivity, being thus *at home* in its *other-being as such*.

In this discussion all the illusions of speculation are brought together.

*First of all*: consciousness, self-consciousness, is *at home* in its *other-being as such*. It is therefore – or if we here abstract from the Hegelian abstraction and put the self-consciousness of man instead of self-consciousness – it is *at home* in its *other being as such*. This implies, for one thing, that consciousness (knowing as knowing, thinking as thinking) pretends to be directly the *other* of itself – to be the world of sense, the real world, life – thought surpassing itself in thought (Feuerbach).<sup>[51]</sup> This aspect is contained herein, inasmuch as consciousness as mere consciousness takes offence not at estranged objectivity, but at *objectivity as such*.

Secondly, this implies that self-conscious man, insofar as he has recognised and superseded the spiritual world (or his world's spiritual, general mode of being) as self-alienation, nevertheless again confirms it in this alienated shape and passes it off as his true mode of being – re-establishes it, and pretends to be *at home in his other-being as such*. Thus, for instance, after superseding religion, after recognising religion to be a product of self-alienation he yet finds confirmation of himself in *religion as religion*. Here is the root of Hegel's *false* positivism, or of his merely *apparent* criticism: this is what Feuerbach designated as the positing, negating and re-establishing of religion or theology – but it has to be expressed in more general terms. Thus reason is at home in unreason as unreason. The man who has recognised that he is leading an alienated life in law, politics, etc., is leading his true human life in this alienated life as such. Self-affirmation, self-confirmation *in contradiction* with itself – in contradiction both with the knowledge of and with the essential being of the object – is thus true *knowledge* and *life*.

There can therefore no longer be any question about an act of accommodation on Hegel's part *vis-à-vis* religion, the state, etc., since this lie is the lie of his principle.

||XXIX| If I *know* religion as *alienated* human self-consciousness, then what I know in it as religion is not my self-consciousness, but my alienated self-consciousness confirmed in it. I therefore know my self-consciousness that belongs to itself, to its very nature, confirmed not in *religion* but rather in *annihilated* and *superseded* religion.

In Hegel, therefore, the negation of the negation is not the confirmation of the true essence, effected precisely through negation of the pseudo-essence. With him the negation of the negation is the confirmation of the pseudo-essence, or of the self-estranged essence in its

denial; or it is the denial of this pseudo-essence as an objective being dwelling outside man and independent of him, and its transformation into the subject.

A peculiar role, therefore, is played by the act of *superseding* in which denial and preservation, i.e., affirmation, are bound together.

Thus, for example, in Hegel's philosophy of law, *civil law* superseded equals *morality*, *morality* superseded equals the *family*, the *family* superseded equals *civil society*, *civil society* superseded equals the *state*, the *state* superseded equals *world history*. In the *actual world* *civil law*, *morality*, the *family*, *civil society*, the *state*, etc., remain in existence, only they have become *moments* – states of the existence and being of man – which have no validity in isolation, but dissolve and engender one another, etc. They have become *moments of motion*.

In their actual existence this *mobile* nature of theirs is hidden. It appears and is made manifest only in thought, in philosophy. Hence my true religious existence is my existence in the *philosophy of religion*; my true political existence is my existence in the *philosophy of law*; my true natural existence, existence in the *philosophy of nature*; my true artistic existence, existence in the *philosophy of art*; my true *human* existence, my *existence in philosophy*. Likewise the true existence of religion, the state, nature, art, is the *philosophy* of religion, of nature, of the state and of art. If, however, the philosophy of religion, etc., is for me the sole true existence of religion then, too, it is only as a *philosopher of religion* that I am truly religious, and so I deny *real* religious sentiment and the really *religious* man. But at the same time I *assert* them, in part within my own existence or within the alien existence which I oppose to them – for this *is* only their *philosophic* expression – and in part I assert them in their distinct original shape, since for me they represent merely the *apparent* other-being, allegories, forms of their own true existence (i.e., of my *philosophical* existence) hidden under sensuous disguises.

