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The Hegelian Sources of Marx's Concept of Man

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THE HEGELIAN SOURCES OF MARX' CONCEPT OF MAN

by

Martin J. De Nys

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate
School of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Preface	ii
Chapter	
I. MARX' THEORY OF MAN	1
1. Marx' Concept of Praxis	4
2. Marx' Concept of Society	38
3. Marx' Concept of Consciousness	83
II. MARX' CRITIQUE OF FEUERBACH	119
1. Althusser's Interpretation of Marx' Theory of Man	119
2. Marx and Feuerbach's Critique of Hegel	131
3. Marx' Critique of Feuerbach's Notion of Nature	141
4. Marx' Critique of Feuerbach's Doctrine of Sense Consciousness	150
5. The Question of Community and Society	164
6. Humanism and Ideology.	198
III. MARX' HEGELIAN SOURCES	216
1. Hegel: Consciousness and the Embodied Individual.	220
2. Agency, Self Actualization, and Intersubjectivity in the <u>Phenomenology</u>	231
3. Agency and Society in the <u>Philosophy of Right</u>	284
IV. MARX' APPROPRIATION OF HEGEL	329
1. Marx' Indebtedness to Hegel	330
2. Marx' Critique of Hegel.	357
V. THE ROLE OF MARX' ANTHROPOLOGY	399
1. The Comprehension of History	400
2. The Problem of Alienation.	415
3. The Critique of Wage Labor	430
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	449

Preface.

The majority of commentators on the early writings of Marx agree that a theory of man can be found in these texts.¹ Moreover, there is general agreement that Marx' theory of man is developed through polemics with his philosophical predecessors, and is especially influenced by his encounters with Feuerbach and Hegel.² But beyond this point there seems to be slight agreement among the commentators. Since the notion of man in Marx' early texts is set forth in a polemical context, it is difficult to ascertain

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Cf. For example Adam Schaff, "Marxism and the Philosophy of Man," in Socialist Humanism, edited by Erich Fromm (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1965), p. 142. Also Adam Schaff's Marxism and the Human Individual, translated by O. Wojtasiewicz, edited by Robert Cohen, (New York: McGraw Hill Inc., 1970), p. 9.

Other concurring authors include Roger Garaudy, Karl Marx: The Evolution of his Thought, translated by Nan Apotheker, (New York: International Publishers Co. Inc., 1967), p. 53; Erich Fromm, Marx' Concept of Man (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1961), p. v; Sartre, Search For a Method, translated by Hazel Barnes, (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), pp. xxxiv-xxxv; Shlomo Avineri, The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 85; Nathan Rotenstreich, Basic Problems of Marx' Philosophy, (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. Inc., 1965), p. 46; Pierre Bigo, Marxisme et Humanisme, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1954), pp. 137-141.

The major dissenting opinion is offered by Louis Althusser, who in his Pour Marx argues that any hints of a notion of man in Marx' manuscripts represent a "Feuerbachian" phase of Marx' development, and are not genuinely "Marxian." Althusser's arguments will be considered in the second chapter of my thesis.

2

Cf. especially Rotenstreich, Basic Problems of Marx' Philosophy, pp. 42-45, in which it is argued that Marx' concept of 'praxis,' the central concept in his theory of Man, is developed by Marx in the face of Hegel's notion of Spirit.

just what this notion is, and what its place is within the compass of Marx' thought. For the same reason, it is also difficult to determine precisely how Marx' theory of man is influenced by his predecessors, Feuerbach and Hegel. But it is important to determine clearly the relation of Marx to Feuerbach and Hegel. For Marx' notion of man is developed through his polemics with these of his predecessors. Consequently a clear understanding of the relation of Marx' thought to the thought of Feuerbach and Hegel is of critical significance in obtaining a distinct understanding of Marx' theory of man.

In this thesis, I shall argue that the basic content of Marx' theory of man can be derived from a textual analysis of Marx' early manuscripts, particularly the "Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844."³ This theory functions for Marx as a criterion or norm, entitling him to comment on other topics, such as the nature of productive alienation, and the condition of the wage laborer. Further, I shall argue that the most fundamental concepts of Marx' 'normative'⁴ theory of man have a close

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Supporting references will also be made to selected of Marx' subsequent works; The German Ideology, The Poverty of Philosophy, Class Struggles in France, The Grundrisse of 1857-1858, The Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy, and Capital. These references will have an obvious bearing on the problem of continuity in Marx' writings.

4

In referring to Marx' theory of man as 'normative,' I intend a reference to the terms 'criterion' and 'norm' as used above. A normative theory which operates as a criterion for making judgments on topics not directly discussed within the body of the theory itself.

affinity with certain aspects of the thought of Hegel. I do not claim that Marx is "an Hegelian." Marx' studied Feuerbach seriously, and he is sharply critical of Hegel at many points. Nevertheless, I claim that it is on certain portions of Hegel's thought that Marx profoundly models his theory of man.

A schema of my argument runs as follows: Chapter One develops the content of Marx' theory of man through an analysis of the relevant texts, principally though not exclusively the Manuscripts of 1844.⁵ In this chapter I argue that the three basic categories present in Marx' theory of man are productive activity of praxis,⁶ society, and consciousness.

Praxis is first of all productive activity requiring as its object something sensuous and external to the individual agent: nature. But the object of praxis is here understood as essentially a correlate of praxis. Nature is the field or milieu of praxis, and thus needs to be understood through its relation to praxis, rather than as a reality fully determined in itself. The result of praxis is 'objectification,' since the object produced by praxis bears the marks of that agency which produced it.

'Objectification,' the embodiment of the details of praxis in an external

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Cf. footnote three.

6

this term, for which productive activity or agency may be taken as synonyms, will, as I indicate in this preface, receive progressive definition through my first chapter.

product, is initially defined by Marx through a description of the relation of praxis to nature. But 'objectification' is also a concept which Marx frequently employs in further analyses of the structure of praxis itself. It figures prominently in his explanation of the effect of praxis on the experience of the agent, as one who is realized or actualized as a definite agent through his productive activity. Marx shows how the agent himself is embodied in the product he produces, and this is one of the two meanings of the concept of human 'self actualization' in Marx' theory of man.

The notion of objectification enables Marx to analyze praxis from the point of view of its product. But praxis in the texts of Marx is also analyzed from the point of view of the agent. Here the notion of "needs" comes into play. All praxis or productive activity is, Marx insists, rooted in needs; it is in virtue of his experiencing his own needs that the individual acts. Needs require agency for their satisfaction in that, as subjectively apprehended deficiencies or lacks within the individual, they require for their satisfaction the individual's active relating of himself to that which is other than and external to himself. And since the individual experiences definite needs, they are responsible for the definite forms of action the individual performs to obtain satisfaction.

The human subject of praxis must be understood as the subject of two sorts of needs: 'subsistence needs' and 'human needs.' The former are those which arise directly from the physiological structure of the individual, and whose satisfaction is required for the organic maintenance of the individual, e.g. hunger. Such needs are common to

all behaving organisms. Human needs arise from more complex interrelations between agent and environment, and they are essentially characterized as developmental. Human needs develop from previous instances of praxis, and they in turn bring about new sorts of praxis, and thus new and more complex interrelations between individual and environment. And since the individual develops these needs through his own actions as a productive agent, he further 'actualizes' or realizes himself as an agent. Here the notion of 'self actualization' takes on an additional meaning. This expanded sense of 'self actualization' also allows Marx to characterize praxis as 'universal.' Human productive activity roots itself in needs which develop dialectically through praxis itself. Such activity then is not limited to those forms of behavior whose bases are needs arising from the physiological structure of the individual; distinctly human praxis is universal in scope.

Marx, then, understands praxis in terms of its relation to its object, through the concept of objectification, and through its relation to its subject, through his notion of needs. This analysis of praxis further allows Marx to hold that the human agent 'appropriates' nature in two senses. The human agent 'appropriates' nature in that he transforms it on the terms of his productive agency. The result of this agency is a product suitable for the satisfaction of needs. But the praxis of the individual must also be described as occurring in society, in a context of social relations. And 'society' itself is a second category basic to Marx' theory of man.

Marx holds that society must be understood as a series of social

relationships between subjects of praxis or productive agents, and explains that such relationships are possible through praxis itself. Praxis is objectified in its product. This means that the agent himself is externalized in the objective result of his activity, inasmuch as his activity is radically his own, rooted in his own needs. The product is appropriable by the agent for the satisfaction of his own needs. But since the result of praxis is an external product, it is appropriable also by other individuals, towards the satisfaction of their relevantly similar needs. In thus appropriating the results of productive agency, individuals relate themselves both to a product and to the producer himself, since the product here is a result of some feature of the individual producer himself, viz., his own agency. Marx' point is that it is through my productive agency that I externalize myself, thus rendering relationships between myself and others, social relationships, possible. Consequently social relationships are most fundamentally relationships between productive agents.

For Marx the relationship between praxis and society is more complex than this conclusion might seem to suggest. For just as society is to be understood in terms of praxis, actual praxis is in turn essentially conditioned for Marx by the social context in which it occurs. Praxis originates in needs and is directed at nature. But nature is here to be understood as the correlate of praxis, including social praxis. The "material" upon which praxis is exercised is nature as already determined by social production. And thus the possibilities which this "material" present to the individual productive agent are themselves

conditioned by his social milieu. Moreover, society for Marx is a system of productive relations. As a system society controls the definite productive options available to the individual.

These two general descriptions of society show that for Marx praxis is in principle social. 'Society' is thus a category which plays an essential role in Marx' theory of man. All praxis results in the externalization of the individual, and thus renders him in principle accessible to social relations. And praxis, both in its definite options and "materials" depends upon the social context in which it occurs. The concepts of society and praxis are, then, to be understood in terms of each other. Just as praxis explains the possibility and the fundamental character of social relationships for Marx, so society explains the details of productive agency in their definite actuality.

This view of society implies two further points of importance for Marx' "social" theory of man. One is the idea of 'totalization.' As a system of productive relations, society in principle offers us a plurality of options for productive activity. This makes it possible for the individual to act in diverse ways towards the satisfaction of diverse sorts of human needs. Thus the agent may achieve self actualization as an agent 'totally' rather than partially: society accounts for the real possibility of multi-directional rather than uni-directional or reified praxis.

Second, society also accounts for the possibility of the agent's being determined as an 'object' as well as a 'subject.' The agent is determined as a 'subject' through his realization of himself as an agent

in definite productive acts and through the development of new needs within his experience as a result of such acts. The agent is determined as an 'object' through his being the object of the productive activities of others. This is possible only in a context of social relations. The determination of the agent as an 'object' is essential in order that man as agent be considered 'natural' in Marx' sense of that term.

Consciousness is the third broad category of Marx' theory of man. In his theory, consciousness is integrated with praxis and society. Marx first of all holds that consciousness as a feature of individual experience is a feature or moment of human praxis. Consciousness is 'produced' by praxis, inasmuch as consciousness is a relationship between the individual and his environment determined by the more fundamental relationship which the individual enjoys with his environment as an agent. But Marx also argues that consciousness is an essential feature of human praxis, in that only given this can the developmental character of human needs be explained. Further, consciousness as an indispensable feature of human praxis, albeit social praxis, must be distinguished from consciousness as ideology. It is the former treatment of consciousness which Marx' theory of man involves.

In addition to developing praxis, society, and consciousness as the primitive categories of his theory of man, Marx also holds in the Manuscripts and elsewhere that these categories are interrelated in a fashion such that praxis is the most fundamental of the three. Some reasons for this position are suggested throughout chapter one, and at the conclusion of this chapter I explicitly sketch an argument for this

claim. But the argument which Marx himself takes to justify this position can, I feel, best be seen only through a consideration of Marx' relation to Hegel. Therefore I postpone this argument until the fourth chapter.

A brief remark about my procedure in chapter one may be made here. I take the positions and arguments outlined above to constitute the basic structure of Marx' theory of man. I base my claim on a textual analysis of Marx' early writings. Whenever it is necessary to develop an argument that is implicit rather than explicit in Marx' texts, my test for the acceptability of such an argument is twofold. I offer no development of an implicit argument unless that argument is both consistent with positions held in Marx' theory of man other than the one which the argument supports, and consistent with other explicit arguments developed in Marx' theory and discoverable in the texts. And I cite no position in my exposition of Marx' theory of man that is merely implicit in Marx' texts.

My second chapter attempts to confront the claim that Marx' theory of man is fundamentally identical with the humanism of Feuerbach. Louis Althusser has defended this claim. For Althusser, Marx' writings at least through 1844 are based on theories of man, theories which through 1843 depend on Kant and Fichte, and through 1844 on Feuerbach. The Paris Manuscripts most particularly repeat, Althusser claims, Feuerbach's theory of man as a communal being, although Marx develops this theory through his own terminology, and uses it in his own evaluation of contemporary society.

Beginning from 1845, Althusser claims, Marx' texts manifest a shift

towards those aims which are his mature goals, and this shift involves Marx' rejection of the theoretical validity of 'humanisms,' 'theories of man,' particularly that Feuerbachian humanism which had governed his intellectual minority. Marx came to hold that any theory of man must describe a transhistorical human nature, thus contradicting his thesis that man is the "ensemble" of his social relations, with society understood here as the subject of the historical process. And he held further that any theory of man is an ideology, a representation of the operative reality of, and particularly the class structure of, actual society. As such no theory of man may legitimately function in a theory of history, and of society as the subject of history. Marx' mature theory must be viewed as 'anti-humanistic.'

My second chapter deals with the first feature of Althousser's claim concerning Marx' theory of man in the Manuscripts of 1844. This text lends some plausibility to Althousser's interpretation, for Marx praises Feuerbach therein for having achieved three corrections of Hegel, relevant to a theory of man. Feuerbach had corrected Hegel in showing that the individual must be described through the totality of his determinations, rather than simply through those pertaining to him as a self conscious subject. He had defended this statement by refuting Hegel's employment of the dialectical method in relation to sense consciousness. And he had insisted that, of those determinations which must be located descriptively and argumentatively in a theory of human nature, one essential determination is the communal dimension of individual experience.

I argue, however, that in spite of these points of agreement with Feuerbach, Marx' theory of man as it is presented in the Paris Manuscripts and elaborated in the "Theses on Feuerbach" and The German Ideology is critically opposed to Feuerbach Theory, on at least four counts.

First, Marx rejects Feuerbach's doctrine of nature. For Feuerbach, nature presents itself in experience as immediate and wholly self contained, i.e. self determined. Nature is that which of itself contains its determinations within itself, and delivers these determinations to the subject. But for Marx this understanding of nature will not do, both because it renders nature as the correlate of productive activity theoretically inexplicable, and because it renders a genuine theoretical account of productive activity impossible. This criticism of Feuerbach's concept of nature, made explicit in the "Theses on Feuerbach," is based on those portions of the Paris Manuscripts in which Marx' theory of man is discoverable.

Marx also criticizes Feuerbach's doctrine of consciousness, particularly sense consciousness. For Feuerbach, the sensible object is again self contained in its determinations, and in relation to this object the sensory subject is fundamentally passive, although it is necessary that his sensations be 'refined' through imagination and thinking. This also, for Marx, will not do. In describing the sense object as internally determined and the sensory subject as passive, Feuerbach is unable to offer an account of this object as itself determined through praxis, or of consciousness itself as a feature of praxis. Marx insists upon these points in his theory of man.

Feuerbach's descriptions of the social dimensions of individual experience, and of society itself, are also critically viewed by Marx. Feuerbach comprehends social relations on the model of interpersonal, "I-Thou" relationships, through which the finite individual achieves the satisfaction of his desire to realize within his own experience the infinite predicates of the human species: reason, will, love. But for Marx the comprehension of social relations and of society on this model is inadequate. This is because, first, this description forces Feuerbach to discuss needs too abstractly. Second, this model of society renders Feuerbach theoretically incapable of describing social relations as systems of relationships between productive agents. And finally, the logic of Feuerbach's comprehension of society forces that comprehension to be one of society as trans-historical, rather than of society as a subject of the historical process.

The above criticisms of Feuerbach are finally related to similar criticisms which Marx levels against Prudhon. Both Feuerbach and Prudhon, Marx claims, develop theories of human nature which are trans-historical in that they define human nature through certain attributes and needs occurring above and beyond the historical process. But to do this is to misconceive the nature and function of a valid theory of man. Such a theory is one which describes and accounts for those structural features of human nature which render possible the historical process itself, and human self actualization through history. Such a theory of man may be entitled trans-historical, but not in the sense in which that term would be attributed to the 'humanisms' of Feuerbach and Prudhon.

I develop these points concerning the relation of Marx' theory of man to Feuerbach through an analysis of the arguments discoverable in Marx' texts, I take my second chapter to refute Althousser's interpretation of that theory. Marx' theory of man must be understood not as a contentual repetition of Feuerbachian anthropology, but as developed in critical opposition to it.

The third and fourth chapters are a continuation of the attempt to determine the relation of Marx' theory of man to the thinking of his predecessors, this time in relation to Hegel.

Chapter three contains an analysis of those texts in which Hegel develops categories utilized in Marx' theory of man. In his Philosophy of Spirit Hegel argues that consciousness must be understood in relation to embodied consciousness, and thus shows that a work such as the Phenomenology of Spirit can present categories relevant to a theory of man. But the development of such categories themselves occurs in the Phenomenology of Spirit and the Philosophy of Right. I consider first selected texts from the Phenomenology. Hegel argues that, given the relationship between the self conscious subject and the object of his own experience, and the desire arising for the self conscious subject out of this relationship, the subject must realize himself as an agent. And he proceeds to develop a notion of agency through concepts which, although located in a different framework from Marx', are nevertheless identical to those employed by Marx to describe praxis. Agency, arising from desire, is directed at the transformation of the subject's material environment. Such agency as "work" is objectified in the environment as its product.

This results both in the partial satisfaction of the agent's desire, and his necessary emergence within an intersubjective milieu. And the activity of the individual subject also effects that subject's 'self-actualization.'

Arguments in support of these claims are culled principally from Hegel's "Introduction" to the Phenomenology, and from the transitional text from "Consciousness" to "Self-Consciousness." Hegel develops these notions in a section of the Phenomenology entitled "Society as a Community of Animals." There Hegel argues that the individual subject can not be accounted for as an agent through the possession of an "original nature," the possession of fixed and intrinsically determined interests and needs. Agency itself is further described through the concepts of 'objectification' and 'self actualization.' And Hegel argues that the individual who achieves self-actualization through his activity must be understood as a member of a society of agents.

These themes are further developed and refined in the Philosophy of Right. In his analysis of will as embodied in property in the Philosophy of Right, Hegel argues that this external embodiment is necessary for the individual subject of will, and that the active appropriation of property brings this individual into necessary relations with others, social relations, however primitive. Further arguments in the Philosophy of Right show that, for Hegel, the individual subject of will must be comprehended both as an agent and as a social agent. The individual is an agent in virtue of privately experienced needs. His work effects both the satisfaction of and the multiplication of such needs. But the details

of his work are conditioned by the labor of his society. He is dependent for the satisfaction of his own needs on the work of others, and they upon his work. And the needs which he experiences as his own, and thus as his self, are socially derived.

But Marx' anthropology is not simply inspired by Hegel. It includes a critical argument against Hegel's description of the individual as a self conscious subject. For Marx, Hegel is, given his theory of the self conscious subject, unable to further describe the individual as an agent, with theoretical adequacy. But a theory of man which describes the human individual most fundamentally as an agent, is adequately able to further describe this individual as a self conscious subject. I exhibit this argument in my fourth chapter. It is crucial to Marx' theory of man in that, for Marx, it supports his position that praxis is the most fundamental category in that theory.

Finally, in my fifth chapter, I show that Marx' theory of man plays a "normative" role in his larger theoretical schema. It does this by providing Marx with principles whereby he can comprehend human history as the process of human 'self actualization,' and with norms with which he may evaluate given socio-historical phenomena. I treat the latter briefly in my fifth chapter, by indicating the relationships between Marx' theory of man and his analyses of social alienation, and of the condition of the wage laborer in capitalist society.

Chapter One

Marx' Theory of Man

Adam Schaff, a major theoretician and proponent of Marxist humanism, has stated that, "...the central problem of socialism - of any socialism, and Marx' socialism in particular - is the problem of man, with its essential aspect of creating conditions for man's happiness and full development."¹ In fact, the theory of man is, for Schaff, of such importance that he is willing to assert that, "...a philosophy of man was the cradle of Marxism."² In this chapter I shall examine the early writings of Marx, especially the "Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844," for the purpose of showing the theory of man which they contain.

It should not be surprising that Marx' anthropology is principally found in a text whose subject matter he announces as "political economy," and in which themes such as,

...the state, law, morals, civil life, etc., are touched upon only insofar as political economy, itself, ex professo, deals with these subjects.³

¹ Adam Schaff, "Marxism and the Philosophy of Man," in Socialist Humanism, ed. Erich Fromm, (New York: Anchor, 1966), p. 141.

² Ibid., p. 142. Schaff's arguments in this essay are reminiscent of Lionell Rubinoff, The Pornography of Power, (New York: Ballantine, 1969), pp. 15-90, in which any theory of society, Rubinoff argues, is founded upon a theory of man.

³ Karl Marx, "Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts (1844)," in Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society, ed. Loyd Easton and Kurt Guddat, (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1967), p. 284. Marx-Engels, Historisch-Kritische Gesamtausgabe, ed. D. Rjazanov and V. Adoratski, (Moscow: The Marx-Engels Institute, 1927-1932), Abteilung 1, Band 3, p. 333 (This edition of the works of Marx-Engels will be subsequently referred to as MEGA).

For, as Pierre Bigot observes, "economics" does not mean to Marx what it does for many contemporary social scientists, namely, the attempt to study empirically and in a value free context the economic operations of society.⁴ On the contrary, for the Marx of the Paris Manuscripts economics involves both a critique of capitalism and a critique of the devaluation of labor which capitalism essentially involves, especially insofar as this devaluation is a result of private property, the defining institution of capitalism.⁵ But the critique Marx makes is grounded on a general theory

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Cf. Pierre Bigot, Marxisme et Humanisme, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1954), pp. 2-3.

5

Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, pp. 288-289, 287-288; MEGA, 1, 3, p. 82, p. 81. That this is a defining feature of Marx' understanding of political economy, is clear from the texts. He objects to any merely empirical or positivistic interpretation of political economy. "It acknowledges as a fact or event what it should deduce, namely, the necessary relation between two things, for example, between division of labor and exchange. In such a manner theology explains the origin of evil by the fall of man. That is, it asserts as a fact in the form of history what it should explain." In particular, for Marx, economics as ordinarily understood accepts private property as a given, rather than attempting to explain private property as an historical economic occurrence. "Political economy proceeds from the fact of private property. It does not seek to explain private property. It grasps the actual, material process of private property in abstract general formulae which it then takes as laws. It does not seek to comprehend these laws..." Political economy in the ordinary sense, then, is deficient for Marx to the extent that it analyzes private property as a datum, rather than attempting to comprehend it critically in its relations to other features of the economic system. Marx' version of private property will, he insists, undertake this critical comprehension.

of productive agency or praxis, a theory of reference to which statements regarding the devaluation of labor may be validated.⁶ And the theory of praxis which grounds the critique of political economy in the Paris Manuscripts constitutes the heart of Marx' theory of man.

To be sure, the theory of praxis which Marx holds cannot be adequately grasped apart from its relations to the concepts of society and consciousness. In fact, reference to these concepts is necessary for a more complete theoretical description of praxis itself. Still, I want to claim that "society" and "consciousness" are concepts best defined in terms of their relation to praxis. I shall show how each of these concepts is present in the Paris Manuscripts, and how society and consciousness are related to praxis, according to Marx.

6

Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 288, p. 291; MEGA, 1, 3, p. 82, p. 85. This requirement arises from Marx' sense of "political economy," and is central to the consideration of this chapter. Political economy involves a critique of capitalism. As such it involves an analysis of private property and a critique "...of value with the devaluation of man..." as resulting from capitalism. But in order to achieve this, political economy must also offer a theory of value, as well as a theory of labor, in general terms. The first is necessary because some notion of value is required to stand as a criterion, in order that the relation of value and product as it obtains in capitalism can be criticized. And again, some general theory of labor is required as a norm for the critique of labor and its devaluation within capitalism. Thus for "political economy" to do the task which Marx sets for it, both a concept of value and a general theory of labor are required. In the last analysis these requirements are met for Marx by the same theory. Value in an economic sense resides in the product. But the product for Marx is essentially only "...the resume of activity, of production." Therefore, the theory which explicitates the process of productive action at the same time provides the criterion in terms of which the value of the product in a capitalist setting can't be critically comprehended.

I. Marx' Concept of Praxis

Marx' first inroads towards a theory of praxis⁷ in the manuscripts are made through a discussion of the relation of man as agent to nature, under the general heading of "objectification." The initial and most basic requirement for praxis to occur, Marx tells us, is the presence of an external, natural environment for the agent to act upon. "The worker can make nothing without nature, without the sensuous external world. It is the material wherein his labor realizes itself, wherein it is active, out of which and by means of which it produces."⁸ Praxis, labor, requires an environment other than and external to the agent, upon which labor can be performed, and it requires an environment which is maleable, which can be shaped and transformed by labor. The ideas of externality and maleability provide a first meaning of nature in Marx' manuscripts.⁹ And the point he wishes to make here is that, given nature as a sine qua non for praxis, man as agent is essentially related to that which is both external to him, and is a context for his productive behavior.

7

A definition of 'praxis' appropriate to the texts of Marx can be given only after an analysis of the arguments in Marx concerning this concept. As a general rule, 'praxis,' 'productive activity,' and frequently 'labor' may be taken as synonyms.

8

Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 290; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 84.

9

This meaning will be extended in Marx' discussion of nature as man's "inorganic body."

Marx's emphasis at this point, however, involves more than the assertion that man is related essentially to his external, natural environment. For, as Marx states repeatedly at this point in the manuscripts, the relation he is discussing is one of agency. It is man as a practical agent who for Marx requires a relation to that which is sensuous, external, and malleable. And therefore it is the nature of human agency in its essential relation to nature which Marx needs to clarify at this stage of his analysis.¹⁰

Marx commences his analysis of praxis under the general heading of a theory of "objectification." To begin with objectification itself is discussed in terms of labor as externalization. The agent, Marx holds, "...appropriates the external world and sensuous nature through his labor."¹¹ Insofar as praxis occurs in a natural environment, then that environment is in some sense taken in hand by the agent, constituted as being in an essential relation to him, made into his own. The sense in which this occurs for Marx, however, is a very specific sense. Nature, the "external world," of praxis, is appropriated through agency because the result of labor is a product, and the product itself is for Marx in

¹⁰There is a problem here, as it seems that Marx is claiming not simply that man entertains a relationship to nature through labor, but that man's most fundamental relation to nature is had through labor, praxis rather than, for instance, through perception, or through aesthetic or conceptual consciousness. Consequently Marx needs to provide arguments in support of this claim. But he can provide such arguments only after he has clarified the structure of praxis, and when some defensible meaning for praxis has been established.

¹¹Marx, Easton and Guddat, p. 291; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 85.

essence, "...the resume of activity, of production."¹²

The point which Marx wishes to maintain here is of basic importance to his general theory of praxis, and must be explicitated in some detail. If it is the case that by praxis man "appropriates" nature, and if this is the case because the product, the result of praxis, is a "resume" of the act of production, then what is the nature of this "resume," and how does this lead to an "appropriation" of the natural world by labor?

It is difficult to see from Marx' texts how he answers these questions. In part this difficulty stems from his convoluted use of terms in the beginning portions of the manuscripts, and in part it arises from the fact that Marx' discussion of praxis as appropriation in general is done simultaneously with a discussion of alienated labor. However, close analysis of a key paragraph can aid in clearing his terminology, and in showing the distinction between the two levels of discussion which Marx carries on around the concept of praxis.

Towards the beginning of the section of the manuscripts entitled "Alienated Labor," Marx asserts that, under the system of production described by ordinary political economy, labor becomes reified and devalued, in that it is viewed as an item to be bought and sold, an inert item in the market place. "Labor not only produces commodities. It also produces itself and the worker as a commodity, and indeed in the same

¹²Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 291;

MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 85.

proportion as it produces commodities in general."¹³ Then, he goes on to argue that,

This fact simply indicates that the object which labor produces, its product, stands opposed to it as an alien thing, as a power independent of the producer. The product of labor is labor embodied and made objective in a thing. It is the objectification of labor. The realization of labor is its objectification. In the viewpoint of political economy the realization of labor appears as the diminution of the worker, the objectification as the loss of and subservience to the object, and the appropriation as alienation [Entfremdung], as externalization [Entäusserung].¹⁴

The problem of this text lies in the meaning of the terms "objectification" and "realization" as applied to labor, and the relation of these terms to "alien thing," "diminution," "alienation," and "externalization." It appears on the surface that the former two terms are equated by Marx with the latter, in a general critique of labor under capitalism. Put another way, it at first appears that Marx is doing no more in this

¹³Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 289; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, pp. 82-83.

¹⁴Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 289; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 83. "Dies Faktum druckt weiter nichts aus als: Der Gegenstand, den der Arbeit produziert, ihr Produkt, tritt ihr als ein fremdes Wesen, als ein von dem Produzenten unabhänge Macht gegenüber. Das Produkt der Arbeit ist die Arbeit, die sich in einem Gegenstand fixiert, sachlich gemacht hat, es ist die Vergegenständlichung der Arbeit. Die Verwirklichung der Arbeit ist ihre Vergegenständlichung. Diese Verwirklichung der Arbeit erscheint in dem national ökonomischen Zustand als Entwirklichung des Arbeiters, die Vergegenständlichung als Verlust und Knechtschaft des Gegenstandes, die Aneignung als Entfremdung, als Entäusserung."

paragraph than offering the beginnings of his theory of alienated labor. He seems to say that, insofar as the product of labor is an "alien thing," i.e., a "power independent of the producer" under capitalism, then labor is "made objective" in a product; thus labor's "realization" in the product is at the same time "the diminution of the worker." There seems then to be one level of discussion involved in this paragraph, a critical discussion of labor under capitalism as "alienated," in which the terms noted above are roughly equivalent.¹⁵

But when one delves through the terminological confusions which plague this text, a second impression arises. This becomes apparent if one isolates the last two sentences of the above cited paragraph from the body of the text. Marx here first asserts that, "The realization of labor is its objectification."¹⁶ In this sentence Marx equates "objectification," not with alienation, but with that process through which labor

15

This impression is reinforced further in the texts, in Marx' employment of the terms 'object' and 'objectification.' For example, in "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 289; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 83, Marx goes on to refer to the result of capitalist production as an "...alien object..." (fremden Gegenstand), and at p. 290; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 84, Marx shows two senses in which the worker, "...becomes a slave to his objects..." (wird der Arbeiter also ein Knecht seines Gegenstandes). These usages seem to point to a semantic equivalence between 'object' and 'alienated object' even though, at this point in the Manuscripts, alienation has been defined only in its most general form as involving the product "...as a power independent of its producer."

¹⁶ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 289; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 83..

in general "is realized," is made actual. He then goes on to describe the manner in which this process of labor's being made actual appears "In the viewpoint of political economy...."¹⁷

Now political economy, in its ordinary and deficient sense, begins for Marx by accepting the premises operative in existing relations of production: private ownership and the ensuing competition of commodities in the marketplace.¹⁸ Only with this clearly in mind can we appreciate the sense of Marx' next assertion. For he goes on to say that it is from the perspective of existing (capitalistic) relations of production, and from the viewpoint of the science which accepts these relations as its basic premises, that "this realization of labor," the process through which labor is made actual, "appears as the diminution of the worker, the objectification as the loss of and subservience to the object...."¹⁹ In other words, Marx is here making critical comments concerning the economic realities of capitalism, but in addition, he is at least laying down terms -- "objectification" and "realization" -- which he takes to

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 288; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 81.

¹⁹Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 289; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 83. Note here too that in this last phrase the notions of loss and subservience in relation to the object of labor are contrasted to, not equated with, 'objectification.'

be applicable in a more general theory of praxis.

This impression is reinforced if one reads a little further on in the text. Continuing his comments on labor from the "viewpoint of political economy," Marx goes on to say that,

So much does the realization of labor appear as diminution that the worker is diminished to the point of starvation. So much does objectification appear as loss of the object that the worker is robbed of the most essential objects not only of life but also of work.²⁰

Given what Marx has contended in the passage just examined, one can clearly see the distinction here between the notion of labor "realized" and "objectified," and the "diminution" of labor as a result of its occurring in a context characterized by private property and competition.

Marx, then, describes and analyzes praxis as involving an "appropriation" of nature on two levels: on a general level, under the heading of "objectification" and on a more specific and critical level, under the headings of "diminution" and "alienation." This distinction must be justified by the texts if one wishes to argue, as I do, that Marx describes the relation between man and nature as "appropriation," i.e., as essentially a relationship of agency, and in turn describes the structure of this agency through the concept of "objectification." Only if Marx' arguments concerning "objectification" are descriptive of praxis in general, can it be shown that they relate for him to an overall feature of the structure of agency. If his arguments concerning the concept of "objectification" related only to his descriptions of labor as alienated,

²⁰ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 289; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 83.

then these arguments could be with necessity applicable only to Marx' critique of capitalism, not to his comments on the nature of agency overall. But, as I have tried to show above, the texts do illustrate two levels of discourse in relation to the notion of praxis, and do point to a discussion of praxis in general as well as to a critique of labor as alienated.

With this distinction seen, the question posed above can be reformulated. What is the structure of praxis in general, such that praxis requires the presence of an external natural context for its realization? Put otherwise, what for Marx is the meaning of "objectification" insofar as this concept describes praxis as an "appropriation" of nature?

Lobkowitz offers an interesting analysis of "objectification" in a section of his Theory and Practice devoted to Marx, an analysis which, I believe, gets at the basic meaning of this concept.

Marx describes the essence of labor as *Vergegenständlichung*, objectification. Though he never explains what the expression "objectification" means, it is not overly difficult to state its basic connotations. "Objectification" first means externalization: man externalizes himself in labor in that he makes of his inner life a form of exterior objects. He confers his life on objects. However, this externalization must not be taken to be a translation of pre-existing ideas into reality. Rather, the inner life conferred to outer objects must be viewed as a potentiality which becomes actual in and for man by becoming the form of a reality outside man. Accordingly, "objectification" also connotes self actualization: by externalizing his inner life through labor, man labors and creates, in short, brings out of himself his human potentialities schaftt seine Gatterngskräfte heraus.²¹

²¹Nicholas Lobkowitz, Theory and Practice, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967), pp. 341-342.

Lobkowitz is correct in his indication that Marx' explicitation of the meanings of "objectification" is indirect. However, as he himself points out, these meanings are discoverable in the texts. First, objectification entails the "externalization" of the activity of labor in the product. The choice of terms here is unfortunate, for "externalization" (Entäusserung) typically has the meaning of alienation for Marx.²² But taken in a broader and non-technical fashion, the idea which Lobkowitz wishes to establish holds good, even if his terminology falters. Marx, as we mentioned above, hold that "...the product is only the resume of activity, of production."²³ His point is that an object can be considered an object of labor only to the extent that it bears the stamp of activity having been performed upon it. Thus he would argue that, on the one hand, the act of labor requires an external object, because labor can only be conceived of as occurring if it is labor on something other than and external to itself. On the other hand, the object of labor, the product, is not unchanged through the process of production. Quite the reverse is the case. A thing is a product precisely because it has been changed, transformed, through some activity of labor being performed upon it. And the details of the transformation which occurs in the product correspond to the details of the activity of labor performed upon it. When I am engaged in writing, my product is the written page.

²²It is clear that in the text which Lobkowitz himself at this point refers to, that 'Entäusserung' is being used by Marx in this technical sense.

²³Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 291; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 85.

While I begin my activity with objects external to my self (e.g., paper and ink), the result of my activity is a product to the extent that it has been transformed through my labor, and transformed in a way that bears the stamp of the specific details of that labor (in this case, writing). It is in this sense that the product is for Marx a summary or "resume" of the activity of production.

The conclusion towards which Marx' argument points is that because the product is a "resume" of productive activity, labor itself is, as Lobkowitz puts it, externalized in the product. The product of labor, while being a result of the activity performed upon it, nonetheless remains "external" to or other than that activity itself. Since this is the case, and since it is the case that the product perdures even after the process of labor has terminated (since, for example, the written page perdures as my product even after my activity of writing has terminated), then labor itself is rendered public and observable in the enduring product. This is so because the product is a thing transformed according to the details of the activity of labor. Thus the activity of labor is rendered enduring and "external" to itself in the product. It is in this sense too that Marx speaks of the "realization of labor" as "objectification."²⁴ In being rendered enduring and observable in the produce, labor is rendered actual in a way which transcends the transient character of the activity itself.

This rendering public and external of praxis is one side of the

²⁴Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 289; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 85.

concept of objectification. Lobkowitz notes also a second side to this concept: "...objectification also connotes self actualization: by externalizing his inner life through labor, man labors and creates, in short, brings out of himself his human potentialities, schafft seine Gattungskrafte heraus."²⁵ This comment indicates that praxis as objectification" effects the agent himself as well as the natural object. Here objectification also entails a "realization," in the sense of "self-actualization."

Marx gives what I take to be his clearest expression of this idea in his "Excerpt Notes of 1844," notes written in the spring and summer of that year, while undertaking the study of classical economic theories. In a section of those notes entitled "Free Human Production," Marx attempts to describe the structure of production in a non-alienated condition. The nature of non-alienated labor is such, he holds, that,

In my production I would have objectified my individuality and its particularity, and in the course of the activity I would have enjoyed an individual life; in viewing the object, I would have experienced the individual joy of knowing my personality as an objective, sensuously perceptible, and indubitable power.²⁶

The nature of production, of praxis in general, is such that the agent as well as the product is in some sense "actualized" through the act of production. He is actualized, Marx tells us, at least in the sense that

²⁵Lobkowitz, Theory and Practice, p. 342.

²⁶Marx, "Excerpt-Notes of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 281; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 546.

his activity is rendered overt and enduring in a product, and, because of this, recognizable for him.

Unfortunately, Marx does not supply an explicit argument in the texts to establish this assertion. As a result, it is not clear precisely what he means to claim. Nor are the commentators on Marx of great aid in supplying clarification of the notion of self actualization. Lobkowitz comments that Marx makes this assertion, but provides no analysis of its meaning. Both Schaff²⁷ and Rotenstreich²⁸ observe that self actualization is a feature of Marx' basic notion of praxis, but then move immediately to discussions of the relation of praxis and society. Thus, they also fail to provide clarification of the idea of self actualization itself.

But it is possible to adduce an argument in support of the claim that objectification results in the self actualization of the agent, an argument, I think, which is both consistent with other statements which Marx makes about praxis, and which captures his mind on this point.

In discussing the product as the objectified "resume" of the activity of production, Marx consistently relates the notions of "realization" or actualization, "objectification," and enduring recognizability.

²⁷Adam Schaff, Marxism and the Human Individual, trans. O. Wojasiewicz, ed. R. S. Cohen, (New York: McGraw Hill, 1970), p.70.

²⁸Nathen Rotenstreich, Basic Problems of Marx' Philosophy, (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merril Co., 1965), p. 38.

The act of labor is realized, made actual, in that it is embodied in a product which captures and summarizes the details of the activity of which it, the product, is the result. And because the actualization of labor involves its being embodied in a product, i.e., an enduring object, then labor itself achieves an enduring recognizability in this object.²⁹

Now it can be argued, and I think consistently with Marx' texts at this point, that the identification of these notions holds for Marx' doctrine of the effect of labor on the agent, as well as for his doctrine of the effect of labor on the product. The key notions here are endurance and recognizability. First, since my labor results in a product, it is embodied in an enduring object. At the same time my labor is myself, or an aspect of myself. But for some process to be embodied in an enduring object is for Marx, as we have just seen, the "actualization" of that process. Thus because my labor results in an enduring object, that aspect of myself which is my activity is "actualized" in the product. Here, then, actualization means embodiment in an enduring object, and praxis, because it results in a product, implies

²⁹To return to the example used above, the result and realization of my activity of writing is the written page. Since the written page endures beyond the termination of my activity and at the same time is the "resume" of that activity, my labor becomes recognizable in its result. In this sense Marx has already identified the actualization or realization of labor, its "objectification" or embodiment in a product, with its being recognizable through the product.

the "self actualization" of the agent.

Second, objectification entails self actualization by reason of the recognizability of labor in the product. To say that the product is my product means that I can recognize myself in the result of my activity, that is, I can recognize that the labor which is summarized in the product is mine. And moreover, I can recognize my activity in a different and fuller way when it is summarized in a result than I can during the process of activity itself.³⁰ My activity is a feature of myself. And thus in recognizing my activity in the product, I recognize a feature of myself as embodied in the product. I take this to be the import of Marx' statement that, "...in viewing the object I would have experienced the individual joy of knowing my personality as an objective, sensuously perceptible, and indubitable power."³¹

These arguments establish a twofold meaning for self actualization in this context: the embodiment of the agent's labor in a product, and the resulting ability of that agent to recognize his labor in the product. The arguments are consistent, I believe, with Marx' use of the notions of "realization," "objectification," and "recognizability," and consistent also with the assertion concerning the "objectification"

³⁰To return to our paradigm case, as I examine the written page which is the product of my act of writing, I can recognize the details of my activity, evaluate its strength and weakness, and observe its structure, in a way fuller than that possible during the process of writing itself.

³¹Marx, "Excerpt-Notes," in Easton and Guddat, p. 281; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 546.

of the individual through labor, which Marx makes in the "Excerpt-Notes."

In the light of the idea of praxis as "objectification," the question of Marx' meaning of praxis as the "appropriation" of nature can now be answered. Labor or praxis requires the presence of an external, "natural" environment as a condition of its occurrence. But the basic feature of labor's relation to this natural context is appropriation, since the result of labor in nature is a product which is defined as an object modified according to the terms of the process of labor performed upon it.³² Put briefly, labor transforms nature, and this transformation occurs on labor's own terms. The result of praxis is not nature unchanged, but nature "appropriated," transformed through labor, and emergent as a result describable through those of its details which "realize" and embody the labor process. Thus of Marx, the basis of the relation of praxis to nature is "appropriation."

Marx' development of the notion or praxis as the appropriation of nature leads him to a discussion of two further concepts, by means of which he tries to develop his theory of praxis and render it more concrete. These are the concepts of "needs," and the idea of human praxis as "universal." As with the notion of objectification, "needs" is taken by

³²It is interesting to note that the same relation of labor, product, and nature is noted by Marx in Capital, ed. Frederick Engels, trans. S. Moore and E. Aveling, (New York: International Publishers, 1967), Vol. 1, pp. 42-43, under the heading of the product in its 'use value.' See Marx-Engels, Werke, (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1961-1971), Vol. 23, p. 57. (This edition of the works of Marx-Engels will be subsequently referred to as MEW.)

Marx to be a concept descriptive of both the agent as the source of praxis, and the product as its result.

The idea of needs as a universal characteristic of praxis is used by Marx in the Paris Manuscripts to elucidate further his notion of the relationship between man and nature.³³ He writes:

Immediately, man is a natural being. As a living natural being he is, in one aspect, endowed with the natural capacities and vital powers of an active natural being. These capacities exist in him as tendencies and capabilities, as drives. In another aspect as a natural, living, sentient and objective being man is a suffering, conditioned, and limited creature like an animal or plant. The objects of his drives, that is to say, exist outside him as independent, yet they are objects of his need, essential and indispensable to the exercise and confirmation of his essential capacities.³⁴

In this text Marx is making three claims concerning the relation of man and nature. Each of these claims is made in terms of the governing concept of "needs." The relation of man to nature, first of all, is not simply an "abstract" or merely formal relation. In all individual cases, rather, this relation has a particular content, a particular series of describable features. And this is the case because "needs" form the context in which particular relations between man and his natural environment occur. In particular cases man relates to nature because of certain needs for whose satisfaction a natural context is required: e.g., subsistence needs such as hunger, thirst, or the requirement of shelter. He selects from his environment those items capable of satisfying these needs. And his relations to nature are founded in his relations to these items.

³³ Cf. also ibid.

³⁴ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 325; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 160.

Thus, Marx argues, man's relations to nature are concrete and particular, and are such in virtue of the needs which form the context of these relations.

Thus man relates concretely to nature in virtue of needs. But in addition the structure of this relation is such that, again, man's relation is to something external to and in some sense independent of him. Man "...is a suffering, conditioned, and limited creature like an animal or plant. The objects of his drives, that is to say exist outside him as independent."³⁵ The externality of nature is emphasized by Marx, here in the sense that what man aims at in attempting to satisfy his needs is a natural, i.e., external item. It is in this sense that man is "a suffering, conditioned, and limited creature," and that nature is "independent" of its relation to man. The implied premise, as I take it, is that the satisfaction of all needs requires an aim and direction towards something external and independent. A need is precisely some lack whose satisfaction cannot be attained by the subject of the need's relation to himself, but whose satisfaction requires a relation to a real other, here nature for Marx. Thus needs indicate that man's relation to an external nature is not only concrete, but also necessary.

But third, man's necessary relation to nature in virtue of needs is not simply a relation to an independent and external other. In the second part of the sentence cited above, Marx offers an additional comment

³⁵ Ibid.

on this relation. "The objects of his drives, that is to say, exist outside him as independent, yet they are objects of his need, essential and indispensable to the exercise of his essential capacities."³⁶ In other words, external natural items are not simply independent of man. They are also items in relation to man, objects for him. A thing in nature may subsist simply as that item in an independent state. But as an object of a need it is no longer simply independent. It stands in relation to the subject, as well as being independent of or external to that subject. Thus, in virtue of needs, nature is not simply "independent," just as man is not simply "a suffering, conditioned, and limited creature..." Rather, nature is also an "object" for man, a setting of items which are in relation to man, just as man is also "endowed with the natural capacities and vital powers of an active natural being."³⁷

A summary of this idea is offered by Henri Lefebvre, who substitutes the term "passion" for Marx' term "drive," as man's self direction towards external nature in response to his needs.

Natural man as such is passive. Inasmuch as he feels this passivity, that is, the thrust of his desire together with the impotence of that desire, he becomes passionate. "Passion," says Marx, "is an essential force in the man tended towards his object." ...And yet passion itself must only be the basis and starting point of power. Power no longer depends on the object, it dominates and contains

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.

its object: the objectivity of nature is no longer anything more than its limit and its end.³⁸

Up to this point, what Marx has claimed is that "needs" indicate the concrete and necessary qualities of the relationship of man and nature, as well as qualities of independence and dependence as aspects of that relation. Marx, however, does not stop here. The development of Marx' thought proceeds in two complementary directions: an explicit relating of the concept of needs to praxis, and a distinction between two sorts of needs.