In just the same way, *quality* superseded equals *quantity*, *quantity* superseded equals *measure*, *measure* superseded equals *essence*, *essence* superseded equals *appearance*, *appearance* superseded equals *actuality*, *actuality* superseded equals the *concept*, the *concept* superseded equals *objectivity*, *objectivity* superseded equals the *absolute idea*, the *absolute idea* superseded equals *nature*, *nature* superseded equals *subjective* mind, *subjective* mind superseded equals *ethical* objective mind, *ethical* mind superseded equals *art*, *art* superseded equals *religion*, *religion* superseded equals *absolute knowledge*.<sup>[52]</sup>

On the one hand, this act of superseding is a transcending of a conceptual entity; thus, private property *as a concept* is transcended in the *concept* of morality. And because thought imagines itself to be directly the other of itself, to be *sensuous reality* – and therefore takes its own action for *sensuous, real* action – this superseding in thought, which leaves its object in existence in the real world, believes that it has really overcome it. On the other hand, because the object has now become for it a moment of thought, thought takes it in its reality too to be self-confirmation of itself – of self-consciousness, of abstraction.

||XXX| From the one point of view the entity which Hegel *supersedes* in philosophy is therefore not *real* religion, the *real* state, or *real* nature, but religion itself already as an object of knowledge, i.e., *dogmatics*; the same with *jurisprudence*, *political science* and *natural science*. From the one point of view, therefore, he stands in opposition both to the *real* thing and to immediate, unphilosophic *science* or the unphilosophic *conceptions* of this thing. He

therefore contradicts their conventional conceptions. [The conventional conception of theology, jurisprudence, political science, natural science, etc. - Ed.]

On the other hand, the religious, etc., man can find in Hegel his final confirmation.

It is now time to formulate the *positive* aspects of the Hegelian dialectic within the realm of estrangement.

(a) *Supersession* as an objective movement of *retracting* the alienation *into self*. This is the insight, expressed within the estrangement, concerning the *appropriation* of the objective essence through the supersession of its estrangement; it is the estranged insight into the *real objectification* of man, into the real appropriation of his objective essence through the annihilation of the *estranged* character of the objective world, through the supersession of the objective world in its estranged mode of being. In the same way atheism, being the supersession of God, is the advent of theoretic humanism, and communism, as the supersession of private property, is the vindication of real human life as man's possession and thus the advent of practical humanism, or atheism is humanism mediated with itself through the supersession of religion, whilst communism is humanism mediated with itself through the supersession of private property. Only through the supersession of this mediation – which is itself, however, a necessary premise – does positively self-deriving humanism, *positive humanism*, come into being.

But atheism and communism are no flight, no abstraction, no loss of the objective world created by man – of man's essential powers born to the realm of objectivity; they are not a returning in poverty to unnatural, primitive simplicity. On the contrary, they are but the first real emergence, the actual realisation for man of man's essence and of his essence as something real.

Thus, by grasping the *positive* meaning of self-referred negation (although again in estranged fashion) Hegel grasps man's self-estrangement, the alienation of man's essence, man's loss of objectivity and his loss of realness as self-discovery, manifestation of his nature, objectification and realisation. <In short, within the sphere of abstraction, Hegel conceives labour as man's act of *self-genesis* – conceives man's relation to himself as an alien being and the manifestation of himself as an alien being to be the emergence of *species-consciousness* and *species-life*.>

(b) However, apart from, or rather in consequence of, the referral already described, this act appears in Hegel:

First as a *merely formal*, because abstract, act, because the human being itself is taken to be only an *abstract, thinking being*, conceived merely as self-consciousness. And,

Secondly, because the exposition is *formal* and *abstract*, the supersession of the alienation becomes a confirmation of the alienation; or for Hegel this movement of *self-genesis* and *self-objectification* in the form of *self-alienation* and *self-estrangement* is the *absolute*, and hence final, *expression of human life* – of life with itself as its aim, of life at peace with itself, and in unity with its essence.

This movement, in its abstract ||XXXI| form as dialectic, is therefore regarded as *truly human life*, and because it is nevertheless an abstraction – an estrangement of human life – it is

regarded as a *divine process*, but as the divine process of man, a process traversed by man's abstract, pure, absolute essence that is distinct from himself.

*Thirdly*, this process must have a bearer, a subject. But the subject only comes into being as a result. This result – the subject knowing itself as absolute self-consciousness – is therefore *God, absolute Spirit, the self-knowing and self-manifesting idea*. Real man and real nature become mere predicates – symbols of this hidden, unreal man and of this unreal nature. Subject and predicate are therefore related to each other in absolute reversal – a *mystical subject-object* or a *subjectivity reaching beyond the object* – the *absolute subject* as a *process*, as *subject alienating* itself and returning from alienation into itself, but at the same time retracting this alienation into itself, and the subject as this process; a pure, *incessant* revolving within itself.

*First. Formal and abstract* conception of man's act of self-creation or self-objectification.