Lefebvre, in the citation above, suggests a conceptual relation between Marx' concept of needs and his general notion of praxis. In Lefebvre's formulation, that "passion" or drive which has its basis in need is converted into "power" in the agent who, through his agency, overcomes the pure externality of nature, relating natural items to himself as objects suitable for the satisfaction of his needs, "appropriating" nature to his needs through praxis. Lefebvre's point is that, just as needs govern the concrete relations between man and nature, again, "man" for Marx must here be taken to signify "man as agent." It is through agency or praxis that those concrete relations between man and nature are established whereby needs are satisfied. Thus needs must be understood in relation to praxis, for their location in Marx' thought to be more precisely determined.

Marx' texts, themselves, suggest that Lefebvre's reading of the

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Henri Lefebvre, Dialectical Materialism, trans. John Sturrock, (London: Johnathan Cape Ltd., 1968), p. 117.

of the relation of needs and praxis is accurate. As shown above, Marx refers to "vital powers" and "drives" as that through which man attains a relation to nature such that needs can be satisfied, and man himself is referred to in this context as "an active natural being." The satisfying of any need involves, as a minimum, man's directing himself towards some external natural item, his constituting of himself as in relation to this item, and his taking of this item for his use. This self-directing and taking involve agency or praxis. For Marx, then, "needs," are inexorably connected with praxis and conversely, all praxis, since this involves as its sine qua non a relation of the agent to nature, is governed by needs.

The concept which I take Marx to have in mind here, although he assumes it rather than stating it explicitly, is again the concept of objectification. Just as the product is a summary of the details of the process of its production, the object of need is a summary of need as resident in its subject, in the sense that the object possesses some qualities through which it can satisfy the subject's need. An object of need is as such "produced" by an agent, at least insofar as an agent directs himself to an object relevant to his need and takes it up for his own use. Needs are satisfied through praxis, and needs in turn govern the specific details of praxis in its relation to nature, and as a result, determine the qualities of the product, which "resume" the process through which the product was produced.

The relation of needs to praxis is further developed by Marx through a distinction between two sorts of needs. Up to this point the

relation of needs to praxis has been limited to just one sort of needs, namely, needs directly defined in terms of natural necessities. A more complete analysis of the relation of needs to praxis requires that we take into account a second major class of needs, namely, developing needs.

On the one hand, some needs arise simply from the structure of the organism which is their subject, and must be satisfied for the life processes of the organism to be sustained. Hunger is an example of such a need which Marx uses in the Manuscripts. "Hunger is a natural need; it requires nature and an object outside itself to be satisfied and quieted. Hunger is the objective need of a body for an object existing outside itself, indispensable to its integration and the expression of its nature."³⁹ Such a need has the basic characteristics of needs outlined above: an item external to the subject of the need is required for its satisfaction; this item is constituted as an object in relation to the subject's need; the object is thus not simply external to and independent of the subject, for the object is an object answering to the subject's need insofar as the subject is an agent capable of using the object.⁴⁰

Further, this sort of need is characterized as one of organic subsistence. Its satisfaction relates simply to the maintenance of

³⁹ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, pp. 325-326; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 161.

⁴⁰ Cf. Ibid.

biological life processes. In a primitive sense, such need can be satisfied simply by "taking" for use relevant items from the natural environment. At another point in the manuscripts, Marx identifies the processes whereby such needs are satisfied as, "...animal functions - eating, drinking, and procreating,"⁴¹ implying that he might entitle the needs towards which such functions are geared as "animal needs." Indeed he does assert several paragraphs later that, "...the animal produces only what is immediately necessary for itself or its young....The animal produces under the domination of immediate physical need...."⁴² Note that "production" is the term used here, but that production geared towards the needs of biological subsistence is referred to by Marx as the production of the "animal." To this Marx contrasts man as agent, who, "...produces free of physical need, and only genuinely so in freedom from such need."⁴³ A distinction is drawn then between two sorts of needs, those involved with and those free of biological requirements for subsistence, and a corresponding distinction between two sorts of "production," that of the "animal" and that of man, relative to these two

⁴¹Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 292; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 86.

⁴²Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 294; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 88.

⁴³
Ibid.

two classes of needs.

Despite the fact that Marx contrasts "animal" and human production, his chief interest in making this distinction is not to elucidate philosophical distinctions between human and animal life. Rather Marx uses these distinctions heuristically, as a device in terms of which to distinguish classes of needs, and to draw out the implications of this distinction for a developed doctrine of human praxis. To see the import of this distinction for Marx' doctrine of praxis, it will be helpful to introduce reference to another assertion Marx makes on this theme:

The animal's product belongs immediately to its physical body while man is free when he confronts his product. The animal builds only according to the standard and need of the species to which it belongs while man knows how to produce according to the standard of any species and at all times knows how to apply an intrinsic standard to the object.⁴⁴

In this passage Marx brings out the point that in contrast to animal production, human praxis involves "universality."⁴⁵ We need now to see how this distinctively human kind of productivity affects the meaning of human praxis.

That needs govern the particular details of human praxis is a premise which Marx takes as already established. But in distinguishing

⁴⁴Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 295; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 88.

⁴⁵Cf. for example, Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 294; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 88. "Conscious life activity distinguishes man immediately from the life activity of the animal."

needs geared towards and needs free from the requirements of organic subsistence, Marx suggests an argument to the effect that needs are not fixed for man, but are developed, and developed in terms of their dialectical relation to praxis itself. The basic proposition upon which Marx rests this argument is the assertion that human praxis involves more than simply the satisfaction of those needs under whose egis it initially occurs. This is one of the points to Marx' assertion that the "production" of the "animal," produces in a one sided way while man produces universally."⁴⁶ The labor of the animal does accomplish no more than the satisfaction of those needs which immediately govern it: those of the subsistence of the individual organism and, in terms of procreation, the survival of the species. It is a "one sided" labor in this sense. In human praxis, however, the result is more complex.

To substantiate this claim Marx must offer some further distinction between "human" praxis and simple (animal) behavior in nature. And such a distinction is offered by him in The German Ideology. There, Marx asserts that man "begins to distinguish himself from the animal the moment he begins to produce his means of subsistence, a step required by his physical organization. By producing food, man indirectly produces his material life itself."⁴⁷ The "labor" of the "animal" involves simply the taking up of items from the natural environment, or the

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The German Ideology, trans. R. Pascal, (New York: International Publishers, 1947), p. 7; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 10.

utilization of aspects of his own organism (e.g., sexual aspects). Human praxis however, Marx asserts, involves labor in a more accurate sense of the term: to wit, it involves production. It involves the active modification of aspects of the (at least) natural environment so that out of this praxis a new object arises, capable of satisfying a need. Primitive agriculture is an example of such production on the level of subsistence needs. And the meaning of this is that, through human production, nature is "transformed," with this term bearing the meaning given it above in the discussion of objectification.

At this point, two features of the theory of objectification outlined above need to be recalled, and related to Marx' argument on the relation of human praxis and needs. For Marx, production as objectification involves the transformation of the context of labor, since the result is an object which (as product) "resumes" the activity of production; and it involves the actualization of the agent, since he is realized as one who has produced this product. The result of praxis is transformative both for the agent and the object. Through praxis, then, a more fully "developed" (or "actualized") agent exists in the face of a more fully "developed" (or "realized") environment.

Now given the relation of praxis and needs which Marx has already argued, it can be further claimed that the product, as "resume" of the productive activity, is one capable of satisfying that need which conditioned the agency. The agent, then, is actualized as capable of achieving satisfaction from his product. But since the agent is both

capable of achieving satisfaction and confronts a newly modified environment in relation to which he has to some extent actualized himself in some respect, he is further capable of responding to his environment with new needs. As a paradigm case, let us say that I begin the study of a philosopher with a need, for instance the need to learn something about Hegel. I undertake this study, and its result may be an essay on some feature of Hegel's philosophical doctrine. Now on the one hand, this essay is my product, it "resumes" the activity of my study. As my product, it constitutes an aspect of my environment which is new, and which is a modification of my environment as it previously occurred. And it satisfies a need of mine: through its production I have learned something of Hegel's philosophical doctrine. But further, it is now the case that, because both my environment and myself have been realized through this piece of productive behavior, I am now capable of responding to that environment with new needs: e.g., the need to learn more about Hegel, or to study Hegel in relation to some other philosophers, Husserl or Kant. And the ground of the possibility of this new need for me is precisely that productive behavior whereby a prior need was satisfied.

It is in a sense exhibited by this sort of example that Marx pictures the relation between human praxis and needs. Because the result of praxis is both an actualized agent and a transformed environment, the agent is capable of developing new needs with which to relate to a relevantly new environment. Thus it is the case both that human praxis is conditioned by needs, and that new needs are the result of praxis,

that new needs are elicited in man as agent through a dialectical relationship of needs and praxis. As Rotenstreich puts this conclusion, "Production has two main aspects: it creates both the wants and the means for the provision of goods."⁴⁸

Marx' discussion of praxis as "objectification," is then in his own eyes rounded out only when the relation of praxis and needs is elucidated. The point of distinguishing needs bound to and needs free from biological subsistence requirements is to show that, in relation to praxis, human needs are not fixed in a specific pattern, but that they develop and become more complex. This is not to say that, in behaving so as to fulfill needs of the former sort, man behaves "inhumanly" for Marx. But it is to say that the restriction of human needs to a fixed pattern of biological necessity is for him "one-sided." "To be sure, eating, drinking, and procreation are genuine human functions. In abstraction, however, and separated from the remaining sphere of human activities and turned into final and sole ends, they are animal functions."⁴⁹

This discussion of needs and praxis suggest two further points which move Marx closer to the interpretation of human praxis as an indication of man as a "species being" (Gattungswesen). These conclusions involve assertions concerning the "universality" of human praxis, and a further refinement of the notion of "self-actualization."

In a text cited above, Marx, in describing the "one-sided"

⁴⁸Rotenstreich, Basic Problems of Marx' Philosophy, pp. 34-35.

⁴⁹Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 292; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 86.

production of the "animal" (i.e., production restricted to subsistence needs), and in contrasting this to human praxis, asserts that, "The animal builds only according to the standard and need of the species to which it belongs while man knows how to produce according to the standard of any species...."⁵⁰ I have argued that, for Marx, "one-sided" labor denotes labor tied to needs of a fixed biological necessity, in distinction from human praxis, dialectically related to developed series of needs. But the text shows a further implication of this distinction.

Insofar as animal "labor" in nature is bound by fixed needs, the details of its behavior are also fixed, as are the items in its environment to which its behavior will relate. Further, because such behavior does not "produce" its "means of subsistence,"⁵¹ the natural environment is not, in Marx' sense of the term, "transformed" by such behavior. Such behavior is limited and is not praxis in the true sense of the term. According to Marx, these limits are biological ones, those of the species: "The animal builds only according to the standard and need of the species to which it belongs...."⁵² The environment in which the animal behaves

⁵⁰Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 295; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 88.

⁵¹Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 7; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 10.

⁵²Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 295; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 88

is "species specific."⁵³

For Marx, human praxis has another character. New needs develop dialectically through praxis. And simultaneously through praxis the environment is transformed, and thus new possibilities are elicited from the environment. Marx' contention, then, is that man, in acting from an on-going development of needs and towards a developing environment, is in principle capable of acting out praxis in the context of any environmental setting. Marx expresses this by asserting that man, "...knows how to produce according to the standard of any species, and at all times knows how to produce according to the standard of the object."⁵⁴ Since human praxis is not fixed by biological needs, and thus not fixed to a specifically structured natural environment, it is in principle possible for human production to occur within any context and to transform any context.⁵⁵

53

Cf. Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality, (New York: Anchor Books, 1967), p. 47. My use of the term "species specific" is derived from the definition which Berger and Luckmann give to that term. Species specific, "...refers to the biologically fixed character of their (animals) relation to the environment, even if geographical variation is introduced. In this sense, all non-human animals, as species and as individuals, live in closed worlds whose structures are pre-determined by the biological equipment of the several animal species."

54 Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 295; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 88.

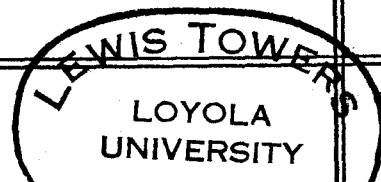
55

Cf. Berger and Luckmann, pp. 47-48. These authors express this idea through the statement that, "...man's relationship to his environment is characterized by world openness. Not only has man succeeded in establishing himself over the greater part of the earth's surface, his relation to the surrounding environment is everywhere very imperfectly structured by his own biological constitution...the human organism manifests an immense plasticity in its response to the environmental forces at work on it."

Human praxis, then, is "universal," capable of "transforming" all portions of the natural environment rather than being "species specific." And this is the case for two reasons: because human praxis does transform nature rather than leaving it as it is, thus eliciting from nature new possibilities for praxis; and because praxis enables man to actively relate to his environment through an on-going series of new needs.

Allied to this is a further comment which Marx makes about praxis as involving the "self-actualization" of the agent. Human praxis, he claims transforms the agent as well as the environment; through his productive activity the human subject develops new and more complex needs.⁵⁶ Now under the heading of "objectification," Marx argued that praxis results in the self actualization of the agent, that is, through praxis the agent is actualized as one who has performed a specific piece of productive behavior. But given his further discussion of needs, "self-actualization" now takes on a wider meaning. It is also the case that new needs are developed through agency, and that the means to satisfy these needs is also produced, through the (at least partial) transformation of a prior environment. If the reality of agency includes both needs, which ground the details of productive behavior, and an environment within which production towards the satisfaction of such needs can effectively occur, then it can be said that the reality of agency itself, and thus of the

⁵⁶Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 294; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 88.



agent, is "self-actualized " by praxis.⁵⁷

In general, then, praxis for Marx actualizes the agent, or the agent achieves "self-actualization" through praxis. "Self-actualization" through praxis now means: a) that the agent is actualized as one who has performed a specific act of production; b) that the agent is actualized as the subject of new needs as a result of his prior act of production; c) that, as a result of his act of production,⁵⁸ the agent encounters a transformed environment in which his action can satisfy these new needs.

Lefebvre summarizes these point in this way:

By acting man modifies Nature, both around and within him. He creates his own nature by acting on Nature. He transforms himself in nature and transforms Nature in himself. By shaping it to his own requirements he modifies himself in his own activity and creates fresh requirements for himself. He forms himself and grasps himself as a power by creating objects or "products." He progresses by resolving in action the problems posed by his own action.⁵⁹

⁵⁷This point may be illustrated by returning to an example used above. My reality as an agent who (a) needs to learn more about Hegel, and (b) faces an environment in which effective study towards this result can occur, arises from a prior act from which both this need and this environment have been elicited. Thus a prior instance of praxis has "actualized" me as this potential agent, i.e., as one with definite needs, and an environment which can be acted upon to satisfy them, in this new situation.

⁵⁸Marx will further argue that praxis actualizes 'man' as such, rather than simply man as agent. But in order to bring out this point, we shall have first to consider Marx' arguments for the claim that praxis is basic to human reality.

⁵⁹Lefebvre, Dialectical Materialism, p. 118.

This discussion of needs in relation to praxis⁶⁰ is crucial to Marx' theory of man. For one thing, he uses the discussion in his polemic against the use of a concept of human nature in Prudhon's version of political economy. Marx' account of the relation of needs to praxis would thus seem to be a critical factor in distinguishing an appropriate from an improper use of a theory of human nature. This is a point to which I shall return when I consider the function of a theory of man in Marx' thought. (See below, Chapter two, pp.197ff.)

A second reason for the critical importance of Marx' account of the relation of needs to praxis is that it is intimately involved in

⁶⁰Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 239; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 87. The points of the above discussion, involving the ideas that human praxis is "universal" rather than "species specific," and that praxis involves the "self-actualization" of the agent, is summed up by Marx through his referring to nature as man's "inorganic body." "The universality of man appears in practice in the universality which makes the whole of nature his inorganic body: 1) as a direct means to life; 2) as the matter, object, and instrument of his life activity." Body is that through which the individual has life, that which develops as individual life processes develop, and that through the development of which the individual himself is realized. Just so the relation of praxis and nature to the agent. Nature is the agent's "...inorganic body...insofar as it is not the human body." But it is that through which the agent lives, since agency or praxis, as seen above, requires nature as a sine qua non. Again, nature, or the external, malleable context within which praxis occurs, develops or is transformed as a result of its being the scene of praxis. And through this development, the agent himself experiences "self actualization," becomes the subject of new needs and a new environment within which they can be satisfied through productive behavior. Thus, "Nature is the inorganic body of man....Man lives by nature. This means that nature is his body with which he must remain in perpetual process in order not to die."

his attempt to show that man is a "species being" (Gattungswesen). It is to this argument that I shall now turn.

Marx' discussion of man as a "species being" occurs initially as a portion of his general discussion of alienation, in the section of the Paris manuscripts entitled "Alienated Labor." Here he lists man's alienation from his "species being" as a result of his being alienated from his product and from his activity of production, under the capitalist relations of production.⁶¹ The meaning of "species being" at this stage of Marx' analysis seems to involve first a summary of those specifically human characteristics which he has already listed in his general theory of praxis.⁶² The argument here is that, insofar as man is alienated from his product and his activity of production, he is alienated from that which specifically characterizes him as man. In elaborating this assertion, Marx both summarizes his discussion of praxis up to this point, and points out those characteristics which specifically constitute man as man.

Man is specifically characterized through his essential relation to nature, a relation grounded in praxis.⁶³ Furthermore, the structure of

⁶¹Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 293; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 86. "We have now to derive a third aspect of alienated labor from the two previous ones."

⁶²Cf. Gaston Fessard, "Is Marx' Thought Relevant to the Christian? A Catholic View," in Marx and the Western World, ed. Lobkowitz (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967), pp. 344-345, footnote 18, for agreement with this analysis.

⁶³Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 293; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, -. 87.

this relation, or the structure of praxis as the ground of this relation, is such that man is not a "species specific" organism, but rather "universal" in his production.⁶⁴ Such production involves objectification as a basic characteristic, and the on-going development of needs through a dialectical relation of needs and praxis.⁶⁵ And finally, Marx takes the praxis which specifically characterizes man to involve consciousness and freedom,⁶⁶ topics I shall consider later in this chapter.⁶⁷

⁶⁴Cf. Ibid.

⁶⁵Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 295; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 89.

⁶⁶Cf. Ibid.

⁶⁷Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 293; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 87. There is in Marx' first statement of the doctrine of "Gattungswesen" a note not only a differentiation, but also of recognition by the agent of this differentiation. This is seen in Marx' assertion that, "Man is a species being (Gattungswesen)...in that as present and living species he considers himself to be a universal and consequently free being." The argument which Marx implies here seems to fall into two stages. First, that which fundamentally distinguishes the human agent from other sorts of organisms related to nature is that man's agency or praxis involves "universality." This in turn is accounted for through the notion of needs as developing dialectically in relation to praxis. Because praxis brings about the satisfaction of those needs which ground it, as well as the production of new needs which in turn can ground new forms of praxis, man is capable of utilizing all of his natural environment, rather than simply a limited portion of that environment as the material of his labor. Thus he is distinct in not being "species specific." But further, this distinctness is not simply a fact of the structure of human praxis. It is also a fact which is recognized by the agent. The universality of human praxis does not simply occur as an element of agency. It is experienced by the agent, in the sense that it is recognized by him, in that "...he considers himself to be a universal and consequently free being." This recognition, Marx seems to assert, is an essential moment of the structure of human praxis itself. The distinctness of human praxis does not consist in the fact that man's production is universal, and that he then recognizes this distinction. Rather, man

But Marx does not here further elaborate these ways of characterizing distinctively human praxis. Instead, he develops another ramification of the notion of the dialectic of needs as the foundation of his concept of "Gattungswesen." In the process, he advances a thesis concerning the essentially social character of praxis and of the agent. Here I shall follow Marx' lead, dealing first with his notion of the social character of agency, and then returning to the question of consciousness.

II. Marx' Concept of Society

Marx' assertions concerning the social nature of human praxis are of comparable importance to his assertions concerning the relation of man to nature. He tells us that to speak of human existence in its true sense is to speak of social existence,⁶⁸ that the relation between man and nature is described abstractly to the extent that it is not recognized as occurring in society;⁶⁹ that, "...the essence of man..." is "...the ensemble of social relationships."⁷⁰ But while Marx seems to assign basic

is specifically distinct in virtue of the universality of his production, a feature of which is this recognition. Thus tied into the notion of species being is a hint of a doctrine of consciousness for Marx, and of a doctrine of the relationship of consciousness to praxis.

⁶⁸ Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, pp. 304-305; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, pp. 114-

⁶⁹ Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 305; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 115.

⁷⁰ Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," in Easton and Guddat, p. 402; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 525.

importance to the social character of praxis in the Paris Manuscripts and other texts, the exact place of these assertions in Marx' overall argument is not immediately evident, a difficulty resulting partly from the polemical character of the texts themselves.⁷¹

Nor do the commentators on Marx greatly clarify this point.

Lobkowitz traces the historical background of Marx' ideas on the sociality of praxis through Strauss, Feuerbach, and Hess, but fails, I think, to elucidate the structure of Marx' own arguments on the question.⁷²

Adam Schaff does a slightly better job in emphasizing the importance of the concept of sociality for Marx' understanding of praxis, but in doing this Schaff underplays the arguments whereby Marx elucidates this concept.⁷³ Perhaps Calvez offers the best explanation of social alienation, but his account is somewhat unsatisfactory in that he fails to consider the positive arguments which Marx might utilize to found his discussion of alienation.⁷⁴ Still, even an initial reading of Marx' texts and the commentaries makes clear two points: Marx wishes to relate his discussion

⁷¹The section of the Paris Manuscripts entitled "Private Property and Communism" contains some of Marx' baldest assertions concerning the social structure of human praxis. However, they are set in the context of Marx' polemics against forms of socialism which he takes to be deficient. Because of this, the clarity of argument is often wanting.

⁷²Cf. Lobkowitz, Theory and Practice, pp. 389-392.

⁷³Cf. Schaff, Marxism and the Human Individual, pp. 82-91.

⁷⁴Cf. Calvez, La Pensee de Karl Marx (Paris: Editions de Seuil, 1965), pp. 222-238.

of society to his discussion of nature, praxis, and human needs;⁷⁵ and he wishes to hold that his discussion of society is in some sense a completion of these other themes.⁷⁶

Although Marx' polemical style tends to confuse the issue here, it still seems possible to isolate the basic contentions which Marx wishes to assert concerning the social character of human praxis, and the (at least implicit) arguments which he utilizes in support of these claims. I would hold that in the Paris Manuscripts and in later stages of Marx' writings, five basic propositions are asserted and argued concerning the social character of praxis. First, Marx argues that society, or social relations between agents, is rendered possible through human praxis as thus far described. The details of this argument seem to rest on two ideas developed above: viz., that praxis transforms the environment so as to render it the context of new possibilities, and that the product of praxis involves the relation of agency and nature (the "material" of agency) in such a fashion that the resulting product is the "externalization" of that agency which is its source.

These ideas are clearly involved in Marx' account of objectification. But the argument he uses to relate these concepts to the concept of society is implicit rather than explicit in the text. It may be formulated as

75

Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 305; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 115.

76

Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 304; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 114.

follows. As shown above, acts of production and their resulting products do more than simply satisfy needs. They also give rise to new needs, and to environments which are capable of sustaining praxis towards the satisfaction of these new needs. Now the result of praxis is a product, that the product is a modification, and this modification is a modification of an environment, (or "nature") i.e., of something other than and external to the agent. The product is always "external"⁷⁷ to the agent in some relevant sense, and the product itself is the modification of the environment or nature. But as external, the product is also "objective" in the sense of being public, observable, open to inspection.⁷⁸ And because of its externality, it is possible that the product occurs in relation not only to the producer, but also in relation to some other agent. This means that the product, in virtue of its externality to its producer, can be appropriated by some other agent, can acquire a "use value"⁷⁹ for some other agent to whom it is present. Therefore the product as such introduces a new possibility into the environment of an agent, viz., the

⁷⁷Cf. Supra, Marx' initial discussion of the relation of productive activity to 'nature.'

⁷⁸I take this to be a typical meaning of 'objective' in the texts of Marx. Marx takes the 'object' to be that which is both related as a product to the productive agent, and at the same time that which is external to that agent and therefore public.

⁷⁹This use of 'use value' is perfectly consistent with the first exposition given of that term by Marx in Capital, Moore and Aveling, vol. 1, p. 36; MEW, vol. 23, p. 50. There Marx tells us that, "The utility of a thing makes its use value. But this utility is not a thing of air. Being limited by the physical properties of a commodity, it has no existence apart from that commodity. A commodity such as iron, corn, a diamond, is therefore, so far as it is a material thing, a use value, something useful. His point here is that the product, as involving definite physical properties,

possibility that the result of his agency may be taken up by someone other than himself.

That the product introduces this new possibility into the environment of the agent is the first step of Marx' argument towards the conclusion that society is rendered possible by the character of the product of praxis. Marx' argument requires also a second step, This second step involves the reiteration of the concept of the product as "resume" of the activity of production.

As seen above, an item is a product precisely because it is an item transformed through some process of agency. And because of this transformation, the product itself contains the details of that activity of production of which it is the result, albeit that the finished product contains these details as other than and external to the process of production. But, as seen above in the discussion of self-actualization more is involved here than simply the relation of production (or agency) and product. For the activity from which a product results is the activity of an agent, and therefore it is the agent's own activity, his own "self," that is objectively resumed in the completed product. As Marx puts it in the "Excerpt Notes" of 1844, "In my production I would have objectified my individuality in its particularity,"⁸⁰ that is to say, the product which is the result of my agency objectifies the details of a process which

is capable of being appropriated by persons other than its producer, to the extent that those properties may satisfy needs of these others as well as needs of the producer himself. Thus the product is a 'commodity' as an item susceptible to exchange. And it is clearly a general notion of exchange that Marx is working towards in this argument.

⁸⁰Marx, "Excerpt Notes of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 281; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 546.

is my own, and thus objectifies a feature of myself.

This idea has significant implications for Marx' initial concept of the relation of praxis and society, when linked with the first step of his argument. The product introduces into the environment of its producer the possibility that his product may be taken up for use by someone other than himself. But the product does not stand, as a simple item does, in a neutral relation to its producer. Rather, and by definition, the product is the result of the producer's agency, and is thus the objectification of an aspect of his own self. And thus, when someone other than its producer takes up a product for his own needs, he also is taking up more than a simply neutral item. He is taking up an object in which a fundamental feature of its identity, the details of his agency, is "resumed."

The implication of this statement is of key importance for Marx' argument, and it is the following. If the product of one agent is taken up for use by another, it must be the case that this product relates in its definite composition to some needs of this other, because for Marx all use is use towards the satisfaction of a need, in the broadest sense of this latter term. But then, on the one hand, the production of a product by one agent and its appropriation by another entails a similarity of needs shared between them, and on the other hand, the product itself in being produced and appropriated is the objectification of this similarity of needs. The similarity of needs, as Marx sees it, forms the context of the possibility of social interaction between the two, and the form in

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which this interaction occurs is agency, respectively the production of and the appropriation of a product. Again as Marx states it in the "Excerpt Notes" of 1844, "In your satisfaction and your use of my product I would have had the direct and conscious satisfaction that my work satisfied a human need, that it objectified human nature, and that it created an object appropriate to the need of another human being."⁸¹

Thus, for Marx, social relations are to be initially and fundamentally understood in terms of praxis, in that such relations are rendered possible by the character of the product of praxis. To appreciate the full force of this conclusion, however, we must see how Marx is led by it to the second of his propositions concerning the relation of praxis and society, to wit, that details of acts of praxis are conditioned by actual social relations.

We face a difficulty in examining this second proposition similar to a difficulty noticed in connection with the first proposition on the relation of praxis and society. It is a contention which Marx seems to assert rather than to defend by argument. Marx states that, "society itself produces man as man...."⁸² He asserts that man as agent is in some sense "produced" by the social context in which he is situated, just as he asserts above that social contexts themselves find their foundation in agency, in being rendered possible by agency. And in the famous sixth

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸² Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 305; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd/ 3, p. 116.

thesis on Feuerbach, Marx goes so far as to hold that, "...the essence of man is no abstraction inhering in each single individual. In actuality it is the ensemble of social relationships."⁸³

To understand these statements of Marx, we must first recognize that he is here discussing again the social dimensions of praxis. The texts themselves are a clear indication of this. In the first text cited above, the full clause reads, "As society itself produces man as man, so it is produced by him."⁸⁴ The reference of the second part of this statement is at least that assertion which has been argued above, viz., that the structure of praxis involves those conditions which render social relations possible. Society "is produced" by man in being made possible through the structure of human agency itself. But if praxis is the subject matter of the second portion of this statement, it is reasonable to assume that it is the subject of the first portion also. Moreover, Marx typically refers to agency in stating that man is in some sense a "product of his social context."⁸⁵ In these statements, Marx seems to be asserting then that it is man the agent that society "produces."

⁸³Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," in Easton and Guddat, p. 402; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 535.

⁸⁴Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 305; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 116.

⁸⁵For example, in a text immediately preceding the one cited above, Marx asserts that, given the overcoming of private property, a society would occur in which man would affirmatively produce both himself and other men. He would do this, however, through his productive activity, and other men would be 'produced' by him through their activity of appropriating the object of his labor. Thus in asserting that society 'produces' man Marx is stating that the details of praxis are conditioned

Or, he seems to assert that agency, praxis, is in some way "produced" by society.

Marx makes these statements in the Manuscripts of 1844, in a section in which his prime purpose is the comparison of his theory of socialism to other theories which he considers less radical and therefore less satisfactory than his own. Because this comparison is his first purpose, he does not spend his energy to provide a clear argument for the claim that the details of productive activity are conditioned by actual social relations. And of course the absence of argument makes it difficult to ascertain just what this assertion means. Moreover, the commentators are by no means in agreement on this point. Schaff, e.g., takes Marx' statements to the effect that man is "produced" by society to mean that the individual's consciousness of himself is conditioned by the social matrix in which he is located. Society produces man by providing the context from which the individual's self-understanding is derived:

...if human attitudes, opinions, evaluations, etc., are a historical product of mutual interaction between base and superstructure...then the general psychological structure of men under given conditions depends on the patterns of social relations, particularly in the sphere of production. These relations are the bases of his consciousness -- they create it, although this creative process is an extremely complicated one. What philosophers call "human nature" or the "essence of man" is thus reduced to the status of a product -- or a function -- of social relations.⁸⁶

by the social setting in which praxis occurs. The 'man' that society 'produces' is, for Marx, the agent.

86
Schaff, Marxism and the Human Individual, p. 65.

Marx does indeed wish to maintain something of this sort concerning the question of the relation of society and consciousness, although as we shall see his doctrine on this point is more complex than Schaff's statements might imply. And it is doubtless true that this idea of the relation of society and self understanding is something of what Marx means in asserting that "society produces man." He states in the German Ideology, e.g., that "Consciousness is...from the very beginning a social product, and remains so as long as men exist at all."⁸⁷ But while this notion of the relation of consciousness to society is an aspect of Marx' assertion that "society produces man," I would argue that it is not the fundamental sense of this assertion, and that the other statements which Marx makes on the general question of the relation of society and consciousness suggest that it has another meaning, and one that is logically more basic.

Society for Marx means a system or systems of production of useful items, in which (either cooperatively or competitively), persons interact through reciprocal appropriation of and exchange of social products.

Marx himself argues, in the German Ideology, that the theory of production or praxis, he has stated, results in an understanding of society. "The production of life," he asserts, "both of one's own in labor and of fresh life in procreation, now appears as a double relationship: on the one hand as a natural, on the other hand as a social relationship."⁸⁸ We have

⁸⁷Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 19; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 20.

⁸⁸Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 18; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 19.

seen both that production of any sort requires nature as a condition, and that praxis engenders the possibility of social relations. Marx, in this text goes on to develop from this a notion of society in the sense discussed above.

By social we understand the cooperation of several individuals, no matter under what conditions; in what manner and to what end. It follows from this that a certain mode of production, or industrial stage is always combined with a certain mode of co-operation, or social stage, and that this mode of co-operation is itself a "productive force." Further, that the multitude of productive forces accessible to men determines the nature of society, hence the "history of humanity" must always be studied and treated in relation to the history of industry and exchange.⁸⁹

Society for Marx, then, given its foundation in production, becomes for Marx a system or series of systems of interacting (i.e., cooperation as above) productive activities, geared towards "industry" (i.e., productive acts) and "exchange" (i.e., the reciprocal appropriation of the products of its members).

It is this understanding of society which is the key premise for the argument I am advancing here, to wit, that just as society is engendered by praxis, it also specifies and controls the sorts of acts of praxis that are available to its members. Marx, in the text cited above, explains that because society involves the interaction of agents in terms of production and reciprocal appropriation (i.e., exchange), and because the repetition of such acts results in a certain stylization thereof, a "certain mode of cooperation" which Marx himself entitles the "social stage,"

⁸⁹Ibid.

society itself becomes a "productive force," i.e., the systematization and organization of specific acts of production of various kinds occurring within it. Society facilitates, renders more efficient and more fruitful, these latter sorts of acts.

But as the systematization of kinds of production occurring within it, society affects more than simply their efficiency and utility. Society also offers these kinds of production -- whatever they may be in a given social system -- as viable alternatives for its members in their own practical engagements. Or, society as that "force" which organizes and systematizes sorts of production occurring within it, at the same time renders these sorts of production and the relations occurring between them available to its members. But this means that society conditions and to some extent determines the sorts of production or praxis occurring within it, just as society itself is engendered by praxis. And this means that the sorts of interactive relations occurring between persons in a given social system depends upon and are conditioned by the structure of the society itself as a "productive force," i.e., as the systematization of sorts of production occurring within it.⁹⁰

Thus conceived, the "structure of society" determines the sorts of

90

Cf. G. V. Plekhanov, Essays in the History of Materialism, trans. Ralph Fox (New York: Howard Fertig, 1967), pp. 214-215. As Plekhanov puts this point, "...the means of production just as inevitably determine the mutual relations of men in the process of production, as the armament of an army determines its whole organization, all the mutual relations of the men of which it consists. But the mutual relations of men in the process of production in their turn determine the whole structure of society.

productive behavior available to its members.⁹¹ For Marx, just as man as agent and society are mutually productive of each other, so society

⁹¹Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 305, 306; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 116, 117. See also, Marx, Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations, trans. E. J. Hobsbawm (New York: International Publishers, 1965), pp. 80-81; Marx, Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Okonomie (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1953), p. 384. That this is what Marx intends to argue in asserting that, "...as society itself produces man as man, so it is produced by him," can be seen from further comments which Marx himself makes in the Paris Manuscripts and in the Grundrisse of 1857-58. In the first of these texts, Marx notes that, "To be avoided above all is establishing 'society' once again as an abstraction over against the individual. The individual is the social being. The expression of his life, even if it does not appear immediately in the form of a communal expression carried out together with others, is therefore an expression and assertion of social life." The point of this statement is twofold, co-incident with the note from Plekhanov cited above, and the inference derived from it. First, society is not to be taken as an entity apart from its members. Rather, it is the system of productive activities and relations of these activities which its members enjoy. But second, society is the system of these activities and relations. As a system it offers them as viable alternatives to its members. As a result the productive activity of an individual, even if seemingly private, is nonetheless "...an expression...and assertion of social life..." i.e., because it is an activity rendered available to the individual by the society within which he is located.

This view of the relationship of individual praxis and society is reinforced in the section of the Grundrisse of 1857-58 entitled "Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations." There, in describing the relation of the productive individual to society in primitive communal systems, he notes first that, in a stable social system, individual productive behavior effects a "reproduction" of those forms and relations of praxis offered as viable alternatives to the individual by society. In such societies, "...the economic object is the production of use values...", and this behavior yields, "...the reproduction of the individual in certain definite relationships to his community, of which it (sic. the community) forms the basis..." The wording of this text is of major importance. The production of items bearing "use values" involves an activity through which the agent acts out his role as a producer within the broader system of productive relations which is his society. This is the meaning of Marx' phrase, "...the reproduction of the individual in certain definite relationships to his community." But he goes on to say that the society itself, (i.e., the community) is the "basis" of the relationship which the individual has to it, the basis of his role within the larger productive

changes man (through the offering of new and broader productive options) as man changes society (through the development of new modes of production which result necessarily in social change). With the caveat that the relation between man as agent and society is conceived of by Marx as dynamic as well as stable,⁹² we may claim to have shown two propositions of major importance in Marx' account of the relation of praxis

system. And society here is such a basis because society, as the organization of productive acts occurring within it, provides this role as an option for the individual member. Thus again "society produces man as man," i.e., society provides options for productive behavior through which the individual may act out his role in the social system, just as society finds its source in the activity of production, i.e., just as "society is produced by man."

⁹²Cf. Marx, Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations, Hobsbawm, pp. 92-93; Grundrisse, pp. 393-394. See also Marx' "Preface" to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Works in One Volume (New York: International Publishers, 1969), pp. 182-183; MEW, vol. 13, p. 9. In order to avoid the impression that Marx' understanding of society is static at this point, another idea from the same section of the Grundrisse cited above may be briefly noted, to wit, that as modes of production within a social system develop, these may lead to new productive forms, and new needs on the part of the producer, thus outstripping those systematized relations of production which society as a "force" has constituted. And this development would in turn require a re-organization of society itself, as a result of which society would offer new and expanded options to its members. Marx in this section of the Grundrisse uses the example of the growing complexity of agricultural forms of production, enabling a community to produce new and more varied forms of agricultural products without expanding its territorial boundaries. Such advance in turn would lead to the re-formulation of social relations of production, and thus to a society offering its members more varied agricultural options. This example is consistent with the general formulation of the process of social change which Marx offers in his famous "Preface" to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy of 1859. He states that, "At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or - what is but a legal expression of the same thing - with property relations within which they have been at work hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into fetters. Then begins an epoch of social

and society. First, society is rendered possible by the structure of human praxis. Second, society specifies the details of praxis, through controlling the productive options available to its members.

A third principal assertion concerning the relation of society and praxis arises out of these two propositions. This is the claim that all praxis is in some sense social; in other words, that nothing occurs which might accurately be described as a purely private act.

The young Marx gives at least two indications that this is a claim he wishes to make, one in the 1844 Manuscripts, and one in the sixth thesis on Feuerbach.⁹³ First, in the Manuscripts, Marx discusses an example of the activity of scientific thinking. It may seem that as a scientist my speculative behavior is purely private, that I withdraw from my community to formulate hypotheses concerning the nature of my subject matter, and to work out criteria by which these hypotheses might be tested. But, "Not only is the material of my activity - such as the language in which the thinker is active - given to me as a social product, but my own

revolution. With change in the economic function, the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed."

93

Cf. Marx, Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, ed. and trans. J. O'Malley (Cambridge: The University Press, 1970), p. 79; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 1, Hb., p. 496. A third indication may be found in Marx' Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, in which Marx speaks of "...the commonwealth (das Gemeinwesen), the communal being (das kommunistische Wesen) within which the individual exists...." Avineri, The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx, p. 35, interprets Marx' choice of terms here as an indication of his belief, "...that man and society should not be antagonistically conceived...", or that the being of the individual is always social, a "kommunistische Wesen." If this is so, then it follows that all agency is also social in some relevant sense, or that there is no such occurrence as a totally private act.

experience is socialactivity; what I make from myself I make for society, conscious of my nature as social."⁹⁴ The implication Marx appears to draw from this example is that no act, however private and individual it may seem, occurs without the social context, and more strongly, that the social context is a necessary condition for the occurrence of even the most seemingly private act.

Second, in the sixth thesis on Feuerbach, Marx states that Feuerbach's critique of religion errs in its tendency "...to abstract from the historical process and to establish religious feeling as something self contained, and to presuppose an abstract - isolated individual."⁹⁵ The clear implication of this statement is that one could only examine religion as a "self-contained" rather than an historically-socially conditioned phenomenon, if one presupposed an asocial, "isolated individual" as the bearer of religious feelings and beliefs, and that this is an error because all individuality and agency somehow involve their occurring in the context of society.

As I understand these texts and what they imply, Marx' intention here is to draw upon the arguments already seen on the relation of praxis and society to support this third proposition, as well as to show, by this proposition, that deep significance of the two claims we have already discussed. Note first that in his statement concerning the social character of scientific activity, Marx states that, "...what I make from myself, I

⁹⁴Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 306; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 116.

⁹⁵Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," in Easton and Guddat, p. 402; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 535.

make for society, conscious of my nature as social." Now excluding the question of consciousness here, Marx is in this statement clearly harkening back to the point that praxis is such that through its resulting product another might have access to the agent (producer), and the agent access to the other (appropriator). The point here is that for Marx, even the most seemingly private actions share in this structure. My seemingly private act of scientific investigation results, if brought to term, in a product, e.g., a written report of the process and conclusions of my research, which is available for public inspection and appropriation. Thus even this seemingly private act is in principle social.

Further, actions of this seemingly private variety draw upon the structure which society organizes as structures for productive acts occurring within it, either through the utilization of materials which are socially provided, or through the adoption of procedures which are socially constituted, or both. As Marx notes, if I am engaged in scientific research, the "...material of my activity..." is "...language...given to me as a social product...."⁹⁶ That is to say, in performing this sort of speculative behavior, one of necessity utilizes a socially constructed material, and through his action participates in the society in which he is located.⁹⁷

⁹⁶Marx insists on the social origin of language in several texts other than this cited from the 1844 Manuscripts. I consider this point further in the section of this chapter devoted to a discussion of society, praxis, and consciousness.

⁹⁷The person performing scientific activity utilizes paradigmatic models to guide the formation of his experiments, definite laboratory techniques, instruments for measuring and recording the data of his

These examples provide Marx with illustrations of the general point which I take him to be making, namely, that no action or instance of praxis is thoroughly "private" and that no individual acts in a thoroughly private fashion.⁹⁸

experimentation, all of which are social in origin, at least in terms of the community of scientists of which he is a member. In other words, in his activity he adopts procedures and utilizes instruments which are socially derived. In this respect also his behavior is far from private; it shares in the structure of the society in which he is located.

98

Similar sorts of statements could be made concerning religious behavior as a so-called "private" form of action, as Marx indicates in the sixth thesis on Feuerbach. Religious action seems at first glance to involve a private relation between the individual and some object which he considers divine and therefore worshipful. But upon examination one notes that this sort of action, if brought to term, does result in some kinds of products (e.g., rituals and rites) which render it accessible to observation and appropriation by others - in a word, social. Again, religious behavior participates in the society in which worshipers are located, through its belonging to those forms of action which the society in general constitutes as appropriate for worship. Additionally, cf. Geo. Kline, "Hegel and the Marxist-Leninist Critique of Religion," in Darrel E. Christensen (ed.), Hegel and the Philosophy of Religion, The Wofford Symposium (Martinus Nijhoff: The Hague, 1970), p. 195. Professor Kline correctly notes that Marx' concept of religion involves an "Absterbens-theorie," that, "In Marx, religion stirbt ab, dies out, or withers away; it negates itself, although the 'self elimination of religion' may be interpreted as 'elimination by the objective movement of history.'" For Marx, religion is an "...historically transient phenomenon, inextricably bound up with the socio-economic system of capitalist (and pre-capitalist) exploitation, and doomed to 'whither away' with the approach of a non-exploitative, classless economic system." But the point here is that through 'pre-historical' social development religion is for Marx precisely an experience which is 'inextricably' related to the various social contexts in which it occurs. Thus for Marx religious behavior is in no meaningful sense of the term a private act of the individual.

It is important to see the role which this assertion plays in Marx' general argument. As I read the texts, Marx is not attempting to construct some new argument through which he might deduce this assertion as a conclusion. Rather, he is utilizing the assertion that no act is thoroughly private, as implied by the examples of scientific and religious praxis, to indicate a further, and to him more profound, dimension of the claims previously discussed concerning the relation of society and praxis. This more profound dimension of Marx' arguments involves the notion that praxis and society are mutually implicative. No action is a private action because all praxis, given its structure and the nature of its resulting product, opens the way towards a relation between the agent and the other. All action opens the possibility for interaction. Conversely, all praxis occurs in specified and describably forms, and this specification is the result both of those needs which are the ground of praxis for the individual agent, and of the society in which the agent is located. Society organizes the sorts of praxis which occur within it, and thus constitutes certain forms of praxis as appropriate for the satisfaction of certain needs. Or, the interactive context in which praxis occurs conditions the character of that instance of praxis.

Society and praxis, then, are for Marx integral components of a single subject matter which Marx wishes to examine. He does not claim that praxis is the historical origin of society, which then goes on to determine the character of praxis. Rather, Marx would assert of the relation of praxis and society the same statement which he makes concerning his analysis of the dialectical division of satisfaction of needs,

production of new needs, and the origin of the family in the German Ideology, to wit, that, "These...aspects of social activity are not of course to be taken as...different stages, but just, as I have said, as ...aspects or, to make it clear to the Germans...'moments,' which have existed simultaneously since the dawn of history and the first men, and still assert themselves in history today."⁹⁹

Society and praxis mutually and necessarily compliment each other in Marx' analysis, and each in its turn accounts for certain properties as belonging to the other. Praxis accounts for the possibility of society, and for society as being fundamentally a system of productive relations among agents. Society accounts for the organization of praxis into definite and descriptably historical forms. Thus the agent is necessarily a social agent, and praxis is necessarily conditioned by the social context in which it occurs. Once we see this, we can also see the full force of Marx' assertion that, "To be avoided above all is establishing 'society' once again as an abstraction over against the individual. The individual is the social being....The expression of his life - even if it does not appear immediately in the form of a communal expression carried out together with others - is therefore an expression and assertion of social life."¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, pp. 17-18; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, pp. 18-19.

¹⁰⁰Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 306; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 117.

As a post-script to this idea, one may also see that, for Marx, society provides the one and only environment in which certain needs, which for him are crucial cases of human needs, can arise for the individual. Among these crucial cases are the needs of the individual for love and friendship. Roger Garaudy is quite correct in noting that, given Marx' understanding of the broad social character of human relations, neither notions of love or hostility can be used by Marx as concepts of the most fundamental sorts of relationships between persons, in terms of which other sorts of relations can be critically examined.¹⁰¹

"These relations (i.e., love and hostility), are established between men by the nature which encompasses them and which is their common work."¹⁰²

In other words, the structure of social agency itself provides norms whereby various sorts of human relations can be critically examined, and no specific relation can be used in itself as the conceptual foundation of such a norm. However, once this proviso is taken, Marx is willing to point out, as Garaudy himself notes,¹⁰³ that love, (and I think friendship by implication),¹⁰⁴ are cases of human relations that are critically

101

Cf. Roger Garaudy, Perspectives de l'Homme (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969), p. 206.

102

Ibid. My translation.

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Cf. Ibid., p. 265.

104

Cf. John Macmurray, The Self as Agent (London: Farber and Farber Ltd., 1953), p. 15. When Macmurray asserts in this volume that, "All meaningful knowledge is for the sake of action, and all meaningful action is for the sake of friendship," I take him to be making two assertions with both of which Marx would agree thoroughly. That Marx inclines

important. For example, Marx asserts of the relation of love between man and woman that, "From this relationship one can thus judge the entire level of man's development....It ...indicates the extent to which man's natural behavior has become human or the extent to which his human existence has become a natural essence for him, the extent to which his human nature has become nature for him."¹⁰⁵

Now the factor to be noted here is that, for Marx, the development of a need beyond that of biological subsistence requires for Marx, among other conditions, the presence of some relevant characteristic in the environment that may elicit that need as a need for the agent. This has already been noted above, in showing that, for Marx, initial modifications of an environment provide the environment with those features which give rise to new needs in the agent. An environment then which would give rise to the needs for love and friendship must be one which involves relevant features of interpersonality, i.e., one in which some real interaction between personal agents occurs. Such an environment is, by

towards the second, which is our question for the moment, can be seen in a text already cited from the "Excerpt-Notes of 1844," in which Marx discusses the ideal of the relationship between the agent as producer and the personal other as appropriator of the product. There Marx states that my basic satisfaction in the other's appropriation of my product is my knowledge that I have "created an object appropriate to the need of another human being." (Easton and Guddat, p. 281, MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 546). The point here is that Marx describes as an ideal a relation in which my satisfaction is derived from the need of the other in virtue of an object which I have produced relevant to that need. And the notion of friendship as a fundamental and critical human relationship seems derivable from this idea of Marx.

105

Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 303; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 133. This passage, widely used as an indication of Marx' "humanism" indicates at least that for Marx the love relationship is one of crucial importance.

definition, society. Thus society is the necessary for the emergence of such crucial cases of human needs as friendship and love.¹⁰⁶

Up to this point, then, we have considered three propositions of central importance to Marx' view of the relation of society and praxis:

a) that society is rendered possible in virtue of the structure of praxis; b) that society in turn organizes the sorts of praxis occurring within it, and thus conditions the sorts of praxis available to its members; and c) that no act, or instance or praxis, is in a literal sense of the term a "private" act; or that all praxis is in some sense social. I take these three propositions, and the arguments supporting them, to be the kernel of his doctrine concerning the relation of praxis and society. In addition to these, however, two other propositions concerning the relation of society and the agent need to be taken into account. I want now to consider them.

The first of these propositions concerns Marx' concept of "totalization," and may be stated as follows: in society there is a "division of

106

Marx argues against Prudhon that all human needs are social, and thus historically variable. His point is that since all human needs are historically variable, then no such need can be posited as historically or culturally universal. But it seems that Marx contradicts himself here on two grounds. First, in discussing friendship and love as crucial human needs, he seems to posit these needs as universally present to human agency. (Otherwise, why would the alienation of man from other men which Marx discusses in the 1844 Manuscripts be a case of alienation at all?) Second, in positing society as the necessary environment for the eliciting of these needs Marx seems to further posit the need for society as an historically universal need of the agent. Is this not a contradiction of Marx' contention that all human needs are historically variable?

labor," an extension of the varieties of praxis, opening the possibility for the totalization¹⁰⁷ of the agent.

One of Marx' more notorious statements concerning "totalization" occurs in the German Ideology, in a discussion on the effects of "division of labor," in the pejorative sense of that term. There Marx tells us that division of labor effects a social condition in which, "man's own deed becomes an alien power opposed to him, which enslaves him instead of being controlled by him. For as soon as labor is distributed each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape. He is a hunter, a fisherman, a shepherd, or a critical critic, and must remain so if he does not want to lose the means of his livelihood...."¹⁰⁸ Division of labor here denotes a social condition in which forms of labor are "distributed" variously among members of the social system, and a condition in which each of these members is forced, for reasons of subsistence, to perform his own form of labor to the exclusion of all other forms. Marx contrasts this state of affairs with that of communist society:

...while in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to

107

Of course, for this proposition to be fully intelligible, "totalization" must be defined, a definition of this term will be worked out through an examination of the argument which Marx uses to support this assertion. It will be seen that the term "division of labor" can be used in two senses for Marx.

108 Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 22; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 22.

do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd, or critic.¹⁰⁹

It is in this highly utopian statement that Marx sets forth totalization as an ideal goal for man in communist society. However, the utopian elements of Marx' assertion can be taken as metaphorical in the context of the argument of the German Ideology.¹¹⁰ The true sense of this statement can be seen in Marx' contrast of the condition of the agent in a society pejoratively characterized by division of labor, and that of the agent in "communist society." And that contrast involves at least this: that the agent as member of a society characterized by "division of labor" is limited in terms of the forms of productive activity available to him, and thus limited in the sorts of needs which he may satisfy through his action; while the agent as member of a social system in which labor is not so "distributed" is free to undertake a variety of forms of productive actions towards the satisfaction of a variety of disparate needs. Productive activities in this context may assume direction toward disparate ends such as organic subsistence (agriculture and

109

Ibid.

110

Cf. Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 26; MEGA, Abt. 1 Bd. 3, p. 25, Marx himself would certainly wish that the "utopian" elements of this statement be interpreted metaphorically. In a later passage of The German Ideology, in which Marx is attempting to establish communism as a science, he states that, "Communism is not for us a stable state which is to be established, an ideal to which reality will have to adjust itself. We call communism the real movement which abolishes the present state of things. The conditions for this movement result from the premisses now in existence."

husbandry), recreation, and philosophical criticism. Totalization for Marx, then, involves the ability of the agent to act fruitfully in a variety of fashions towards the satisfaction of disparate needs.

This understanding of totalization in Marx is reiterated by Marek Fritzhand, "What did Marx intend when he proclaimed the ideal of a 'total' man?" Fritzhand asks. "First, he meant the overcoming of the 'fractionalization,' 'fragmentation,' and 'functionalization' of modern man caused by the institution of private property and the social division of labor."¹¹¹ And Fritzhand goes on from this to state something of what he takes to be the positive content of Marx' concept of totalization.

The "total" man is a complete man, whose self realization knows no bounds. He is a human individual not separated by private property from the world of culture and civilization. The totality of that human being consists in his "possession" of that total world-possession understood here as the fullest possible share in the creation and enjoyment of the goods of civilization and culture.¹¹²

This interpretation is consistent with the understanding of totalization offered above. Totalization as a possibility for the agent is contrasted here to the condition of the agent in a society in which labor is "distributed" or "divided." Further, totalization is noted as a feature of "self-realization" or self actualization, i.e., the satisfaction of needs through agency and the production of new needs. And in speaking of a "self realization" which "knows no bounds," and individual enjoying "possession of that total world," Fritzhand indicates the capacity of the

111

Marek Fritzhand, "Marx' Ideal of Man," in Socialist Humanism, ed. Erich Fromm, p. 174.

112

Ibid.

agent to perform varieties of forms of praxis towards the satisfaction of disparate needs.

One difficulty with these statements, however, has to do with their consistency with Marx' refusal to postulate utopian ideals for communist society, or for the condition of the individual within such society. Fritzhand refers to Marx' concept of "totalization" in the above text as an "ideal," and indeed Marx' own rhetoric in the text from the German Ideology seems to indicate that he is positing an ideal of utopian character. But in the German Ideology itself Marx argues that, "Communism is not for us a stable state which is to be established, an ideal to which reality will have to adjust itself. We call communism the real movement which abolishes the present state of things. The conditions of this movement result from premises now in existence."¹¹³ In other words, the concept of totalization, as a postulate describing the condition of the individual in communist society, must have its foundation in those premises which describe society in general, and the relation of individual praxis and society. In other words, the concept of totalization must be in some sense derivable from these assertions concerning the relation of society and praxis which have already been seen.

The concept of totalization can be derived from Marx' analysis of the fundamental relation of praxis and society in two ways. The first of these takes its source from the premise that society organizes the forms of praxis occurring within it; the second from the premise that praxis

113
Marx-Engels, op. cit., loc. cit.

itself implies the possibility of social relations.

Marx' first argument justifying the concept of totalization begins with the premise that, as a system of organization of praxis, society necessarily organizes and involves a plurality of diverse sorts of activities, and of diverse sorts of subjectively located needs corresponding to these activities. Initially praxis aims at the satisfaction of those needs relating to biological subsistence, "...before everything else eating and drinking, a habitation, clothing, and many other things. The first historical act is thus the production of the means to satisfy these needs, the production of material life itself."¹¹⁴ Even at this level of praxis, a limited range of diverse actions and needs occur as can be seen by Marx' enumeration of the several items requisite for the sustenance of the human organism. And thus the society which organizes praxis even on a primitive level organizes a limited plurality of disparate activities.

But a more crucial recognition of the idea that society organizes praxis in terms of disparate forms of action is had when one remembers that, for Marx, a result of the satisfaction of biological or "first level" needs is that "new needs are made."¹¹⁵ The agent and the environment are, in virtue of that action which satisfies subsistence needs, modified (or in Marx' terminology "actualized") such that the

¹¹⁴ Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 16; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 17.

¹¹⁵ Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 17; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 18.

agent is now capable of being the subject of needs of a more complex sophisticated variety, and the environment is capable of sustaining action towards the satisfaction of these new needs. Such new needs and forms of action may include the production of tools and techniques which render more efficient existing means for the satisfaction of subsistence needs, the development of new means towards the satisfaction of subsistence need,¹¹⁶ the formation of rites and rituals occurring in relation to the productive activities of a society, lending these activities and aesthetic (and religious) significance,¹¹⁷ and the formation of creative means for the utilization and enjoyment of leisure time.

Now the development of new needs and forms of action such as these does not obliterate those needs and actions which relate to subsistence within a society. On the contrary, needs relating to and actions aimed at subsistence of necessity remain a part of the productive composition of the social system, only now they are integrated with new needs and forms of action of a more complex and sophisticated variety. According to Marx, as a system of organization of praxis, society for Marx organizes and integrates both those forms of action which relate to subsistence, and those which relate to more developed and sophisticated needs produced

116

For example, the development of an agricultural mode of production out of a society previously geared to hunting and gathering. Another example of this point is the historical development of land distribution and utilization within agricultural societies, which Marx points out in the section of the Grundrisse entitled "Pre-capitalist-Economic Formations," Hobsbawm, pp. 68-80; Grundrisse, pp. 375-384.

117

Fritzhand, op. cit., loc. cit., p. 174. points out that for

as a result of the satisfaction of subsistence needs. And thus the forms of action which the social system organizes can be seen to be a plurality of activities of a more widely disparate character.

The idea of society as necessarily relating and integrating a plurality of disparate forms of action can also be justified by Marx in terms of his assertion that, along with the development of more complex forms of action within the social system, there occurs the development of specific forms of social relations between persons. These developing relations facilitate the performance of productive activity, and must in turn be systematized by the society as a whole. The first and foremost example of such relations is the family.

The third circumstance which, from the very first, enters into historical development, is the man, who daily remake their own life, begin to make other men to propagate their kind: the relation between man and wife, parents and children: the Family. The family which to begin with is the only social relationship, becomes later, when increased needs create new social relationships and the increased population new needs, a subordinate one...and then must be treated and analyzed according to the existing empirical data.¹¹⁸

The point which Marx wishes to make here is that the development of new needs and forms of action resulting from the satisfaction of the requirements of subsistence involves more than simply the appearance of

Marx the 'total man' is one who "...does not distinguish between work and enjoyment." One interesting way of understanding this is to see that work can be ritualized in a fashion so as to attain aesthetic significance. This notion, which might be involved in an attempt to do history from a Marxian perspective, is verifiable at least with regard to primitive and feudal societies.

118

Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 17; MEGA, Abt. 2, Bd. 5, p. 18.

new sorts of activities which might ordinarily, and for Marx much too narrowly, be entitled "productive forms of action." In addition to the growing complexity of needs and actions there also emerges definite forms of social relations within which production occurs. These forms of social relations are, for Marx, products, in that they are the results of agency, albeit that agency here takes the form of interaction with other agents. Such relations provide contexts for unique forms of actions, and for the satisfaction of definite needs. And again, such relations, while they seem to be synonymous with society itself -- i.e., a system of interactive relations within which productive agency is organized -- are also factors which are developed and systematized by the larger society within which they occur.¹¹⁹

Through this analysis Marx establishes that society is necessarily a context in which a plurality of disparate forms of action are available to its members. These forms of action, or praxis, include activities aimed at the satisfaction of subsistence requirements, aesthetic, recreational, or indeed intellectual forms of action rooted in needs which developed as the results of the satisfaction of subsistence needs, and activities appropriate to characteristically interpersonal settings, such as the family.

119

Cf. Ibid. Marx clearly points this out with regard to the family, in stating that, "The family which to begin with is the only social relationship, becomes later, when increased needs create new social relationships, a subordinate one...and then must be treated and analyzed according to the existing empirical data...." That is to say, given the historical development of societies, the family can only accurately be understood through an examination of its relations to other

Given this analysis, Marx can justify the idea of "totalization" as follows. Since society organizes praxis in this fashion, it offers to its members as individual agents the possibility of engaging a variety of activities, towards the satisfaction of distinct needs of which the agent is subject. Further more, since society is the necessary environment within which the agent exists, and since society is a context within which disparate forms of action are possible, society constitutes the agent as subject of various and distinct needs, correlative to the distinct sorts of activities which it renders available to the agent. The premise to be kept in mind here is that needs arise for an agent from two sources: from the individual's own action, and satisfaction of prior needs; and from the environment within which action occurs. It is the environment as source of needs that is at issue here. As composed of a variety of available forms of action, society renders the agent the subject of a variety of needs which the various forms of action possible in his social milieu are capable of satisfying. Thus the individual agent, as member of society, is in principle capable of engaging in various sorts of activities, towards the satisfaction of disparate needs which are his own.

Thus the possibility of totalization as defined above is, for Marx founded in the general structure of society, and the relation of society and praxis. "Total man" is not an ideal postulate descriptive of the condition of the individual in a utopian communist society, but a state of affairs which society renders in principle possible for its

features of the social system, because it is from these relations that the family derives its character and identity.

members, albeit that some "pre-historical" societies simultaneously offer this possibility to their members and deny it to them through an enforced "division of labor." Interestingly enough in this connection, Fritzhand notes that Marx objects to only one sense of division of labor, that sense in which forms of labor are severally distributed to persons in an enforced fashion, such that persons are capable of significantly engaging in one form of action, exclusive of others.

Marx was aware of the need for a division of labor and of its significance for the development of mankind. He was not against a voluntary division of labor which would do justice to the desires, inclinations, talents, and individuality of human beings. He disapproved only of a compulsory division of labor which condemns people to work in the same treadmill, doing the same things and performing the same functions all their lives. This division of labor has "assumed a life of its own." It has alienated itself from human beings, constrained their powers, limited their lives and their possibilities of choice.¹²⁰

Marx, then, approves of a social division of labor in which the agent acts in keeping with volition, and in terms of which he is capable of performing various compatible sorts of activities towards the satisfaction of the several distinct needs which he possesses. He approves of a condition whose possibility is founded in the general structure of society itself, in which the individual, as Marx metaphorically puts it, "Hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner...."¹²¹

120

Fritzhand, op. cit., loc. cit., p. 174.

121

Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 22; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 22.

This interpretation of "total man" is one generally held by the commentators on Marx' texts. And it is undoubtedly the major significance which Marx attaches to the concept. I would claim, however, that a second aspect of the concept of totalization is suggested by Marx in his discussion of division of labor. In a text already cited, Marx states that one result of a "division of labor" pejoratively taken is that, "man's own deed becomes an alien power opposed to him, which enslaves him instead of being controlled by him."¹²² Marx's idea here is that, as a member of a society in which forms of labor are distributed in a compulsory and exclusive fashion, the agent is unable to recognize his action as the result of his own choice. He recognizes his action as imposed upon him, and thus as a phenomenon opposed to him rather than being of his own authorship. And Fritzhand echoes this idea when he comments: "This division of labor has 'assumed a life of its own.' It has alienated itself from human beings, constrained their powers, limited their lives and their possibilities of choice."¹²³ If the agent's own activity is recognized by him as imposed rather than as embodying his own volition, if they seem opposed to him rather than being of his own authorship, then such activity has, from the point of view of the agent, "assumed a life of its own." And one result of this is that society, which is indeed made possible by praxis and is itself the product of interactions among agents, comes to be recognized as a reality apart

122

Ibid.

123

Fritzhand, op. cit., loc. cit., p. 174.

from and opposed to the agent as individual, both because it is here a product of activities which already seem opposed to him, and because it is that force which "distributes" forms of action according to a formula of the "division of labor."¹²⁴

One may infer that for Marx the concept of totalization includes the agent's capacity to recognize his own activity and his society as

124

Cf. Berger and Luckmann, op. cit., p. 89. The topic under discussion here is well summarized by Berger and Luckmann under the heading "reification." "Reification is the apprehension of human phenomena as if they were things, that is, in non-human or possibly supra-human terms. Another way of saying this is that reification is the apprehension of the products of human activity as if they were something else than human products - such as facts of nature, cosmic laws, or manifestations of divine will. Reification implies further that man is capable of forgetting his own authorship of the human world, and further, that the dialectic between man the producer, and his products, is lost to consciousness. The reified world is, by definition, a dehumanized world. It is experienced by man as a strange facticity, an opus alienum over which he has no control, rather than as the opus proprium of his own activity." For reasons given above, Marx would hold that one result of the division of labor, i.e., the social condition which inhibits the realization of "total man" in practice, is reification as described by Berger. This reification extends to two fronts: one apprehends both his own activity and the society in which he is located as, in Berger's terminology, "opera aliena, rather than as being of his own authorship, as "opera propria" of his own action. But on the other hand, and appearances to the contrary, one's own actions as well as the society in which he is located are respectively of his own authorship and product of his interactions. The overcoming of division of labor as that condition which inhibits the actualization of "total man," would also mean the overcoming of the agent's apparent and reified apprehension of his own activities and of his social world.

of his own authorship, in virtue of the overcoming of that division of labor which renders this recognition impossible. The concept of totalization, then, includes both the capacity to act in a variety of significant fashions towards the satisfaction of disparate needs, and the capacity to recognize his own actions and his social world as being of his own authorship.¹²⁵ Both these aspects of totalization are founded in the general explanation of the relation of society and praxis Marx provides, and both are actualized through the overcoming of "division of labor" in its pejorative sense. The latter is expressed by Marx in his dictum that, "The individual and generic life of man are not distinct, however much -- and necessarily so -- the mode of existence of individual life is either a more particular or more general mode of generic life, or generic life a more particular or universal mode of individual life."¹²⁶

125

Cf. Gajo Petrovic, "Marx' Theory of Alienation," Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, 1962-63, 23 (2), p. 421. Also cf. Petrovic, Marx in the Mid-Twentieth Century (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1967), pp. 144-145. In these essays, Petrovic argues that the crucial forms of alienation for the Marx of the 1844 Manuscripts are the alienation of the self from its own actions, and the alienation of the self from society. Both of these forms of alienation, I would argue, are forms which Marx discusses as arising from 'division of labor' and both are overcome in the actualization of the 'total man.'

126

Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 306; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 117. Cf. Lefebvre, Dialectical Materialism, p. 148, p. 150, pp. 161-162. It is interesting to note the Henri Lefebvre treatment of totalization in Dialectical Materialism discusses the concept exclusively in terms of the relation of man to nature. He correctly notes that for Marx, man, i.e., the human agent, exists in a necessary relation to the non-human other, nature, as the context of his activity. (p. 148) Through this relation, man, "produces himself through his activity..." (p. 148) and produces as the result of his activity on nature, "...a world, an organized experience..." (p. 150) an environment which is

My consideration of totalization has been an examination of one of two propositions through which Marx explicates the relation of the

organized through the labor of the agent and satisfies his needs. Now for Lefebvre, to produce a "world" in this sense is to overcome the otherness and externality of nature, to "humanize nature," (p. 150), to realize nature as a source of human self-satisfaction. And, Lefebvre argues, it is man as so realizing nature whom Marx entitles "total man." The total man is both the subject and object of the Becoming. He is the living subject who is opposed to the object and who surmounts this opposition. He is the subject who is broken up into partial activities and scattered determinations and who surmounts this dispersion. He is the subject of action, as well as its final object, its product even if it does seem to produce external products." (pp. 161-162) I would suggest that, while Lefebvre's comments are accurate with regard to Marx' concepts of praxis and self actualization, they are inaccurate because they are too broad in scope to his concept of totalization. Lefebvre offers a passing nod to "total man" as an agent capable of engaging in a variety of activities towards the satisfaction of disparate needs, but he does not seem to see this as essential meaning to totalization, which, I suggest, Marx clearly does. Further, Lefebvre does not include in the concept of totalization the agent's apprehension of his own actions and of his social world as being of his own authorship, a significance which the concept does have for Marx. Finally, Lefebvre argues that the condition of totalization is rooted in the relationship of the agent to nature. But the sense of Marx' statements on the question seem clearly to indicate that this condition is founded rather in the relation of the agent to society, and that it is the general structure of society which renders totalization a state of affairs which is in principle possible. For Marx, I think, to assert that totalization is rooted in the relation of the agent to nature would be too abstract an assertion, for it is only the structure of society, and the mediation of the agent's relation to nature by society, which renders totalization possible. And it is only an explanation of totalization in terms of a description of social structures which can show the former to be more than a mere utopian ideal, and thus a concept inadmissible within the framework of communism as a "science."

agent to society, beyond the three propositions which I take to form the kernel of his doctrine of the relation of society and praxis. A second important implication of this basic theory suggested in the 1844 Manuscripts is that society provides a structure in which the agent is an object as well as a subject, thus further determining the content of his subjectivity.

I take this claim to explain the sense of Marx' assertion in the 1844 Manuscripts that, "A being which is not itself an object for a third being has no being for its object, that is, is not related objectively, its being is not objective,"¹²⁷ a thought which Marx completes by remarking that, "An unobjective being is a nonentity."¹²⁸

This assertion of Marx occurs in the section of the 1844 Manuscripts entitled "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General," in a passage offering extended critical analysis of Hegel's doctrine of consciousness, self-consciousness, objectivity, and the relation of consciousness to its object. A thorough exposition of Marx' arguments in this passage will be offered in my fourth chapter, in which I will suggest that it is in terms of these arguments against Hegel that Marx explains and defends his concept of the fundamentality of praxis. For the moment, this passage needs to be examined only to the extent that it reveals an argument in support of the claim that society provides a structure in which the agent is an object as well as a subject.

127

Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 326; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 161.

128

Ibid.

In order to clearly analyze this argument, brief comment must be made as to the meanings which Marx assigns to the terms "subject" and "object."¹²⁹ First, it is worth recalling that for Marx a requirement for the occurrence of all agency is a real relation between the agent and some external, maleable environment, "Nature," in Marx' sense of the term. Marx expresses this idea a few lines above the text in the Manuscripts now under study by stating that, "A being which does not have its nature outside itself is not a natural one and has no part in the system of nature."¹³⁰ His meaning here, regarding the agent, is that the structure of praxis necessarily relates the agent to something outside himself, something in which his labor is "externalized," and in which the details of his action are "resumed," i.e., the product. It is thus that the agent has a part in "the system of nature."

Correspondingly, nature too has its being "outside of itself": it

129

Cf. Marx, Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, ed. O'Malley, pp. 23-24; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 1, Hb. 1, p. 426. That the meanings of "subject" and "object" are derived meanings is clear from this and other texts. In the passage referred to here, Marx asserts, in the contexts of an argument against Hegel, that "Subjectivity is characteristic of subjects, and personality a characteristic of person. Instead of considering them to be predicates of their subjects, Hegel makes the predicates independent and then lets them be subsequently and mysteriously converted into subjects." Now the import of this passage is that, if subjectivity is a 'characteristic' of something else, then its meaning can only be determined through an examination of its real relation to that of which it is a determination. And mutatis mudandis, Marx would argue similarly concerning the concept of the object. We shall see that, for Marx, both subjectivity and objectivity are differentiations occurring within and determinations of agency, and that they can only be understood accurately if they are examined as such determinations.

130

Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 326; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 161.

is essentially related to the agent as that material upon which he can exercise praxis, transforming items into products capable of satisfying needs which are his own. Marx adds that, "A being which has no object outside itself is not objective."¹³¹

Now initially to speak of an "object" in this context is to speak of some item in nature which is external to the agent. But since the theme of this discussion is agency, praxis, the object may be defined as that in nature which, though external to the agent, is capable of being the material of his labor, of being transformed through his action, and thus coming into an essential relation to him. To be an object, then, is to be an item capable of being determined through the action of another, and thereby of coming into a relation with that other. The term "objective" in the above sentence is used in a sense already seen as characteristic of Marx, to indicate the "public" features of the object. An item is objective in that it is "external" with regard to the agent: an item which is available for observation, inspection, and in principle appropriation by someone other than the agent who has "transformed" it through his praxis. The product for Marx is by definition "objective" in this sense.

With this seen, the meaning of "subjective" for Marx can also be determined. The subject is initially one who has an "object outside itself," is essentially related to something other than itself. But again this relation is one of agency. Just as the object is that which is

131

Ibid.

capable of being transformed and determined through agency, so the subject is one capable of effecting that transformation and determination. Since all agency is rooted in needs and exercised towards the satisfaction of needs, the subject is further the possessor of needs in which the responsibility for specific forms of agency is founded. The subject, then, is one who is a possessor of needs which he is capable of satisfying through action, thus being essentially related to nature as his "other." The specific "nature" of the subject is determined by the details of those needs which he possesses, and the forms of action through which he effects their satisfaction.¹³² As an agent, he is a being which again has, "its nature outside itself," is a "part of the system of nature."¹³³

The understanding of the meanings of "subject" and "object" in Marx allow the analysis of his argument concerning a further relation of society and the agent to proceed. The subject or agent forms a real part of the "system of nature," in that he is really and essentially related to items in nature, "objects." But this implies, first, that as a part of nature the subject is "objective": his actions as well as the results of his actions are in principle public and observable. It also implies that, as an "objective" feature of the natural world, the subject himself is capable of receiving a further determination in that he is

132

This latter is essentially the case in that it is through action that the agent achieves 'self actualization.'

133

Ibid.

capable of being the "object" of the activity of another. In other words, the structure of the agent qua "objective" is determinable both as "subject," as one possessing needs and able to effect their satisfaction through action, and as "object," i.e., as an item upon which another agent can act towards the satisfaction of his own needs.

This, as I see it, is the meaning of Marx' statement in this context that, "A being which is not itself an object for a third being has no being for its object, that is, is not related objectively, its being is not objective." ¹³⁴ A necessary feature of the "objectivity" of the agent is its ability to be determined both as subject and as object, its ability both to satisfy need through action, and to be that upon which another acts towards the satisfaction of his needs. Lefebvre sums up the idea in discussing this feature of the agent. "Since he has other beings for his object, this man is an object for other beings. He is at once a subject and an object which are opposed and yet inseparable: a material subject, objectively given in his organism and elementary biological consciousness, and thus containing a relation with other beings who are, for him, the objects of his desire, but, in themselves, subjects, a material object for these other beings. The fact that he is thus an object exposes natural man to the desires and aggressions of other living beings."¹³⁵

134

Marx, op. cit., loc. cit.

135

Lefebvre, Dialectical Materialism, p. 116.

Consequently, for Marx, a structural feature of agency that the agent be determinable both as subject and object in the above described senses of these terms, and it is only in virtue of the latter determination that the "objectivity" of the agent can be located in some interactive and productive milieu with other agents, and allows him to attain real relations with them. Society is by definition such a milieu, and the agent is necessarily socially located. As necessarily located in an interactive context composed of other agents, the subject finds himself in an environment in which he may be determined as an object, acted upon towards the satisfaction of the needs of others. This can occur in either of two fashions. It may be seen that the result of the agent's praxis, his product, is appropriated for use by another. In this case, the praxis of the agent and its result are treated by others as objects upon which to exercise their action. Here the producer may anticipate appropriation of his product by others and this anticipation may in part determine the details of his agency. And he may, in Marx' language, experience satisfaction in his work, in that it has "satisfied a human need, that it objectified human nature, that it created an object appropriate to the need of another human being."¹³⁶ On the other hand, the agent may be the object of actions rooted in needs of a more properly personal sort, such as

136

Marx, "Excerpt-Notes of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 281, MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 546.

friendship or love.¹³⁷ Such relations may obtain between two or several agents, in situations of interaction in which the two or several agents are mutually the subjects of their own actions and the objects of the actions of others. In either case, it is necessary that the agent be located in an interactive milieu, and this condition is fulfilled by the agent's being socially located. Thus society renders the agent capable of being determined as object as well as subject.

A remark must be added here with regard to Marx' statement that, "An unobjective being is a nonentity."¹³⁸ This statement immediately follows Marx' assertion that a being which has an object must also be itself also "an object for a third being..." and immediately precedes his claim that an item which is not an object would occur in a state of non-relation, privacy, solitude.¹³⁹ To the extent that Marx' statement here is an explicitation of the structure of the agent in relation to society, I take it to be simply a further elucidation of his comments and arguments relative to the agent's public or "objective" character. The agent is in principle "objective" as a part of the "system of nature." But in order that this objectivity be realized in practice as well as in principle, the agent must be located in a context in which he and his products can be inspected and appropriated by others, or, in a context in

137

As noted above, p. 58, these sorts of needs are crucial cases of human needs, for Marx. It is most appropriate, then, that he explain how the agent is capable of being the object as well as the subject of actions rooted in needs of this variety.

138 Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 326; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 161.

139 Ibid.

which he may be determined as object as well as subject. In other words, objectivity can only actually occur for the agent if he is socially located, or that it is only in terms of the concept of society that objectivity as a characteristic of the agent makes sense. Marx sums this up in the manuscripts by stating that, "To be objective, natural, sentient, and at the same time to have an object, nature, and sense outside oneself or to be oneself object, nature, and sense for a third person is one and the same thing."¹⁴⁰

This concludes my analysis of Marx' views of the relation of society and praxis. To resume, I have analyzed five assertions, three of which describe significant effects which Marx conceives society as having on the agent. These propositions are: a) that society is rendered possible in virtue of the structure of praxis; b) that society in turn organizes the sorts of praxis occurring within it, and thus conditions the sorts of praxis available to its members; c) that no act, or instance of praxis, is in a literal sense of the term a thoroughly "private" act; d) that society yields a "division of labor," an extension of the possibilities of praxis, opening the possibility for the totalization of the agent; and e) that society provides a structure in which the agent is determined as an object as well as a subject. I claimed at the beginning of this chapter that the concepts of praxis, society, and consciousness are the key concepts in terms of which Marx constructs a theory of man. I turn next to a consideration of Marx' concept of consciousness.

140
Ibid.

III. Marx' Concept of Consciousness

Marx' writing on the critical question of human consciousness in the 1844 Manuscripts and other texts suffers from being more often polemical than argumentative. He seems to be as much interested in defending his position against such opponents as Hegel,¹⁴¹ Feuerbach,¹⁴² and Stirner,¹⁴³ as he is in justifying his own position. Nevertheless, a close reading of the texts shows that a doctrine of consciousness is of crucial importance to Marx' thought. At one point in the 1844 Manuscripts, he asserts that, "...free conscious activity is the species characteristic of man."¹⁴⁴ A little later he states that, "Conscious life activity distinguishes man immediately from the life activity of the animal. Only thereby is he a species being. Or rather, he is only a conscious being - that is, his own life is an object for him - since he is a species being."¹⁴⁵

Statements such as these show unquestionably that Marx' theory of man involves a significant doctrine of consciousness. Other texts make

141

Cf. for example, that section of the Paris Manuscripts devoted to Marx' critique of Hegel.

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Cf. for example, the first of the "Theses on Feuerbach," in Easton and Guddat, p. 400-401; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 534.

143

Cf. for example, Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 29; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 28.

144

Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 294; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 88.

145

Ibid.

it equally plain that Marx wishes to integrate his doctrine of consciousness with the doctrines of praxis and society. In the succeeding pages, I shall maintain that, analogous to his theory of society, Marx' doctrine of consciousness can be expressed in three propositions, which together with their supporting arguments offer an overall schema of this doctrine. These propositions are: a) that consciousness is an aspect or moment of human praxis; b) that consciousness is an essential moment thereof; c) that as praxis is conditioned by society, so consciousness is conditioned by society.

To best understand the first of these propositions we would do well to recall Marx' general doctrine of praxis as outlined above, and to note again that, for Marx, it is through praxis that man attains his fundamental relation with his environment, and that it is in virtue of praxis that human self-actualization occurs. Men, "begin to distinguish themselves from animals..." i.e., they begin to occur as men in the true sense of the term, "as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence, a step which is conditioned by their physical organization. By producing their physical subsistence, men are indirectly producing their actual material life."¹⁴⁶ And he goes on to assert that since praxis is the condition of the occurrence of human experience, the identity of the individual is his actions. "As individuals express their life, so they are."¹⁴⁷ In turn, while praxis requires nature as a condition of its

¹⁴⁶ Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 7; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 10.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

occurrence, nature itself is to be understood as that environment which is capable of being transformed through human agency, as that material out of which products can be produced. Nature is man's "inorganic body; 1) as a direct means of life, and 2) as the matter, object, and instrument of his life activity."¹⁴⁸ Because praxis is the fundamental category in terms of which man, his relation to his environment, and that environment itself are to be understood, Livergood is correct in commenting that, "Reality, for Marx must be viewed as the redirective activity of human beings in relation to the changing conditions in external reality. Both the object and the subject are continually active; human history may be seen as the process in which the changes in material reality create new needs which in turn bring about human transformations of material reality."¹⁴⁹

If both the reality of the external environment and man himself are to be understood in terms of praxis, it would seem to follow that consciousness, as a feature of man, or as a feature of the occurrence of human experience, must in a Marxian framework be understood in terms of praxis. Now in its primary sense consciousness for Marx means the awareness of an external object.¹⁵⁰ But, as Livergood points out, to speak of

148

Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 293; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 1, p. 87.

149

N.D. Livergood, Activity in Marx' Philosophy (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), p. 20

150

This is clear from, among other things, Marx' criticisms of Hegel's doctrine of consciousness and its implications for a philosophical understanding of the object of consciousness, in the 1844 Manuscripts. Cf.

the "real object" is to speak of that which is external to man and to which he is essentially related as an agent. It is to speak of that "nature" out of which man produces a world. Thus to say that consciousness is of an "object" in this sense of the term, is to say that, what in virtue of consciousness man is aware of and related to, is that which he is already related to as agent.

Further, the "object" or "world" of which man is conscious, receives its fundamental determinations through praxis. Nature does not occur immediately in human experience.¹⁵¹ Rather, Nature or the external environment occurs as mediated by praxis, as that environment which man

for example Easton and Guddat, p. 320; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, pp. 155-156, Marx writes that "The human quality of nature, of nature produced through history and of man's products appears in their being products of abstract spirit and hence phases of mind, thought entities, The Phenomenology is thus concealed and mystifying criticism...." Marx' point here is that, given Hegel's refusal to recognize consciousness as a feature of praxis, he is unable to describe the object of consciousness as anything more than an intelligible content, a concept, rather than a 'real' (read sensuous) object. But even in this context Marx implicitly admits that Hegel does recognize that it is necessary and fundamental to consciousness that it be awareness of an object. Indeed Marx' criticism of Hegel here, which will be analyzed in more detail in the fourth chapter, is that Hegel does recognize this, but is unable to offer an adequate philosophical account of it.

151

Cf. the first of Marx' "Theses on Feuerbach," in Easton and Guddat, p. 400; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 533. "The chief defect of all previous materialism (including Feuerbach's) is that the object, actuality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the object of perception (Anschauung), not as sensuous human activity, Practice (Praxis), not subjectively." This question epitomizes from the point of view of the question of perceptual consciousness Marx' doctrine of the relationship between the agent and his environment, object, or "Nature." The object is, for Marx, always given to man as the object of praxis, as that which receives its fundamental determinations in virtue of praxis. Thus the object does not occur in human experience immediately, but rather occurs as mediated through agency.

"humanizes."¹⁵² The environment occurs always as a correlate of the agent, and moreover of the socially located agent. Society both conditions and enhances the quality of his agency.¹⁵³ Thus that which consciousness is conscious of is more primitively mediated by and determined by agency. This is to repeat the claim that the object of consciousness is more fundamentally the object of an agent.

From this it is a short step to the proposition that consciousness is a moment or aspect of human praxis. Marx' position here is that to speak of consciousness is to speak of the subject's awareness of an object. But both the subject and object are in a more fundamental sense constituted and determined by -- Marx would say "produced" by -- praxis. Therefore consciousness is related to praxis in such a fashion that praxis holds primacy over consciousness in the relation between subject (agent) and object. The argument may be developed through the introduction of two headings under which Marx discusses consciousness as a moment or aspect of praxis.

First, Marx asserts in a passage discussing the result of praxis as "the objectification of his (man's) species life," that man "produces himself not only intellectually, as in consciousness, but also actively in a real sense and sees himself in a world he made."¹⁵⁴ This assertion

152

Cf. Lefebvre, Dialectical Materialism, p. 150.

153

This of course implies a relation between society and consciousness; a relation I will examine in the discussion which follows.

154

Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 295; MEGA, Abtl. 1, Bd. 3, p. 89.

involves a double edged intent. On the one hand, Marx is reiterating the familiar theme of objectification, that praxis results in an objective product which resumes the details of the agency of which it is the result, and that man thus actualizes himself as well as the "world." But on the other hand, a crucial feature of the idea of "self-actualization" is noted here. For in this text Marx is asserting that, while the production of consciousness is not the only feature of self actualization, and not even the most basic feature thereof, it is nonetheless a feature thereof. In other words, Marx here asserts that consciousness is related to praxis in that consciousness is actualized or "produced" through praxis, and that praxis is responsible for the self actualization of the individual in general.

An argument supporting this assertion may be formulated in the following manner. Self actualization may be understood as the actualization of the agent's ability to enjoy productive and complex relations with his environment above and beyond those relations which fulfill subsistence needs.¹⁵⁵

Actions geared towards the fulfillment of subsistence requirements are indeed "human" forms of praxis, but are so when and only when they are integrated with actions, which are rooted in needs of a more complex variety, needs which develop as a result of prior satisfactions of the former sorts of requirements.

Such actions certainly involve at least the production of "means

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Cf. for example, Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 292; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 86.

of subsistence."¹⁵⁶ Even at the most primitive level they are geared towards the production of an environment, rather than the simple taking of what is offered in Nature. Indeed, a mere taking does not for Marx constitute an occurrence of human experience. The constitution of human experience requires the occurrence of relations to an environment more complex than those barely required to maintain the organism. The crucial point to be noted here is that through such relations to the environment, new needs are "produced" or actualized through the satisfaction of subsistence requirements.¹⁵⁷

Now consciousness is a relation between subject and environment more complex than that required to maintain the bare subsistence of the organism, more complex than is required for the mere taking of sustaining items from nature. This is the case even for the limited awareness required to relate items in nature in terms of use, that required for the production of instruments or tools. Even this limited form of consciousness involves a more than instinctual awareness of the qualities which given items possess, and the ability to relate them each to the other.

156

Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 7; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 10.

157

Cf. Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 16; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 18. In an assertion previously noted, Marx states that with regard to the satisfaction of subsistence needs, "...as soon as a need is satisfied (which implies the action of satisfying and the acquisition of an instrument), new needs are made, and this production of new needs is the first historical act." The import of this assertion is that it is only in virtue of the satisfaction of subsistence needs that more complex needs are had by the agent, and thus that more complex relations of praxis become possible between agent and environment.

But if so, and if relations between agent and environment more complex than those required for bare subsistence are "produced" as a result of forms of behavior which satisfy subsistence needs, then it follows that consciousness as a relation between agent and environment is a relation "produced" as a result of such forms of behavior. And if it is such forms of behavior or praxis which account for all senses of self actualization in the agent, then it is the case that consciousness is actualized or "produced" through that factor which is responsible for self-actualization in general, and that consciousness is related to praxis in virtue of the former's being made possible by the latter.

A dual caveat must be issued here with regard to the notion of the "production" of consciousness resulting from the satisfaction of subsistence needs. Marx does not, and can not, mean that consciousness is "produced" in the same way that an objective product is produced. I do not "make" consciousness in the same way that I "make" a house, by transforming the qualities and relations of externally given items so that they fulfill a need of mine. Rather, Marx is speaking of the "production" of consciousness in the same way in which he speaks of the production of new needs¹⁵⁸ as qualities subjectively possessed by the agent.

To speak of the production of a need for Marx is to speak of the developed ability of an agent to relate to his environment in a fashion more complex and sophisticated than was previously possible, as well as the tendency on the part of the agent to achieve this relation: needs are

158
Cf. Ibid.

"natural capacities and vital powers of an active natural being."¹⁵⁹

Analogously, to speak of the "production" of consciousness is to speak of achieved ability of the agent, given certain inherent psychological capacities,¹⁶⁰ to relate to the environment in a fashion more complex than that required for the simple taking of items from nature. Marx is not speaking naively of the "production" of consciousness as one would in ordinary language speak of the "production" of an object. Rather, he means to indicate the developed ability of the subject to relate in a certain fashion to his environment, resultant upon definite forms of action.

One must, I think, avoid reading the idea of a temporal sequence into Marx' discussion of the relation of consciousness and praxis at this point in his exposition. Marx is not asserting that an organism takes sustaining items from nature and then begins to produce the means of its own subsistence and then acquires new needs through which new and more complex relations of agency with its environment are subjectively founded, and then, realize a relationship of consciousness with its environment. In spite of the language of priority and posteriority employed above,

159

Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 325; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 160.

160

Marx would no doubt assent to the idea that the ability to achieve conscious relations with the environment would in part depend on the organism's possession of a certain inherent and complex physiological structure. But given that, he would still insist that the achievement of the capacity, here consciousness, made possible by that structure must occur in terms of active or behavioral relations between agent and environment.

this is not at all Marx' meaning.

He is rather attempting to understand the occurrence of human experience as a complex phenomenon in which a variety of factors must be distinguished, related to each other, and explained. Among these are praxis, which must be described in both its individual and social dimensions, the environment or nature, needs which subjectively ground actions, developed and more complicated needs resultant upon successful instances of agency, and consciousness as a relation between subject and environment. Now within this schema of categories praxis is the most theoretically basic to Marx, both because it provides for accurate description of the others, and because it provides the foundation for an account of the others. But this implies no notion of temporal sequence. It implies instead that the occurrence of human experience can only be properly understood through an accurate understanding of the dialectical interrelationships of these categories as they there appear. Indeed praxis itself in a Marxian scheme can only be understood through an analysis of how it involves and is dialectically interrelated with nature, needs, society, and consciousness.

Given these two qualifications, then, one can state that for Marx, consciousness is actualized or "produced" through praxis. But Marx' discussion of the relation of consciousness and praxis may be further expanded under a second heading. This heading involves the thesis that consciousness is itself a form of action, and one intrinsically related to all other forms of agency which can be validly entitled instances of human praxis. This thesis can also be formulated as follows: that

consciousness is not a feature alien to the occurrence of human praxis, but a feature thereof implied by the structure of praxis as Marx describes it. To speak of praxis is among other things to speak of a process of agency whereby modifications are introduced into an environment. This is the case even at the most rudimentary level of production, that relating to the production of "means of subsistence."¹⁶¹ Now even this rudimentary sort of production¹⁶² is sufficiently complex to be identified as human praxis and distinguished from animal behavior. But some conditions are required in order for this basic transformation of the environment to occur. For one thing the agent must entertain some conscious awareness of the qualities possessed by items discovered in the environment, as well as the purpose he wishes to achieve through production, and the way in which discovered items may be related to each other, and transformed in order to achieve that purpose. Otherwise all successful actions upon the environment would represent merely a haphazard series of chance instances, and there would be nothing to distinguish productive agency from a simple "taking" of items. Furthermore, in order that such productive agency be a sustained rather than a chance series of intermittent events, the agent must possess consciousness of his actions and their results as well as of his purpose. He must be capable of learning which forms of action on the environment are successful

161

Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 7; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 10.

162

Ibid.

given certain ends in view, and which forms do not succeed.

This implies that consciousness for Marx is itself a kind of activity, a relation between subject and environment in virtue of which the subject deals with the environment. Basic conscious events occur at rudimentary levels of praxis; such events are acts of a subject whereby he relates to his environment and such relations of consciousness between subject and environment are part of the total process which Marx entitles praxis. "Knowledge, for Marx, is that activity of man whereby he comes into interaction with the world and understands it so as to transform it....Knowledge is an active process of apprehension which is necessarily linked to transformation of reality....Knowledge (for Marx) is not material transformation of reality, Knowledge, however, is necessarily related to such transformation."¹⁶³ On the other hand, the structure of praxis itself implies the occurrence of consciousness as an essential feature. In order that the process which Marx entitles praxis be thoroughly described, or that the possibility of praxis be accounted for, consciousness must be located as an intrinsic feature of this process. But this is simply to say that upon thorough analysis the structure of praxis as Marx initially describes it reveals that consciousness to be indispensable as aspect of this process. And finally, Marx' description of consciousness in relation to praxis shows that, for him and at this stage of his analysis,

163

Livergood, Op. cit., p. 22.

consciousness does not occur as a process whose goal is contained within itself. "There is no complete cognition which is knowledge for knowledge's sake."¹⁶⁴ Rather, an occurrence of cognition or consciousness is completed or brought to term through the completion of the instance of praxis of which it is a feature. This is the case because consciousness is both a definite sort of relation, one of awareness, between subject and environment and an aspect of a more basic relation between the subject and his environment, the process of agency. Because of the latter, the relation between subject and environment which is constituted through consciousness is only completed when that instance of agency of which it is a feature is also brought to term.