Hegel having posited man as equivalent to self-consciousness, the estranged object – the estranged essential reality of man – is nothing but *consciousness*, the thought of estrangement merely – estrangement's *abstract* and therefore empty and unreal expression, *negation*. The supersession of the alienation is therefore likewise nothing but an abstract, empty supersession of that empty abstraction – the *negation of the negation*. The rich, living, sensuous, concrete activity of self-objectification is therefore reduced to its mere abstraction, *absolute negativity* – an abstraction which is again fixed as such and considered as an independent activity – as sheer activity. Because this so-called negativity is nothing but the *abstract, empty* form of that real living act, its content can in consequence be merely a *formal* content produced by abstraction from all content. As a result therefore one gets general, abstract *forms of abstraction* pertaining to every content and on that account indifferent to, and, consequently, valid for, all content – the thought-forms or logical categories torn from *real* mind and from *real* nature. (We shall unfold the *logical* content of absolute negativity further on.)

| Hegel's positive achievement here, in his speculative logic, is that the *definite concepts*, the universal *fixed thought-forms* in their independence *vis-à-vis* nature and mind are a necessary result of the general estrangement of the human being and therefore also of a human thought, and that Hegel has therefore brought these together and presented them as moments of the abstraction-process. For example, superseded being is essence, superseded essence is concept, the concept superseded is ... absolute idea. But what, then, is the absolute idea? It supersedes its own self again, if it does not want to traverse once more from the beginning the whole act of abstraction, and to satisfy itself with being a totality of abstractions or the self-comprehending abstraction. But abstraction comprehending itself as abstraction knows itself to be nothing: it must abandon itself – abandon abstraction – and so it arrives at an entity which is its exact opposite – at *nature*. Thus, the entire logic is the demonstration that abstract thought is nothing in itself; that the absolute idea is nothing for itself; that only *nature* is something.

||XXXII| The absolute idea, the abstract idea, which “*considered* with regard to its unity with itself is *intuiting* ([Logic § 244](#)), and which (*loc. cit.*) “in its own absolute truth *resolves* to let the moment of its particularity or of initial characterisation and other-being, the *immediate idea*, as its reflection, *go forth* freely from itself as nature” (*loc. cit.*),



this whole idea which behaves in such a strange and bizarre way, and which has given the Hegelians such terrible headaches, is from beginning to end nothing else but *abstraction* (i.e., the abstract thinker), which, made wise by experience and enlightened concerning its truth, resolves under various (false and themselves still abstract) conditions to *abandon itself* and to replace its self-absorption, nothingness, generality and indeterminateness by its other-being, the particular, and the determinate; resolves to let *nature*, which it held hidden in itself only as an abstraction, as a thought-entity, *go forth freely from itself*; that is to say, this idea resolves to forsake abstraction and to have a look at nature *free* of abstraction. The abstract idea, which without mediation becomes *intuiting*, is indeed nothing else but abstract thinking that gives itself up and resolves on *intuition*. This entire transition from logic to natural philosophy is nothing else but the transition – so difficult to effect for the abstract thinker, who therefore describes it in such an adventurous way – from *abstracting* to *intuiting*. The *mystical* feeling which drives the philosopher forward from abstract thinking to intuiting is *boredom* – the longing for content.

(The man estranged from himself is also the thinker estranged from his *essence* – that is, from the natural and human essence. His thoughts are therefore fixed mental forms dwelling outside nature and man. Hegel has locked up all these fixed mental forms together in his logic, interpreting each of them first as negation – that is, as an *alienation* of *human* thought – and then as negation of the negation – that is, as a superseding of this alienation, as a *real* expression of human thought. But as this still takes place within the confines of the estrangement, this negation of the negation is in part the restoring of these fixed forms in their estrangement; in part a stopping at the last act – the act of self-reference in alienation – as the true mode of being of these fixed mental forms; \* –

[\* (This means that what Hegel does is to put in place of these fixed abstractions the act of abstraction which revolves in its own circle. We must therefore give him the credit for having indicated the source of all these inappropriate concepts which originally appertained to particular philosophers; for having brought them together; and for having created the entire compass of abstraction as the object of criticism, instead of some specific abstraction.) (Why Hegel separates thought from the *subject* we shall see later; at this stage it is already clear, however, that when man is not, his characteristic expression cannot be human either, and so neither could thought be grasped as an expression of man as a human and natural subject endowed with eyes, ears, etc., and living in society, in the world, and in nature.) – Note by Marx]

– and in part, to the extent that this abstraction apprehends itself and experiences an infinite weariness with itself, there makes its appearance in Hegel, in the form of the resolution to recognise *nature* as the essential being and to go over to intuition, the abandonment of abstract thought – the abandonment of thought revolving solely within the orbit of thought, of thought *sans* eyes, *sans* teeth, *sans* ears, *sans* everything.)