That consciousness is a feature of agency implied by the structure of human praxis itself can, then, be seen from Marx' description of praxis on even its most rudimentary level. This idea is expanded by Marx in his discussions of more sophisticated forms of praxis. In the 1844 Manuscripts, Marx holds that,

The animal produces under the domination of immediate physical need while man produces free of physical need and only genuinely so in freedom from such need. The animal only produces itself while man reproduces the whole of nature...the animal builds only according to the standard and need of the species to which it belongs, while man knows how to produce according to the standard of any species and at all times knows how to apply an intrinsic standard to the object.¹⁶⁵

164
Ibid.

165
Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, pp. 294-295; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 88.

Marx' argument here begins with the often repeated premise that the satisfaction of subsistence needs results in the production of new needs, which ground the individual's ability to engage in new and more complex forms of agency. This of course means that the individual as agent is now capable of relating to his environment in a broader fashion than before, and that the transformations which he is capable of introducing into the environment are of a wider range and scope. But again, for this sort of agency to occur, certain conditions must be present as features of the structure of agency itself. First, the agent must be aware of the nature of his newly developed need. Otherwise his actions towards the satisfaction of this need would be merely random, and would not represent agency in a true sense of the term. He must know what the details of his need are, in order to know how to act for its satisfaction. Second, the agent must be aware of the nature of his more modified environment, in order to be able to introduce further transformations in it. Marx is arguing here that the taking of sustaining items from the environment requires nothing more than an immediate biological interaction between organism and environment indicating the suitability of the item. But in order to transform the environment, the agent must know how to engage in this transformation. That is to say, the agent must be aware of the characteristics of objects which he encounters, as well as the potentialities of objects, in virtue of their characteristics, for specific sorts of transformation. To satisfy a need of a more complex variety the agent must know what that need is, and he must know the details of his environment, in order to know how that environment or objects contained

therein may be manipulated and transformed towards the satisfaction of his need.

Marx expresses this in the above text through the statement that, "...man knows how to produce according to the standard of any species and at all times knows how to apply an intrinsic standard to the object."¹⁶⁶ To say that man is able to act "according to the standard of any species" is to say that man's needs, the subject's grounds of all action, are not limited to those resident in his specific organic structure as requirements for the maintenance of that structure. To say that human action implies knowing "at all times how to apply an intrinsic standard to the object" is to say that action above and beyond that rooted in sustenance needs requires that the agent be aware of the nature of the object is to say that the agent be aware of the nature of the object upon which he is acting, and in virtue of this awareness be able to apply to that object a cognitive "standard" appropriate to the characteristics of the object, enabling him to form that object into a new product capable of satisfying the need which is the subjective ground of his agency.

Given the above, it is clear that, for Marx, the very structure of human praxis implies the presence of consciousness as a factor occurring within that process, as well as implying that consciousness is not something which comes about independent of agency.¹⁶⁷ And this concludes Marx'

166
Ibid.

167
Cf. Macmurray, The Self as Agent, pp. 54-55. Here and elsewhere in this work Macmurray offers an argument that Marx would wholeheartedly accept, to the effect that any philosophical theory which posits the

arguments towards the proposition that consciousness is an aspect or moment of human praxis. Consciousness as awareness of the object has been shown to be dependent upon that more fundamental determination that the object receives through agency. And consciousness has been shown to be, in a certain sense of the term, a "product" of praxis, as well as an occurrence implied by the vert structure of praxis itself. An accurate

relationship between consciousness and its object as a relationship complete in itself and self contained, is then unable to make sense of the phenomenon of human agency, i.e., is unable, to show that agency is necessarily related to the occurrence of consciousness. On the other hand, a philosophical theory which posits agency as the fundamental relationship between self and environment can make sense of the occurrence of consciousness. In the text referred to here, Macmurray argues that, "Knowledge is the determination of an object, but that determination is theoretical. If the object can be determined by thought, by a judgment which may be true or false, then it must already be determinate. If it were not determinate, then no judgment of ours could be either true or false. Action, however, is the determination of something not in theory, but in actual fact. To act is to make something other than it would have been had we not determined it." Now if the relation between consciousness and its object were the primary relation between subject and environment, then the object would be perforce understood as fully determinate in itself, requiring only to be comprehended through thought, to be determined through a concept adequate to the object itself. In this schema, no agency is required to explain the occurrence of consciousness, or to augment or further determine the object. Therefore no necessary relation can be shown between consciousness and agency, and thus no adequate sense can be made of agency from the perspective of this sort of theory. However, to describe action as the more basic relation between subject and environment allows one to describe the object as indeterminate, or as partially determinate. One may then argue, as Marx does, that some occurrence of consciousness is necessary as a feature of that agency which further determines the object. Thus from this theoretical perspective, the occurrence of consciousness and the theory itself then seems preferable as more inclusive, Marx himself argues in this fashion, but the details of his argument are developed only in his consideration of Hegel's doctrine of the relationship of the object to consciousness and to action respectively. Our reflections on this argument must be postponed to the fourth chapter in which the broader nature of Marx' arguments against Hegel will be treated.

summary is offered by Rotenstreich of the relation between praxis, reality (or "existence" in his terminology), and consciousness:

Existence is the product of the process that man has made, This existence is reality not strange to man, and not even strange to consciousness. Consciousness is part of the practice that creates it. Existence, the product of practice, determines consciousness; this means that consciousness is not cut off from existence and is not bound to an independent realm. Consciousness is only a part of existence, determined by its totality. The relationship between consciousness and existence is similar to the relationship between the part and the whole. But since consciousness is a part of existence and from its nature an element alien to it and since the whole determines its part, consciousness combined in the whole determines the consciousness that is a part of the whole.¹⁶⁸

To be avoided in this discussion is the view that while consciousness is an aspect of praxis, it is an aspect which occurs only at the initiation of an instance of praxis, the idea that agency involves a conceptual terminus a quo which then is translated into real production resulting in the product, an actual terminus ad quem, if production be successful, corresponds to the conceptual initiation of the process. Marx' understanding is rather that of a constant interrelationship between consciousness and production in all stages of the process of praxis. Since any engagement in production requires some awareness of how this is to be done, such awareness must be present throughout the several moments of that process through which a product is realized. And correspondingly, insofar as a process of production can itself be an "object" for consciousness, then consciousness itself progressively acquires a more precise and detailed awareness of its object as this object is "realized";

168

Rotenstreich, Basic Problems of Marx' Philosophy, p. 50. Cf. also Avineri, The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx, p. 71.

this is one way in which consciousness is "produced" by praxis.¹⁶⁹

The above analyses may seem to argue for the second as well as the first of the propositions listed above as outlining Marx' theory of consciousness; they seem to show that consciousness is both an aspect or moment of human praxis, and an essential moment thereof. For if consciousness is implied by the very structure of Marx' description of praxis, then to say that praxis can occur in a non-conscious fashion would be a contradiction. In that case by definition consciousness would be an essential condition or factor which must be present if praxis is to occur. But the import of the above analyses is to show that, while there is an intrinsic relation between consciousness and praxis, praxis holds primacy in that relationship. Consciousness is dependent upon praxis for the object of which it is aware. Consciousness is "produced" by praxis, in that it involves a relation between subject and environment which is brought about and developed through the more fundamental factor of agency. And to assert that consciousness is an aspect or feature of human praxis is to assert precisely that consciousness is a feature of something else, rather than a relation of subject and object which is independent and complete in itself. In considering the second proposition listed above, I would like to consider one argument which I take to be implicit in the text of the 1844 manuscripts and crucial in demonstrating the essential relationship of consciousness to praxis: an argument which shows that only if consciousness is considered as essential to praxis

169

Cf. Macmurray, The Self as Agent, p. 82, Marx would agree with Macmurray's statement that, "'Acting' and 'thinking' then are, in abstract

can an account be given of the developmental character of human needs.

It is axiomatic for Marx that human praxis involves the developmental character of needs, that praxis is the sort of agency in which, upon the satisfaction of certain needs, "new needs are made..."¹⁷⁰

To consider this then in relation to the question of consciousness, I wish to return to a text of the 1844 manuscripts already seen, in which Marx asserts that,

The animal produces under the domination of immediate physical need, while man produces free of physical need and only genuinely so in freedom from such need. The animal only produces itself while man reproduces the whole of nature....The animal builds only according to the standard and need of the species to which it belongs while man knows how to produce according to the standard of any species and at all times knows how to apply an intrinsic standard to the object.¹⁷¹

Marx is here asserting that man is not "species specific" in relation as agent to his environment. And he is asserting this idea in terms of his understanding of the nature of human needs. But what is the condition under which a need can develop and what is the condition under which a developed need can be a ground for action? First, a need can

conception, exclusive contraries. In actuality they are the ideal limits of personal experience; and 'acting' is the positive, while 'thinking' is the negative limit." And he would go on to add that, in Macmurray's terminology, this positive limit itself implies the occurrence of its negative, and that the latter is produced and developed by the former.

170

Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 17; MEGA; Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 18..

171

Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 295; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 88.

only develop as a result of some previous modification of an environment. Only under this condition, a) is a prior need satisfied, and b) does the agent stand in relation to a new environment which can elicit a new need in him. But to speak of modification of an existing environment is for Marx to speak of production, and this in turn is to speak of a form of agency which includes consciousness. For in order to transform an environment, one must know how to bring about that transformation. Thus to speak of a developed need at all is to speak of a need developing out of a form of agency which includes consciousness. But further, something must be said of the conditions under which a developed need can be a ground for action. For one thing, the agent must stand in some relation to the modified environment such that this environment can be the source of a new need. Further, the agent must stand in some relation to this new need itself as it is subjectively located, i.e., he must stand in some relation to this new need as a need of his own. Finally, the agent must stand again in some relation to his environment such that through his action the new need can, all other conditions being equal, be satisfied.

Now I would suggest that each of these conditions can be met only if the agent has consciousness. If, for example, the environment is to be considered as that which stimulates behavior relative to a subsistence need, then it need only present to an organism some item which will trigger a biological, "species specific" response. And in this case the relation of organism to environment need only be "species specific," need only involve an instinctual behavioral response to the presence of some sustaining item. But in order to present a stimulus relative to a developed

need, the environment must present not a given item but a possibility, i.e., it must present itself as a context in which some fruitful manipulation and production can be undertaken. In turn, the subject must be capable of relating to its environment so as to envision possibilities in it, i.e., must be able to relate to the environment not as it is simply given, but as it potentially could be. To be able to relate to an environment in this fashion, it is necessary that the agent be able to relate objects to each other in an ideal fashion. And this ability is by definition a (function) of consciousness, i.e., a (function) of a subject insofar as he is aware of his environment. Thus in order to elicit some developed need in a subject, the environment must be related to a subject which is a conscious subject. Only such a subject is capable of responding to possibilities as well as givens in an environment.¹⁷²

Further, the relation of the subject to the developed need as a need of its own must be considered. Here again the relation differs from that of the simple organic subject to its own subsistence needs. In the latter case, because the need is only a subsistence need, its subject need only be an organism, a unified structure capable of biological responses. A subsistence need is by definition built into the specific

172

Cf. Marcuse, Reason and Revolutions (Boston: Beacon, 1960), p.vii. In his preface to the work, "A Note on Dialectic," Marcuse notes that the concept of dialectical consciousness in general involves an understanding of consciousness in general as involving, "...the power of negative thinking," the power of overcoming the facticity of an environment in terms of possibility of value. Marx would agree with this understanding of consciousness, and add a) that such consciousness is necessarily the consciousness of an agent, and b) that only in virtue of consciousness

structure of an organism. Thus the organism as such can relate to such a need in a simple instinctual fashion. It can simply behave as it will behave, given its own biological nature. But a developed need is by definition not built into the specific structure of an organism. It is a need in virtue of which the subject acts not only in such a fashion as to produce "what is immediately necessary for itself and its young," but a need in virtue of which, "man produces universally."¹⁷³ But insofar as a need is something developed, it cannot be a need to which its subject relates as a simple organism; it cannot relate to such a need instinctually as a specific feature of its biological makeup. If so, then something other than instinctual relation between a developed need and the subject in which it is located is required. But this can only be a relation in which the subject realizes or is aware of a developed need as a need of its own. If a subject is to relate to a need which is not organically determined, then it must do so in terms of some feature through which it can transcend its own species structure. Only consciousness can account for such a transcendence. Only consciousness can account for the relation of a subject to its own developed, non species specific needs.

Finally and briefly, in order to stand in some relation to an environment in terms of which he may fruitfully act towards the satisfaction

can such a relationship of negativity between subject and environment be explained.

173

Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 294; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 88.

of a developed need, a subject must be able to act productively in that environment. A developed need, as above and beyond subsistence needs, cannot be satisfied merely by taking items from an environment, but only by production. But productive activity involves the presence of a subject for whom consciousness occurs, an agent capable of praxis in Marx' full sense of that term. Thus the subject must stand in a conscious relation to his environment, in order to act towards the satisfaction of a developed need.

This import of these arguments is that consciousness is crucial to Marx' idea of developed needs. Only if the subject of such needs is a conscious subject can we explain those relations between subject and environment and subject and self which must be explained if sense is to be made out of the notion of developed needs. But the idea of developed needs is itself crucial to Marx' description of human praxis. It is only in virtue of the idea of developed needs that Marx is able to explain how human agency, as opposed to animal behavior, "produces universally,"¹⁷⁴ how it "reproduces the whole of nature."¹⁷⁵ So if the idea of developed needs is necessary to explain human praxis, and if the occurrence of consciousness is necessary in order to account for developed needs, then the occurrence of consciousness is a necessary and essential feature of human praxis, and a complete description and explanation of human praxis must include consciousness as an indispensable feature.

The assumptions underlying Marx' doctrine of consciousness can be

174 Ibid.

175 Ibid.

fully understood only when seen in this light. Consciousness is related to praxis both in terms of dependence and of essentiality. Consciousness is dependent upon praxis for the fundamental determinations of the objects of which it is aware and for its own "production." The conscious subject is always an agent. But at the same time consciousness is an essential feature of praxis, a feature which must occur if praxis is to occur, a necessary feature of the agent as agent, and of any adequate description of human agency. And, I would submit, only an account of consciousness which insists upon both these points is faithful to the texts of Marx.

Some further discussion, however, is necessary to provide an account which Marx would feel is both theoretically adequate and sufficiently concrete. Connection must be drawn between society and the occurrence of consciousness in human experience. I have claimed that Marx' general description of praxis is only explicitated in adequate theoretical detail through arguments which illustrate the relation of praxis and society. Analogously, a discussion of consciousness which brings out the relation of consciousness and praxis without any significant reference to society would be in Marx' eyes an abstract, one-sided account. The very sense and meaning of what I have claimed concerning the relation of consciousness and praxis invites some discussion of the relation of consciousness and society.

To bring out the connection between consciousness and society, let us recall some of the principle contentions already defended concerning

the relation between society and praxis. These function in the main as the premises for Marx' further arguments on the relation of society and consciousness. We have already shown that society functions to organize and condition the details of praxis, the concerted actions of its members, and that all praxis is in some sense social. From these premises, Marx can construct an argument for the additional claim that consciousness, as well as praxis, is in the concrete structured and conditioned by society.

As already seen, Marx' assertion that, "...as society itself produces man as man, so it is produced by him,"¹⁷⁶ indicates a relationship of reciprocity between praxis and society. Man "produces" society, that is to say, social relations are rendered possible through the structure of praxis, and "society" itself is understood by Marx, in its most basic sense as a system of productive relations between agents. Correspondingly, "...society itself produces man as man...." that is, precisely as a system of relations, society regulates and conditions the forms of praxis that are available to its members; it determines the character of the various productive roles available to its members. Arguments for these assertions have been seen. And their import for Marx' doctrine of consciousness can be seen through the formulation of a further argument.

The relation between consciousness and praxis is such that consciousness must be understood as a necessary ingredient of praxis, or, that the

176

Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 305; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 116.

subject of praxis must be understood as a conscious subject. In order that behavior be productive action, praxis as opposed to "animal" behavior, and in order that needs be developed within the individual agent rather than organically static, praxis must be understood as including consciousness as a moment of itself. But, praxis or productive action for Marx is not isolated action, not that of the isolated individual. Rather, praxis is organized and systematized by the very social relations which it engenders. But then consciousness, as a feature or "moment" of those social relations, must likewise be organized and structured by society.

Marx expresses this idea under three headings, sensation, language, and theoretical thinking, thereby lending concreteness to his claim. Sense consciousness, first, is understood to be immediate awareness of some datum in the external environment, some item of nature. But an item of nature for Marx is not to be understood simply. Rather, natural objects occur in human experience. As objects of praxis, and as determined by praxis. And he understands consciousness to be instrumental in relation to praxis. Thus, the object is, in the words of the first thesis on Feuerbach, to be considered both "in the form of object or perception (Anschauung)...," and as object of "sensuous human activity, practice (Praxis)..."¹⁷⁷ and the former is for Marx derived from the latter."¹⁷⁸ And moreover, praxis is, as has been seen, organized in its

177

Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," in Easton and Guddat, p. 400; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 533.

178

Cf. Kojève, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, trans.

actual occurrence by society. But if sensory consciousness is dependent for its object upon praxis, and if the possibilities of praxis are organized and defined by society, then the object of sensory consciousness, and thus sensory consciousness itself, is conditioned by society. The data available to sense consciousness are socially conditioned.

As Marx states in the German Ideology, the "sensuous world..." available to the individual is "not a thing given direct from all eternity, ever the same, but the product of industry and of the state of society..."¹⁷⁹

Just as Marx argues that consciousness in its most rudimentary form, sensation, is socially conditioned, so he argues that it is similarly conditioned in its more developed forms. The arguments offered here center first around the nature of language. In the German Ideology, Marx first asserts that thought is a phenomenon inconceivable apart from language. "From the start the 'spirit' is afflicted with the curse of being 'burdened' with matter, which here makes its appearance in the form of agitated layers of air, sounds, in short of language."¹⁸⁰ Marx

J. H. Nicholas, Jr., ed., Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1969), p. 48. In a footnote to a discussion of the Master-Slave dialectic in the Phenomenology of Spirit, Kojève notes that, "According to Hegel, Concept (Begriff) and Understanding (Verstand) are born of the slave's work, whereas sensual Knowledge (sinnlich Gewissheit) is an irreducible given. But one could try to deduce all human understanding from work." Marx in the first of his "Theses on Feuerbach" is clearly attempting to argue along the lines indicated by Kojève here.

¹⁷⁹ Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 35; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 32.

¹⁸⁰ Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 19; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, pp. 19-20.

offers no explicit justification of this statement, but an implicit justification seems to reside in a following statement, in which language is described as "... practical consciousness, as it exists for other men, and for that reason is really beginning to exist for me personally as well . . ." ¹⁸¹

His reasoning seems to be as follows. That of which a subject is aware must enjoy some measure of externality from him in order to possess that definite embodiment which an object of awareness must have. And of course, one's own thought, to be such, must be something of which one is aware, must "exist personally for me." Now language is in principle external to the conscious subject, at least in that it may be produced by him for public inspection. But then language also lends thought that concrete embodiment through which it may be cognitively apprehended. ¹⁸²

Thus thought is conceivable, Marx asserts, only with its linguistic embodiment. But language, as the necessary condition of the occurrence of rational consciousness, is, Marx goes on to argue, at once a human action and a human product. Both as act and product it is only conceivable as rooted in a need: "...language, like

¹⁸¹ Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 19; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.5, p. 20. "...die Sprache ist das praktische, auch für andere Menschen existierende, also auch für mich selbst erst existierende wirkliche Bewusstsein..."

¹⁸² Language should be taken here in its broadest sense, to mean any concrete symbolization of cognitive content, including for example mathematical symbolization.

consciousness, only arises from the need, the necessity, of intercourse with other men."¹⁸³ It is out of the necessity of sharing at least basic information as to the immediate environment¹⁸⁴ that linguistic behavior originates. Thus language necessarily originates in a social setting. And further, language is conditioned in the details of its origin and employment by the concrete demands and exigencies of the social setting within which linguistic behavior occurs. But this means that language itself, and rational consciousness whose occurrence is made possible by and is simultaneous with language, is conditioned by the social context within which the conscious individual is present as a language bearer.¹⁸⁵

Finally, Marx, argues that theoretical scientific activity is socially conditioned, and this argument is exhibited in a text already cited in the 1844 Manuscripts. He states that, "My general consciousness is only the theoretical form of that whose living form is the real community, the social essence...." Scientific thinking, for example, is to all appearances private. But first, it is a form of activity undertaken through the use of socially provided materials. Language is one of its

¹⁸³ Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 19; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 20.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. also that section of Marx' Grundrisse, translated by Hobsbawm as Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations, p. 88; Grundrisse, p. 390. "Language as the product of an individual is an absurdity...Language is just as much itself the product of a community, as in another respect it is the existence of the community: it is, as it were, the communal being speaking for itself."

instruments: "...the material of my activity -- such as the language in which the thinker is active -- given to me as a social product..."¹⁸⁶

In that theoretical, scientific thinking occurs through the utilization of socially determined materials, it is in its details a socially conditioned activity. Moreover, for Marx theoretical thinking involves a response to the demands of the social milieu, and thus is conditioned by the character of those demands. This seems to be the import of his remark that, insofar as theoretical thinking involves a kind of production, "...what I make from myself I make for society, conscious of my nature as social," and that, "Consequently the activity of my general consciousness is thus, as activity, my theoretical existence as a social being."¹⁸⁷ No explicit argument is offered by Marx to support these assertions. He might appeal to the notion that all activity results from a need, that the need for theoretical thinking is rooted in social exigencies requiring theory in order that they be handled, and that the details of theoretical behavior are thus conditioned by the concrete character of the social need eliciting such behavior. This would be at least be consistent with his frequent condemnations of pure theory, e.g., metaphysics, as ideology.¹⁸⁸

186

Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 306; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 116.

187

Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 306; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 117.

188

Cf. for example, Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, pp. 4-5, MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, pp. 8-9. This notion will also appear in Marx'

In addition to these assertions concerning the nature of consciousness, and the arguments offered for them, it is well known that Marx frequently advances two additional claims concerning the relationship of consciousness and society: that consciousness occurs at large in society in the form of two theories expressing a rationale for social institutions, and that such rationales may become ideologies when functioning in society to legitimize class domination.¹⁸⁹ That these propositions play key roles in certain of Marx' critical arguments, particularly those concerning capitalist society, there is no doubt. But I would argue, their relevance is to the sociological premises implicit

criticisms of a theory of human nature of the type advanced by Prudhon. Also cf. Callewaert, "Les manuscrits economico-philosophique de Karl Marx," *Revue Philosophique de Louvain*, 1951, 49 (3), p. 390.

189

Cf. O'Neill, "Alienation, Class Struggle, and Marxian Anti-Politics," *The Review of Metaphysics*, 1963-64, 17 (67), p. 468, where it is argued that these propositions are separate for Marx. "It is clear that the externalization of human behavior into ideologies, social instruments, material products, is a necessary condition of the phenomenon of estrangement, i.e., men treated, say, as means, rather than the end of such cultural products. It is not necessary that the phenomenon of externalization be accompanied by estrangement." Textual evidence for this is found, among other places, in Marx' Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, ed., and trans. O'Malley, p. 10 and p. 26; MEGA, Abt., 1, Bd. 1, Hb. 1, p. 409 and p. 430. See also Dupre, The Philosophical Foundations of Marxism (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1966), p. 157, for an exposition of the latter proposition in the context of commentary on The German Ideology.

in Marx' work, rather than directly to the theory of human nature. These statements describe the ways in which societies explain and legitimize existing institutional structures, and thus indicate Marx' conception of the role of theory as operative in society at large. They are thus distinct from propositions descriptive of and arguments concerning consciousness as a feature of human nature properly taken, and the necessary role and function of consciousness in the experience of the individual. That the text of Marx reveal propositions and arguments concerning this latter theme, I take the above expositions to have shown. And it shows as well, I hope, that Marx argues that consciousness is a necessary feature of human nature. Albeit that consciousness is derived from praxis, it must, Marx holds, be understood as a feature thereof if praxis is to be distinguishable from mere random behavior, in Marx' terminology, from "animal" behavior. In making this claim Marx at least moves beyond a sociological critique of consciousness which focuses exclusively on the operational role of concepts within society at large.

* * * * *

The propositions which Marx asserts and argues for around the topics of praxis, society, and consciousness are, in my understanding, the basis of Marx' theory of human nature. These propositions may now be summarized.

1) Concerning praxis:

a) Praxis requires external nature for its occurrence.

b) Praxis, human productive activity, yields a transformation

of the natural environment upon which it is exercised.

- c) The result of praxis resumes or objectifies the details of that activity of which it is the product.
 - d) Praxis is universally rooted in subjectively apprehended needs.
 - e) The satisfaction of needs through praxis yields the production of new needs.
 - f) The human agent is thus "self-actualizing."
- 2) Concerning praxis and society:
- a) Society, or social relations between agents, is rendered possible through the structure of praxis.
 - b) Society, in turn, conditions the details of actual praxis.
 - c) Agency as praxis is only possible within a social context.
 - d) Social relations provide for the diversification of possibilities for praxis through "division of labor."
 - e) Social relations enable the individual to be determined as an object as well as a subject.
- 3) Concerning consciousness:
- a) Consciousness is a feature or moment of human praxis.
 - b) Consciousness is an essential feature of the structure of human praxis.
 - c) As praxis is conditioned by society, so consciousness is conditioned by society.

The above exposition shows, I hope, that these propositions are consistent with each other, that the arguments offered are also so consistent, and

that the procedure of those arguments and their interrelations cause the propositions to relate to each other in the form of a consistent unity of doctrine.

But from this analysis a number of crucial questions arise.

First, how does the theory of man fare in the face of Marx' specific attacks on the notion of a theory of human nature, especially those attacks which he directs against Prudhon? And allied to this is a second question: What of those scholars, most particularly Althousser, who argue that any theory of human nature discoverable in Marx' early texts belongs to a "Feuerbachian" phase of Marx' development, a phase which was later rejected by Marx the scientific communist, and therefore is not a genuinely "Marxian" theory? I shall discuss these questions in the next chapter. In that chapter I will take up the question as to whether and how far the theory of man which I have attributed to the early Marx is "Feuerbachian" and also discuss the critical role of this theory in Marx' attacks on Prudhon.

Thirdly, and most crucially, what is the relation of the above outlined theory of Marx' to Hegel? Marx' texts suggest that this relation is a strong one, but its details are far from immediately clear. I shall deal with this question in the third and fourth chapters of this text, arguing: a) that given the content of his theory of human nature, Marx must be understood as rejecting Feuerbach and returning to Hegel to derive the key categories of his analysis; and b) that Marx at the same time, within the context of his theory, provides a critique of the Hegelian doctrine of the relation of consciousness and action that is critical

to Marx' theory of human nature, but that this critique can only in the most attenuated sense be taken as a "Feuerbachian" criticism of Hegel. And, I will hold that only when these points are developed can a proper understanding of Marx' theory of human nature be distinctly grasped.

Finally, some remark should be made here concerning the role of praxis as a category in Marx' theory of man. At this point, such a remark must be provisional. For it is only in the context of his criticism of Hegel on the question of the relation of action and consciousness, that Marx develops an argument in support of the fundamental categorial role of praxis that he might consider decisive. Still, I can give a tentative sketch of this argument.

Praxis, society, and consciousness are the three basic categories contained in Marx' theory of man, and the latter two are to be understood in terms of the former. It is in virtue of praxis that social relations are understood as possible for Marx. Analogously, it is through praxis that consciousness is "produced," in the sense in which that term is used in the relevant sections above.

To hold with Marx that praxis is a more fundamental category than society and consciousness, is to hold that these latter can only be accurately comprehended if they are comprehended on their relation to praxis. If 'x' is necessarily understood through 'y', than 'y' can be said to be more fundamental than 'x.' If consciousness and society are understood through praxis, then it can be argued that praxis may be taken as the fundamental category through which a description of the structures of human experience is to be developed, and through which a theory of

human nature is to be elucidated.

But the above argument is at best provisional, and is unsatisfactory as it stands, particularly with respect to the question of the relation of consciousness to praxis. We have seen Marx' attempt to argue that praxis "produces" consciousness, that the occurrence of consciousness arises from praxis, that concrete praxis determines the details of the actual occurrence of consciousness. And we have also observed that, for Marx, consciousness is an essential moment or feature of the occurrence of praxis, that praxis can only be praxis if it includes consciousness as a feature of itself. Now if the occurrence of 'x' is necessary in order that 'y' be 'y,' then might not one argue that 'x' is categorially more fundamental than 'y'?

In the light of this sort of objection, my sketch of an argument in support of the claim that praxis is the fundamental category of Marx' theory of human nature can only be considered a preliminary sketch. It does indicate the line of argument which Marx will use in dealing with this question. But Marx offers his basic argument in support of the claim that praxis is the fundamental category of an adequate theory of human nature, an argument he thinks is decisive, only in his explicit critique of Hegel in the Manuscripts of 1844.

Chapter Two

Marx' Critique of Feuerbach

A critical problem in determining the content of Marx' theory of man is that of the relation of Marx to Feuerbach. And the problem is twofold. First, the texts in which Marx' theory of human nature is developed, principally the Paris Manuscripts, were written during a period in which Marx' thinking was significantly influenced by his reading of Feuerbach. It would seem, then, that knowledge of the details of that influence might be essential to an accurate awareness of the theory of man discoverable in those texts. But second, some commentators have held that these very texts should be discounted as representing truly "marxian" arguments because of their "Feuerbachian" leanings. Louis Althusser has defended this position particularly regarding the question of Marx' anthropology.

I. Althusser's Interpretation of Marx' Theory of Man

In his Pour Marx, Althusser classifies the texts of Marx, including those edited and published by Engels, under four headings:

- 1) 1840-1844 Youthful Works
- 2) 1845 Transitional Works (de la coupure)

¹Cf. for example D. C. Hodges, "The Young Marx, a Re-appraisal," Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, 1966-67 27 (2), p. 216. The Paris Manuscripts are here referred to as "...materials from Marx' own wastebasket," a consignment which Hodges feels ought to be permanent.

3) 1845-1857 Maturational works

4) 1857-1883 Mature works²

And of the first period, important for us because of the Paris manuscripts, Althusser further comments that, "The period of Marx' youthful works (1840-1845), that is to say, of his ideological works, may itself be subdivided in two periods: a) the rationalist-liberal period of the articles of the *Reinische Zeitung* (up to 1842), b) the communal-rationalist period of the years 1842 to 1845. As I briefly point out in my essay on 'Marxism and Humanism', the works of the first period are based on a Kantian-Fichtean problematic the writings of the second period are based, on the other hand, on the anthropological problematic of Feuerbach."³

Althusser goes on in the essay referred to above to amplify this commentary on the writings of the young Marx.

The first stage is dominated by a rationalist-liberal humanism, resembling more Kant and Fichte than Hegel. As Marx combatted censorship, feudal Rhenish laws, and Prussian despotism, he founded his political combat theoretically, and based the theory of history which underlay this combat on a philosophy of man. History is only intelligible in virtue of the essence of man, which is freedom and reason. Freedom: this is the essence of man as weight is the essence of body. Man is given over to freedom, his very being...Reason: man is only free as rational. Human freedom is neither caprice, nor the determinism of interest but, as

²Louis Althusser, *Pour Marx*, (Paris: Francois Maspero, 1969), p. 27. This and subsequent translations from Althusser's text are my own.

³Ibid.

Kant and Fichte would have it, autonomy, obedience to the interior law of reason.⁴

Marx' political articles for the Rheinische Zeitung, then are exercises in "criticism" as Bauer and other of the young Hegelians understood that term: an exercise "which measures individual existence against essence, particular actuality against the Idea."⁵ And for the Marx of this period, that critical norm against which existing social realities are measured is a theory of the "essence" of man in which freedom and reason are the key concepts. From these concepts, the Marx of the Rheinische Zeitung was able to "deduce" his criticisms of existing social and political structures, as well as of contradictory theoretical positions, of Prussian censorship, or of the legal theories of Hugo and Savigny.⁶

But through such criticism Marx came to understand the very existence

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Ibid., p. 230.

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Marx, "Notes to the Doctoral Dissertation," in Easton and Guddat, Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society, (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1967), pp. 61-62.

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Cf. Marx' articles, "Comments on the Latest Prussian Censorship Instruction," and "The Philosophical Manifesto of the Historical School of Law," in Easton and Guddat, pp. 67-92, pp. 96-105; MEGA, 1, 1, 1, pp. 153-173.

of the state as the alienation of man's communal being,⁷ and this understanding was based for him on a humanism, a theory of human nature, which was now not derived from Kant or Fichte, but was that of Feuerbach.

The second stage (42-45) is dominated by a new form of humanism, the "communal" humanism of Feuerbach. The rational state has remained deaf to reason: the Prussian state has not reformed...the abuses of the state are no longer conceived as aberrations of the state in relation to its essence, but a real contradiction between its essence (reason) and its existence (irrationality). Feuerbachian humanism allows one to think precisely this contradiction, by showing in irrationality the alienation of reason, and in this alienation the history of man, that is, his realization.⁸

Marx is able to perform a radical critique of the state, then, because he is able to conceive the state as the alienation of man's nature, in Feuerbachian terms. He, for example, critically describes the state in his article "On the Jewish Question," through the statement that, "Where the political state has achieved its full development, man leads a double life, a heavenly and an earthly life, not only in thought or consciousness, but in actuality. In the political community he regards himself as a communal

⁷Althusser might have cited here, in support of his position, a text from Marx' essay "On the Jewish Question." Cf. Easton and Guddat, p. 255; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 1, Hb. 1, p. 584. "By its nature the perfected political state is man's species life in opposition to his material life...Where the political state has achieved its full development, man leads a double life, a heavenly and an earthly life, not only in thought or consciousness but in actuality. In the political community he regards himself as a communal being; but in civil society he acts as a private individual, treats other men as means, and becomes the plaything of alien powers."

⁸Althusser, Pour Marx, p. 231.

being; but in civil society he acts as a private individual, treats other men as means, and becomes the plaything of alien powers."⁹ And he is able to make this critical assertion precisely because of his option for the Feuerbachian theory of the essence of man as communal, the attitude that, "The single man for himself possesses the essence of man neither in himself as a moral being nor in himself as a thinking being. The essence of man is contained only in the community and unity of man with man."¹⁰ It is in virtue of the state's being the imaginary rather than the actual embodiment of man's communal being that his existence as a "citizen" is an alienated existence, and that his existence in civil society is such that he "becomes the plaything of alien powers."¹¹

This dependence on Feuerbach for his basic problematic and for the concepts through which that problematic is elucidated is, Althusser further insists, clearly present in the Marx of the 1844 manuscripts. Indeed in this text Marx was beginning to deal broadly with issues that are recognizably those of political economy.¹² But first, Marx is not occupied in this text with political economy as such, and is not performing the critique of political economy that characterized his maturity. Rather, he is in the Paris manuscripts occupied with a

⁹ Marx, "On the Jewish Question," Easton and Guddat, p. 225; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 1, Hb. 1, p. 584.

¹⁰ Feuerbach, Principles of the Philosophy of the Future, trans. Vogel, (Indianapolis: The Library of Liberal Arts, 1966), p. 71; Feuerbach, Sammtliche Werke, ed. W. Bolin and F. Jodl, (Stuttgart: Fr. Frommanns Verlag, 1903-1911), vol. 2, p. 318.

¹¹ Cf. Althusser, op. cit., p. 67.

¹² Cf. Ibid., p. 157.

discussion of certain political economic ramifications, "in certain effects of a political economy, or certain economic conditions of social conflicts."¹³

Second, that concept which is at the foundation of the argument of the manuscripts, the concept of alienated labor, is ultimately rooted in a Feuerbachian humanism, for certain conditions of labor may yield "alienated labor" precisely because they alienate man from his essence, conceived in Feuerbachian terms.¹⁴ The Marx of the manuscripts had passed beyond Feuerbach's terminology, and had moved beyond Feuerbach in a critical application of his anthropology to questions other than religious. But this central concern remained Feuerbach's anthropology nonetheless. As Althusser puts it, "...Feuerbach's anthropology could become the problematic not only of religion (The Essence of Christianity), but also of politics ("The Jewish Question," the Manuscripts of 1843), even of history and of economy (the Manuscripts of 1844), without ceasing, in all essentials, to remain an anthropological problematic, even though Feuerbach's language had itself been abandoned and overcome."¹⁵

It is in 1845 that Althusser locates Marx' break with his Feuerbachian sources, and his initial development of a doctrine of society that is "Marxian" in the mature and genuine sense of the term. This development has for Althusser three characteristics. The first involves

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Cf. Ibid., p. 158.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 65.

Marx' development of the basic concepts of historical materialism.¹⁶ But it is the latter two that are of importance here. They are: the "Radical critique of the theoretical pretensions of all philosophical humanism" and the "Definition of all humanism as ideology."¹⁷ These two developments, as described by Althusser, may be reported on briefly.

Involved first in Marx' critique of philosophical humanism, his critique of any attempt at a theory of human nature, is his realization that any such attempt demands the assertion of two propositions: "...first that there exists a universal essence of man; second, that this essence is the attribute of 'individuals taken as isolated' who are its real subjects."¹⁸ Regarding the first of these propositions, Althusser further comments that, "For the essence of man to be a universal attribute, it is necessary that, in effect, its concrete subjects exist as absolute givens..."¹⁹ If there be an essence or nature of man, then any individual man must be a priori determined by that essence, in spite of any relationships or conditions which might otherwise empirically condition his experience. And this leads to the second of the two statements asserted above, which Althusser comments on by stating that, "For these empirical individuals to be men, it is necessary that they individually bear with themselves the totality of the essence of man..."²⁰

¹⁶Cf. Ibid., p. 233.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 234.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

This position would allow one to assert that an individual is essentially determined as a man in a condition of isolation. It would thus allow for two fallacies against which the mature Marx constantly inveighs. First, it allows for the assumption that the capacities and needs of the individual may be deduced from his "essence," the latter being determinable in an a priori fashion, for, "...the myth of the economic man, that is the individual having defined faculties and defined needs..."²¹ In the arguments of the Poverty of Philosophy which Marx levels against Prudhon, he makes it quite clear that this is a position which he opposes.

Second, this position allows for the notion that man can be adequately understood as an isolated individual. But that this is considered by Marx fallacious can be clearly seen in Marx' assertion, in the Sixth Thesis on Feuerbach, that "...the essence of man is no abstraction inhering in each single individual. In its actuality it is the ensemble of social relationships."²² This is an assertion which Marx held throughout his maturity, and represents his decisive break with any attempt to do a theory of human nature, in the sense in which that term must be understood.

Coupled with this recognition of the necessary fallacies in any attempt to deprive a theory of human nature was, Althusser further insists, Marx' identification of any humanism as ideology. Ideology is described

²¹Ibid.

²² Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," in Easton and Guddat, p. 402; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 535.

by Althusser as "a system (possessing its proper logic and rigor) of representations (in various cases images, myths, ideas or concepts) endowed with an existence and an historical role at the heart of a given society."²³ Ideology is a necessary feature of any society; its appearance may be expected within the context of any social system,²⁴ class or classless. In terms of its function, Althusser discusses ideology as the overall expression of socially necessary learning: "...ideology (as a system of common representations) is indispensable to all society for educating men, for transforming them and for putting them in the condition to respond to the exigencies of their existential situation."²⁵ But more important is Althusser's discussion of the location of ideology as such within society.

As a system of common representations, ideology expresses the lived relations of persons to their social context, as those lived relations are had in imagination, or, as those relations are lived imaginatively. "In ideology, men express, in effect, not their relations to the conditions of their existence, but the appearance (facon) in terms of which they live their relation to the conditions of their existence: that which at one and the same time supposes real relation and 'lived,' 'imagined' relation."²⁶ In other words, ideology expresses the relation of persons

²³ Althusser, op. cit., p. 238.

²⁴ Cf. Ibid., pp. 238-239.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 242.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 240.

to the details of their social setting, as that relation is apprehended imaginatively, as, for example, the bourgeoisie of capitalist society apprehend their relation to the details of society to be such as to maximize individual freedom and opportunity. Of itself, ideology is neither necessarily accurate nor inaccurate presentation of reality, precisely because it is an image (or better, a system of images or representations) through which reality is apprehended and acted upon, through which, as Althusser puts it, relations to the details of actual social situations are "lived."

But that ideology can, and indeed for Marx has been up to his time an illusory representation of reality, is apparent. This has been possible precisely because ideology has not been recognized for what it is; a system of imagined representations of lived reality, rather than the truth thereof. And it is here, Althusser reports, that Marx' attack on humanism is to be found.

Within the history of class societies, various systematized representations of the nature of man (i.e., ideologies) have arisen. Such representations, when arising from the dominant class in society, have led to the exploitation of other classes. But because of the nature of ideology itself, and because of its being taken for truth, such ideologies, as long as the societies remained stable,²⁷ legitimized the behavior of the dominant class, and rendered the situation of exploited classes tolerable, even necessary or fruitful, in their own

²⁷That is to say, in Marx' language, as long as the relations of production remained congruent with the forces of production.

vision thereof. Althusser comments on this phenomenon in terms of the humanistic ideology of the bourgeoisie. "When the 'rising class,' the bourgeoisie, developed through the course of the 18th century a humanist ideology of equality, freedom, and reason, it gave to this claim of its own the form of universality, as if through this it wished to enroll in its ranks, by shaping them towards this end, the very men whom it liberated only to exploit."²⁸

The point which Althusser wishes to make in this discussion is that, for Marx, humanism has historically functioned as ideology, and ideology has been simply the imaginatively developed self understanding of a society or portion of society, reflecting the economic details of the given social system from which it develops, but taken as truth rather than as reflection. Precisely because ideology is a reflection of given societies, it cannot validly function as a theory which will undertake a critical examination of the nature and development of social history.

Nor can any theory of human nature function as such a theory. For as a theory of the "essence" of man, it must take human reality and the details of human experience to be simply given rather than historically developed. Now Marx' mature aim was the construction of a theory which would expose the structures of historical development, based on the idea that the subjects of such development are given societies.²⁹ Such a theory would enable him to critically examine capitalist society, as well

²⁸Althusser, op. cit., p. 241.

²⁹Cf. Ibid., p. 238.

as point out proper directions for the practical, active overcoming of this social system. Clearly because of the above, a humanism will not do as such a theory; Marx' discovery of this inadequacy was indeed the beginning of his formulation of his mature goal. And thus Marx' mature doctrine may be legitimately called a "theoretical anti-humanism,"³⁰ one which replaces prior modes of theorizing with, "an historical-dialectical materialism, that is to say with a theory of the different specific levels of human action (economic action, political action, ideological action, scientific action) in their own articulations, based on the specific articulations of the unity of human society."³¹ Humanism, then, and attempts at theories of human nature are theoretical attempts whose value is denied by the mature Marx.

The interpretation of Marx offered by Althusser raises two questions one of which is especially critical for my argument. First, there is the question of the continuity of the texts of the "young" and the "mature" Marx. On Althusser's terms, Marx' later texts represent a crucial shift from the ideas embodied in those written through 1844.³² Second, the question of the content of those earlier texts must itself be raised. And, again on Althusser's terms, their content must be viewed as a humanism whose most significant expression is through and through

³⁰Ibid., p. 236.

³¹Ibid., pp. 235-236.

³²I shall not take up the question of continuity directly in this thesis. However, the arguments of this and the following chapters will, I think, have significant bearing on that question.

Feuerbachian. One concludes then that the content of the theory of human nature which Marx expresses in the Paris Manuscripts is for all intents and purposes identical to Feuerbach's theory of man, that the former can be understood most fruitfully in terms of the latter, and that Marx' act of elucidating a theory of man in the Manuscripts of 1844 essentially involved an act of borrowing and assimilating into his own terminology a theory of Feuerbach's.

I shall devote the body of this chapter to arguing that this is not the case. Textual analysis of certain works which Althusser classifies as "youthful" works of Marx, particularly the Paris Manuscripts, reveals a theory of man definitely continuous with that implied in certain texts which Althusser would classify as "transitional," e.g., the Theses of Feuerbach. This is to deny, first, that the later Marx represents a definite break with the earlier around the question of theory of man. And it is secondly to argue that, even in the Manuscripts of 1844, Marx defined his theory of man most significantly in terms of opposition to rather than agreement with Feuerbach. Thus Marx' divergence from Feuerbach must be understood if the content of his theory of man is to be properly elucidated. Additionally, Marx attacks Feuerbach, in a manner similar to his confrontation with Prudhon, on the question of the theoretical function of a theory of human nature. His arguments on this theme will also be briefly sketched in this chapter.

II Marx and Feuerbach's Critique of Hegel

It must first be noted that Marx' attitude towards Feuerbach as expressed in the Paris Manuscripts is far from unequivocal. Indeed, he

introduces the Manuscript entitled "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General," by pointing out those Feuerbachian criticisms of Hegel which he takes to be both accurate and significant. Feuerbach, for Marx, "is the only one who has a serious and critical relation to Hegel; a dialectic, who has made genuine discoveries in this field, and who above all is the true conqueror of the old philosophy."³³ And Marx goes on to list those Feuerbachian criticisms of Hegel which he takes to be crucial under three headings.

Feuerbach's great achievement is: (1) proof that philosophy is nothing more than religion brought to and developed in reflection, and thus is equally to be condemned as another form and mode of the alienation of man's nature;

(2) the establishment of true materialism and real science by making the social relationship of "man to man" the fundamental principle of his theory;

(3) opposing to the negation of the negation, which claims to be the absolute positive, the self-subsistent positive positively grounded on itself.³⁴

As Marx understands this statement, the "great achievement" of Feuerbach here is a direct overcoming of Hegel. And that overcoming involves essentially a change in attitude as to the nature of philosophy itself, particularly in relation to its subject matter.

³³Marx, "Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts (1844)," in Easton and Guddat, p. 316; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 151. Marx is here opposing Feuerbach's notion of and analysis of Hegel's dialectical method to those analyses offered by others of the Young Hegelians, e.g., Bauer, for whom dialectical negation is equivalent to 'criticism' as the motive force of the development of self consciousness. On this point cf. McLellan, The Young Hegelians and Karl Marx, (New York: Praeger, 1969), pp. 59-63.

³⁴Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, pp. 316-317; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 152.

For Feuerbach, religion concretely involves the details of human self-understanding, but with those details imaginatively projected and so understood as belonging to a being other than (or alien from) man, rather than man himself:³⁵ "...religion is man's earliest and also indirect form of self-knowledge."³⁶ But speculative philosophy, i.e., Hegelian philosophy, has retained something of this "religious" form of human self-understanding. For just as religion involves man's alienating through imaginative projection the predicates of his own nature from himself, speculative, Hegelian philosophy projects those predicates descriptive of the concrete individual into one single feature of the human individual, self-consciousness, and then treats that feature as an absolute.

Marx might, at this point in the Manuscripts, have referred to a text in Feuerbach's Principles of the Philosophy of the Future³⁷ in which the latter explicitly attacks Hegel in the terms to which Marx

³⁵Cf. Ludwig Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity, trans. Geo. Eliot (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), p. 12; Feuerbach, Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 6, p. 15. "...the object of any subject is nothing else than the subject's own nature taken objectively. Such as are men's thoughts and dispositions, such is his God; so much worth as a man has, so much and no more is his God. Consciousness of God is self consciousness; knowledge of God is self Knowledge."

³⁶Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity, Eliot, p. 13; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 6, p. 15.

³⁷Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, pp. 315-316; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 151. It is clear, one may note in passing, that the Principles of the Philosophy of the Future is a dominant text which Marx has in mind in commenting on Feuerbach, in the Paris Manuscripts. In those Manuscripts Marx, in discussing the superiority of Feuerbach over other young Hegelian critics of Hegel, principally Bruno Bauer, writes: "But now that Feuerbach in his "Theses" appearing in the Anekdotia and more fully in his (Principles of the) Philosophy of the

refers. In number 23 of that work, Feuerbach writes that, "Hegelian philosophy is reversed idealism; it is theological idealism...It placed the essence of the ego apart from the ego, separated from the ego, and objectified as substance, as God. But, by doing that, it expressed again indirectly and reversely the divinity of the I..."³⁸ Hegel "divinizes" the "I", or, self consciousness through examining self-consciousness as if there were contained therein all determinations which might properly be taken as "human." And Feuerbach's correction of this lies in his realization that the human individual must be examined through the totality of his determinations, rather than those deriving from self consciousness exclusively.³⁹ In Feuerbach's words, "Man distinguishes himself from the animals not only by thinking. His whole being, rather, constitutes his distinction from the animals."⁴⁰

This realization of Feuerbach's, that human nature must be examined in its concrete totality rather than simply through a description of self consciousness, is both itself a correction of Hegel

Future has destroyed the inner principle of the old dialectic and philosophy, the school of criticism which was unable to do this in itself but has seen it done has proclaimed itself pure, decisive, absolute, and entirely clear within itself."

³⁸Feuerbach, Principles of the Philosophy of the Future, Vogel, p. 36; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 2, p. 279.

³⁹We shall see in chapter four, however, that Marx' ultimate rationale for accepting this criticism is not a "Feuerbachian" one, but one that is rooted in his own confrontation with the Hegelian doctrine of self-consciousness.

⁴⁰Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel p. 69; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 2, p. 315.

and leads to a second such correction, "...the establishment of true materialism and real science by making the social relationship of 'man to man' the fundamental principle of the theory..."⁴¹

In that Feuerbach had realized the necessity of a concrete description of human nature, he opened the way for an examination of one such determination that is both concrete and fundamental: man's determination as social. And moreover, Feuerbach had insisted on the essential character of this determination of human nature, even in the first pages of The Essence of Christianity. There, he begins a description of the nature of human consciousness by asserting that, "Consciousness in the strictest sense is present only in a being to whom his species, his essential nature, is an object of thought."⁴² Human consciousness is such that the individual is aware of himself both as a discrete individual, and as an individual embodiment of human nature. And Feuerbach goes on immediately to assert that, in virtue of this characteristic of human consciousness, "Man is himself at once I and thou; he can put himself in the place of another, for this reason, that to him his species, his essential nature, and not merely his individuality, is an object of thought."⁴³ In that human consciousness entails "species consciousness," the individual is capable of apprehending the experience of another self as well as that of his own

⁴¹Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 316; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 152.

⁴²Feuerbach, Essence of Christianity, Eliot, p. 1; Sämmtliche Werke, p. 1

⁴³Feuerbach, Essence of Christianity, Eliot, p. 3; Sämmtliche Werke, p. 2.

self, of putting "himself in the place of another," of experiencing intersubjectivity. And in that "species consciousness" is essential to the human individual, intersubjectivity is also essential. As McLellan comments:

The fundamental unity of mankind that the idea of a species presupposes arises from the fact that men are not self-sufficient creatures; they have very different qualities, so it is only together that they can form the "perfect" man. For Feuerbach all knowledge comes to man as a member of the human species and when man acts as a member of the human species his action is qualitatively different. His fellow human beings make him conscious of himself as a man, they form his consciousness, and even the criterion of truth."⁴⁴

Marx would agree with McLellan's gloss of Feuerbach's notion of man as essentially intersubjective or social, and consider this point a lasting contribution of Feuerbach's to the concrete analysis of human nature.

Finally, and as a consequence of the above, Feuerbach offers for Marx a third and necessary corrective to Hegel, and now a methodological corrective, that of "opposing to the negation of the negation, which claims to be the absolute positive, the self-subsistent positive positively grounded on itself."⁴⁵

Marx offers a clue to this initially complex statement by stating immediately after it in the text that it indicates the manner in which

⁴⁴McLellan, The Young Hegelians and Karl Marx, p. 92, McLellan's last comment is a gloss on article 58 of the Principles of the Philosophy of the Future, Vogel, p. 71; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 2, p. 318. "Truth is only the totality of human life and of the human essence."

⁴⁵Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 317; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 152.

Feuerbach "justifies starting out from the positive, from sense certainty..."⁴⁶ And his point seems to involve Feuerbach's specific critique of Hegel's application of the dialectical method to the question of "sense certainty." As Feuerbach reads Hegel, the question of the first chapter of the Phenomenology of Spirit is that of an initial conception of the relationship between thought and being. Consciousness, at the most primitive level at which it can be analyzed, takes as its object simply, "the immediate...what is,"⁴⁷ that which is given as an immediate sense datum to consciousness. And moreover, consciousness takes this immediate object to offer "the richest kind of knowledge..."⁴⁸ But the structure of its own experience leads consciousness to recognize that, on the one hand, this attitude implies a radical distinction between itself and its object, between thought and being, and that on the other hand this notion of a radical distinction between thought and being will not do because, on its terms, the object can be apprehended simply as immediate, whereas the object itself is apprehended by consciousness in a richer and more manifold condition, as is shown by its, the objects' being named. In virtue of the objects being named, being described through language, its content must be apprehended as including universality as well as particular immediacy. "It is as a universal,

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷G.W.F. Hegel, The Phenomenology of Mind, trans. Baillie, (London: Allen and Unwin, 1931), p. 149. G.W.F. Hegel, Phänomenologie des Geistes, ed. Hoffmeister, (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1952), p. 79.

⁴⁸Ibid.

too, that we give utterance to sensuous fact."⁴⁹ But then the object of consciousness, being, must be understood as not simply distinct from consciousness and as such being necessarily mediated thereby.

But it is here that Feuerbach offers his objection to Hegel. And that objection yields the realization that Hegel's dialectical examination of sense certainty involves his "reformulating the differences between thought and being as a difference between knowing and the known..."⁵⁰ For Feuerbach, to speak of the object as fundamentally mediated by knowing consciousness is to describe the object of conscious knowing, but not the object of sensation. It is rather to abstract from the latter. For on its own terms, sense consciousness does recognize the distinction of its object from itself, and its own necessary dependence on its object. "Were Hegel really to enter the experience of sensuous consciousness and to shift the emphasis of the Phänomenologie away from the logic of the phenomena, he would have to acknowledge that sense certainty in no way refutes itself by virtue of being thought and expressed..."⁵¹ Rather, thought and language are expressions of the richness of the content delivered in sensation.

This is not to assert that raw sensation delivers of itself the total richness of content accessible to the subject. Feuerbach is aware

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 152; Phänomenologie, p. 82.

⁵⁰Lowith, "Mediation and Immediacy in Marx, Hegel, and Feuerbach," in Steinkraus (ed.) New Studies in Hegel's Philosophy, (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1971), p. 132.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 134.

that, "Immediate sensuous intuition is, on the contrary, subordinated to imagination and representation," that, "The true sensuous intuition first makes visible what is invisible to the uneducated eye."⁵² Imagination and the response of feeling⁵³ unveil the richness of the content delivered in sense intuition for Feuerbach, but precisely because of this they are themselves culminating features of the experience of sense consciousness. And this is to maintain the position of the fundamental nature of sense consciousness for the individual subject, as well as the distinction between thought and being which can be recognized as integral to the experience of sense consciousness, if the latter is examined on its own terms. Thus sensation, and its integral features, are for Feuerbach necessary and basic to the experience of the subject, and not to be understood as overcome through a dialectical "negation of the negation."

Marx takes this criticism of Hegel to be a crucial one because it corrects the latter precisely at that point which limited him to finding "only the abstract, logical, speculative expression of the movement of history, not the actual history of man as a given subject..."⁵⁴ Because

⁵²Ibid., p. 136.

⁵³Cf. Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 52; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 2, p. 297. "The new philosophy regards and considers being as it is for us, not only as thinking but also as existing being; thus it regards being as an object of being, as an object of itself. Being as an object of being - and only this being is being and deserves the name of being - is the being of the senses, perception, feeling, and love. Being is thus a secret of perception, feeling, and love."

⁵⁴Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 317; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, pp. 152-153.

Hegel, in virtue of his speculative employment of the dialectical method, was unable to consider on their own terms the sensuous relations of the individual to his environment, both natural, and social, he was unable to offer a total and accurate description of the nature of individual experience, but rather only one of the experiences of the self-conscious individual. Feuerbach, in overcoming Hegel's dialectical description of sense experience by insisting that the latter be examined on its own terms, points the way to a more adequate and more total description of those determinations which constitute the nature of the individual as such.

To this point, it has been seen that Marx in the Paris Manuscripts affirms three Feuerbachian criticisms of Hegel, directly relating to the formulation of a theory of human nature. Feuerbach had corrected Hegel in showing that the individual must be described through the totality of his determinations, rather than simply those which pertain to him as a self-conscious subject. He had defended this statement by refuting Hegel's employment of the dialectical method in relation to sense consciousness, "sense certainty." And he had insisted that, of those concrete determinations which must be located descriptively and argumentatively in a theory of human nature, one such determination, and an essential one, is the communality or sociality of the individual. Given simply these statements, one might readily suspect that Althusser's reading of the Manuscripts of 1844 is correct, that Marx develops therein a "humanism" that is in its contents essentially Feuerbachian.

But it is at this point that I would suggest that such a reading

of the Manuscripts of itself will not do, and will not do because its very partiality renders it inadequate. Certainly on the above points Marx considers Feuerbach's correctives on Hegel to be crucial in defining and formulating his own theory of human nature. Their implications will be further developed when a consideration of Marx' own criticisms of Hegel's doctrine of self consciousness, in relation to the question of agency, is offered in a later chapter. However, the question now at hand is, what is the relation of Marx' fuller theory of human nature to his understanding of Feuerbach, given his acceptance of the above positions? I shall argue that Marx supposes his own theory to be, in certain crucial and fundamental features, opposed to Feuerbach, that he is correct in this supposition, and that he formulates his theory of man overtly within the context of this opposition. This can be seen by showing that certain criticisms of Feuerbach offered in the "Theses on Feuerbach" are thoroughly consistent with the content of the theory of man which underlies the Manuscripts of 1844. It will thus be shown by implication that Althusser is incorrect in reading these texts as representative of distinct periods of Marx' development. Marx' criticisms of Feuerbach relevant to this discussion revolve around the themes of the relationship between praxis and nature, between nature and consciousness of the social character of the individual (man as a communal being), and of the function and possibilities of a theory of human nature.

III Marx' Critique of Feuerbach's Notion of Nature

The theme of the relation between praxis and nature is the first of the above noted topics which Marx himself treats, and he does this in the

first of his often cited "Theses of Feuerbach." There, Marx notes that, "The chief defect of all previous materialism (including Feuerbach's) is that the object, actuality, sensuousness is conceived only in the form of the object or perception (Anschauung), but not as sensuous human activity, practice (Praxis), not subjectively."^{54a} And he follows up this assertion with the further statement that, "Feuerbach wants sensuous objects actually different from thought objects," but he does not comprehend human activity itself as objective."⁵⁵ Certain implications of these statements concerning Marx' attitude on the relation of nature and consciousness will be later seen, but now, what points concerning the relation of nature, "the object," is Marx implying here, and why do these points lead him to a posture on Feuerbach which is critical? Particularly, what does Marx mean by asserting that "the object" or nature has a "subjective" side, and that human praxis has an "objective" side?

Responses to these questions may be offered by comparing Marx' acceptance of Feuerbach's criticisms of Hegel with Marx' own elucidation of the concept of nature in the Manuscripts of 1844. In the content of the first, as has been seen, Marx views Feuerbach as correct in distinguishing the question of the relation of thought and being from that of the relation of knowledge and its object,⁵⁶ and in recovering through this distinction an understanding of nature, and by implication of the

^{54a} Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," Easton and Guddat, p. 400; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 533.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Cf. texts previously cited from Löwith's article, in which this distinction made by Feuerbach is described.

relation of the human individual to nature, that is more adequate than that available to Hegel. But at the same time, Feuerbach's own understanding of nature must for Marx be subjected to critical analysis and correction. Because as Marx reads Feuerbach, and I suggest that this is a correct reading, nature in its ordinary occurrence for the sensory subject is experienced in an immediate condition, as that which of itself exists, contains its determinations within itself, and delivers these determinations to the sensuous subject.

Feuerbach's statement that "The real in its reality or taken as real is the real as an object of the senses; it is the sensuous,"⁵⁷ needs to be taken in two senses. First, it means that the subject's primary access to reality is had through sensation, with the essential proviso noted above that the data of reality be revealed and made visible by imagination and feeling as themselves aspects of sense experience. The second, this statement also means that the object of sensation is "the real," is that which can most accurately and originally be entitled "being." "The real" then is for Feuerbach that self contained immediate datum which is the object of sensation,⁵⁸ or nature as, "in the sum of

⁵⁷Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 51; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 2, p. 296.

⁵⁸Cf. J. E. Barnhart, "Anthropological Nature in Feuerbach and Marx," Philosophy Today, 1967 (11) 414, p. 268, for an opposing interpretation of the question of nature as the object of sensation in Feuerbach. Barnhart argues that as object of sensation, nature is 'mediated' by the sensory subject. "Sensuousness or matter serves as the basis of man's consciousness of 'personality'. But man is more than 'personality' and as a part of man matter has no reality apart from the human species. In perceiving his material base, man is simply knowing himself."

all the sensuous forces, things, and beings which man distinguishes from himself as other than human."⁵⁹

Nature is in this sense for Feuerbach, that which man, "experiences directly and sensuously as the ground and substance of his life,"⁶⁰ and it is capable of functioning as and of being experienced as such a ground precisely in virtue of its being fundamentally real in itself and as such distinct from the human subject. Feuerbach might argue that it is only in virtue of nature's being self contained in its determinations distinct from the human subject, primarily real in itself, that it is capable of being that to which the human subject relates sensuously, that from which he is capable of drawing ever enriched data through the multi-faceted act of sensation.

But it is here that Marx levels an initial critical comment on

Barnhart supports this interpretation by citing Feuerbach's statement in The Essence of Christianity, Eliot, p. 12; (Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 6, p. 15), that, "...the object of any subject is nothing else that the subject's own nature taken objectively," Barnhart is of course correct in holding that for Feuerbach 'matter' or 'nature' is "...the basis of man's consciousness..." but he errs in holding that Feuerbach moves from this to the conclusion that nature is therefore mediated by human (sensory) consciousness. For Feuerbach, as seen above in the text, this would be to translate the distinction of thought and being into the distinction of knower and known. Rather, for Feuerbach, nature is man's own nature 'taken objectively' in the sense that human nature requires that the individual subject be related to an object that is distinct from itself, and that contains its determinations within itself.

⁵⁹Feuerbach, Lectures on the Essence of Religion, trans. Ralph Manheim (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 90; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 8, p. 113.

⁶⁰Ibid.

Feuerbach. The latter insists on describing nature as self contained reality. And this description, is taken to be one that is in principle complete. As complete, however, this description leaves no room for a theoretical consideration of nature as the material base of human praxis. Stated more formally, if nature is self-contained reality, then there is no need to hold that nature is also that which stands in relation to the human subject as agent, or as that which relates itself to the agent as capable of receiving determinations through and as the result of human productive activity. And Marx' assertion here is that nature must be so described if the phenomenon of productive activity is itself to be given a theoretical account.⁶¹

The terminology of the first thesis of Feuerbach expresses this idea through asserting that nature must be conceived "subjectively."⁶² That is to say, nature must be conceived of as that which as such receives determinations from the agent subject to which it stands in relation. And the prior chapter has shown that Marx also insists on such an understanding of nature in the Manuscripts of 1844. There Marx asserts that nature is man's "inorganic body: (1) as a direct means to life, and (2) as the

⁶¹It will subsequently be argued that a concept of nature including the idea that nature is as such determined by human agency is necessary in Marx' eyes in order that a theory of man be functionally valid. This will be seen in the context of a consideration of Marx' remarks on Prudhon.

⁶²Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," Easton and Guddat, p. 400; MEGA, Abt. 1 Bd. 5, p. 533.

matter, object, and instrument of his life activity."⁶³ The point there, too, is that, in order to make sense out of the phenomenon of agency, some theoretical description must be given of nature as that within which actual agency, actual human praxis, is undertaken. But this means that a concept of nature must include the idea that nature is as such fundamentally maleable, that which, in virtue of its own character, presents itself as something capable of receiving determinations resultant upon productive activity, and therefore that which is not of itself self-contained, in the way Feuerbach would have it. Because of this, as shown above, the two concepts which most accurately describe nature for Marx are externality and maleability. This description, however, is one which Marx recognizes as distinct from Feuerbach's in the "Theses," and which is included in the 1844 Manuscripts. On at least this point, then, Althusser's statement that the Marx of 1844 is an out and out Feuerbachian will not do.

The above, however, treats a comparison of Marx and Feuerbach on the theme of the relation of nature and action only by a description of the first of these terms. Marx implies in the First Thesis on Feuerbach that critical comparison might be made on the second term as well. He initiates such a comparison through stating that Feuerbach "does not comprehend human activity itself as objective."⁶⁴

⁶³Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 293; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 87.

⁶⁴Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," Easton and Guddat, p. 400; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 534.

Given Feuerbach's doctrine of nature, what sort of action would be possible within the natural environment? At best, Marx might reply, the action of taking given items from the environmental setting. To be sure, this is not to imply precisely the same sort of "taking" which Marx notes as the proper characteristic of "animal" behavior in the Paris Manuscripts, but the analogy is a strong one. Feuerbach insists in a fashion similar to Marx that, "Man is...a universal being...wherever a sense is elevated above the limits of particularity and its bondage to needs, it is elevated to an independent and theoretical significance and dignity; universal sense is understanding; universal sensation, mind."⁶⁵ Because sensation is for man integrated with consciousness,⁶⁶ albeit that sensation is basic to any form of consciousness, then sensuous awareness, and possible actions consequent upon sense awareness, are for man not limited to those founded upon organically inbuilt instincts. Man is capable of acting to use his environment for purposes developed through imagination and theoretical thinking. But given Feuerbach's description of nature, can action for him mean more than use? Marx seems to think not, and here again critically differentiates himself from Feuerbach. Rotenstreich comments intelligently on this point:

⁶⁵Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 69; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 2, pp. 315-316.

⁶⁶Cf. Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity, Eliot, pp. 1-2; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 6, pp. 1-2. One must remember here that, for Feuerbach, human consciousness is 'species consciousness,' and that in virtue of this scientific knowledge is possible for man.

Action, according to Feuerbach, is connected with the acquisition of pleasure, or with utility; it is egoistic-utilitarian action. A somewhat pointed question arises: Is such acquisition an action at all? Marx apparently thought that it was not an action, that it did not create objects; it derived pleasure from given objects insofar as it derived benefit from them. The action that Marx set foremost in his theory was not an action of use and exploitation of goods or objects of the surrounding world; it was rather a creative action, a spontaneous action, even though it was limited to the area of the senses.⁶⁷

The key feature of Rotenstreich's comment here seems to me to be his highlighting of Marx' equation of action and creativity. It has been shown above that the Marx of the Paris Manuscripts insists on describing human activity as human productive activity, as praxis, and that for him a key feature of praxis is objectification, activity resulting in a product which, "is only the resume of activity, of production."⁶⁸ The product of human activity on its side "resumes" or contains within itself and manifests the details of that activity of which it is the result. And it is its being related to such a product that, in part, defines human activity itself. But then human activity is for Marx productive or creative. It is responsible for the determinations of its result.

This equation of human activity with productivity and creativity is the meaning of Marx' assertion that human action must be understood "objectively," and it defines his criticism of Feuerbach on this point. Activity must be seen as "in the material wherein his labor realizes

⁶⁷Nathan Rotenstreich, Basic Problems of Marx' Philosophy, (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill, 1965), p. 36.

⁶⁸Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 291; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 85.

itself, wherein it is active, out of which and by means of which it produces."⁶⁹ Thus activity must be understood as essentially related to its object in the sense that the object involved the determinations which it possesses as a result of the activity from which it results, that activity is embodied in its produced object, or that activity is "objective." For the same reason, nature is "subjective," is in its concrete details determined by the agent, the subject of action, and embodies certain details of that subject, to wit his action itself. Just as in politics, so in the theory of agency and of human nature, what Marx desires is a theory that is "radical," that is to say one which will "grasp things by the root."⁷⁰ And in terms of a theory of praxis or agency, this means a theory which will describe and account for the productive creativity which Marx takes to be at the basis of the structure of praxis.

It can be seen then that, in the "Theses on Feuerbach," Marx levels critical comments on Feuerbach's understanding of the relation of action and nature, and on his understanding of each of the terms in that relation, as well as that the foundation for this critical comment is discoverable in the 1844 Manuscripts. One may legitimately infer, then, that those aspects of Marx' theory of man in the Paris Manuscripts which involve discussion of the relation of agency and nature, and the meaning of those

⁶⁹Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 290; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 84.

⁷⁰Marx, "Toward the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law: Introduction," Easton and Guddat, p. 257; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 1, Hb. 1, p. 614.

terms within that relationship, are not, contrary to Althusser's claim, aspects of Marx' theory of man which may be validly entitled Feuerbachian. In addition to this, one may argue that Marx also levels criticism in the theses against Feuerbach's doctrine of the relation of nature and consciousness, particularly sense consciousness, and that the foundation of this criticism is also contained in the Paris Manuscripts.

IV Marx' Critique of Feuerbach's Doctrine of Sense Consciousness

The briefest statement of Marx' criticism of Feuerbach on this theme is the fifth of the "Theses on Feuerbach": "Feuerbach, not satisfied with abstract thinking, wants perception; but he does not comprehend sensuousness as practical, human sensuous activity."⁷¹ This statement seems susceptible to two interpretations. One, indicated by Rotenstreich, reads this statement as a methodological criticism of Feuerbach. Feuerbach attempts but does not reach a consideration of that which is actually and materially real, human praxis as mediated by society. Thus for example, Feuerbach analyzes religion as "Religious self-alienation, the duplication of the world into a religious world and secular world,"⁷² but does not go on to analyze the details of the secular base, of society, which induce the phenomenon of religious consciousness. Marx himself does go on to do such analysis, and thus achieves a more radical critique of such phenomena as religion than that

⁷¹Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," Easton and Guddat, p. 401; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 534.

⁷²Ibid.

of which Feuerbach is capable.⁷³

One may read the Fifth Thesis in this fashion, but it seems that for Marx to assert this implies another assertion concerning the nature of perception as well: that Feuerbach fails to grasp "Human sensuous activity" because he fails to comprehend "perception" itself in an adequate fashion. Implications of this were seen already in the first thesis. Now Marx explicates these around the questions of sensation and consciousness.

Feuerbach's discussions of the nature and role of sense perception occur in two contexts, that of the function of sense perception itself as the basis of individually realized knowledge, as well as within a discussion of perception as affected by community. The latter context will be illustrated below, in an exposition of Marx' attitudes towards Feuerbach's notion of community in general. The texts seem to indicate that it is only within a discussion of community that the nature of perception can be completely described for Feuerbach. But he nonetheless does make a number of assertions about perception itself, abstracting from the broader context, which are germane to the present analysis.

First, and indeed implied by the above exposition of the meaning of "nature" for Feuerbach, he insists that the basis of all knowledge is awareness of the content of real, separate, and given objects delivered in sensation. "The determinations that afford real knowledge are always only those that determine the object by the object itself, namely, by

⁷³Cf. Rotenstreich, *Op. cit.*, p. 68-69.

its own individual determinations..."⁷⁴ Feuerbach insists that it is in awareness of concrete determinations of given objects that all valid knowledge is based, and he contrasts this basis to the general determinations of objects offered by metaphysics, which cannot function as the basis of knowledge in that they "determine no object because they extend to all objects without distinction."⁷⁵ Thus he indicates that he is, as Marx comments, "not satisfied with abstract thinking"⁷⁶ but insists on recovering a notion of the source of knowledge in the concrete determinations of the immediate given.

Feuerbach proceeds from this point to make several assertions concerning sense perception itself, and the perceiving subject. In that the awareness of concrete given data constitutes the foundation of knowledge, and in that this awareness is had through sensation, then sensation is in principle,⁷⁷ the clearest form of knowledge available to the knowing subject: "...only the sensuous is as clear as daylight; all doubt and dispute cease only where sensation begins. The secret of immediate knowledge is sensation."⁷⁸

⁷⁴Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 66; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 2, p. 312.

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," in Easton and Guddat, p. 401; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 534.

⁷⁷Feuerbach will qualify this assertion by going on to describe two sorts of imagination, primitive and refined.

⁷⁸Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 55; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 2, p. 301. Here again Feuerbach opposes the clarity which he takes to be in principle available to sense knowledge, to the supposed clarity of the intuition of ideas, e.g., Cartesian intuition, indicating the accuracy of Marx' comment.

And reflection on the experience of sense perception yields statements describing further the sensory subject himself. That which is realized by the subject in sense awareness is data in the literal sense of that term: something given. Therefore the sense subject realizes himself in the experience of sensation as not a pure subject; i.e., not exclusively active,⁷⁹ but as passive as well, as one who receives the given through sensation. Feuerbach expresses this through stating that "In the activity of the senses...I let the object be what I myself am--a real and self actualizing being. Only sense and perception give me something as subject."⁸⁰ For a thing to be a subject in this context is for it to be in some sense active. And in the experience of sensation, the object realized is related to the sense subject in something of an active fashion: it delivers the data realized by the sense subject, is the source of that data which the individual subject receives.

Sensation involves an experience in which the subject is "given" something, and in which he is to that extent passive. The concrete details of the experience of the sense subject reveal this to him, and reveals as well the separateness of object from subject in sensation. For example, "Pain is a loud protest against the identification of the

⁷⁹Cf. Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 40; Sämtliche Werke, vol. 2, p. 284. "In thought, I am an absolute subject, I accept everything only as my object or predicate, that is, as object or predicate of a thinking self; I am intollerant."

⁸⁰Ibid.

subjective with the objective,"⁸¹ an experience revealing the distinctness of the source of pain from the subject undergoing it. And indeed the very experience of concrete objects itself is, when accurately described, a demonstration of this separateness of the object from the sense subject: "only where I am transformed from an 'I' into a 'thou' where I am passive, does the conception of an activity existing apart from me, that is, objectivity, arise. But only through the senses is an 'I' a 'non-I.'"⁸² The term "thou" here is used to indicate something acted upon. And the point is that the very experience of perceptual objects necessitates the conclusion that the subject is and must take himself to be a "thou" in this sense, something acted upon, and, by implication for Feuerbach, something acted upon by an item really separate from himself. Indeed it is only given this that an accurate notion of the subject's consciousness of himself as an individual can be had. For, "Man is given to himself only through the senses, he is an object of himself only as an object of the senses."⁸³ The individual, to accurately and concretely comprehend himself, must comprehend that he is receptive to data delivered from distinct sources, and that his basic understandings of his own reality are likewise delivered via sensation.

Finally, it must be noted that Feuerbach is not asserting a theory

⁸¹Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 53; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 2, p. 288.

⁸²Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 51; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 2, p. 296.

⁸³Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 58; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 2, p. 303.

of sensation that is either crude or narrow. For first, as already seen, Feuerbach's notion of sensation is a broad rather than a narrow one, including imaginative and affective aspects as well as "perceptual" features in the strict sense of that term. "Certain and immediately assured is only that which is an object of the senses, perception, and feeling."⁸⁴ And second, he does not hold that sensation in an unrefined sense yields immediate and clear knowledge. Feuerbach distinguishes "crude senses" from "refined senses."⁸⁵ The former receives that data which is immediately and apparently given. It may be encumbered by the association of data with spontaneously constructed and fantastic images.⁸⁶ Refined sensation is that which attains accurate awareness of the data of sensation through analyzing it critically through responding to it imaginatively and emotively, as well as intellectually.⁸⁷ The point is that refined sensation is attained by the individual who utilizes the several critical devices available to him, emotive, imaginative, and intellectual, to interpret and thus attain awareness of the real content of the data of sensation itself. In this sense, the perceiving individual is active, that is he acts on his sensations of the object, though not on the object itself. In this context the role even of philosophy is

⁸⁴Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 55; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 2, p.300.

⁸⁵Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 58; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 2, p.304.

⁸⁶Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 60; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 2, p. 306.

⁸⁷Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 58-60; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 2, pp. 303-306.

defined for Feuerbach. "The task of philosophy and of science in general consists, therefore, not in leading away from sensuous, that is, real, objects, but rather in leading toward them, not in transforming objects into ideas and conceptions, but rather in making visible, that is, in objectifying, objects that are invisible to ordinary eyes."⁸⁸

Feuerbach's doctrine of sense perception itself, then, includes the following ideas. Sense perception yields the most basic form of awareness available to the conscious subject. The experience of sense perception reveals that the subject stands in a passive and receptive relation to real and separate objects which deliver the data of sensation, and experiences his own self awareness through the medium of sensation, i.e., experiences himself as an object as well as a subject, a "thou" as well as an "I." But sensation must be taken to include imaginative and emotional as well as strictly perceptual features through which the individual acts on his sensations of the object. And these former two features, along with intellectual behavior, function to refine sense awareness and to enable the subject to attain an enriched and accurate consciousness of its delivered content. Upon which of these statements might the author of the "Paris Manuscripts" and the "Theses of Feuerbach" desire to comment critically?

From remarks made earlier in this chapter, one must infer that Marx would not quarrel with Feuerbach's general effort to recover through theoretical means an awareness of the basic character of the sensuous.

⁸⁸ Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 60; Sämmtliche Werke, vol.2, pp. 305-306.

Marx, like Feuerbach is "not satisfied with abstract thinking"⁸⁹ i.e., not satisfied with describing the individual simply as a self-conscious subject, but requires a description of the totality of the determination of the individual. We have seen Marx praise Feuerbach on this very point, as offering a materialism which indicates the manner in which "the actual history of man as a given subject"⁹⁰ may be theoretically comprehended and described in terms of the actual relation of the individual to his concrete environment. But Feuerbach goes on to describe the basis of those actual relations as sense perception. It is this thesis that Marx attacks, and he attacks it by criticizing Feuerbach's understanding of the perceptual object itself.

For Feuerbach the object of perception occurs as separate from the perceiving subject, contains within itself its own determinations, and offers itself to the perceiving subject as receptive. This implies that Feuerbach can only make sense of the notion of the subject if the subject is taken to be an object as well, an individual that is both active and receptive, an "I" and a "thou". In this sense it can be said that the subject requires or needs the object in order to be a subject, to be what it is. And it is the nature of the perceptual object itself which defines the content of the need which the subject has for it. The object is self existent and in terms of its determinations self contained; the

⁸⁹Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," Easton and Guddat, p. 401; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 534.

⁹⁰Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 317; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 152.

perceiving subject requires this object, one which is thus self existent and self contained, in order to be a perceiving subject. But can Feuerbach expand the notion of need beyond this? Marx seems to realize that he cannot. In attempting to describe the individual subject as a "sensuous" subject, Feuerbach describes him as a perceiving subject. And the object which such a subject requires or needs is then precisely that which Feuerbach describes. But the description of this object is such that it does not allow him to define the notion of need itself in an adequate fashion.

For an accurate description of the individual in his relations to his environment, Marx argues in the Manuscripts of 1844, the notion of need must be defined in a sense at once more general and more concrete than that available to Feuerbach, as some felt lack or deficiency within the individual, capable of being satisfied through the individual's relating himself to something other than and external to himself. To understand the individual concretely, Marx asserts in the Manuscripts, is, "as seen above, to understand him, as a natural, living, sentient, and objective being," as "a suffering, conditioned, and limited creature like an animal or plant. The objects of his drives, that is to say, exist outside him as independent, yet they are objects of his need, essential and indispensable to the exercise and confirmation of his essential capacities."⁹¹ "Need" must initially be understood as describing that manifold of felt requirements which demand that the

⁹¹Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 325; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 160.

individual relate himself to his environment. And Feuerbach's narrower understanding of need as the need of the perceiving subject for the perceptual object will not do simply because it seriously limits the sense of the term to the extent that it cannot describe the totality of its actual manifestations. The serious difficulty with this limitation is that, by holding that the individual requires the object as a perceptual object, Feuerbach implies for Marx that the individual subject must be described as a perceiving subject. But this is a retreat into "abstract thinking..."⁹² equally as inadequate as that doctrine which would describe the individual simply as a self-conscious subject. Feuerbach does not want to hold to this exclusive and limited description; he asserts that, "Indeed, even the stomach of man, which we view so contemptuously, is not animal but human because it is a universal being..."⁹³ that the individual is constituted by the totality of his relations to his environment. But Marx' implication seems to be that Feuerbach wants to but cannot hold this, given his description of the nature of the perceptual object in relation to the perceiving subject.

This notion of need which Marx considers at once broader and more concretely accurate than that available to Feuerbach leads Marx to further statements concerning the nature of the relation of individual to the external environment and the nature of the external environment itself in that relation.

⁹²Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," Easton and Guddat, p. 401; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 534.

⁹³Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 69; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 2, p. 316.

Need, as Marx takes the term, governs the manner in which the individual relates to his environment. But this manner must be one through which the individual is capable both of relating his need to the environment itself, and of satisfying that need. For Marx, this is to assert that it is some manner in which the individual "appropriates the external world and sensuous nature through his labor..."⁹⁴ or some manner in which the individual relates to his environment as an agent, through praxis. In that the individual relates his needs to the environment through practical agency, those needs are at once specified (e.g., hunger as a need is specifically transformed into the need for this or that food item available through action on the environment; the need for friendship is transformed into the need for interaction with this or that person) and the conditions for the possibility of their satisfaction are constituted through the contents of the environment being brought into relation to those needs.⁹⁵ But this is to reassert the familiar theme that the external environment or nature is to be understood as the material for and the context of agency.

Further, it has been shown that human productive agency or praxis is

⁹⁴Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton, p. 290; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 84.

⁹⁵Cf. Karl Marx, The Grundrisse, trans. and ed. David McLellan, (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 26. Marx, Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie, (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1953), p. 14, in which text Marx expresses the same idea in the economic language of production and consumption. "Production creates the material as well as the external object of consumption, consumption creates the want as the immediate object, the purpose of production."

in part defined for Marx through being governed by needs developed beyond those subsistence needs.⁹⁶ But as Marx argues in the German Ideology, such developed needs arise from the satisfaction of priorly experienced needs,⁹⁷ and that prior satisfaction entails some activity having been performed within the environment, and this in at least minimal modification of the environment. Indeed as also seen above, it is the environment as modified through action which forms the objective source which elicits the development of concrete and new needs in the subject. This however yields a second familiar assertion: that the actual and external environment to which man relates, nature in Marx' sense of the term, is not self contained in its determinations, but receives determinations as a result of human productive activity; or, that nature as related to by man⁹⁸ is produced by him. Translated into Feuerbachian language, this statement would read that the object to which the subject relates is actually external to him but not simply self-contained in terms of its contents; rather it is an object or feature of nature in virtue of its being determined by the productive activity of the subject.

As it stands, this may seem simply another argument in support of Marx' criticism of Feuerbach's doctrine of nature itself in relation to action. But its implications for an understanding of the perceived object,

⁹⁶Cf. for example Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, pp. 292-293; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, pp. 86-87.

⁹⁷Marx, Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, pp. 16-17; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 18.

⁹⁸That Marx will ultimately accept no other sense of 'nature' is shown by texts already cited from the Paris Manuscripts and the German Ideology.

perception itself, and consciousness more generally taken, are both immediate and crucial. Perception is the most rudimentary and basic manner in which the individual is aware of his environment. It is tautologous, given this, to state that perception is perception of an object. But the object perceived is a portion of the natural environment to which the individual relates, and that natural environment is as such determined through its being the object of productive activity. Thus the object of perception itself, as a portion of the environment, is so determined. Put differently, the experience of the perceiving subject is determined by the object of perception, but that object itself is not simply given in its content, but more fundamentally determined in its content by the subject as an agent.⁹⁹ However Feuerbach incorrectly asserts the contrary of this: that the experience of the perceiving subject is, in its content, determined by the content of the perceived object taken in isolation, that is, as unaffected by the subject himself. That "refined" sensation which makes "...visible objects which are invisible to ordinary eyes...",¹⁰⁰ is an activity of the perceiving

⁹⁹. Marx would of course immediately insist here that the productive activity determining the character of the natural environment, and thus of the perceived object, must be understood as the productive activity not simply of the agent taken in isolation, but of the social whole within which the individual is located.

¹⁰⁰. Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, pp. 58 and 60; Sämtliche Werke, vol. 2, pp. 304 and 306.

subject, but an activity of that subject on his sensations, which in turn ultimately depend for their content on the self contained object of perception, in Feuerbach's understanding of perceptual experience.

This then is Marx' criticism of Feuerbach's doctrine of the perceptual object and of perception itself: that the latter "...does not comprehend sensuousness...", that is, does not comprehend the perceptual object, "...as practical, human sensuous activity...",¹⁰¹ as in its own reality not self contained, but as fundamentally determined by human productive activity. In view of his correction of Feuerbach here, Marx asserts not that the perceiving subject stands in a relation of receptivity to his object, but that he stands in a more basic and active relation to that object, as a practical agent. And if one were to argue in a Marxian context the Feuerbachian premise that all forms of consciousness derive from and relate back to sense consciousness, then one would have to argue with Marx the further assertion that all other forms of consciousness are themselves had by a subject who relates to that of which he is aware fundamentally as an agent. Marx would of course insist here that the productive activity determining the character of the natural environment, and thus of the perceived object, must be understood as the productive activity not simply of the individual taken in isolation, but of the social whole within which the individual is situated. Praxis, as seen in the first chapter, is and for Marx must be

¹⁰¹ Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," Easton and Guddat, p. 401; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.8, p. 534.

understood as a social rather than an exclusively individual phenomenon. But given this qualification, one may still assert that for Marx and contrary to Feuerbach, the perceived object is still not itself essentially given, but is, in a relevant sense of the term, "produced."

It appears then that on the theme of consciousness and its object, significantly perceptual consciousness in relation to its object, as well as on that of the significance of nature in relation to action, Marx stands in a posture of opposition to rather than of agreement with Feuerbach. This opposition is both noted in the "Theses on Feuerbach" and based on arguments implicit in the Manuscripts of 1844. And the arguments for both of these points of opposition appear significantly in the theory of human nature offered in those manuscripts. Just as Marx argues concerning the relation of praxis and nature in that theory of man, he argues also therein concerning the relation of praxis, consciousness including sense consciousness, and nature. Thus it seems that on both of these themes Althusser's claim that the "humanism" of Marx' Manuscripts is in its inspiration as well as its content "Feuerbachian" will not hold.

V. The Question of Community and Society.

A third area of Althusser's claim however remains to be treated, involving the question of the unity or disparity of Marx and Feuerbach on the assertion of the communal or social nature of man. And on this point it at least initially seems that Althusser's interpretation of Marx' theory of man in the Manuscripts might be given some credence.

Althusser asserts that in the period (1842-45) within which the Manuscripts were written, Marx envisioned a theoretical humanism in which

man was understood as "...primarily a 'Gemeinwesen,' a 'communal being,' a being who only actualizes himself theoretically (science) and practically (politics) in his universal human relations, relations with other men rather than with object (external nature 'humanized' through labor)." ¹⁰² And he further states that this "communal" theory of human nature is identical with "...the 'communal' humanism of Feuerbach." ¹⁰³ Now there are certain textual features of the Manuscripts of 1844 which apparently lend weight to this interpretation.

It has already been shown that Marx in the Manuscripts places great emphasis on the social nature of the individual as agent, and of man as such. The "...expression..." of the individual's life, Marx states in the Manuscripts, is "...an expression and assertion of social life." ¹⁰⁴ And indeed packed with Feuerbachian overtones is Marx' statement that, "...though man is therefore a particular individual - and precisely his particularity makes him an individual, an actual individual communal being he is equal to the totality, the ideal totality, the subjective existence of society explicitly thought and experienced." ¹⁰⁵ Moreover, as has also been seen, Marx in the Manuscripts lauds Feuerbach for the formulation of

¹⁰² Althusser, op. cit., p. 232.

¹⁰³ ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 306; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 116.

¹⁰⁵ ibid., p. 307; p. 117.

a materialism adequate to the description of the individual as actually and fundamentally social.¹⁰⁶ Texts such as these have led McLellan to comment, concerning the influence of Feuerbach's doctrine of man as communal in the Principles of the Philosophy of the Future in relation to Marx' Manuscripts that, "It is...in the Paris Manuscripts that Feuerbach is supreme and his all pervasive influence cannot escape anyone who carefully compares the respective texts,"¹⁰⁷ However, differing interpretations are possible and have been offered. Lobkowitz, for example, who states generally concerning Feuerbach's influence on Marx that, "...this influence would seem far less than is generally believed,"¹⁰⁸ insists that this comment is specifically accurate concerning the theories of man as communal and social as offered by the two.¹⁰⁹

An accurate determination of this question can only be the result of some attempt to analyze Feuerbach's theory of the communal nature of man itself. The texts of Feuerbach, both the Essence of Christianity and the Principles of the Philosophy of the Future readily allow this analysis, and it is one that can be initially related to previous statements made about Feuerbach's doctrine of sensation. For in the Principles of the Philosophy of the Future, Feuerbach explicitly relates his statement that sensation yields certainty, to the notion of man as communal. "The

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 316; p. 152.

¹⁰⁷ McLellan, The Young Hegelians and Karl Marx, p. 106.

¹⁰⁸ Lobkowitz, Theory and Practice, p. 251.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Lobkowitz, p. 360.

certainty of the existence of other things apart from me," he tells us, "is mediated for me through the certainty of the existence of another human being apart from me. That which I perceive alone I doubt; only that which the other also perceives is certain."¹¹⁰ Feuerbach's point here seems to be that first, as noted above, it is sensation which delivers the most basic and recognizable form of certitude, in virtue of the sensation's itself being that which is capable of being apprehended immediately. But second, as has also been seen, the data of sensation is, for Feuerbach, not biven to the sense subject in a merely immediate fashion. Although the object of sensation is for him finally a self contained and therefore non-mediated object, it is nonetheless one whose content must be made "visible" because it is "invisible to ordinary eyes."¹¹¹ That is, it must be rendered discernable through relevant affective and imaginative, as well as intellectual, acts.¹¹² The occurrence of affective and imaginative responses relevant to specific sorts of sense data is requisite in order that the sense data itself yield certitude to the subject. But the import of Feuerbach's texts cited above is in this also that the individual's ability to develop the affective and imaginative capacities necessary to reveal the truth of sense data is not possible apart from his membership in community. Feuerbach supports this assertion by no argument at this stage of his analysis. But the assertion itself

110. Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 59; Sämmtliche Werke, vol.2, p.304.

111 ibid., p. 60; p. 306.

112 cf. ibid.

seems to be this. Sense data is capable of delivering true certitude, but only when interpreted affectively and emotionally. But sense data can also only deliver recognized certitude to the individual in community, not to the individual as isolated. Therefore, the development of those affective and imaginative capacities necessary for recognizable certitude is possible only for the individual taken as communal.¹¹³

The general point of these statements is that, for Feuerbach, the individual is not self contained, is not capable of developing those capacities which as a human individual he needs to develop, in a condition of isolation. As noted above, the individual subject "needs" the perceptual object in order to be a subject, in Feuerbach's sense of the latter term. But now he is further asserting that community is necessary in order that the subject adequately attain the object. Thus he is asserting that community is necessary in order that the subject attain that which he requires or "needs" to be a subject at all, and to be adequately able to "perceive" his experience.

Feuerbach's procedure in developing these assertions involves his departing from a discussion of the perceptual object, and a move towards

¹¹³ As noted, Feuerbach offers no argument in the Principles of the Philosophy of the Future to support his assertions regarding 'sense certitude' and community. Therefore, it is very difficult to ascertain the content of those assertions. I shall argue that other and explicitly defended positions of Feuerbach exhibit consistency with the claim for the content of the assertion which I have made.

discussing the nature of individual personal subjectivity in a more general sense. But within this move he retains an intention of supporting the assertion that the individual subject requires community to be an individual subject at all.

An initial indication that this assertion might be justifiable is given by Feuerbach in the first pages of the Essence of Christianity. There, as seen above, Feuerbach argues that man's "species consciousness" necessarily implies that man as an individual, "...is himself at once I and Thou; he can put himself in place of another, for this reason, that his species, his essential nature, and not merely his individuality, is an object of thought."¹¹⁴ In virtue of his "species consciousness," in other words, the individual is capable of interpersonal or communal relations. This at least Feuerbach wishes to assert in this text. But he seems to wish to assert more than this as well.

To be an individual, "species consciousness" must be realized, or in some sense actually apprehended by the subject. But it is not only the case that the individual is constituted through "species consciousness." For, as noted above, all knowledge must in some way be derived from sense experience. Now "species consciousness" involves the individual's realization that "human nature" is a reality beyond that of the

¹¹⁴ Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity, Eliot, p. 2; Sämmtliche Werke, vol.6, p. 2.

singular discrete reality of the individual.¹¹⁵ But given Feuerbach's doctrine of the relation of all knowledge to sense experience, then the individual is only capable of realizing "species consciousness" if he is able to view the content of such consciousness, "human nature," as actually transcending his own discrete individuality, in its exhibition in sense experience.