||XXXIII| But *nature* too, taken abstractly, for itself – nature fixed in isolation from man – is *nothing* for man. It goes without saying that the abstract thinker who has committed himself to intuiting, intuits nature abstractly. Just as nature lay enclosed in the thinker in the form of the absolute idea, in the form of a thought-entity – in a shape which was obscure and enigmatic even to him – so by letting it emerge from himself he has really let emerge only this *abstract nature*, only nature as a *thought-entity* – but now with the significance that it is the other-being of thought, that it is real, intuited nature – nature distinguished from abstract thought. Or, to talk in human language, the abstract thinker learns in his intuition of nature

that the entities which he thought to create from nothing, from pure abstraction – the entities he believed he was producing in the divine dialectic as pure products of the labour of thought, for ever shuttling back and forth in itself and never looking outward into reality – are nothing else but *abstractions* from *characteristics of nature*. To him, therefore, the whole of nature merely repeats the logical abstractions in a sensuous, external form. He once more *resolves* nature into these abstractions. Thus, his intuition of nature is only the act of confirming his abstraction from the intuition of nature [~~Let us consider for a moment Hegel's characteristics of nature and the transition from nature to the mind. Nature has resulted as the idea in the form of the other being. Since the id ...~~] – is only the conscious repetition by him of the process of creating his abstraction. Thus, for example, time equals negativity referred to itself (Hegel, *Encyclopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse*. p. 238). To the superseded becoming as being there corresponds, in natural form, superseded movement as matter. Light is *reflection-in-itself*, the *natural* form. Body as *moon* and *comet* is the *natural* form of the *antithesis* which according to logic is on the one side the *positive resting on itself* and on the other side the *negative resting on itself*. The earth is the *natural* form of the logical *ground*, as the negative unity of the antithesis, etc.

*Nature as nature* – that is to say, insofar as it is still sensuously distinguished from that secret sense hidden within it – nature isolated, distinguished from these abstractions is *nothing* – a *nothing proving itself to be nothing* – is *devoid of sense*, or has only the sense of being an externality which has to be annulled.

“In the finite-teleological position is to be found the correct premise that nature does not contain within itself the absolute purpose.” [§245].

Its purpose is the confirmation of abstraction.

“Nature has shown itself to be the idea in the *form of other-being*. Since the *idea* is in this form the negative of itself or *external to itself*, nature is not just relatively external *vis-à-vis* this idea, but *externality* constitutes the form in which it exists as nature.” [§ 247].

*Externality* here is not to be understood as the *world of sense* which *manifests itself* and is accessible to the light, to the man endowed with senses. It is to be taken here in the sense of alienation, of a mistake, a defect, which ought not to be. For what is true is still the idea. Nature is only the *form* of the idea's *other-being*. And since abstract thought is the *essence*, that which is external to it is by its essence something merely *external*. The abstract thinker recognises at the same time that *sensuousness* – *externality* in contrast to thought shuttling back and forth *within itself* – is the essence of nature. But he expresses this contrast in such a way as to make this *externality of nature*, its *contrast* to thought, its *defect*, so that inasmuch as it is distinguished from abstraction, nature is something defective.

||XXXIV| An entity which is defective not merely for me or in my eyes but in itself – intrinsically – has something outside itself which it lacks. That is, its essence is different from it itself. Nature has therefore to supersede itself for the abstract thinker, for it is already posited by him as a potentially *superseded* being.

“For us, mind has *nature* for its *premise*, being nature's *truth* and for that reason its *absolute prius*. In this truth nature *has vanished*, and mind has resulted as the idea arrived at being-for-itself, the *object* of which, as well as the *subject*, is the *concept*. This identity is *absolute negativity*, for whereas in nature the concept has its perfect external objectivity, this its

alienation has been superseded, and in this alienation the concept has become identical with itself. But it is this identity therefore, only in being a return out of nature.” [§ 381].

“As the *abstract* idea, *revelation* is unmediated transition to, the *coming-to-be* of, nature; as the revelation of the mind, which is free, it is the *positing* of nature as the *mind's* world – a positing which, being reflection, is at the same time, a *presupposing* of the world as independently existing nature. Revelation in conception is the creation of nature as the mind's being, in which the mind procures the *affirmation* and the *truth* of its freedom.” “*The absolute is mind*. This is the highest definition of the absolute.” [§ 384.] |XXXIV|