This necessarily involves the individual's experiencing himself as in relation to the concrete personal other. For it is the concrete personal other who exhibits to the individual the phenomenon of "human nature" transcending his, the individual's own, discrete singularity. As seen above, "species consciousness" on the one hand renders the experience of interpersonality or community possible for Feuerbach.¹¹⁶ But on the other hand, it is the experience of interpersonality or community which provides the individual with the concrete exhibition or sensuous ground in virtue of which he can realize "species consciousness." Thereofre, it is the experience of community which constitutes the individual as a human individual. Or more simply, for Feuerbach the human individual must be, and must be understood as, communal.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity, Eliot, p.2; Sämmtliche Werke, vol.6, pp. 1-2. That Feuerbach intends this is clearly seen by his identification of species consciousness as the necessary condition for scientific knowledge, i.e., knowledge of classes rather than knowledge of discrete singular items.

¹¹⁶ Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity, Eliot, p. 2; Sämmtliche Werke, vol.6, p. 2,

Feuerbach develops this assertion of the necessary communality of the individual through a number of texts in the Essence of Christianity and the Principles of the Philosophy of the Future. He begins by reasserting the necessity of species consciousness, or "humanity" as an idea, being founded on concrete communal experience by comparing the felt effect of idea and concrete experience: "...the idea of humanity has little power over the feelings, because humanity is only an abstraction; and the reality which presents itself to us in distinction from this abstraction is the multitude of separate, limited individuals."¹¹⁷ The experience of concrete personal others is the individual's experience of "humanity," of human nature as transcending the limits of his singularity, and of its being embodied and realized in others as well as himself. It is this experience of sensuous concreteness, Feuerbach argues, which basically affects or has "power over the feelings" of the individual, and the "idea of humanity," species consciousness, is itself the accurate comprehension of community in its sensuous concreteness.¹¹⁸ Sensuous communal experience is had in an immediate way by the individual in direct interpersonal experience, in what Feuerbach calls the direct experience of the "I-thou."

¹¹⁷ Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity, Eliot, p. 153; Samtliche Werke, vol. 6, p. 185.

¹¹⁸ Cf. *ibid.*; Samtliche Werke, vol. 6, p. 184. One may note here that, despite the above statements, it is not Feuerbach's intention to wholly collapse the identity of the individual into that of the community. Feuerbach states that the ancients sacrificed the individual to the species, and that Christians sacrificed the species to the individual. His language suggests his opposition to both 'sacrifices'.

Feuerbach amplifies this assertion by further stating that it is only within the direct experience of communal interpersonality that the individual distinguishes and differentiates himself as an individual. One of his most overt statements of this idea involves a statement of the relation of personality and sexuality. The individual must experience himself sensuously, and thus must experience himself as a body.¹¹⁹ And personal embodiment of course involves sexual specification.¹²⁰

From this point Feuerbach goes on to make three statements. First, sexuality is not simply one property possessed by the individual among others and indifferent to those others, but is a pervasive feature of the reality of the personal individual. "The distinction of sex is not superficial, or limited to certain parts of the body; it is an essential one; it penetrates bone and marrow."¹²¹ Second, it is within situations of direct intimacy, such as sexual intimacy, that the individual's most basic and concrete experiences of interpersonality or community are had. "The thou between men and women has quite another sound than the monotonous thou between friends."¹²² One might generalize slightly from this statement to say that, for Feuerbach, those experiences of

¹¹⁹ ibid., p. 91; Sämmtliche Werke, vol 6, p. 109.

¹²⁰ ibid., pp. 91-92; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 6, pp. 110-111.

¹²¹ ibid., p. 92; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 6, p. 111.

¹²² ibid.

community necessary for the individual's realization of himself are as such necessarily and most concretely had through experiences of direct intimacy. But thirdly, Feuerbach goes on to assert that it is precisely within such situations of direct intimacy, referring again to sexual intimacy, that the individual differentiates himself from the other and realizes himself as this individual, as unique. "There is no thou, there is no I; but the distinction between I and thou, the fundamental condition of all personality, of all consciousness, is only real, living, ardent, when felt as the distinction between man and woman."¹²³

Some concrete and immediate experience of interpersonality is necessary for the individual in order that a sensuous ground for species consciousness be had. But such experience is also required in order that the individual be able to distinguish himself from others and realize his personal uniqueness. The realization of such uniqueness involves one's differentiating the characteristics and traits of his own personal self from those of other selves. But this can only occur if other selves are given within the experience of the individual. And for such experience to be effectively significant for the individual, it must occur in the context of a relation which, in Feuerbach's words, is "...real, living, ardent..." such as, for example, the sexual relationship. It is in the context of such a relationship that the individual most concretely relates himself to and differentiates himself from the other, and

¹²³ Ibid.

realizes himself as unique. Thus in this sense too community and significant interpersonality comprise necessary experience for the individual.

Developing this point, Feuerbach goes on to note that, in the act of differentiating himself from the other, one feature which the individual realizes concerning himself is his own limitation and imperfection. Noting this involves Feuerbach's unifying certain comments made early in the Essence of Christianity concerning human species consciousness with other comments noted above concerning individual self-differentiation and the synthesis of these comments in the statement that it is through concrete community that the individual overcomes those limitations which he notes as necessary features of himself.

Interpersonal experiences within which individual self-differentiation occurs involve the individual's noting distinctions between himself and others, and among other things distinctions of capacities and developed abilities. Friendship is an example of this. "Friendship can only exist between the virtuous, as the ancients said. But it cannot be based on perfect similarity; on the contrary, it requires diversity, for friendship rests on a desire for self-completion. One friend obtains through the other what he himself does not possess. The virtues of the one atone for the failings of the other...If I cannot be myself perfect, I yet at least love virtue, perfection, in others."¹²⁴ A concrete

124. Ibid., pp. 156-57; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 6, p. 189.

feature of individual self differentiation within interpersonal relations, like friendship, is the individual's noting his own limitations and imperfections vis a vis the other. This recognition provides a motive for such relations, a "...desire for self-completion." But Feuerbach seems additionally to assert that this motive is a consistently operative desire.

Feuerbach's rationale for this seemingly involves an appeal to initial statements concerning human consciousness as adequately present "...only in a being to whom his species, his essential nature, is an object of thought."¹²⁵ For Feuerbach, man's consciousness of his "essential nature" has a content, namely reason, will and love.

"Reason, love, force of will, are perfections - the perfections of the human being, nay, more, they are the absolute perfections of being."¹²⁶

These predicates must be taken as absolute or infinite perfections, in that they must be taken as ends in themselves: "...it is impossible to love, will, or think, without perceiving these activities to be perfections - impossible to feel that one is a loving, willing, thinking being without experiencing infinite joy therein...It is therefore impossible to be conscious of a perfection as an 'imperfection,' impossible to feel feeling limited, to think thought limited."¹²⁷

¹²⁵ ibid., p. 1, Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 6, p. 1,

¹²⁶ ibid., p. 3, Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 6, p. 3. Cf. ibid., pp. 3-12, Sämmtliche Werke, vol 6, pp. 3-13, in which Feuerbach expands in detail on these ideas.

¹²⁷ ibid., p. 6; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 6, p. 7.

Feuerbach's last statement here is the critical one for our purposes. In themselves, and as ends in themselves, reason, will, and love are taken by the individual to be infinite perfections, and thus capable of infinite expression. They are also taken by him to be perfections of human nature, and thus of himself as an individual embodiment of human nature. But at the same time the individual is not fully identical with human nature or with his species, is not the full embodiment of those perfections which are nonetheless his own. If the individual errs, as Feuerbach insists he does, in making "...his own limitations the limitations of the species," this is an error which arises from, "the mistake that he identifies himself immediately with the species, a mistake which is intimately connected with the individual's love of ease, sloth, vanity, and egoism."¹²⁸ Given, then, an accurate perception of himself, the individual must comprehend himself as characterized by reason, will, and love, infinite perfections of the species whose reality he individualizes, and at the same time as incapable within his own individuality of realizing the infinity of these perfections.

In this comprehension is rooted the desire noted above. The individual desires to realize infinite reason, will, and love, because these are infinite perfections of his own nature. But he is unable to achieve such realization on his own terms, because as distinct from the species, the individual is limited and is thus unable to fully embody

¹²⁸ ibid., p. 6; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 6, p. 7.

the species' perfections. The desire noted above must then be a structural and consistently operative desire for the individual.¹²⁹

But it is further one which can be related to by community as an essential element of the experience of the individual. Community yields the concrete experience of the individual's participation in the species. And concrete communal interaction involves interaction with others who in terms of their own developed abilities compensate for the deficiencies of the individual, and he for theirs. Communal interaction and experience then involves his experiencing a situation in which the perfections of human nature are developed beyond his own limited development of them. And thus actual community relates to and compensates the individual's desire for a perfection that transcends his own limitations.

McLellan sums up this idea in the comment that, for Feuerbach, "The fundamental unity of mankind that the idea of a species presupposes arises from the fact that men are not self-sufficient creatures; they have very different qualities, so it is only together that they can form the 'perfect' man."¹³⁰ Feuerbach himself states the idea in numerous ways, beginning with the general statement that, "Hence intercourse

129

Cf. Ibid., p. 153; Samtliche Werke, vol. 6, p. 184. Feuerbach argues that the consistency of the individual's desire to realize the perfection of the species is the basis of the religious illusion. "Thus the species is unlimited; the individual alone is limited. But the sense of limitation is painful, and hence the individual sets himself free from it by the contemplation of perfect Being; in this contemplation he possesses what is otherwise wanting to him."

130

McLellan, The Young Hegelians and Karl Marx, p. 92.

ameliorates and elevates; involuntarily and without disguise, man is different in intercourse from what he is when alone."¹³¹ Feuerbach's comment on friendship as such an 'elevation' has been seen. He discusses sexual love in these terms, as that context in which the individual, "...postulates the existence of another as a need of the heart, he reckons another as part of his own being; he declares the life which he has through love to be the truly human life, corresponding to the idea of man, i. e., of the species."¹³² Feuerbach even relates the idea of community as compensating the individual for his own felt sense of self limitation to the community as historical. History offers limitless possibilities for the overcoming of imperfections. And the individual, as participating in historical community, can envision these possibilities, albeit vicariously. "My life is bound to a limited time, not so the life of humanity; the history of mankind consists of nothing else than a continuous and progressive conquest of limits...the future always unveils the fact that the alleged limits of the species were only limits of individuals."¹³³ Thus in various ways community and interpersonality relate to the individual's desire to realize the perfections of the species, which are in themselves infinite.

The idea that reason, love, and will are perfections proper to the human species, and as such infinite perfections, allows Feuerbach to enunciate

131. Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity, Eliot, p. 156; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 6, p. 188.

132. Ibid.

133. Ibid., pp. 152-153; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 6, p. 184.

that, "Homo homini Deus est - This is the great practical principle; this is the axis on which revolves the history of the world."¹³⁴ And in that community is that through which these perfections are realized concretely as ends in themselves for the individual, then community is both essential to the individual, and is for him, in the only sense of the word which Feuerbach will accept, "sacred." Feuerbach's model for understanding community is and must be for him direct or interpersonal "I-Thou" relations, because it is in such relations that the individual experiences both interaction and self-differentiation in their fullest sensuous immediacy. But given that, he can confidently assert in concluding the Essence of Christianity that, "...true social relations are sacred as such."¹³⁶ And in concluding the Principles of the Philosophy of the Future he is capable of applying the above ideas to the topic of "thought," asserting that the individual's realization of reason, as of any other human perfection is possible only through communal participation. "The true dialectic is not a monologue of a solitary thinker himself; it is a dialogue between I and thou."¹³⁷ From the above, then one can recognize Feuerbach's emphasis on the communal nature of man, the individual as essentially communal or social. Social relations are necessary for the individual to be an individual;

134. Ibid., p. 271; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 6, p. 326.

135. Cf. Ibid. This idea is illustrated by Feuerbach in his statement immediately following the text cited above. "The relations of child and parent, of husband and wife, of brother and friend - in general of man to man - in short all the moral relationships are per se religious. Life as a whole is, in its essential, substantial relations, throughout of a divine nature.

136. Ibid., p. 273; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 6, p. 329.

137. Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 72; Sämmtliche Werke, vol. 2, p. 319.

they provide the context in which his imaginative and affective capacities can be concretely developed; they constitute him as a human individual, and enable him to achieve individual self awareness through actual self differentiation; they relate to a desire which is structurally involved in the human individual as such. In language perilously close to that of at least the young Marx, and thus in seeming substantiation of Althusser's claim, Feuerbach asserts that, "The essence of man is contained only in the community and unity of man with man..."¹³⁸ But at the same time one might read the statement of Marx in the "Theses," that, "Feuerbach resolves the religious essence into the human essence. But the essence of man is no abstraction inhering in each single individual. In its actuality it is the ensemble of social relationships."¹³⁹ And the implication of this statement is that, for Marx, Feuerbach does not comprehend these social relationships adequately.

One aspect of the above criticism involved Marx's attitude towards Feuerbach's conception of the function of a theory of human nature. This criticism will be considered subsequently in this chapter, along with analogous statements made by Marx against Prudhon. But this implication of the above statement from Marx' Theses" depends on a prior criticism of Feuerbach's doctrine of the nature of social relations. And it is a criticism which, I shall argue, is both is both founded upon argumentative

138. Ibid., p. 71; Sämmtliche Werke, vol.2, p. 319.

139. Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," Easton and Guddat, p. 402; MEGA, Abt. i. Bd. 5, p. 535

details present in the Paris Manuscripts, and is tied to another statement made by Marx in the sixth Thesis, that Feuerbach is "...compelled 1) to abstract from the historical process and to establish religious feeling as something self contained, and to presuppose an abstract - isolated - human individual."¹⁴⁰

A hint as to why these comments concerning social relationships and history are linked together by Marx in the Sixth Thesis is offered by Rotenstreich, in his commentary on that thesis. "The view that regards society as a natural reality implies that it is a given reality; and if society is viewed as an historical reality, the implication is that it is capable of changing itself."¹⁴¹ For history to occur, it is necessary that the historical subject, society,¹⁴² be capable of process and change. But

140. Ibid.

141. Rotenstreich, op. cit., p. 73.

142. There can be no doubt that, for Marx, society is the 'historical subject, the subject of the historical process. Althusser, pp. cit., p. 328, notes that, for the mature Marx, "The subjects of history are given human societies." But the foundations of this statement are clearly present in the Paris Manuscripts as well. For example, Marx there frequently refers to 'communism' as the goal of history (cf. Easton and Guddat, p. 314; MEGA Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 125), but the term 'communism' in the Manuscripts refers to a system of social relations. Also, Marx asserts in the Paris Manuscripts (cf. Easton and Guddat, p. 314; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 125), that, "...for socialist man, however, the entire so called world history is only the creation of man through human labor and the development of nature for man..." As already seen, Marx also argues in the Manuscripts that both the motive forces of man's self actualization and his relations to nature involve praxis as conditioned in its actual details by society. Thus on these terms too, Marx must see society as the subject of the historical process, now identified with the process of human self actualization.

then a theoretical account of society, or of social relations, must be one which includes a description of society as capable of undergoing change, such that it can be the subject of the historical process. Otherwise the possibility of history itself is left unaccounted for. And Rotenstreich states, Marx understands Feuerbach's doctrine of social relations as not yielding such a description in that the latter understands society "...as a natural reality..."

To see Marx' criticism of Feuerbach here, two statements made above about the latter's doctrine of society and community may be recalled. For Feuerbach social relations provide those and only those experiences through which the individual can be an individual, as the bases both of the realization of "species consciousness" and of individual discrimination. And for Feuerbach, social relations provide those experiences through which the felt limitations of the individual can, in one way, be overcome. This is for him to say at least that the individual is necessarily social. But more, these characteristics for Feuerbach are defining characteristics of society or community itself. Society for Feuerbach is given in direct, experienced interpersonal or "I-Thou" relations. The description of these relations and of their effects on individual participants, is a description for him of the nature of society itself, and its effects on its individual members. This description involves the ideas: a) that social relations occur directly within and at the basis of human experience; b) that such relations provide the basis for the individual's realization of the nature of his species; c) that such relations provide the basis for personal individual differentiation;

and d) that such relations relate to the individual's desire to overcome imperfections which as an individual he necessarily possesses. But these are descriptive statements about the nature of society which are in principle ahistorical. They describe, in a Feuerbachian context, simply features of direct interpersonal relations which are indifferent to history. But they are also descriptions of the essential nature of society for Feuerbach. And if so, then society is described by him as essentially ahistorical.

The point here is not that Feuerbach does not want to describe society in relation to history. Indeed a text cited above indicates his desire to do this. But Marx' question is, can Feuerbach succeed in this? And his negative answer is based on the idea that Feuerbach describes the essential features of social relationships through a series of statements whose contents must be taken as unchanging contents. The direct immediacy of social or interpersonal relations, the function of such relations as bases for species realization and individual self-differentiation, and the role of such relations as enabling the individual to overcome those imperfections which he feels resident in himself as a mere individual, are characteristics and functions which social relations can in principle have or exercise in any historical context. But then to assert that these are the essential characteristics and functions of social relations is to assert that society is in its essential reality "...a given reality...",¹⁴³ or, essentially ahistorical. This forces

143. Rotenstreich, op. cit., p. 73.

Feuerbach both to "...abstract from the historical process...",¹⁴⁴ to leave history unaccounted for, and also to describe society inadequately, in not describing it such that it can be viewed as the subject of history.

Marx indicates the correction he takes to overcome the difficulty of Feuerbach's in the Eights Thesis, in asserting that, "All social life is essentially practical."¹⁴⁵ To understand society as essentially founded upon "practical," i. e. active, relations, or productive relations, is to describe society in such a way as to render it comprehensible as the historical subject.¹⁴⁶ The details of practical or productive activity can vary within societies. If social reality is comprehended as essentially involving such relations, then it is comprehended as that which can be the subject of historical change. The elucidation of such a doctrine of society would then provide both an explanation of the possibility of history, and a more adequate account of the nature of society itself.

144. Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," Easton and Guddat, p. 402; MEGA Abt. I, Bd. 5, p. 535.

145. Ibid. Cf. Rotenstreich, op. cit., p. 80. Rotenstreich comments that this statement epitomizes Marx' other assertions on practical, productive activity in Theses One to Three, and Five.

146. It is also, and this Marx takes to be crucial in this thesis, to understand society as that which engenders ideological consciousness. This Marx asserts in the remainder of the Eighth Thesis. Cf. Easton and Guddat, p. 402; MEGA, Abt. I, Bd. 5, p. 535. Marx states that, "All the human mysteries which lead theory to mysticism find their rational solutions in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice." Thus the understanding of society which Marx offers here enables him, for example, to perform a critique of religion in a way unavailable to Feuerbach, because it provides him with a theoretical model which points to an examination of the 'practical' social basis of religion.

Marx' classic statement of social productive activity as the basis of history and his description of the historical process itself, is found in the "Preface" to his 1859 Critique of Political Economy. There he speaks of "social production," distinguishes "forces of production" and "relations of production,"¹⁴⁷ and describes the historical process as governed by the former outstripping the latter.¹⁴⁸ But we have seen that as early as 1845, Marx indicates in the "Theses on Feuerbach" at least the desire to account for history by describing society as essentially constituted by practical productive activity. And it can be shown that at least this idea is resident in the Manuscripts of 1844 as well, and resides there as a feature of Marx' theory of human nature.

Proof of this statement can be seen through reference back to my first chapter, where I argue that, for the Marx of the Manuscripts, human praxis engenders, and is the condition of the possibility of, social relations. Especially important for this idea are the texts where Marx asserts that man "produces" society, and that, for the individual, "...the object, the immediate activity of his own individuality, is at the same time his existence for other men, their existence for him."¹⁴⁹ Beneath

147. Marx, A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, trans. S. Ryazanskaya, ed. M. Dobb, (New York: International Publishers, 1970), pp. 20-21; MEW, vol. 13, pp. 8-9.

148. Cf. Marx, Political Economy, ed. Dobb. pp. 20-21; MEW, vol 13, pp. 8-9.

149. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 305; MEGA, Abt.1. Bd. 3, p. 115. The second of these statements is in context asserted by Marx as a description of social relations within a context characterized by the overcoming of private property. That it is a description of social relations in general can be seen by comparing it to Marx' analysis of the

these texts lie two assertions germane to the present topic.

One is the by now familiar assertion as to objectification as a characteristic of praxis or productive activity. The product of activity is, as we have seen Marx state, the "resumé" of productive activity,¹⁵⁰ the embodiment of the details of that activity of which it is a product or result. As such, and given the assertion of the necessary relation between activity and nature already laid down by Marx,¹⁵¹ the product, as both the result of the individual's activity and external to the individual himself,¹⁵² renders public the details of the individual's agency, and renders the details of that activity as embodied in the result available for inspection by and appropriation by others. In addition, Marx also implies here that this objectifying or publicizing of the individual through the result of this activity is necessary in order that social relations occur at all. In order that one individual interact with another, something about the former must be public (rather

alienation of man from his fellow man (cf. Easton and Guddat, p. 295; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd. 3, p. 89. There, Marx argues that it is precisely because the individual is alienated from his product and thereby from himself, that he is alienated from his fellow man as well. And thus in an alienated as well as a non-alienated social condition, it is the product, or as Marx puts it here the "object" that mediates the individual's existence with and his relations to others.

150. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 291; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 85.

151. Ibid., p. 290; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd. 3, p. 84.

152. Ibid., p. 291, MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 85.

than purely private to him) so as to be accessible to the latter. Without this condition's being met, social relations or interaction would be impossible. And it is precisely the product of activity, as the objectification of activity itself, which renders some feature of him, his action itself, public in such a way as to make him a possible member of a social relation. Moreover, it is also through the product of his activity that the individual brings others into social relations with himself, again by publicizing something of himself to which they can relate. It is because of this that Marx asserts that the individual's product of activity, or "object" as the term is now used, is "...his existence for other men...and their existence for him..."¹⁵³ The point is that, for Marx here social relations must be understood as relations based on productive activity. And this idea is emphasized by Marx in the "Excerpt Notes of 1844" as well.¹⁵⁴

No claim is made here that the above comments represent Marx' full doctrine of society and of the necessary relation of the individual and society as that doctrine is exhibited in the 1844 Manuscripts, or that the 1844 Manuscripts themselves exhibit Marx' full doctrine of society as a system of productive activities, forces, and relations, or that the Manuscripts contain Marx' developed notion of the relation between society so understood and history. The first would require an exposition

153. Ibid., p. 305; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 115 .

154. Marx, "Excerpt Notes of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 281; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 546=547.

of Marx' dictum that, "...society itself produces man as man..."¹⁵⁵ that social relations systematize, govern, and condition specific productive activities undertaken within them, through the offering of an argument similar to that developed in chapter one towards this conclusion.¹⁵⁶

Regarding the second, as early as the German Ideology, Marx offers some fleshing out of the notion of society as a system of productive inter-relations.¹⁵⁷ And in the German Ideology, too, Marx develops his doctrine of the relation between social productive activity and history,¹⁵⁸ a doctrine whose mature and developed explicitation is to be found in texts such as the 1857-58 Grundrisse,¹⁵⁹ and most concisely in the "Preface" to the Critique of Political Economy of 1859.

I wish to argue the much narrower thesis that Marx' criticism of Feuerbach's doctrine of society as inadequate to an explanation of history in that it does not comprehend society "practically," as founded on practical productive relations, is, insofar as that criticism is offered in the "Theses on Feuerbach," prefigured in the Manuscripts of 1844. that Marx offers a rationale in support of that criticism in those

155. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 305; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 116.

156. Ibid., pp. 305-307; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, pp. 115-118.

157. Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 18; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.5, p. 19.

158. Cf. Ibid., pp. 16-19; MEGA, Abt.1. Bd.5, pp. 17-19.

159. Cf. Marx, "Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations, ed. and trans. E.J. Hobsbawm, (New York: International Publishers, 1965), a translation of a text from the Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie, (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1953), pp. 375-413, in which these ideas are developed.

Manuscripts, and that the rationale he there offers is explicitly related to his theory of human nature.

In the portion of the Manuscripts referred to here, Marx explicitly objects to the Feuerbachian attitude which conceives social relations to be given directly in the experience of the individual, in the form of immediately had "I-thou" relations. "Social activity and satisfaction by no means exist merely in the form of immediate communal activity and immediate communal satisfaction."¹⁶⁰ And Marx' objection to Feuerbach here is specifically that he does not comprehend social relations as made possible by, and one might also say as "mediated" by, productive activity. Marx in the Manuscripts even hints at the idea of society as an historical subject, at least through his references to communist society as the goal of history.¹⁶¹ On these terms, then, it seems invalid to argue that the Marx of such texts as the "Theses on Feuerbach" and the German Ideology differs fundamentally from the doctrine of the Paris Manuscripts, and that the "communal humanism" of those Manuscripts is merely borrowed from Feuerbach.

In addition to the above, two further aspects of Marx' criticism of Feuerbach's doctrine of social relations should be noted. These are, first, that Marx understands Feuerbach as unable to describe the social individual adequately as an agent, and second, that Feuerbach's concept of the social individual as desiring to overcome his felt limitations

160. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 306; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 116.

161. Cf. Ibid.

through association with others is an inadequate description of the phenomenon of needs.

The first of these points may initially seem to be merely a repetition of the above. But the above argument represented a Marxian critique of Feuerbach's doctrine of social relations as such. This point rather reflects a Marxian critique of Feuerbach's attitude towards the status of the individual as a member of social relations. And it begins from the text of Marx cited above, stating that, "Social activity and satisfaction by no means merely exist in the form of an immediate communal activity and immediate communal satisfaction."¹⁶². For Feuerbach, the experience of community or of social relations is had by the individual in its most concrete and essential features in direct interpersonal relations, in relations of the "I" to the "thou" in Feuerbach's language. Of such relations, Feuerbach asserts that they directly and immediately occur, that they are necessary for the individual for reasons cited above, and that they satisfy. And these assertions are taken by him to describe such relations essentially.

But given this, what can be said of the individual whose experience occurs essentially within the context of such relations? Simply that he so occurs, that he must so occur in order to realize himself as a human individual, and that he derives necessary satisfaction from his direct occurrence within the interpersonal milieu. This, however, is to omit any discussion of the individual as a real agent, and it is precisely this

162. Ibid.

omission which Marx seems to find objectionable.

This objection is not one primarily directed at the internal consistency of Feuerbach's position. It is one directed rather at the adequacy of his position, its ability to include and account for data which need to be included and accounted for. The individual's occurrence as an agent in society, rather than simply his occurrence itself in social relations, is one datum which, Marx holds, needs to be described and explained by any adequate theory of social relations. This means that a theory of social relations must at least offer some reason to describe the individual as an agent in society.¹⁶³ And Feuerbach's theory of social relations does not offer this. Feuerbach perhaps could assert the statements noted above as describing the individual in community, and also assert that this individual is the subject of actual productive activity. But this is simply to add concepts together or to lay them side by side, rather than to theoretically unify them through argument. Because of the statements he does make concerning the nature of immediate community, and because he holds that these statements describe social relations generally in their essential features, Feuerbach is unable to describe the individual productive agent in society with sufficient theoretical force. And thus he is even more unable to theoretically comprehend the statement made by Marx in the Paris Manuscripts, clearly descriptive of the individual as a productive agent, that, "The expression of his

¹⁶³ ibid.

life - even if it does not appear immediately in the form of a communal expression carried out together with others - is therefore an expression and assertion of social life.^{164.}"

Finally, a contrast must be made between Marx' notion of "needs" in relation to the social individual, and Feuerbach's notion of the "desire" which the individual feels in relation to community. And it will be seen that on this point, too, Marx levels criticism against Feuerbach's doctrine of social relations.

For Feuerbach, as noted above, community relates to the desire which the individual entertains in relation to his own felt limitations. That desire must be examined in more detail here. We have seen Feuerbach argue that it is through concrete communal experiences that the individual both achieves "species consciousness" and discriminates himself as an individual distinct from others. But this is also to say that through concrete communal experiences the individual achieves realization of the perfections of human nature, which are the contents of "species consciousness," as infinite or absolute, as well as of himself as individually actualizing those perfections in only a limited fashion. This latter awareness is had both through the individual's noting in others the actualization of some human perfections to a greater degree than within himself,¹⁶⁵ and through his experiencing interpersonal

164. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 306; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 117.

165. Cf. Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity, Eliot, p. 156; Samtliche Werke, vol. 6, p. 189.

contexts in which certain human perfections are experienced as ends in themselves e.g. love in the context of the sexual relationship. These statements point out that, as Feuerbach understands it, communal experience does not simply relate to that desire which the individual experiences to overcome his necessary limitations; communal experience is also the source of that desire. It is in virtue of his being located communally, then, that the individual experiences that desire which in turn governs his actions towards the realization and enrichment of interpersonal relations, and thus, towards the satisfaction of the desire itself.

But one can immediately see that, for Marx, this discussion is inadequate because too abstract. And it is overly abstract both as a discussion of desire or need itself, and as one of the relation between desire or need and communal or social relations.

As seen in the first chapter Marx does insist on describing the individual as subject of desires or needs. On the one hand, some discussion of needs is necessary in order to make sense of the phenomenon of activity: activities are undertaken towards the satisfaction of needs.¹⁶⁷ On the other hand, Marx seems also to hold that needs themselves can only be adequately comprehended in relation to the notion of activity: a need is itself some felt lack or deficiency which the individual experiences about himself, and whose resolution or overcoming involves

166. Cf. Ibid., p. 156; Sämtliche Werke, vol.6, p. 188.

167. Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, pp. 325-326; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, pp. 160-161.

his undertaking some relevant activity. Further, we have seen that for Marx there is also a necessary relation between the occurrence of needs and social relationships. One of Marx' ways of defining human productive activity or praxis involves his holding that such activity is based on and governed by needs of two sorts: "subsistence needs" rooted in the physiological structure of the organism, and "human needs," which are developed beyond those involving simply physiological requirements and responses, and which are the source of activity which can be more accurately entitled productive,¹⁶⁹ and Marx would insist creative.¹⁷⁰

Marx further insists in this context that human needs are developmental, and that a need which develops in the experience of the individual agent develops from activity undertaken for the satisfaction of other needs.¹⁷¹

Here the relation between the occurrence of needs and society or social relations can be seen. In that newly developed needs arise from instances of productive activity, the details of these new needs are the

168. Cf. Ibid., p. 326; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 161.

169. Cf. Ibid., pp. 292 and 294; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, pp. 86 and 88.

170. Cf. Ibid., p. 294; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 88.

171. Cf. Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, pp. 16-17; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd, 5, p. 18. Marx' most explicit early statement of his idea is found in this text already cited from The German Ideology. But, as is argued in my first chapter, all the concepts which Marx takes to be necessary for the substantiation of this statement are operative in those portions of the Paris Manuscripts in which Marx' early theory of man is developed.

result of those instances of productive activity from which they develop. ^{172.} But in turn the details of that productive activity available to the individual agent is initially determined by the content of the social relations in which he is located, in that social relations constitute a milieu which systematizes the activity of production occurring within it. ¹⁷³ The social implication of this is that the content of newly developed needs is the result of the features of the social context in which the practical agent, as subject of those needs, is situated.

These statements form the basis for a Marxian critique of Feuerbach on the point noted above. Feuerbach is able to describe desire as a feature of the experience of the individual which arises out of his actual communal relations. And he is further able to offer something of a description of that desire: it is a desire of the individual to overcome his necessary limited possession of the perfections of his own nature. But given the limitations of his own analysis, Feuerbach is unable to go beyond these statements, His analysis is unable to point out any feature of the experience of community other than that communal experience **itself** involves the direct experience of interpersonal relations, And likewise, he is unable to point out any feature of

172. Cf. Henri Lefebvre, Dialectical Materialism, trans. J. Sturrock, (London: Johnathan Cape Ltd., 1968) p. 118, for an argument which supports this statement.

173. Cf. Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal. p. 18; MEGA, Abt.1. Bd.5, p. 19. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 306; MEGA, Abt1, Bd.3, p. ii6. It is in The German Ideology that Marx specifically defines society in this fashion. But the definition is clearly prefigured in the section of the Paris Manuscripts referred to here.

this desire of the individual itself, other than that it is the desire of the individual to fully possess the perfections of his own nature, reason, love, and will. But this is, on the one hand, to discuss desire or need abstractly, because even the desire to exercise reason, love, or will can take on a multiplicity of forms, depending upon the actual social environment within which one is situated.¹⁷⁴

It is, secondly, to omit a discussion of and an account of a vast range of needs other than this desire itself of which the individual is capable of being, and indeed must be, the subject. For one thing, it omits a discussion of subsistence needs. Feuerbach seems to wish to discuss something of this sort; he does assert that, "Indeed, even the stomach of man...is not animal but human..."¹⁷⁵ But his analysis of the desire of the individual to overcome his limited possession of the perfections of his nature ultimately collapses all other needs into simply this desire. Marx, on the other hand, certainly wishes to assert that subsistence and human needs occur concurrently and are integrated within genuine human praxis,¹⁷⁶ but he also wishes to maintain a distinction between these two sorts of needs,¹⁷⁷ and to develop a theory

174. Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 306; MEGA, Abt.1. Bd.3, p. 116. This is clearly implied in Marx' description of scientific theoretical behavior.

175. Feuerbach, Principles, Vogel, p. 69; Sämmtliche Werke, vol.2, p. 316.

176. Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 292; MEGA Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 86.

177. Cf. Ibid., pp. 325-326; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, pp. 160-161.

of needs which will account for both.

Finally, Feuerbach is unable on Marx' terms to point out those specific features of social relations which result in the development of needs for the individual. He is simply able to hold that communal experience is directly had, and that it is the source of desire. But in that he is unable to point out that about the individual which is the source of his developing new needs, namely, productive activity, he is unable also to point out that about society which concretely influences the development of those needs: society as the systematization of the productive options available to the individual.

In short, Marx views Feuerbach as unable to accurately describe and account for the essentially social character of needs, and of the individual himself, to assert accurately that man is "...the ensemble of social relationships."¹⁷⁸ Feuerbach is only able to describe the individual as the subject of desire in general, to wit the general desire to fully exercise rationality, affection, and volition, and is only able to attain an abstract description of community as the source of this desire, community as the experience of interpersonality immediately had. He is unable to point out the specific features of the social context which elicit the development of needs within the individual, or the concrete character and range of the needs operative within the individual himself.

178. Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," Easton and Guddat, p. 402; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.5, p. 535.

At this point one might pause to note that, given the above, it appears that the interpretation of Marx' theory of man offered by Althusser is untenable. Althusser comments that the theory of man offered by Marx is identical in all but terminology with the doctrine of human nature developed by Feuerbach, and specifically with Feuerbach's understanding of man as essentially communal or social. But we have seen three critical themes, those of the relation of nature and action, nature and consciousness, and the social dimension of the individual itself, on which Marx markedly differs from and stands in opposition to Feuerbach's philosophical doctrine. That opposition is discoverable not only in certain texts of 1845, such as the "Theses on Feuerbach" and the German Ideology, as Althusser himself will admit, but also in the Manuscripts of 1844. Althusser's interpretation then will not hold. One must rather hold that in the Paris Manuscripts Marx develops a theory of man that is uniquely his own rather than borrowed from Feuerbach, and that this theory manifests a continuity with Marx' 1845 texts.¹⁷⁹

VI. Humanism and Ideology.

A final point in Althusser's critique of the 'humanism' of the Paris Manuscripts must however be dealt with. This is Althusser's comment as to Marx' own criticism of the viability of a theory of human nature, as expressed in such texts as the "Theses on Feuerbach,"

¹⁷⁹. Cf. Louis Dupre, The Philosophical Foundations of Marxism, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World Inc., 1966), p. 121. By the time Marx penned the Paris Manuscripts, he had discovered that Feuerbach's "...man of flesh and blood was no less abstract than Hegel's Idea."

the German Ideology, and the Poverty of Philosophy. As Althusser reads the texts, Marx in 1845 came to grips with the question of the possibility of a theory of human nature and rejected this possibility because, "It implied, as he confronted it, two complimentary postulates defined by him in the sixth thesis on Feuerbach: 1) that there exists a universal essence of man; 2) that this essence is the attribute of 'isolated individuals' who are its real subjects."¹⁸⁰

Marx certainly wishes to deny these postulates in the Sixth Thesis. He asserts there that, "...the essence of man is no abstraction inhering in each single individual. In its actuality it is the ensemble of social relationships."¹⁸¹ And he reinforces this assertion as a specific criticism of Feuerbach in the Eighth Thesis, in stating that, "...perceptual materialism," i.e. Feuerbach's doctrine, is one "that does not comprehend sensuousness as practical activity, is the view of separate individuals in civil society."¹⁸² The questions which pose themselves here are, what are the details of this criticism offered by Marx of Feuerbach; is this an implicit criticism by Marx of his own theory in the Paris Manuscripts; and is there any role for a theory of man which, given these statements, Marx might understand as valid?

Regarding the first question, Marx' criticism of Feuerbach here may

180. Althusser, op. cit., p. 234.

181. Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," Easton and Guddat, p. 402; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.5, p. 535.

182. Ibid.

be fruitfully seen in relation to certain of his criticisms of Prudhon offered in the Poverty of Philosophy.¹⁸³ In asserting that Feuerbach's doctrine is "...the view of separate individuals in civil society..." Marx is pointing out that for Feuerbach, the individual is himself and on his own terms the embodiment of human nature, as possessor of the perfections of the species, although his experience is also given as directly interpersonal. And this implies that the desires or 'needs' of the individual can be accurately deduced from a correct theory of human nature. But Marx wishes to argue, as pointed out previously, that to describe the individual concretely as the subject of needs involves the description of those needs themselves as developing dialectically from undertaken instances of praxis, and in the face of a social milieu which systematizes and thus determines the options for productive activity available to the individual agent, as well as providing the "...material of...activity..."¹⁸⁴ available for the agent's use, and the possibilities of the imaginative development of new forms of praxis. It is from this basis that consciousness, as a mode of effectively dealing with the environment, arises as a capacity for the individual. And it is from this basis also that affection and volition arise as available ways of relating to personal others within the social environment, but not the

183. Cf. Shlomo Avineri, The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 71, where it is suggested that the criticisms of Feuerbach and Prudhon implied here are identical.

184. Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 306, MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 116, for this usage.

most basic ways of so relating, in that, for Marx, all instances of interpersonal interaction are founded upon and made possible by that objectification which results from productive activity itself.¹⁸⁵

It is the context of these notions that Marx wishes to assert against Feuerbach in the Sixth Thesis that, "...the essence of man...is the ensemble of social relationships." It is the specific detail of the social environment which governs those forms of praxis available to the individual as options, which forms the contextual basis from which he may develop new modes of productive activity through creative imagination. Social relations are thus the necessary context conditioning the individual's possession of needs, his development of new needs, and his exercise of consciousness, affection, and volition as manners of relating to and dealing with his natural-social environment. This is to say that, for Marx, any attempt to elucidate a theory of man which would postulate specific predicates such as rationality, affection, and volition as the perfections of or fundamental needs resident in human nature, in abstraction from a discussion of these as developing in their actual and varied manifestations from real productive activity, and productive activity in turn as conditioned and constituted by existing historical society, is to Marx objectionable. And this is precisely the objection which he levels against Feuerbach in the Sixth and Eighth Theses.

185. Cf. Ibid., p. 305; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 115. Also see Marx, "Excerpt-Notes of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 281; MEGA, Abt.1. Bd.3, pp. 546-547.

As noted above, these criticisms of Feuerbach are developed by Marx in criticisms of Prudhon offered in the Poverty of Philosophy. Their content may be developed, therefore, by a brief examination of selected ideas from that work.

Avineri sums up well Marx' criticism of Prudhon, and the unity of this with his attack on Feuerbach. "Classical materialism...reduced human activity to abstract postulates like 'the essence of man,' making a discussion of history as man's self development impossible on its own premises. According to Marx, Prudhon faced the same dilemma when he started, under the influence of classical political economy, to discuss human nature per se, overlooking the fact that human nature itself is the ever-changing product of human activity, ie. of history."¹⁸⁶ That this comment accurately reflects Marx' criticism of Prudhon can be seen from an examination of the text.

Marx first accuses Prudhon of a dual error with regard to his comprehension of needs as the source of individual productive activity, and of society as the context in which productive activities and relations of production occur and are developed. According to Marx, Prudhon erroneously holds first that productive activity is initiated in virtue of the individual's sensing certain innate needs which cannot be satisfied by "nature's spontaneous production,"¹⁸⁷ and whose satisfaction

186. Avineri, op. cit., p. 71.

187. Marx, The Poverty of Philosophy, (New York: International Publishers, 1963), p. 31; Misère de la Philosophie, (Paris: Editions Sociales, 1946), p. 31.

requires some practical initiative of the individual. To render his productive activities more efficient, the individual agrees to cooperate productively with others in society who are able to carry out different and various productive-economic functions.¹⁸⁸

But to propose these theses is to err on two counts. It is, first, to fail to offer an explanation of the development of those needs which yield the initiation of productive or "economic" activity. Marx' implication here is that, because Prudhon is unable to offer such an explanation, his only way of accounting for the occurrence of needs is the positing of a human essence, in the sense of an essence of the homo economicus, from which such needs are directly derived. This involves an error of which, as Althusser notes, Feuerbach is in Marx' eyes equally guilty, that of supposing, "...1) that there exists a universal essence of man; 2) that this essence is the attribute of 'isolated individuals' who are its real subjects."¹⁸⁹ Second, Prudhon is unable to offer an account of the genesis of social relationships. He simply hypostatizes society as an existing entity, which as existing can then be the scene of productive relations towards the enhanced satisfaction of innately possessed needs. He is unable to account for the genesis of society as made possible by praxis, or to describe accurately the nature of society

188. Cf. Poverty, pp. 32 and 33; Misère, pp. 32 and 33, to note that, as Marx reads Prudhon, the latter errs on the question of the origin of exchange value. "'A man' sets out to 'propose' to other men, his collaborators in various functions, that they establish exchange, and make a distinction between ordinary value and exchange value."

189. Althusser, op. cit., p. 234.

as fundamentally the systematization of productive activities. As Marx puts it, "...M. Prudhon personifies society; he turns it into a person,"¹⁹⁰ considers it as a person and an entity, rather than as a system of relations.

Because of this dual error, Prudhon, as Marx reads him, falls prey to further erroneous ideas concerning both man and society. Concerning society, Prudhon is first unable, like Feuerbach, to accurately describe it as the subject of history. If society is the scene of productive activities and relations, and if productive activities are undertaken because of needs which arise out of a universal essence of man, then neither will these activities, nor society as the scene thereof, undergo historical change.¹⁹¹ Prudhon is unable to describe society as the subject of history, and thus is further unable to account for historical change, to note that, "The movement of history produces social relations."¹⁹²

More germane to our theme, for Marx, Prudhon errs further in describing man, specifically in his description of human productive activity and human needs. Because he fails to accurately note the relation of needs to praxis, he is unable to define human needs as essentially developmental, or to see the relation between developed needs and the social milieu of the individual; unable to hold, in short, that,

¹⁹⁰ Poverty, p. 91; Misère, pp. 73-74.

¹⁹¹ Cf. Poverty, p. 122; Misère, pp. 97-98, for Marx' explicit reply to Prudhon on this point.

¹⁹² Poverty, p. 106; Misère, p. 86.

"Most needs arise directly from production, or from a state of affairs based on production."¹⁹³ Because he invalidly posits an essence of the homo economicus, that is, Prudhon is unable to recognize that the needs which give rise to praxis, the details of productive activity itself, and the social relationships occurring between productive agents, change through history. Again, as Marx puts this in the Poverty of Philosophy, "M. Prudhon does not know that all history is nothing but a continuous transformation of human nature."¹⁹⁴

From this, one may see that Marx levels certain common objections against both Feuerbach and Prudhon, concerning the possibility of a theory of human nature. He objects to a theory of human nature which would posit given needs, be they "humanistic" or economic," as resident in the individual simply because of his possession of "human nature;" or, to any theory of human nature from which given and specific needs may be deduced as necessarily occurring for the (ahistorical) individual. He objects to any theory of human nature which is unable to account for the development of new needs out of instances of praxis. And he objects to any theory of human nature which is unable to comprehend the individual as a productive agent, as one whose experience, in terms of his very productive activity itself, is concretely governed and conditioned by his social relationships; and theory of man unable to comprehend that

193. Poverty, p. 42; Misère, p. 49.

194. Poverty, p.147, see also pp. 160-161; Misère, p. 115, see also p. 80.

"...the essence of man is...the ensemble of social relationships."¹⁹⁵

Given these objections, however, one can see upon comparison that Marx is not objecting, as Althusser claims he is, to his own theory of man as developed in the Paris Manuscripts and elsewhere. And in the Manuscripts themselves, Marx provides at least the conceptual bases for the overcoming of these objections.

First, as seen in chapter one, Marx undertakes his description of the relation of praxis and needs in the Paris Manuscripts, and links this to his discussion of action and nature already noted in this chapter. For the individual agent, "The objects of his drives...exist outside him as independent, yet they are objects of his need, essential and indispensable to the exercise and confirmation of his essential capacities."¹⁹⁶ The distinction between subsistence needs and human needs is also drawn in the Manuscripts.¹⁹⁷ And most essentially, those concepts which in a Marxian context explain how it is possible that activity towards the satisfaction of needs may result both in that satisfaction and in the development of new needs are also laid down therein, as I show in chapter one, under the headings of transformation, objectification, and self actualization. In that praxis results in a product

¹⁹⁵Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," Easton and Guddat, p. 402; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 535.

¹⁹⁶Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 325; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 116.

¹⁹⁷Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 292; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 86.

which in its "objective" reality embodies the details of that activity of which it is the result, then human praxis is such as to render the natural context in which it necessarily occurs transformed, precisely because that content now includes some item that is the product not of nature taken simply, but of the activity of the agent on nature.¹⁹⁸

This however is to say that the environment is transformed and thus is one which offers new possibilities to the subject of praxis. Further, in acting towards the satisfaction of a need, the subject of praxis transforms not only his natural environment but also himself: "...objectification also connotes self actualization: by externalizing his inner life through labor, man labors and creates, in short, brings out of himself his human potentialities..."¹⁹⁹ In developing his own capacities through praxis, the productive individual develops himself as one capable of responding to new possibilities which his transformed environment, elicits, as one capable of developing and of being the subject of new needs, and of relating to these needs through more complex forms of productivity. It is in the German Ideology that Marx asserts that "...as soon as a need is satisfied...new needs are made; and this production of new needs is the first historical act."²⁰⁰ But the concepts which make this statement possible are found in texts as early

¹⁹⁸Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, pp. 290-291; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 84.

¹⁹⁹Lobkowitz, Theory and Practice. p. 342.

²⁰⁰Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, pp. 16-17; MEGA, Abt. 1, Abd. 5, p. 18.

as the Manuscripts of 1844.

Further, in those Manuscripts Marx develops the concepts which enable him to hold that praxis, and the productive individual, are essentially social phenomena. He indicates therein that it is the productive activity of the individual which makes social relations possible for him, as well as which determines the specific features of those social relations "...the immediate activity of his individuality, is at the same time his own existence for other men, their existence, and their existence for him."²⁰¹ He asserts that productive activity, given that its result is an object in some sense external to its producer and thus public, is activity which is in principle accessible to others and therefore social: "...what I make from myself, I make for society, conscious of my nature as social."²⁰² And he provides in the Manuscripts conceptual direction towards the specific assertion, made in the German Ideology, that society, as the systematization of the productive activities occurring in it, controls the options for productive activity available for its members, as well as the foundation upon which new options might be imaginatively developed: "...society itself...produces man as man."²⁰³ This will allow him, also to assert that it is con-

²⁰¹Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 305; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 115.

²⁰²Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 306, MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 116.

²⁰³Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 305; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 116.

cretely within the context of social relations that new needs are developed, and that social relations themselves condition the development of those new needs. Finally, in virtue of the above, Marx is also able in the Manuscripts even to initially comprehend society as the subject of history, and thus human self-actualization as historical:

"...only naturalism is able to comprehend the act of world history... History is the true natural history of Mankind."²⁰⁴

One would not wish to, from the above, argue that there is a simple identity between the Manuscripts of 1844 and succeeding texts such as the German Ideology or the Poverty of Philosophy, on the theme of the question of the viability of a theory of human nature, or even on the complete exposition of the details of that theory. Certainly these succeeding texts develop, enrich, and offer new insights into the concepts offered in the Manuscripts themselves. I wish to argue a narrower thesis. Althusser claims that Marx' criticisms of Feuerbach's theory of human nature, both stated and implied, in the "Theses" on Feuerbach, represent a break with the theory of man which Marx had appropriated from Feuerbach and himself outlined in the Paris Manuscripts. It has been shown that Althusser's interpretation of the Manuscripts as merely appropriating Feuerbach's doctrine of human nature will not do. The theory contained therein is, in crucial features, distinct from Feuerbach's doctrine. Now, the details against Prudhon in the Poverty of

²⁰⁴Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 305 and p. 327. MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 160 and p. 162.

Philosophy as to the possibility of a theory of human nature have also been elucidated, and it has further been shown, I would hold, that these criticisms are not implicit criticisms of Marx' own 1844 position.

The final question which arises from the above analysis is, given his objections to Feuerbach and Prudhon, what might Marx take a viable theory of man to be? Clearly it cannot be a description of the content of a "universal human nature: from which one may deduce those needs and the details of those experiences which will occur for the individual. This is clear from the above objections. But to say this is not to yet deny the possibility of a theory which describes the structural features of formal features in terms of which human historical experience is had, and in terms of which it is to be comprehended. And it is precisely this role which a theory of man plays for Marx.

Avineri comments significantly on this idea in his description of Marx' theory of human nature.

Marx' view of history as shaping man who simultaneously impresses himself on the world makes it quite impossible to ascribe to man any a priori essence. On the other hand, man's world shaping function itself becomes the empirical content of human existence. This process makes man into man, differentiates him from animals and lies at the bottom of his ability to create and change the conditions of his life. The contents of this continual creation, dynamic and changing, furnish the contents of the historical process. What is not changing and not modified is historical creation as constant anthropogenesis, deriving from man's ability to create objects in which he realizes his subjectivity.²⁰⁵

The point to Avineri's comment is this. Marx wholly rejects any theory of human nature which would, for example, allow one to deduce specific

²⁰⁵Avineri, op. cit., p. 85.

needs as ones which necessarily occur for the individual, because such a theory would in principle allow one to deduce in general the details of human experience itself. This would be to deny both human self-actualization, and the historical character of that process, two phenomena of which Marx will not permit the denial. But Marx will permit, and indeed does develop and presume in the Paris Manuscripts and elsewhere, is a theory of those structural features of human nature which specify man in terms of rendering historical self actualization, or as Avineri puts it "anthropogenesis," possible. For which for Marx, man's nature "can be conceived only as his historically created human possibility."²⁰⁶ at the same time some theory of the structural features of human nature is necessary in order to show how, for man, historical self actualization is possible, Such a theory enables one to, first, comprehend the relation between various aspects of the specific character of and the self actualization of the individual, the relations between productive activity, needs, natural environment, consciousness, and society. It provides criteria whereby the possibilities for productive activity and for experience available to the individual historically and socially located, can be comprehended as such.

Avineri, who in his commentary on Marx is fond of citing the Grundrisse of 1857-58, might concerning this idea have cited a text from the "General Introduction" to that work, in which Marx asserts that, "...all stages of production have certain landmarks in common,

²⁰⁶Petrovic, "Marx; Concept of Alienation," Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, 1962-63, p. 422.

common purposes. Production in general is an abstraction, but it is a rational abstraction, insofar as it singles out and fixes the common features, thereby saving us repetition."²⁰⁷ The elucidation of the common and structural features of social production enable one to comprehend and relate to one another accurately the concrete details of historical productive societies. Even so, the elucidation of the common and structural details of human nature enable one to comprehend and to relate to one another accurately the concrete details of the experience and active self actualization of the historical individual. It allows one to comprehend the very possibility of the historical self-actualizing individual itself. Such a theory enables one, second, to critically evaluate certain social conditions as ones which violate the structural features of human productivity, ones which for example render the agent unable to appropriate the object of his activity for the satisfaction of a directly experienced need,²⁰⁸ or which relegate the producer to action towards the satisfaction of subsistence needs alone,²⁰⁹ and which thus yield a condition of "alienation" in terms of productive activity.²¹⁰

²⁰⁷Marx, The Grundrisse, trans. McLellan, p. 18; Grundrisse, p. 7.

²⁰⁸Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 289; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 83.

²⁰⁹Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 292; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, pp. 85-86.

²¹⁰Cf. Avineri, op. cit., pp. 85-86.

In these two senses, Marx' theory of human nature is a normative theory that is to say, it is one which, in describing the structural features of human nature, without attempting to provide a descriptive account of the details of the actual experience of the historical individual, provides criteria or norms which enable one to comprehend a) the possibility of self-actualizing historical human individuality itself; b) the correct manner in which the details of the actual experience of the individual, including the concrete occurrence for him of praxis, needs, consciousness, and society, ought to be related to one another for an accurate comprehension of that experience; and c) the terms on which given social conditions can violate the structure of human praxis, yielding "alienation". This sort of normative theory of human nature is clearly distinct in Marx' own eyes from the theories of Feuerbach and Prudhon, and is one which he is able to maintain in the face of his objections to these latter authors.

The purpose of this chapter has been to attain a clearer understanding of Marx' theory of human nature, through evaluating Althusser's claim that this theory is, insofar as it is exhibited in the Manuscripts of 1844, one which Marx appropriates from Feuerbach, and one which he moves to reject as early as 1845. I take the analysis done in this chapter, if successful, to have shown that this interpretation is erroneous. On three critical themes, those of the notions of nature in relation to action, consciousness, and human social relations, Marx in the theses diverges significantly from Feuerbach, and this divergence is made possible by concepts enunciated by Marx in the Paris Manuscripts themselves as well as in other texts. On the themes of the possibility

and role of a theory of man, Marx' criticisms of Feuerbach, and allied criticisms of Prudhon, in no way vitiate his 1844 position. Thus it cannot be held that the content of Marx' theory of human nature is borrowed from, and can be understood by comparison to, Feuerbach's doctrine. If one is to look for the historical inspiration of Marx' theory of man, it must be elsewhere than the texts of the Essence of Christianity and the Principles of the Philosophy of the Future.

Two pressing questions stand out, however, at the conclusion of this analysis. First, the theory of man which Marx can adopt, and which accounts for man's historical self-actualization, depends on a proposition noted frequently in chapter one as one to which Marx ascribes: that within the structure of human nature, praxis is the fundamental feature of that structure. But still, no definitive argument, as no argument which Marx himself might view as definitive, has been exposed. Is there such an argument in the texts, and if so what might it be? Second, if the content of Marx' theory of man cannot be fruitfully understood in terms of a positive comparison of it to Feuerbach, what of Marx' relation to Hegel? Can it be held that in Hegel are discoverable those concepts which bear a possible relation to Marx' theory? I shall argue, in the subsequent two chapters that the response to both these questions is affirmative, and further that the relation between Marx and Hegel is critical for two reasons. First, because those concepts which form the content of Marx' theory of human nature find their historical and textual sources in Hegel. And second, because Marx offers that argument for the fundamentality of human praxis which he

himself considers to be definitive in a direct confrontation with
Hegel himself.

Chapter Three

Marx' Hegelian Sources

Readers of the texts of Marx are familiar with his encomium on Hegel in the Manuscripts of 1844:

The great thing in Hegel's Phenomenology and its final result - the dialectic of negativity as the moving and productive principle - is simply that Hegel grasps the self-development of man as a process, objectification as loss of the object, as alienation and transcendence of this alienation; thus he grasps the nature of work and comprehends objective man, authentic because actual, as the result of his own work.¹

This statement not only contains warm praise of Hegel, but singles out several features of Hegel's thought which Marx adopts in his own theory of man. It seems then that Marx here is giving Hegel credit for comprehending and developing several concepts which Marx himself further elucidates and develops in that theory.

But this statement, taken by itself, by no means states the whole truth concerning the relation between Hegelian and Marxian theories of man. For in the third of the Paris Manuscripts Marx is also severely critical of Hegel, and the force of these criticisms is apparently that Hegel misunderstood and did not properly develop those concepts which, for Marx, must be operative and properly interrelated within a theory of human nature. For instance, Marx criticizes Hegel's view of subjectivity. "Man is assumed as equivalent to self. But self is only man conceived

¹Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 321; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 156.

abstractly, derived through abstraction."² Marx also asserts that Hegel is unable to understand correctly the nature of needs as they function for man,³ is unable to grasp properly man's relation to nature,⁴ or the character and role of consciousness in human experience.⁵ And finally, in virtue of these inadequacies, Marx accuses Hegel of being unable to comprehend human productive activity or praxis itself. "The rich, living, sensuous, concrete activity of self objectification therefore becomes its mere abstraction, absolute negativity, an abstraction fixed as such and regarded as independent activity, as activity itself."⁶

On first reading, then, the texts reveal that Marx' own attitude towards his relation to Hegel with regard to his theory of man is far from unequivocal. Marx seems to both affirm and deny Hegel's adequate understanding of the key concepts utilized in that theory. Here again the commentaries on Marx fail to answer satisfactorily the problem of the relation of Marx' thought to that of Hegel. Althusser insists that

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MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 158, Easton and Guddat, op. cit., p. 322.

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Cf. MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 160, Easton and Guddat, op. cit., p. 325.

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Cf. Ibid.

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MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 163, Easton and Guddat, op. cit., p. 328.

6

MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 168, Easton and Guddat, op. cit., p. 333.

"...the young Marx was never an Hegelian..."⁷ But Lefebvre holds that the basic theory of the Paris Manuscripts, "...is still closer to Hegelian rationalism than to Feuerbachian naturalism."⁸ Hyppolite states that the development of Marx' theory involves his "...making novel use of the Hegelian dialectic,"⁹ which remained essential to Marx' theorizing despite the modifications he makes in his appropriation of it. Rotenstreich holds that "...Marx' concept of practice is parallel to Hegel's concept of Spirit, and was developed to replace it; that the relationship between practice and theory according to Marx is parallel to the relationship between spirit and reason according to Hegel."¹⁰ And Lobkowitz, going further, asserts that, "...almost everything which Marx says about labor can be traced back to Hegel."¹¹

It seems, then, that significant difficulties face the attempt to determine the relationship between those concepts developed and utilized by

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Louis Althusser, Pour Marx, (Paris: Francois Maspero, 1969), p. 27.

8

Henri Lefebvre, Dialectical Materialism, trans. John Sturrock, (London: Jonathan Cape Ltd., 1968), p. 101. Lefebvre refers here overtly to Marx' theory of alienation, but he has also the general theory of praxis in mind.

9

Jean Hyppolite, Studies on Marx and Hegel, tran. O'Neill, (New York: Basic Books, 1969), p. 95.

10

Nathan Rotenstreich, Basic Problems of Marx' Philosophy, (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1965), p. 41.

11

Nicholas Lobkowitz, Theory and Practice, (Notre Dame: The University of Notre Dame Press, 1967), p. 321.

Marx in his theory of human nature, and the philosophy of Hegel. Be this as it may, it is nonetheless the case that such an attempt must be made, for its resolution is critical to a proper understanding of Marx' theory of man itself. Iring Fetscher has noted that "...the history of the differing interpretations of the relationship between Marx and Hegel reflects the history of the development of Marxism itself."¹² Analogously, the interpretations of various commentaries on the content of Marx' theory of human nature varied according to their interpretations of Marx in relation to his predecessors, especially Feuerbach and Hegel. We have already seen how this happens in the case of Althusser. Althusser interprets the 'humanistic' Marx of the 1844 Manuscripts to be simply Feuerbachian, and this effects his understanding of Marx' early 'humanism'. It leads Althusser to an interpretation of Marx' theory of man which is, in my judgment, erroneous. But Althusser's case is instructive. From it we can recognize the importance of an accurate understanding of Marx' relations to his predecessors. For, comprehending these relations accurately will enable us to comprehend more precisely Marx' theory itself.

In this and the following Chapter I shall argue that the basic operative concepts of Marx' theory of man as analyzed in Chapter One, were appropriated from Hegel, though Marx differs from Hegel with respect to the precise relationship of consciousness to human praxis. This implies, contrary to Althusser, that the young Marx was very much 'an Hegelian,'

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Iring Fetscher, Marx and Marxism, trans. John Hargreaves, (New York: Herder and Herder, 1971), p. 40.

that Marx was at the same time a disciple and a radical revisionist of Hegel's thought, and that we must understand in detail how Marx simultaneously plays both these roles if we are to grasp the distinctive sense of Marx' theory of man. I shall also argue in chapter four that Marx' argument against Hegel's view of the relationship of consciousness to praxis is the same argument which, he would think, justifies his claim that the concept of praxis is the most fundamental concept of an adequate theory of man.

In this chapter, I shall limit my discussion to an analysis of those concepts discoverable in Hegel which can be seen as one appropriated by Marx in his theory of man. First, I shall exhibit a "pre-phenomenological" justification for a description of the individual in Hegel. This is important, for it justifies discovering in Hegel concepts relating to a theory of man. Then I shall discuss the notions of experience, agency, and intersubjectivity in the Phenomenology of Spirit. Finally, I shall discuss Hegel's notion of the essential social dimension of experience, as he introduces and develops that notion in the Philosophy of Right.

I. Hegel: Consciousness and the Embodied Individual

It is doubtless the case that the Philosophy of Right and the Phenomenology of Spirit were the two texts of Hegel which Marx had studied most carefully up to 1844. Marx' famous Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right had been completed in 1843,¹³ and Marx used the analyses of that work

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Cf. Karl Marx, Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, trans. J. O'Malley, (Cambridge: The University Press, 1970), editor's "Introduction," pp. ix - xiv, for a discussion of Marx' purposes in writing this text.

as the basis of the development of some crucial ideas in his article, "Toward the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law: Introduction."¹⁴ And, in the Paris Manuscripts, Marx makes explicit reference to the Phenomenology of Spirit. One important feature of these remarks of Marx is his recognition that the Phenomenology contains concepts relevant to a theory of human nature. But if this is so then an immediate difficulty presents itself: Is this a valid recognition, or is Marx' 'recognition' a distortion of what the Phenomenology contains? It is well known that Hegel announced as his task in the phenomenology, "...the exposition of knowledge as a phenomenon."¹⁵ How can such an exposition result in concepts proper to a theory of human nature? Or more precisely, how is it the case that a science of knowledge, phenomenally taken, or of the experience of consciousness, can be at the same time a science descriptive of the individual?

Errol Harris correctly points out that a response to this question may be most readily had through an examination of selected arguments from the Philosophy of Mind,¹⁶ the third volume of Hegel's Encyclopedia of the

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Cf. MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 1, pp. 607-621; Easton and Guddat, op. cit., pp. 249-264.

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Hegel, The Phenomenology of Mind, trans. Baillie, (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1931), p. 135; Hegel, Phänomenologie des Geistes, ed. Johannes Hoffmeister, (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1952), p. 66.

16

Errol E. Harris, "Hegel's Theory of Feeling," in New Studies in Hegel's Philosophy, ed. Steinkraus, (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1971), pp. 71-91.

Philosophical Sciences.¹⁷ For in the first section of that work Hegel attempts the transition from philosophy of nature to philosophy of mind through arguing concerning the relationship of mind and individual embodiment. I refer to these arguments as Hegel's 'pre-phenomenological' justification of a science of the experience of consciousness, in that they show the location of consciousness as individual experience, and thus justify a recognizable sense of the term phenomenon or experience of consciousness.

Hegel introduces his analyses in the third volume of the Encyclopedia with a statement of the general character of the relation of mind to nature, as he conceives that relationship. "From our point of view mind has for its presupposition Nature, of which it is the truth, and for that reason its absolute prius. In this its truth Nature is vanished (ist die Natur verschwunden) and mind has resulted as the 'Idea' entered on possession of itself."¹⁸ The term 'truth' here is used in typical Hegelian fashion, to indicate, as Soll points out, the 'truth' of a thing as "...its objective or goal..."¹⁹ And Hegel goes on in an addendum to this article of the Encyclopedia to indicate how he takes mind to be the 'truth' of nature,

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Cf. Hegel, The Philosophy of Mind, trans. W. Wallace with the Boumann Zusätze trans. by A.V. Miller, (Oxford: The University Press, 1971).

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Hegel, The Philosophy of Mind, trans. Wallace and Miller, p. 8; G.W.F. Hegel, Enzyklopädie der Philosophischen Wissenschaften, ed. Nocolin and Poggeler, (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1969), p. 313.

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Ivan Soll, An Introduction to Hegel's Metaphysics, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1969), p. 14.

through stating that, "...in Nature, the Idea appears in the element of asunderness, is external not only to mind but also to itself, precisely because it is external to that actual, self-existent inwardness which constitutes the essential nature of mind."²⁰

We are here reminded by Hegel first of that understanding of nature which marks the beginning of the second volume of the Encyclopedia, that, "...externality constitutes the specific character in which Nature, as Nature, exists."²¹ Nature is immediately characterized by Hegel as involving externality, parts outside of parts. But further, nature is comprehended as a system, that is, that whose externality involves within itself a unity. This is seen by theoretical physics, which attempts to comprehend the system and unity of nature in terms of intrinsic laws. "...it is directed to a knowledge of the universal aspect of nature, a universal which is also determined within itself - directed to a knowledge of forces, laws, and genera, whose content must not be a simple aggregate, but arranged in orders and classes, must present itself as an organism."²² But for this comprehension to occur, nature must exhibit itself as involving such a unity, or as a process within which such a unity develops out of natural externality, which process will be most fundamentally

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Hegel, The Philosophy of Mind, (Wallace, Miller), p. 9.

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Hegel, Philosophy of Nature, trans. A.V. Miller, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 14; Hegel, Enzyklopädie, p. 200.

22

Cf. Ibid.; Enzyklopädie, pp. 199-200.

comprehended by philosophy of nature.²³

As Harris comments, for Hegel, "The entire natural process is one in which the self-externality of the spatio temporal world is progressively overcome, as each successive grade of natural being reflects more adequately the entire system."²⁴ Nature must be conceived of for Hegel as a process of internally determined development through which its character of parts outside of parts is progressively both canceled and preserved, one through which its externality is maintained while at the same time its intrinsic unity is exhibited. It is this which renders a scientific, and ultimately a philosophical comprehension of nature possible.

With this in mind, let us see how for Hegel mind is the 'truth' of nature. The 'truth' or goal of nature is the exhibition of its own intrinsic unity. And this unity is finally and explicitly exhibited in that individual organism which is capable of primitive mental events whereby it is aware of, or Hegel would say senses or feels,²⁵ and which unifies its own experience; it is an individual capable of those primitive mental events to which Hegel in the Encyclopedia refers under the heading of 'soul'.²⁶ Such awareness involves both a unification of experience, and

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Cf. Ibid.; Enzyklopädie, pp. 199-200.

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Harris, op. cit., loc. cit., p. 77.

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Cf. Hegel, Philosophy of Mind, (Wallace, Miller), p. 34; Enzyklopädie, p. 320.

26

Cf. Ibid.

an initial emergence from nature of subjectivity.

Harris cogently summarizes the point which Hegel wishes to make in this portion of the Encyclopedia:

The entire natural process is one in which the self-externality of the spatio temporal world is progressively overcome, as each successive grade of natural being reflects more adequately the entire system... finally, in sentience, the whole of this natural interconnectedness focused in the animal organism is 'inwardized' in subjectivity.

Mind thus comes to be both as a product of nature and as its sublimation in feeling and awareness; it is the form in which nature becomes aware of itself, in a natural organism.²⁷

The natural, sentient organism is capable of awareness, albeit primitive awareness, of its own experience. At the same time, this organism is a feature of nature itself, and is thus the realization within nature itself of nature's 'truth'.

Hegel, as noted above, offers 'soul' as a term descriptive of the capacity for primitive mental events marking the emergence of 'mind' in nature. And his abiding concern throughout the first section of the Philosophy of Mind remains the description of 'soul' as an actual feature of the experience of the individual organism. "The universal soul must not be fixed on as World Soul, as so to speak a subject, for it is only the individual substance, which has its actual truth only as individual

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Harris, op. cit., loc. cit.

subjectivity."²⁸ Soul's emergence is the implicit goal or 'truth' of the process of nature, but that goal is realized only through the actual emergence of individual, natural organisms capable of primitive forms of awareness of experience. For Hegel to describe conscious events as so emergent from nature is to describe such events as properties of the individual.²⁹

This emphasis is further drawn out by Hegel in the Encyclopedia, as he describes the capacities of awareness of 'soul' under three headings: sentience, feeling, and habit. By sentience or sensation,³⁰ 'Empfindung',³¹ Hegel means to indicate the barest form of organic aware-

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Hegel, Enzyklopädie, p. 320, my translation. Cf. Hegel, Philosophy of Mind, (Wallace, Miller), pp. 35-36, for a translation which is, in my opinion, deceptive. Cf. also Harris, op. cit., p. 80, for commentary on the idea offered by Hegel here.

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Cf. Hegel, Enzyklopädie, pp. 325-326; Hegel, Philosophy of Mind, (Wallace, Miller), p. 73, for confirmation that Hegel retains this argument for consciousness as a property of the individual in the context of a discussion of more developed forms of consciousness as well.

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The former translation of 'Empfindung' is selected by Harris, the latter by Wallace. Harris' translation has the advantage of distinguishing in translation 'Empfindung' from 'Sinnlichkeit', a distinction which Hegel obviously draws.

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Cf. Hegel, Enzyklopädie, p. 325.

ness to stimuli,³² so primitive that the distinction between the object and the organism as subject is not drawn therein.³³ This most primitive form of awareness, however, itself forms the basis of its subject's noticing itself as a subject, in the sense of feeling itself to be the center of those instances of sentient apprehension which are its own. Hegel entitles soul as capable of this level of awareness "feeling soul" (fuhlende Seele).³⁴ He states with regard to "feeling soul" that, "...this self centered being is not merely a formal factor of sensation (ein formelles Moment des Empfindenes): the soul is virtually a reflected totality of sensation - it feels in itself the total substantiality which it virtually is - it is a soul which feels."³⁵ The "soul which feels," the individual capable of distinguishing itself as a subject at least

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Cf. Hegel, Philosophy of Mind, (Wallace, Miller), p. 33; Enzyklopädie, p. 325.

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Cf. Ibid.; Harris, op. cit., p. 86.

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Hegel, Enzyklopädie., p. 328.

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Hegel (Wallace, Miller), p. 88; Enzyklopädie., p. 328.

insofar as it is able to feel itself as the center of sentient events, is through this ability capable of realizing itself as subject in a fuller sense, as distinct from its sensations themselves. This Hegel refers to in the Encyclopedia in noting soul's ability of "...making itself an abstract universal being and reducing the particulars of feelings (and of consciousness) to a mere feature of its being..."³⁶

But the condition of the subject as soul being able to realize itself in this fashion, i.e. as a conscious subject, involves its having recognized its sensations as falling into categories or classes. This felt categorization of sensations through their repetition enables the subject to at once recognize typical features of its experience, and also to view them as features of its experience, rather than simply as its self. It is this felt categorization which Hegel entitles "Habit" (Gewohnheit).³⁷ The development of Habit has two effects for that subject of the awareness which Hegel names soul. It enables the subject to cease preoccupation with its own internal sentient experience.³⁸ And it enables that subject to attend to other and external features of its experience: "...it is at the same time open to be otherwise occupied and engaged -- say, the feeling

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Hegel (Wallace, Miller), p. 140; Enzyklopädie., p. 339.

37

Cf. Ibid.

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Cf. Ibid.

and mental consciousness in general."³⁹ And this is in turn the ground of the ability of the subject to differentiate itself from such features of its experience, to realize itself consciously as a subject.

Two points need to be noted here. First, that Hegel does argue in the Encyclopedia that conscious experience and the subject of conscious experience, arise from "soul" as characterized by sentience, feeling, and habit. Hegel notes that "The actual soul with its sensations and its concrete self-feeling turned into habit, has implicitly realized the 'ideality' of its qualities...In this way it gains the position of thinker and subject--specially a subject of the judgment in which the ego excludes from itself the sum total of its merely natural features as an object, a world external to it--but with such respect to that object that in it it is immediately reflected into itself. Thus soul rises to become consciousness."⁴⁰ Sentience, feeling, and habit, mark and describe the development of the conscious subject as the "truth" of nature. And second, insofar as for Hegel the conscious subject emerges in this fashion from "soul," and insofar as the subject of "soul" is necessarily the embodied subject, the individual, then one can confidently state that for Hegel the conscious subject is the embodied individual, that conscious experience, the subject matter of phenomenology, is the experience of the individual. Hegel indicates this in stating that, "The soul, when its corporeity has been

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Ibid.

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Hegel (Wallace, Miller), p. 151; Enzyklopädie, pp. 343-344.

moulded and made thoroughly its own, finds itself there a single subject; and the corporeity is an externality which stands as a predicate, in being related to which, it is related to itself."⁴¹ The conscious subject, the condition of whose possibility is "soul" itself, is then also to be described by Hegel as the embodied individual.⁴² And Harris, in commenting on the emergence of consciousness as the "truth" of nature, confirms the notion that consciousness must be here taken to mean for Hegel the experience of the conscious subject as individual. "For Hegel, then, nature is the actual process of becoming through which mind is realized...In this way, it is true, wide segments of nature are subjectivized, but not in some pervasive soul-substance for which no evidence is forthcoming, but in the felt-experience of actual individuals, for it is as actual individual minds that the universal idea exists."⁴³

The point to these comments is that Hegel, in discussing the emergence of consciousness from nature as nature's "truth", insists in the Encyclopedia that consciousness be understood as the experience of conscious subjects, embodied individuals. Because of this, a science of the structures of the experience, phenomenology as Hegel understands that term

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Hegel (Wallace, Miller), p. 147; Enzyklopädie, p. 342.

42

Cf. Harris, op. cit., p. 90.

43

Ibid., pp. 77, 81.

both in the Phenomenology of Spirit and the Encyclopedia itself,⁴⁴ is at one and the same time a science of the structures of the experience of the individual. Thus it is valid to hold, as Marx in at least one text seems to have held, that we can discover in Hegel's Phenomenology concepts suitable for a theory of man. So if subsequent analysis should discover that certain features of Marx' theory of man seem to have been appropriated by him from Hegel, we will have no general reason to suppose that such appropriation distorts the meaning these concepts have for Hegel.

I now turn to the texts of the Phenomenology of Spirit and the Philosophy of Right themselves. First, consideration should be given to the doctrine of agency elucidated in the Phenomenology of Spirit. It is just for the development of a doctrine of agency that Marx pays tribute to Hegel, as the text cited in the opening of this chapter shows. It seems appropriate, therefore, to first of all direct attention towards that doctrine.

II. Agency, Selfactualization, and Intersubjectivity in the Phenomenology of Spirit

The first discussion of agency in the Phenomenology which seems relevant to a discussion of the relation of Hegel to Marx appears in the

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Cf. J.N. Findlay, Hegel: a re-examination, (New York: Collier Books, 1962), pp. 301, 302.

transition passage from consciousness to self consciousness.⁴⁵ However, preparations for the argument of that passage are made in the "Introduction" to the Phenomenology of Spirit. There Hegel makes certain comments made concerning the relation of consciousness in general to its object.

Hegel begins this analysis by asserting that consciousness, within its own experience, may recognize its object as something which is both distinct from itself and related to itself. "Consciousness, we find, distinguishes from itself something which it at the same time relates to itself; or, to use the current expression, there is something for consciousness..."⁴⁶ For an item to be an object is for it to stand in some relation to a subject, to occur within the experience of consciousness. This, Hegel notes, is at once an "abstract"⁴⁷ and an accurate general statement descriptive of the nature of the object as such. It is not a statement which militates against the integrity of the object as such. Rather, it describes Hegel's insistence that for an item to be an object is for it to be a datum, and thus something which maintains its autonomy, and at the same time to occur essentially, as an object, within the experience of consciousness. In Hegelian terminology, this is to say that for an

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Cf. Hegel, The Phenomenology of Mind, trans. Baillie, p. 218 and ff.; Hegel, Phänomenologie des Geistes, pp. 133 and ff.

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 139; Phänomenologie, p. 70.

47

Cf. Ibid.

item to be an object is for it to occur both "in itself," and "for another," for consciousness.⁴⁸

Hegel develops and attempts to justify this understanding of consciousness in relation to its object in the "Introduction" to the Phenomenology by immediately examining that knowledge which consciousness has of its object. Knowledge is initially to be understood as the awareness had by consciousness of that specific manner in which the object occurs within its experience: "...the determinate form of this process of relating, or of there being something for a consciousness, is knowledge."⁴⁹ That knowledge which consciousness immediately has of its object is its awareness of the details of that relation which the object has to consciousness in its experience, the perspective, as it were, that the object offers to consciousness.⁵⁰ And within this knowledge itself, consciousness distinguishes from the object as a content of its own awareness, the object "in itself," as occurring autonomously and as offering content to awareness.

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Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), pp. 139 and 142; Phänomenologie, pp. 70 and 72.

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 139; Phänomenologie, p. 70.

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Cf. Martin Heidegger, Hegel's Concept of Experience, with a section from Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit translated by K.R. Dove, (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), pp. 57-58, and p. 89, for astute comment on this understanding of the object as it is had in the immediate knowledge of consciousness.

"But from this being for another we distinguish⁵¹ being in itself or per se; what is related to knowledge is likewise distinguished from it, and posited as also existing outside this relation; one aspect of being per se or in itself is called truth."⁵² The object as occurring "per se" or "in itself" is taken by consciousness to occur within its experience, but at the same time is "called truth," is taken to be that which provides content to consciousness, rather than simply as being that content.

As Hegel goes on to note, this understanding had by consciousness of its relation to its object, and of the nature of the immediate knowledge of its object, allows consciousness to construct from within its own experience criteria whereby the adequacy of its knowledge may be evaluated.

"In consciousness there is one element for another, or, in general, consciousness implicates the specific character of the moment of knowledge (es habt überhaupt die Bestimmtheit des Moments des Wissen an ihm). At the same time this 'other' is not simply for it, but also outside this relation. It has a being in itself, i.e. there is a moment of truth. Thus in what consciousness declares inside itself to be the essence of truth we have the standard which itself sets up, and by which we are to measure its know-

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Cf. Hegel, Phänomenologie des Geistes, p. 70. Hegel's text here makes clear that the distinction cited is one made within the experience of consciousness itself in its immediate knowledge of the object, rather than one drawn by the phenomenological observer: "...das auf das Wissen Bezogene wird ebenso von ihm unterschieden und gesetzt als seiend auch ausser dieser Beziehung..."

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 139; Phänomenologie, p. 70. Cf. also Heidegger, op. cit., pp. 88-89.

ledge."⁵³ The object occurs for consciousness in terms of consciousness' awareness thereof. But the content of this awareness is derived from the object as existing within the experience of consciousness and simultaneously occurring "in itself". And it is the object in this sense against which the adequacy of knowledge must be measured.⁵⁴ Since, however, the object as "in itself" occurs within the experience of consciousness, consciousness from within its own experience has to construct standards for the evaluation of its own knowledge.⁵⁵

This account of the relation of consciousness and its object, however, raises the question of how consciousness revises its knowledge of its object. In handling this question Hegel offers a further critical description of the relation of consciousness to its object, and of the nature of the experience of consciousness itself. According to the description of consciousness' immediate attitude towards its object just given, it appears to consciousness that its knowledge is knowledge of the object as it stands in relation to consciousness (für ein anderes),⁵⁶ while at the same time the content of this knowledge is offered by the object as

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 140; Phänomenologie, p. 71.

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Cf. J. Loewenberg, Hegel's Phenomenology, (La Salle: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1965), p. 14.

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Cf. Ibid.

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Cf. Hegel, Phänomenologie, p. 71

it occurs independently. Suppose a comparison of the two be made, such that consciousness discovers that some modification in its knowledge is necessary. That is, suppose consciousness compares its "knowledge" of the object to the latter as it is "in itself" and discovers that its knowledge is not adequate to the reality of the object, and thus discovers that its knowledge must be in some fashion modified or developed.

Should this occur, two results ensue. First, the awareness of the object which consciousness entertains is appropriately modified. "Should both, when thus compared, not correspond, consciousness seems bound to alter its knowledge, in order to make it fit the object."⁵⁷ But second, the object itself is now viewed differently by consciousness. Previously, consciousness made the distinction of the object as for another (for consciousness) and as in itself, but understood the object as in itself to be the source of its own knowledge of the content of the object, i.e., the object as for consciousness. Thus, while consciousness distinguished the object as for another and in itself, its concept of the content of the object belied this distinction, simply because one concept, rather than two, was involved. Consciousness may through some experience of the object be moved to modify its concept of that object, but this will be a modification of the concept and experience of the object both as it is in relation to consciousness and as it is in itself, because the latter is understood precisely as the source of the former. As Hegel puts it, "...in the

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Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 142; Phänomenologie, p. 72.

alteration of knowledge, the object also, in point of fact, is altered; for the knowledge which existed was essentially a knowledge of the object; with change in this knowledge, the object also becomes different, since it belonged essentially to this knowledge."⁵⁸

These statements form for Hegel an explicitation of the statement that the distinction of the object as in itself and for consciousness is one which falls within the experience of consciousness itself, and from this explicitation implications may be drawn concerning the general nature of the experience of consciousness, and concerning the role of consciousness in its own experience. If Hegel's analysis is correct, then the description of the object offered through the already noted distinction is subsumed under a new category, and the object is now understood as being in itself for consciousness: "...consciousness comes now to find that what formerly to it was the essence is not what is per se, or what was per se was only per se for consciousness (für es an sich),"⁵⁹ since consciousness, upon finding it necessary to modify its knowledge of its object, finds that "...the object likewise fails to hold out..."⁶⁰ Hegel insists that to describe the object as that which is for consciousness is not to deny the integrity of the object. What is denied, rather is that the object is to

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Ibid.

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Ibid.

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Ibid.

be simply as a reality in itself, and the negation involved in Hegel's expressing a developed concept of the object is a determinate negation⁶¹ rather than negation taken simply:⁶² "...what this real per se is for consciousness is truth: which, however, means that this is the essential reality, or the object which consciousness has."⁶³

This new description of the object of consciousness in turn leads to a description of "experience," which is inherently dialectical,⁶⁴ and which understands consciousness as acting towards the constitution of its object within its experience.⁶⁵ "This dialectic process which consciousness executes on itself--on its knowledge as well as on its object--in the sense that out of it the new and true object arises, is precisely what is termed Experience."⁶⁶

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Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 137; Phänomenologie, p. 69.

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Cf. Hyppolite, Genèse et Structure de la Phénoménologie de L'Esprit de Hegel, (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1946), p. 20. "Negativity is not then a force which opposes itself to all content, it is imminent in content and allows its necessary development to be comprehended."

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Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 143; Phänomenologie, p. 73.

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Cf. A. Kojève, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, ed. A. Bloom, trans. J.H. Nichols, (New York: Basic Books, 1969), p. 215. Kojève insists here that, for Hegel, experience is fundamentally dialectical, and that phenomenology adopts dialectic only out of the necessity of offering a description of the structure of experience.

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Cf. K.R. Dove, "Hegel's Phenomenological Method," in New Studies in Hegel's Philosophy, ed. Steinkraus, (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1971), p. 41.

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 142; Phänomenologie, p. 73

Two features of this description of experience are notable. First, Hegel here asserts that the dialectical process, the initial positing of an attitude towards the object, the determinate negation of that attitude, and the subsuming of that negation under a new apprehension of the object, is a feature of the experience of consciousness itself. In fact the realization of the necessary connection between the several dialectical phases of its own experience is not available to naive consciousness; it is only available to the philosophical observer,⁶⁷ "...to us, who watch the process ...so to say, behind its back."⁶⁸ But nonetheless, the dialectical process itself is immanent to the experience of consciousness. Second, and in terms of the above, within its experience consciousness plays an active role in the production of the determinate character of its object. The object, that which is "in itself for consciousness," is in its appearance the result of consciousness's own activity, i.e. its act of revising its attitude towards its object, such that out of this revision "...the new and true object arises..."⁶⁹ Hegel's description of the nature of the experience of consciousness leads him to suggest that within its experience consciousness plays an active role in the production of the definite

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Cf. Loewenberg, op. cit., p. 15, where, in virtue of the above comments, Hegel's method is characterized as "...experimental..." as "...Gedankenexperimente..."

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 144; Phänomenologie, p. 74.

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Ibid.

character of its object, or as K.R. Dove suggests in the "constitution" of its object⁷⁰ precisely because conscious experience of its object is determined by that activity whereby consciousness alligns its knowledge of the object with the object "in itself".

From the above analysis, Hegel derives two further conclusions relevant to our purposes, in the "Introduction" to the Phenomenology of Spirit. First, he asserts that, from the description of "experience" he has offered, consciousness can be understood as actively constituting not only the determinate character of its object, but also its self: "...since what at first appeared as object is reduced (herabsinkt), when it passes into consciousness, to what knowledge takes it to be, and the implicit nature, the real object, becomes what this entity per se is for consciousness; this latter is the new object, whereupon there appears also a new mode or embodiment of consciousness, of which the essence is something other than that of the preceeding mode."⁷¹ Hegel's point here seems based on the basic statement that consciousness is primarily awareness of content, and its implication, that the details of its content are identical with the details of specific occurrences of consciousness itself. Now that content of which consciousness in its experience is aware is its object. But the definite character which the object assumes in its experience is the result of consciousness' own activity on the object. Thus the specific

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Cf. Dove, op. cit., loc. cit.

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 144; Phänomenologie, p. 74.

details of consciousness' own experience, or of its self, are the result of its own activity.⁷²

Second, Hegel is already able even in the "Introduction" to the Phenomenology, to point out that given this description of consciousness, consciousness must in general be taken as self consciousness. Consciousness within its experience is aware of content, i.e. of its object. But conversely, that content of which consciousness is aware is its own experience. If the object as for consciousness is an essential moment of its own experience, and if consequently its knowledge of its object is knowledge of its own experience, the consciousness, in knowing its experience, knows itself as well. As Hegel puts it, consciousness' experience of its object is at once "the experience which consciousness has concerning itself."⁷³ Consciousness, in relating to its object at once relates to itself, i.e. to its own experience, and thus must in principle be described as self consciousness.

It is the discussion of self consciousness which Hegel takes as at least an initial goal towards which the description of the nature of the object in the "Introduction" to the Phenomenology tends. For it is self consciousness which in its own experience apprehends in an initial fashion

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Cf. Hegel's Science of Logic, trans. A.V. Miller, (London: Allen and Unwin, 1969), p. 60; G.W.F. Hegel, Wissenschaft der Logik, ed. Georg Lasson, (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1967), pp. 42-43, wherein Hegel analogously suggests that the concrete character of consciousness is the result of its own activity on its object.

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 144, Phänomenologie, p. 73.

the "truth" of consciousness in the "natural attitude," and particularly the truth of the implications of its own experience of the object. This is particularly the case regarding Hegel's analysis of consciousness as exercising an active role in relation to its object as well as itself. Consciousness in the "natural attitude"⁷⁴ takes its object to be an item simply occurring, essentially independent of any relationship with consciousness itself.⁷⁵ Self consciousness, however, recognizes that its object is an essential feature of its own experience, and that a thing's being a feature of its own experience is essential to its being an object "...that being 'in itself' and being 'for another' are the same."⁷⁶ It is in terms of his discussion of self consciousness as initially the realization of consciousness' relation to the object itself, that Hegel develops his notion of agency, in the transition from consciousness to self consciousness of the Phenomenology.

The movement from the "Introduction" to the Phenomenology to that section of the text describing the transition from consciousness to self consciousness omits, of course, a discussion of those phases of Hegel's philosophical analysis which explicitly treat consciousness itself: the dialectics of sense certainty, perception, and understanding. But this

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 135, Phänomenologie, p. 74.

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Cf. for example Hegel's beginning of the dialectic of sense certainty in Hegel, (Baillie), p. 149, Phänomenologie, p. 79.

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 218, Phänomenologie, p. 133.

omission is, I would argue, valid for the purposes of my analysis. The phases of Hegel's dialectic of consciousness here noted represent his initial attempts at a full philosophical justification of the doctrine of consciousness' relation to its object already laid down in the "Introduction." But the basis of his justification of that doctrine is discoverable in the "Introduction" itself, and the transition from consciousness to self consciousness in the Phenomenology is, as already noted, Hegel's attempt at elucidating the "truth" of consciousness itself.

Hegel initiates his dialectical examination of "self consciousness"⁷⁷ by reflecting back on the discussion of consciousness in relation to its object laid down in the "Introduction." He begins by reasserting the necessity of maintaining some distinction between consciousness and its object. To collapse the distinction of self consciousness and its object would be to render unintelligible the notion of self consciousness itself. Self consciousness minimally but essentially involves consciousness' experience of a relation to itself. This can only occur if consciousness is able both to be aware of itself, and to distinguish itself from that which it is not. Without the former, of course, the very concept of self consciousness would be impossible. But without the latter, and experience

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Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 218 and ff.; Hegel, Phänomenologie, pp. 133 and ff.

of self consciousness would likewise be impossible.⁷⁸ For consciousness can only experience itself if it also experiences its other, distinguishes itself therefrom, and apprehends through this distinction its own uniqueness. In Hegel's language, when self consciousness "...distinguishes only its self as such from itself, distinction is straightway taken to be superceeded, in the sense of involving otherness. The distinction is not, and self consciousness is only motionless tautology, Ego is Ego, I am I. When for self consciousness the distinction does not also have the shape of being, it is not self consciousness."⁷⁹ Any concept of self consciousness, as well as any philosophical analysis of the experience of self consciousness, must in some way maintain the distinction between consciousness and its object as other.

Showing the manner in which this distinction is to be maintained occupies Hegel in beginning the dialectic of self consciousness. He summarizes his point in the following statement: "For self consciousness, then, otherness is a fact, it does exist as a distinct moment (das Anderssein als ein Sein oder als untershchiedenes Moment): but the unity of

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F.G. Weiss, Hegel's Critique of Aristotle's Philosophy of Mind, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), pp. 16 and 44, in which it is remarked in the language of 'nature' and 'mind', that Hegel's note on of 'actuality' although ultimately one which involves the dialectical unification of these two concepts, at the same time maintains a distinction between them.

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 219, Phänomenologie, p. 134.

itself with this difference is also a fact for self consciousness, and a second distinct moment."⁸⁰ Self consciousness apprehends its object as that which is other than itself. At the same time, self consciousness recognizes "the unity of itself with this difference" and two ideas follow from the description of this phase of the experience of self consciousness.

Because consciousness recognizes some relation of itself to its object, it is capable of being self consciousness. But further, at this stage of his analysis Hegel implies that the "unity" between consciousness and its object here is a unity such that the object is consciousness' experience. The object of self consciousness is distinct from self consciousness itself, but it is also that which comprises the experience thereof. As such it is essentially related to self consciousness. Because the object is distinct, it can provide content for experience. But if self consciousness realizes its relation to itself through its other, then this other is essentially its own, a feature of its experience, its self. Because self consciousness relates to itself in virtue of relating to its other, we may not comprehend the terms of this relation as simply occurring separately. Hegel expresses this by describing the experience of self consciousness as involving two aspects or moments. "With that first moment, self consciousness occupies the position of consciousness, and the whole expanse of the sensible world is conserved as its object, but at the same time only as related to the second moment, the unity of self

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Hegel, (Baillie), pp. 219-220, Phänomenologie, p. 134.

consciousness with itself."⁸¹ And this means that the object is here both distinct from self consciousness, and is its experience, its own.

For Hegel to describe the location of the object in the experience of self consciousness in this fashion is, as he explicitly states, to assert that the object is now to be regarded as the "life" of self consciousness, and is so regarded by the latter itself. In its initial statement, this concept of life is not the developed concept that Hegel expresses in the Science of Logic,⁸² or even in subsequent moments in the Phenomenology itself.⁸³ But it is nonetheless an initial understanding of life, and one which Hegel uses to develop the notions of desire and agency as features of the experience of self consciousness. In this connection, it is important for my argument. Self consciousness initially views its object as its "life" in the following senses: the object (now described by Hegel as "the whole expanse of the world of sense") is the condition of the possibility of self consciousness' enjoying experience;⁸⁴ the object is that

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 220, Phänomenologie, p. 134.

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Cf. Hegel's Science of Logic, trans. Miller, pp. 761-774; Wissenschaft der Logik, vol. 2, pp. 413-429.

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Hegel, (Baillie), pp. 221-227, Phänomenologie, pp. 135-140.

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Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 219, Phänomenologie, p. 134. Cf. also Hegel, (Baillie), p. 218, Phänomenologie, p. 133. In the latter text, Hegel notes that in the idialectic of self consciousness, "The abstract conception of the object gives way before the actual concrete object, or the first immediate idea is cancelled in the course of experience." This assertion means for Hegel that the present phase of the dialectic recognizes the 'truth' of the object, to wit, that it is of the nature of the object to occur in itself for consciousness. But given this, the understanding of

whose own reality involves its being a feature of the experience of self consciousness;⁸⁵ and the object is consequently that which makes it possible for consciousness to relate to itself, to be self consciousness, Or, the object is the life of consciousness, and thus its own. But at the same time it is qua object distinct from consciousness.⁸⁶ Thus self consciousness here experiences its life as both occurring in a unity with itself and as distinct from itself.

Hegel expresses this idea in two statements, both of which warrant analysis. He first says that, given the experience of self consciousness, "...the sensible world is regarded by self consciousness as having a subsistence which is, however, only appearance, or forms of distinction from self-consciousness that per se has no being."⁸⁷ This statement is not to be taken to mean that the reality of the object in itself is nothing more than false appearance within the experience of consciousness, to be overcome simply through being negated. Its meaning is rather that the object taken simply as distinct and as such isolated from any relation to self consciousness is now seen to be, "...only appearance..." and that this

the object as necessary for the occurrence of experience remains.

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 218, Phänomenologie, p. 133.

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Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 219, Phänomenologie, p. 134. "When for self-consciousness the distinction does not also have the shape of being, it is not self-consciousness."

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 220. Phänomenologie, p. 135.

fact is now recognized by consciousness itself, from within its own experience, its life, and therefore its own. Thus, second, "This opposition of its appearance and its truth finds its real essence, however, only in the truth - in the unity of self-consciousness with itself."⁸⁸ Self consciousness, again, realizes its object as essentially related to itself. But this relation is not one of simple unity.⁸⁹ The object delivers itself to consciousness as other than and simultaneously as the experience of the latter. And "life" itself, in its initial moment, involves the recognition by self consciousness both of a unity with itself through its own experience, and of a fundamental differentiation from itself within its own experience. "The act of moving to and fro between...subject and object constitutes the very differentia of self consciousness."⁹⁰ Self consciousness recognizes its own object, now its own "life", as both essentially related to itself and distinct from itself, and indeed self consciousness is fundamentally this recognition.

All this means that, in Hegel's description, self consciousness experiences its "life" as both its own and as other than itself. But this experience yields the consequent experience of feeling that this disparity must be overcome. And 'feeling' is meant in its literal sense here. Since self consciousness recognizes within its own experience a distinction

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Ibid.

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Cf. Loewenberg, op. cit., p. 77.

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 220, Phänomenologie, p. 135.

between itself and its 'life', it desires to overcome this distinction, aiming at the goal of self unification. "This unity," the unity of self consciousness with its own life, "must become essential to self-consciousness, i.e., self-consciousness is the state of Desire (Begierde) in general."⁹¹

It is desire, then, which forms for Hegel the basic category through which the experience of the life of self consciousness is to be explicated. Self consciousness finds in its experience a "...twofold object...:"⁹² on the one hand the "...whole expanse of the world of sense..."⁹³ as other than itself, and on the other, this object as being the experience that is its own. Self consciousness thus desires to overcome the apparently simple otherness of its object in a way that is recognizable. It experiences itself as desire, as, "...the process in which this opposition is removed, and oneness or identity with itself is established."⁹⁴

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 220, Phänomenologie, p. 135.

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Ibid.

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 220, Phänomenologie, p. 134.

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 220; Phänomenologie, p. 134. Cf. Hyppolite, trans. O'Neill, p. 3. Hyppolite, in commenting on the relation of this section of Hegel's Phenomenology to the "Jeneser System" notes that, "In its immediate form self-consciousness is desire and the object which it confronts is nothing else than the object of its desire. Consciousness in this case is identical with life, and the creature moved by desire does not consider the object of its desire as something essentially alien. As a living creature he experiences the character of 'being other' only as a moment within an encounter that is virtually resolved in satisfaction." But Hyppolite fails to note clearly that, according to Hegel, desire

The experiencing of itself as desire has two results for self consciousness. First, it yields a further individuation of self consciousness. "Desire is always revealed as my desire, and to reveal desire, one must use the word 'I'."⁹⁵ In that self consciousness experiences itself not only as desire in general, but also as the locus of the specific desire to overcome the apparently simple otherness of specific portions of the range of its experience, self consciousness experiences itself as an individual. As a result, Hegel is able to offer an account of individuality more significant and profound than he could have before. Second, the desire of self consciousness when apprehended in relation to the content at

originates as the fundamental feature of immediate self consciousness, in self consciousness' own recognition that its object or its life is simultaneously its own and other than itself. Cf. however Hyppolite, Genèse et Structure, p. 153. Here he comments that, for the immediate self consciousness which Hegel describes in the relevant section of the Phenomenology, "The world no longer subsists in itself; it only subsists in relation to self consciousness which is its truth. The truth of Being is the Self which possesses it, and possesses it for itself...Desire is this movement of consciousness which respects not being but negation, i.e., which possesses being concretely and makes it its own. This desire supposes the phenomenal character of the world, which is only a means for the self." In this comment he recognizes, although I think still too obliquely, that for Hegel it is self consciousness' recognition that its object is both its life and not its own which is at the basis of the desire of self consciousness. Hyppolite's account here is notably superior to that offered by Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960), p. 14. Marcuse simply notes that, "Man has learned that his own self consciousness lies behind the appearances of things. He now sets out to realize this experience, to prove himself master of his world. Self consciousness thus finds itself in a 'state of desire' (Begierde): man, awakened to self consciousness, desires the objects around him, appropriates them and uses them.

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Kojeve, op. cit., p. 37..

which it is directed, reveals to self consciousness the process whereby it might be dealt with and overcome. This process is agency.

It is of the utmost importance to see why, for Hegel, agency is an essential feature of the experience of self consciousness given the nature of desire. And this can be done through noting that, even in the section of the Phenomenology now under consideration, agency takes on for Hegel three definitely interrelated but yet distinguishable senses. First, agency has here the sense of labor or work. The desire which self consciousness experiences is directed at "...the whole expanse of the world of sense..."⁹⁶ as its object. Self consciousness desires to overcome the appearance of this object as being in no essential relation to consciousness itself. And the foundation of this appearance is located precisely on the object's being sensible. Insofar as an item is a sense item, it seems simply to contain within itself its own identity, and to offer this identity to sensation, to consciousness as passive and receptive. The only way in which self consciousness can overcome this apparent nature of its object is to transform it as a sense object, to transform it materially. And it is agency as work which enables the self conscious individual to effect this transformation.⁹⁷ The nature, then, of that desire which self consciousness experiences as its self, together with the character of the object at which that desire is directed, results in self consciousness'

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 220, Phänomenologie, p. 135.

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Cf. Kojève, pp. 37-38.

further experiencing itself as an agent, or experiencing agency as work as a necessary manifestation of the desire which it is, for, as Hegel concisely puts it, "...labor shapes and transforms the thing."⁹⁸

Several commentators have noted the function of action as work or labor in Hegel's philosophical analysis of desire. Kojève identifies desire as, "...the desire to transform the contemplated thing by an action, to overcome it in its being that is unrelated to mine and independent of me, to negate it in its independence...For Self Consciousness...to exist, then, there must be in man not only positive, passive contemplation, which merely reveals being, but also negating Desire, and hence Action that transforms the given being."⁹⁹ Analogous comments are made by Marcuse¹⁰⁰ and Hyppolite.¹⁰¹ One might also remark that Hegel's initial understanding of the object of self consciousness as desire, "...the whole expanse of the world of sense," is in two particulars analogous to that concept of nature which Marx utilizes to illuminate some initial structural features of praxis. Nature, as I show in chapter one, is for Marx that external and malleable environment which is the necessary "material" of praxis, and which is itself essentially determined as the object of praxis. The object of self

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Hegel, (Baillie), p. 238, Phänomenologie, p. 149.

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Cf. Kojève, op. cit., loc. cit.

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Cf. Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, pp. 114-115.

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Cf. Hyppolite, trans. O'Neill, p. 165.

consciousness as desire, described by Hegel, is analogous to this, first, in that it is both other than and essentially related to self consciousness as the "life" of self consciousness, and second in that it is as such determined by the labor of the self conscious individual.¹⁰²

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Cf. Hegel's Philosophy of Nature, trans. A.V. Miller, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1970), pp. 4-5; Enzyklopädie, p. 199. It should not be surprising to find Hegel speaking of the object of the desire of self consciousness in a way analogous to Marx' explicitation of the concept of nature. For in the second volume of the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences, Hegel himself develops the concept of nature in a way analogous to Marx. Hegel insists therein, first, that an adequate philosophy of nature must be one which comprehends nature practically as well as theoretically, physics being an example of an exclusively theoretical comprehension of nature. He then goes on, in introducing the second volume of the Encyclopedia, to indicate what the comprehension of nature as a practical object might involve. "In man's practical approach to Nature, the latter is, for him, something immediate and external; he himself is an external and therefore sensuous individual, although in relation to natural objects, he correctly regards himself as an end. A consideration of nature according to this relationship yields the standpoint of a finite teleology (#205). In this, we find the correct presupposition that nature does not itself contain the absolute final end (#207-11)." And in an addendum to this statement, taken from the 1857 Michelet text, Hegel goes on to indicate how it is that, as a practical object, nature relates teleologically not to itself but to the human subject confronting it. "The practical approach to Nature is, in general, determined by appetite, which is self-seeking; need impels us to use Nature for our advantage, to wear her out, to wear her down, in short, to annihilate her. And here, two characteristics stand out. (a) The practical approach is concerned only with individual products of Nature, or with individual aspects of those products. The necessities and wit of man have found an endless variety of ways of using and mastering nature... (b) The other characteristic of the practical approach is that, since it is our end which is paramount, not natural things themselves, we convert the latter into a means, the destiny of which is determined by us, not by the things themselves; an example of this is the conversion of food into blood. (c) What is achieved is our satisfaction, our self-feeling, which had been disturbed by a lack of some kind or another." Hegel then offers an example of these points, highly reminiscent of the texts of Marx, especially the Manuscripts of 1844. "The negation of myself which I suffer within me in hunger, is at the same time present as an other than myself, as something to be consumed; my act is to annul this contradiction by making this other identical with myself, or by restoring my self-unity through sacrificing the thing."

In elaborating upon agency, Hegel goes on to show how it is that agency as work relates to the desire of self consciousness. The result of work is that self consciousness recognizes its object as its product, and this in three senses. First, the object as product is a "transformed" item, and as transformed it embodies within itself the details of that agency which effected its transformation.¹⁰³ Both Marx and Hegel might express this idea by saying that the product of work "objectifies" the activity of which it is the result. Second, specific pieces of individual agency are

This description of the practical significance of nature is highly analogous to the concept of nature as offered by Marx. Hegel takes nature here to be that sensuous environment which is both external to and essentially the correlate of the human subject. He notes that the details of the relations of the subject to his natural environment are determined by needs resident in the experience of the subject. And he notes that the details of nature itself are determined by that activity which the subject undertakes on nature, towards the satisfaction of his needs. One might also note in passing that Marx and Hegel use the same example to illustrate the subject of needs in his relation to sensuous nature: hunger.

At the same time, Hegel's description of practical nature clearly relates itself to his description of the object of the desire of self consciousness. Both the object of desire and nature are described by Hegel as correlates of the subject, relative to the desire or need of the subject, and that upon which agency, consequent upon desire or need, might be undertaken. Given these points, it is not surprising that Hegel's description of the object of the desire of self consciousness, pointing as it does to his description of practical nature, reminds us of Marx' concept of nature as well.

103

This is a direct implication of Hegel's statement in the Phenomenology cited above in footnote 98, that "...labor shapes and transforms the thing."

temporally finite and evanescent. But the result of agency, which embodies their details, involves in its own reality a relative degree of permanence. Therefore the product lends also a degree of permanence to the activity whose details it embodies.¹⁰⁴ And finally, the object as related to and depending upon itself in a way more profound than was previously conceived. And self consciousness apprehends its own self in its object as product. "That consciousness that toils and serves accordingly attains by this means the direct apprehension of that independent being as its self."¹⁰⁵ Consequently, agency as work satisfies the desire of self consciousness, albeit in a limited fashion, and results in the overcoming of the apparently simple otherness of the object.¹⁰⁶

104

Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 238, Phänomenologie, p. 149.

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Ibid.

106

Cf. Soll, op. cit., p. 12. It can be seen from the above that Soll's comment on the relation of action to the desire of self consciousness is inadequate because over simplified. Soll writes: "The action initiated by desire changes, uses, and possesses the external world but not merely for the benefits ordinarily associated with these activities. The immediate goals of desire and the behavior implementing it are rather viewed as manifestations of the basic drive of self-consciousness to negate the external world and to have only itself for an object...All the stages of self consciousness are to be viewed as different attempts to negate or deny the reality of the external world." But Hegel explicitly denies that the reality of the external world can be simply denied or negated, or that self consciousness desires this. Nor does he hold that self consciousness desires to have "...only itself for an object," in the simple sense of these terms employed by Soll. Rather, self consciousness desires to overcome the apparently exclusive otherness and externality of its object, and aims at the partial achievement of this through work, in the way outlined above.

So far, we have discussed agency as work in connection with showing how, according to Hegel, the self conscious subject of desire must be taken as an agent. But two other senses of agency are involved in Hegel's description of self consciousness at this stage of the Phenomenology, and these are also worth mentioning. They involve the notions of intersubjectivity and "self transformation."

The phenomenon of intersubjectivity arises for Hegel in his examination of the dialectic whereby self consciousness initially realizes for itself the truth of its own desire. The introduction to the dialectic of self consciousness is entitled by Hegel "The Truth of Self Certainty" (*Die Wahrheit der Gewissheit seiner selbst*), and initially, that self certainty which self consciousness realizes is that its object is its own in the sense of being a feature of its own experience:¹⁰⁷ consciousness realizes now what was stated in the "Introduction" to the Phenomenology itself, that the distinction of the object as in itself and for consciousness is one drawn by consciousness from within its own experience.¹⁰⁸ In terms of the language of desire, this is to assert that self consciousness recognizes its object as both its "life" in the senses described above, and as

107

Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 218, Phänomenologie, p. 133. Here, Hegel states this point through discussion of the object of consciousness in relation to consciousness' knowledge of that object. But a recalling of the distinction of the relation between consciousness, its object, and its knowledge of that object offered in the "Introduction" to the Phenomenology makes it clear that self-certainty means that consciousness realizes its object as a feature of its own experience.

108

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 139, Phänomenologie, p. 70.

distinct from itself. We have already seen that this recognition is itself the source of self consciousness' desire. But further, inasmuch as self consciousness experiences this desire, it is capable of recognizing itself as the locus of such desire, i.e. capable of recognizing itself as a personal individual.

Hegel argues that the realization of this capacity for self-recognition requires that the self conscious individual occur in an intersubjective context, or, that the occurrence of intersubjectivity for self consciousness is necessary for the latter to be itself in a full sense. He offers an argument to this effect in what I take to be the following terms. Self consciousness relates to its desire to overcome the apparently simple otherness of its object through agency as work. As that which transforms the object, work succeeds in overcoming its mere otherness. But in the very success of its work, self consciousness rediscovers the yet remaining otherness of its object in the latter's perduring externality. "In this state of satisfaction, however, it has experience of the independence of its object."¹⁰⁹ For it is only as external to self consciousness that the object can be the object of the former's work, and can be transformed thereby.¹¹⁰ Two consequences follow from this. The first is stated by

109

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 225, Phänomenologie, p. 139.

110

Here again is a further parallel between Hegel's concept of the object of self consciousness and Marx' concept of nature as the object of praxis. For Marx, as shown in Chapter One, the object of praxis must be conceived as both external to the subject of praxis, the productive agent, and maleable or transformable by praxis.

Hegel through the assertion that, "Self consciousness is thus unable by its negative relation to the object to abolish it; because of that relation it rather produces it again, as well as the desire."¹¹¹ Self consciousness succeeds in overcoming the apparently simple otherness of its object through that work which transforms the latter. But the goal of the desire of self consciousness is the overcoming of the distinction between self consciousness and its object as its "life." Since the occurrence of work on the object itself elicits self consciousness' recognition of the object's enduring externality, then the success of work is only partial.

A second consequence is that, "The object desires is, in fact, something other than self consciousness, the essence of desire..."¹¹² And this assertion indicates the nature of self consciousness' comprehension of its own desire in relation to its self. Self consciousness necessarily comprehends its desire by comprehending it in its relation to the object at which it is directed: the object is "the essence of desire..." As long as that object is one which retains as its fundamental quality externality, self consciousness recognizes the essential content of its desire as that which is external to itself. Thus, self consciousness does not recognize its own desire as located within itself, as being its own character and individuality, or its own or its self in proper senses of those terms. As

111

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 225; Phänomenologie, p. 139.

112

Ibid.

Hyppolite comments, "In relating to this world, desire must rediscover itself, but it is unable to recognize itself without passing through the mediation of this world. Thus the self appears to itself as an immediate datum of the external world, even at the bare level of life."¹¹³ In order for the desire of self consciousness to be more adequately satisfied, then the externality of its object must be overcome in some further sense. In order for self consciousness to recognize itself as a personal individual, to comprehend its desire as its self or its own, some adequate basis of comprehension must be provided by the object. And indeed it is necessary for self consciousness to recognize itself as a personal individual in the sense noted above, for this is a fundamental feature of the experience of self consciousness, or of the being thereof.¹¹⁴

Hegel argues that self consciousness may achieve both a more adequate satisfaction of its own desire, and the recognition of itself as a personal individual, another self consciousness. A more adequate satisfaction of the desire of self consciousness, first, would involve the overcoming of the externality of self consciousness' object in a more adequate sense that can be overcome in the object of work, "the whole expanse of the world of sense..." For the object of work, externality could be further overcome only through a radical abolition of the object, which is for Hegel on all terms impossible. But the event of self consciousness' being recognized by

113

Hyppolite (O'Neill), p. 162.

114

Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 225; Phänomenologie, p. 139.

externality of its object. Here the object is the other self consciousness. This other is, for the original self consciousness, its recognition of that latter. But this is to say that, in the case of intersubjectivity under discussion, the object of self consciousness is able to be its self, as that which is the recognition of itself, in a way which the object of work can not be, and in this way more adequate to the satisfaction of the desire of self consciousness.¹¹⁵

Further, given recognition by the other, or the experience of intersubjectivity, self consciousness is able to comprehend itself as a personal individual. As noted above, self consciousness, as related to its object of work, is not able to so comprehend itself, both because of the nature and the externality which this object retains, and because its object is "the essence of desire", the content of that desire which is nonetheless self consciousness' own. But in the case of being recognized by another, self consciousness is able to see itself in its object, because its object here is the recognition of itself. And moreover, the other as that object of self consciousness which recognizes it points self consciousness' comprehension of its own desire away from the mere external-

115

Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), pp. 225-26; Phänomenologie, p. 139. Hegel states this idea in a way which interestingly displays his use of the notion of negativity. "On account of the independence of the object, therefore, it can only attain satisfaction when this object effectually brings about negation within itself. The object must per se effect this negation of itself, for it is inherently (an sich) something negative, and must be for the other what it is."

mere externality of its object and back to itself. Thus in the case of intersubjectivity, "A self consciousness has before it a self consciousness. Only so and only then is it self consciousness in actual fact; for here first of all it comes to have the unity of itself in its otherness."¹¹⁶

For Hegel, then, intersubjectivity is necessary in order that self consciousness be itself and this in two related senses: in order that it adequately relate to its own desire, and in order that it comprehend its desire as its self, itself as a personal individual. In order to be itself, in the sense of realizing features implicit in its own experience, self consciousness must occur in a context of intersubjectivity. These are comments, which, as is clear from the text, do more than merely point to the dialectic of Lordship and Bondage.¹¹⁷ They form for Hegel an initial argument in support of the general conclusion that the context of experience of the self conscious individual must be an intersubjective one.

116

Hegel, (Baillie), pp. 226-27; Phänomenologie, p. 140. Cf. Also Hegel, (Baillie), p. 229; Phänomenologie, p. 141. "Self-consciousness exists in itself and for itself in that, and by the fact that it exists for another self-consciousness; that is to say, it is only by being acknowledged or recognized."

117

Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 227; Phänomenologie, p. 140. It is clear that Hegel means to do more with his comments on intersubjective recognition than point to the dialectic of Lordship and Bondage, in that his immediate reference, in the text subsequent to the argument exposed above, is to the concept of Spirit. "With this we have already before us the notion of Mind or Spirit. What consciousness has further to become aware of, is the experience of what mind is - this absolute substance, which is the unity of different self-related and self-existent self-consciousnesses, in the perfect freedom and independence of their opposition as component elements of that substance: Ego that is 'we', a plurality of Egos, and 'we' that is a single Ego."

Hyppolite seems to see this when, in a single comment of self consciousness relation to its own satisfaction and self comprehension, he notes that, "...it can only achieve this if it appears in the form of an other Self, another living self consciousness...the existence of the Other is an ontological condition of my own existence...Thus the desire of life becomes the desire of another desire, or rather, in view of the necessary reciprocity of the phenomenon, human desire is always desire of the desire of another."¹¹⁸ Hegel, then, can hold even at this stage of the Phenomenology that self consciousness must necessarily occur in an intersubjective context, or that the self conscious individual is necessarily a social individual.¹¹⁹

118

Hyppolite, (O'Neill), p. 162.

119

Cf. Findlay, op. cit., p. 94, Soll, op. cit., p. 16-17. Both Findlay and Soll offer, in my opinion, inadequate comments on the text of the Phenomenology under discussion here, in failing to consider the full detail of the argument offered by Hegel. Findlay comments: "Another self is, in short, the only adequate mirror of my self conscious self; the subject can only adequately see itself when what it sees is another self consciousness." But the other is not for self consciousness simply a 'mirror' in which it finds itself reflected. It is rather that object which 'acts' on self consciousness by recognizing it, and thus makes it possible for self consciousness to comprehend itself. Soll thinks himself to offer a corrective to Findlay's comment, but he is misled by an overly vague appreciation of Hegel's use of 'negation'. He writes: "Desire is only satisfied by the negation of its object, and, since desire can not bring this about through its own action on this object (as Hegel argued earlier), desire can be satisfied only if this object negates itself...If one were to describe the attainment of life and self-consciousness by the object of self-consciousness in terms of the mirror metaphor, it would be well to remember that self-consciousness here is expressing itself as the desire to destroy through action." But to suggest that, for Hegel, self consciousness seeks the abolition of its object is to fly in the face of the text. Rather, Hegel argues that self consciousness desires the overcoming of the externality of its object in a way recognizable to itself.

A final comment needs now to be made on Hegel's arguments concerning self consciousness and its relation to its object, viz., that self consciousness in acting on or relating to its object, realizes its own nature, realizes explicitly possibilities which are located within its own experience, or actualizes itself. This comment may be brief, for its evidence is contained in what has already been claimed. It will be remembered, that, in the "Introduction" to the Phenomenology, Hegel referred to experience as a "dialectical process which consciousness executes on itself--on its knowledge as well as on its object--in the sense that out of it the new and true object arises..."¹²⁰ Consciousness acts on its object, and this action constitutively affects not only the nature of the object, but consciousness as well. This idea is expanded and concretized in Hegel's description of self consciousness, in three senses. First, the occurrence of self consciousness' experiencing its object as an object of desire introduces into its experience a further moment of individuation. As Kojève comments, "Desire is always revealed as my desire, and to reveal desire, one must use the word 'I'."¹²¹ Second, in relating to its other as that which recognizes itself, self consciousness is able to comprehend explicitly (Hegel would say is capable of being "for itself")¹²² its own

This is achieved by the object which, while it retains its independence, is for self consciousness the recognition thereof.

120

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 142; Phänomenologie, p. 73.

121

Kojève, op. cit., p. 37.

122

Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 229; Phänomenologie, p. 141.

personal individuality. And finally, in relating to its object as the result of its agency as work, self consciousness is capable of comprehending both itself as a concrete, practical agent, and its object as the concrete expression of its own personal individuality.¹²³ In these three senses, self consciousness' relation to and activity on its object results in its own self realization or self actualization.

So far, we have analyzed texts of the Phenomenology in which Hegel treats the notions of consciousness and self consciousness, for the sake of getting clear how Hegel develops concepts relevant to the content of Marx' theory of human nature. We have seen how, in introducing the topics of experience and knowledge, Hegel argues that consciousness must be described as maintaining an active role in relation to its object. We have seen how these introductory remarks point beyond themselves to the examination of the dialectic of self consciousness. And in that latter dialectic, we have seen the how notions of agency, intersubjectivity, and self actualization introduced and developed. I want next to examine a further section of the Phenomenology, one which Hegel entitles "Das geistige Tierreich und der Betrug, oder die Sache Selbst."

This section of Hegel's text although referred to by one commentator as "an obscurely sketched dialectical phase"¹²⁴ of the Phenomenology, is of the highest significance both for the development of the Phenomenology

123

Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 238; Phänomenologie, p. 149.

124

Findlay, op. cit., p. 110.

subjectivity."²⁸ Soul's emergence is the implicit goal or 'truth' of the process of nature, but that goal is realized only through the actual emergence of individual, natural organisms capable of primitive forms of awareness of experience. For Hegel to describe conscious events as so emergent from nature is to describe such events as properties of the individual.²⁹

This emphasis is further drawn out by Hegel in the Encyclopedia, as he describes the capacities of awareness of 'soul' under three headings: sentience, feeling, and habit. By sentience or sensation,³⁰ 'Empfindung',³¹ Hegel means to indicate the barest form of organic aware-

28

Hegel, Enzyklopädie, p. 320, my translation. Cf. Hegel, Philosophy of Mind, (Wallace, Miller), pp. 35-36, for a translation which is, in my opinion, deceptive. Cf. also Harris, op. cit., p. 80, for commentary on the idea offered by Hegel here.

29

Cf. Hegel, Enzyklopädie, pp. 325-326; Hegel, Philosophy of Mind, (Wallace, Miller), p. 73, for confirmation that Hegel retains this argument for consciousness as a property of the individual in the context of a discussion of more developed forms of consciousness as well.

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The former translation of 'Empfindung' is selected by Harris, the latter by Wallace. Harris' translation has the advantage of distinguishing in translation 'Empfindung' from 'Sinnlichkeit', a distinction which Hegel obviously draws.

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Cf. Hegel, Enzyklopädie, p. 325.

In this present section of the Phenomenology, Hegel discusses the experience of the self conscious individual which takes itself to be both an agent and an individual. He includes an analysis of the most primitive form which this experience can take, and the dialectical ramifications thereof.

Initially, the individual's experience of itself is that of, in Hegel's language, a "result,"¹²⁶ and individuality itself is comprehended as "an original determinate nature..."¹²⁷ By "result" here, Hegel means that the individual takes itself to be simply a given, or simply as one whose experience is immediately given, rather than as being the consequence of several interacting, intermediating features. The term "original" has the same meaning in this context. This meaning is further refined by the term "determinate". The individual's experience of itself is that of involving definite capacities and possibilities for action. In that these capacities are definite, the individual experiences itself as concrete: the individual is concretely determined through those capacities for action which are both definite and its own. The concrete individual, at this primitive phase of its experience, does not recognize these determinate capacities as involving negation, i.e. as limiting as well as defining the range of possibilities of its own activities.¹²⁸ Rather, the individual

126

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 419; Phänomenologie, p. 285.

127

Ibid.

128

Cf. Ibid.

here takes itself simply to be the unity of disparate capacities for action, and takes its life to be the process of activities which follows therefrom.

This process of activities in turn enables the individual to realize the unity between himself and his environment. The environment is comprehended simply as that context wherein life activity itself is comprehended simply as the life process of the individual. Hegel offers a lengthy metaphor to illustrate this point:

We have here something similar to what we find in the case of indeterminate animal life: this breathes the breath of life let us say, into water as its element, or air or earth, and within these again into still more determinate conditions; every aspect of its life is affected by the specific element, and yet animal life still keeps these aspects within its power and itself a unity in spite of the limitations of the element, and remains qua the given particular organization animal life throughout, the same general fact of animal life.¹²⁹

Analogous to animal life, the concrete individual initially comprehends its own activity as its life process, and its environment as simply that context within which its life process is undertaken. Thus it comprehends its environment as occurring in a unity with itself.

This brief examination of the experience of the concrete individual, although inadequate in its first presentation, has offered a subject matter for analysis: the activity itself of the individual. "This concept of

129

Hegel, (Baillie), pp. 419-420; Phänomenologie pp. 285-286.

activity has become essential, and it is this which becomes our object."¹³⁰
The concept of activity is essential here because it is activity which the concrete individual, from within its own experience, comprehends as fundamental to its own life process, and thus to its relation between itself and its environment. Because of this, it must now become the object of philosophical examination. And this examination involves, for Hegel, first, a more detailed analysis of activity as an occurrence within the experience of the individual, and second, some comments on the viability of the individual's experience of itself as experience of an "original determinate of nature..."

The analysis of activity begins with an attempt to note within the experience of action certain unified and yet distinguishable features. First, concrete activity is experienced by the individual as that which it desires in virtue of definite capacities for action which are the individual's own. Because of this, activity is experienced by one individual as an intention or purpose. "To begin with, action is here an object, an object, too, still belonging to consciousness; it is present as a purpose (Zweck), and thus opposed to a given reality."¹³¹ "Zweck" might be better translated here as "design" rather than "purpose," the term Baillie chooses; the concrete individual experiences its own capacity for action as a design to be realized in the context of given environmental

130

Hyppolite, Genèse et Structure, p. 286.

131

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 420; Phänomenologie, p. 286.

circumstances. But while design (or purpose) is a moment of activity, it must be accompanied by a second moment, involving the concrete details of that action whereby design is realized. This feature of activity Hegel entitles "means".¹³² And finally, activity is experienced by the individual as involving the unification of these two prior features in a third, the result of activity in which design is realized through the details of the process of action. "The third moment is, finally, the object, no longer as immediately and subjectively presented purpose, but as brought to light and established as something other than and external to the acting subject."¹³³

But the unification of design and means in result bears a consequence for the experience of the acting individual. The consequence is this: it is in virtue of being able to comprehend the result of its own activity that the individual is capable of comprehending in an objective and concrete fashion the details of its own action (the "means"), as well as the details of that design resident at the base of the process of activity. Design and "means" are available to consciousness in an objective sense only as embodied in the result of activity as that result appears within the experience of the individual. But design and "means" are respectively the original nature of and the life process of the individual: its self. Thus the individual can only concretely comprehend itself in virtue of the

132

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 421; Phänomenologie, p. 286.

133

Ibid.

experience of the results of its own activity. Hegel gives clear expression to this idea in the text. "Consciousness must act solely that what it inherently and explicitly is, may be for it explicitly; or, acting is just the process of mind coming to be qua consciousness. What it is implicitly, therefore, it knows from its actual reality. Hence it is that an individual cannot know what he is till he has made himself real by action."¹³⁴

In concluding his initial examination of the occurrence of activity within the experience of the concrete individual Hegel draws two further

134

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 422; Phänomenologie, p. 287. Parenthetically, Hegel notes that there seems to be a paradox concerning the possibility of the concrete individual's being an agent. Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), pp. 422-23; Phänomenologie, pp. 287-89. The apparent paradox may be simply formulated. If the individual must act in order to comprehend himself concretely, and if action includes design or purpose, a feature of the "original nature" of the individual, then how can design or purpose be known by the individual in such a way as to allow him to initiate action? It would seem that he can not, and that activity is impossible on the above terms. But Hegel argues that this paradox may be resolved, if it is realized that by "design" (Zweck) here is not meant purpose in the sense of a consciously constructed intention as the result of deliberation or planning, but simply the individual's experience of himself as responding to the environment in virtue of specific capacities for action which are his own, and his experience of this response as involving "interest" in or a spontaneous tendency towards the active realization of such specific capacities. It is for this reason that I have preferred to translate "Zweck" as 'design' rather than as 'purpose'. 'Purpose' bears the connotation of planning and deliberation which Hegel is anxious to avoid here. In this fashion the self comprehension consequent upon 'design' may be seen as possible for the individual. And indeed, Hegel seems to argue that it is only given such self comprehension as the result of activity that purposeful activity then becomes possible for the individual.

consequences from his analysis. First, as noted above, the individual is capable of concretely knowing himself, his own "original nature," through recognizing the results of his own activity. And this is the case because the result of activity both unifies the design and the process of activity itself, and is an objective result, public and capable of being discerned. If this is so, then it follows that the individual is capable of knowing not only his own concrete nature through the results of his own activity, but also of knowing the concrete natures of other individuals through the results of their own activities. He is thus capable of comparing individuals in terms of the range and variety of activities available to them.¹³⁵ This involves, of course, not an ethical comparison; no standards for such a comparison have yet been provided from within the experience of the concrete individual itself.¹³⁶ It involves a comparison which is simply quantitative, one in which consciousness "...can, e.g., regard an individual who is of wider compass in his work as possessing stronger energy of will or a richer nature, i.e. a nature whose original constitution (Bestimmtheit) is less limited; another as a weaker and a poorer nature."¹³⁷ Second, inasmuch as the result of activity unifies in itself design and "means," and since the "original nature" and life process of the individual are precisely these, then the individual can apprehend the result of

135

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 424; Phänomenologie, p. 289.

136

Cf. Ibid.

137

Ibid.

his activity as proceeding from and crystalizing his own nature, his self, and take satisfaction from it.¹³⁸

But from this point Hegel moves to a critical exposition of the supposition of the "original nature," asking, "...whether its reality agrees with this notion."¹³⁹ This leads him to further develop the theme of intersubjectivity. The individual agent, conscious of himself as possessing an "original nature" in the sense defined above, takes itself, in Hegel's language "as such to be all reality..."¹⁴⁰ This concretely means that this individual, from within its experience, takes the environment which it confronts to be simply that milieu in which it may realize its given capacities through action: the environment is both external to the individual and that which wholly offers itself as the context in which the activity or 'life process' of the individual can be carried on; it is wholly at the service of the individual, and therefore unified with him in his experience.¹⁴¹ The making of this point was the purpose of Hegel's description of the life process of the individual agent through the metaphor of animal life. It has been noted that in virtue of the results of activity the individual is capable of comprehending the details of his own individual nature, of taking satisfaction in

138

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 425; Phänomenologie, p. 290.

139

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 426; Phänomenologie, p. 290.

140

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 419; Phänomenologie, p. 285.

141

Cf. Hyppolite, Genèse et Structure, pp. 286-287.

its objective embodiment, and of comparing various discretely individual 'original natures.'

But these three possibilities are real possibilities for the individual agent because the results of his activity are embodied in his environment as products external to himself.¹⁴² And this 'objective' character of the results of the individual's activity renders it possible that others can relate to his own product. The individual is capable of experiencing others through to the results of his own action, but this experience negates in a specific fashion his experience of the 'reality' of his environment as being essentially in unity with himself. Others do not relate to the product of the individual's activity as if it were the expression within the external environment of their 'natures'. They relate to this product rather as a feature of the external environment itself, within which they must assert their own active capabilities in order to realize a unity therewith. As Hegel puts it, "The work is, i.e., it is for other individuals, and for them it is an external, alien reality, in whose place they have to put their own, in order to get by their action consciousness of their unity with reality. In other words, the interest which they take in that work owing to their original constitution is other than the peculiar interest of this work, which is thereby turned into something

142

Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 421; Phänomenologie, p. 286. "The third moment is, finally, the object no longer as immediately and subjectively presented purpose, but as brought to light and established as something other than and external to the acting subject."

different."¹⁴³ This is to argue that, given the apprehension of his product by others, the individual is no longer capable of experiencing the reality of his environment as simply occurring in unity with, or as a correlate of, his own activity.

The apprehension of the product of the individual's activity by others bears a further implication for the experience of the individual. The individual agent as described above experiences himself as constituted through an 'original nature', given and definite capacities for action, which yield for him the 'interest' of acting out given purposes or designs. And the interest that this individual has in acting out designs is precisely this, that the results of such activity will express in an objective fashion his own 'original nature.'¹⁴⁴ The 'interest' which others take in the product of the individual's activity is not the same as that taken by the individual himself. For others apprehend his product, not simply as an expression of the individual's 'nature,' but rather as the realization of some purpose which in itself is worthy of being realized through action. (For example: the individual comprehends his activity of poetizing and its result as expressing some definite capacity or talent of his own; others apprehend his result as the result of an activity whose underlying purpose

143

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 427; Phänomenologie, pp. 291-292.

144

We have seen Hegel assert that it is in virtue of this 'interest' that the individual takes satisfaction in the product of his activity.

is worthy on its own terms.) The individual experiences the product of his activity as related to by others in this fashion. The result of this for the experience of the individual agent may be described under the following five headings.¹⁴⁵

First, the individual now experiences his own activity as both expressive of his self and as realizing an intrinsically worthy purpose, but with the latter characteristic as the essential one through which activity is to be comprehended. Hegel asserts that "...what disappears in the work, is the objective reality..."¹⁴⁶ The "objective reality of work has been taken by the agent to be simply this, that activity yields a result which gives objective expression to its producer's 'original nature'. But now the individual experiences the result of his activity as realizing a purpose generally worthy of being acted upon, and as expressing the individuality of its producer insofar as this generally worthy purpose is also his own.

Second, the individual experiences the details of his own activity or work (Werk)¹⁴⁷ as "...transitory..."¹⁴⁸ This point has two interrelated

145

That five headings are required to explicitate Hegel's argument at this point illustrates, I think, the typical and torturously slow pace with which Hegel's dialectic progresses.

146

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 429; Phänomenologie, p. 293.

147

Cf. Phänomenologie, p. 294.

148

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 430; Phänomenologie, p. 294.

meanings for Hegel. On the one hand, the general purpose underlying the activity of the individual is now seen as realizable through any number of disparate activities, of which his activity, in its concrete details, is only one instance. (E.g., doing poetry can, as a general purpose, be realized through a number of disparate sorts of poetizing acts.) On the other hand, the individual's self (or 'nature') might be objectified or externally expressed through any of these disparate and possible acts. Thus the activity of the individual in its concrete details is 'transitory' in the sense of its not being the necessary and only action through which purpose may be realized and individuality objectified.¹⁴⁹

But thirdly, the individual further experiences the transitory character of his work or activity overcome precisely to the extent to which it is concrete action towards the accomplishment of some generally worthy purpose. Hegel entitles the unity of particular activity with the realization of a general purpose "...die Sache selbst...",¹⁵⁰ and makes of it the following statement. "This unity, this identity is the true work, it is the real intent, the fact of the matter (die Sache selbst), which asserts itself at all costs, and is felt to be the lasting element, independent of 'fact' which is the accident of an individual action as such,

149

Cf. Ibid. Hegel sums up the points made here in the following statement. "On the contrary, the opposition and negativity manifested in the case of work then affects not only the content of the work or the content of consciousness as well, but the reality as such, and hence affects the opposition present merely in virtue of that reality and in it, and the disappearance of the work."

150

Phänomenologie, p. 294.

the accident of circumstances, means, and activity."¹⁵¹ In virtue of its being the realization of a generally worthy purpose,¹⁵² particular activity achieves a worth and permanence that it does not simply in itself bear.¹⁵³ And this permanence involves precisely concrete activity's being the realization of a general purpose, and thus holding that general purpose within its own particular details.¹⁵⁴

An implication of this is that the 'reality' of the environment may no longer be taken to be simply that of a milieu within which the individual agent gives expression to his own 'original nature;' it must be taken as

151

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 430; Phänomenologie, p. 294.

152

It is interesting to note here that Hegel offers no criteria whereby 'generally worthy purpose' might be a priori determined. I suspect he would hold that the 'worthiness' of general purpose must be determined socially and historically. Evidence in support of this suggestion will be offered subsequently.

153

Cf. Hegel, The Philosophy of Right, trans. T.M. Knox, (Oxford: The University Press, 1967), p. 238, addendum to paragraph #270. "Actuality is always the unity of universal and particular, the universal dismembered into the particulars which seem to be self-subsistent, although they really are upheld and contained only in the whole. Where this unity is not present, a thing is not actual even though it may have acquired existence." This definition of actuality is clearly relevant to Hegel's description of activity at this point.

154

Cf. Loewenberg, op. cit., p. 171. Loewenberg errs in seeing the unity of concrete activity and general purpose as an operative principle in the beginning of this dialectic. Contrary to this, Hegel holds that this principle can be an operative one only when the experience of the individual agent is articulated to the point at which he can comprehend the relation which the product of his activity has to himself, and notice the effects of the apprehension of his product by others on his own experience

as that context within which activity which unites within itself particular details and the interest in the realization of a general purpose may be undertaken. It is in taking the environment as a correlate of activity of this sort that the individual agent realizes the fundamental possibility which that environment offers to him as an agent, its 'truth' in Hegel's sense of that term. I will take up this point subsequently.

Fourth, the adequacy of describing the individual agent as endowed with an 'original nature' is now called into question. Hegel notes that, "Objective reality, however, is a moment which itself has no longer independent truth in this mode of consciousness; it (i.e. the truth) consists solely in the unity of this consciousness with action (tun), and the true work (das wahre Werk) is only that unity of action and existence, of willing and performance."¹⁵⁵ 'Objective reality' in this statement refers to that 'original nature' in terms of which the agent took himself to be constituted as an individual, and in relation to which his environment was experienced simply as a correlate. Activity was taken by the individual to be simply an expression of this 'original nature'.

But the experience of others relating to the results of his activity has forces the agent to revise his attitude towards that activity itself. And in virtue of this, his attitude towards his own individuality must also be revised. The individual continues to comprehend himself as an individual who acts. But now he comprehends his own activity as containing

155

Hegel, (Baillie), pp. 429-430; Phänomenologie, pp. 293-294.

within its details the aim of realizing a generally worthy purpose. This purpose is both a general one and the individual's own. But more, it is one which the individual makes his own through acting upon it.

This is the case in two senses. First, it is through acting on a general purpose that that purpose is incorporated into the experience of the individual as a 'design' of his own. The individual becomes one who, as an individual, has specific 'designs' precisely through incorporating general purposes into his own behavior. (E.g., it is not the case that one is first a poet, and then proceeds to do poetry. Rather, one does poetry, and through this action becomes an individual poet.) Second, the result of action 'objectifies,' i.e. embodies in a definite product which is external to the individual activity itself, and thus enables the individual to know concretely both his activity and himself. I have already noted this. But activity itself is now comprehended by the individual as concrete action holding within its particularity the aim of realizing a general purpose. The product of action, then, embodies both the concrete details of this activity and the above mentioned aim as the agent has incorporated it into his own individuality. Thus the individual is capable of knowing the details of his adoption of a generally worthy purpose through his relation to the result of his activity, which embodies in itself those details. On this basis, of course, the individual is now capable of revising the details of his own design, and of engaging in further and more sophisticated activities in virtue of that revision.

With these observations in mind, let us return to a consideration of Hegel's text. The individual agent may no longer be described, and no

longer comprehends himself from within his own experience, as being constituted as both an agent and as an individual through possessing a definite, 'original nature.' The 'original nature,' as Hegel puts it, "...has no longer independent truth in this mode of consciousness..."¹⁵⁶ Rather, those capacities for action and designs which are the individual's own, and through which the agent as an individual is to be described, in their definite forms are consequences of the individual's actions, through which designs are adopted by the individual and specified as his own in their details: "...it (i.e. the truth) consists solely in the unity of this consciousness with action..."¹⁵⁷ This is to say that the 'nature' or concrete individuality of the agent, that unity of capacities and designs which is his own and thus his self, is the result of, or is constituted by, that action of his own which unifies particular details of activity and general purpose. One might say for Hegel that the individual nature of the agent is 'actualized' by his own activity. It is a proposition with which Marx would heartily agree.

A final implication of the product of the individual's activity being related to others may now be noted. It is essential to the nature of activity, as pointed out above, that it involve the unification of particular details with a general purpose. Hegel points out that in virtue of

156

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 429; Phänomenologie, p. 293.

157

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 429-430; Phänomenologie, p. 294.

this, activity is experienced as involving permancece, or 'actuality',¹⁵⁸ rather than mere transitoriness. But when his product is apprehended by others, the individual notices, first, that the general purpose which is incorporated into his activity is not his alone, but is shared by others.¹⁵⁹ Indeed a defining feature of 'general purpose' is its ability to be incorporated by several individual agents into the details of the particular actions of each. And further, the individual must now experience and comprehend the 'reality' of his environment as that context within which the activities towards the realization of general purposes, and thus communal activities, may be undertaken.

It is with this comprehension that the "geistige Tierreich" is overcome. Society is a "community of animals" when individual agents experience and comprehend themselves as simply giving active expression to their own, immediate, 'original' natures, and experience the environment only as a correlate of activity towards this expression. But given the possibilities implicit within the experience of the individual agent himself, this form of self comprehension, and thus this description of the nature of the agent, will not do. Hegel now argues that agency is that through which the individual achieves self actualization, and that means through which he "objectifies himself in his environment. The environment, in turn, is and is experienced by the individual as that milieu within

158

Cf. the definition of 'actuality' noted in foot note #153.

159

Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 437; Phänomenologie, p. 300.

which social as well as individual action occurs, and a milieu whose details are produced through social activity. And, finally, agency brings the individual into the context of a society of agents, which context profoundly affects both the nature of individual action and the individual's experience of his own action. The individual is now seen as essentially a member of a society of agents.

When the individual attains this comprehension of himself, when he understands himself to be a participant in a society of agents in virtue of the very structure of his experience as an agent, consciousness achieves its realization as Spirit. This notion was heralded earlier in the Phenomenology, in the dialectic of self consciousness, where Spirit was described as, "...the unity of the different self related and self existent self consciousnesses in the perfect freedom and independence of their opposition as component elements of that substance: Ego that is 'we', a plurality of Egos, and 'we' that is a single Ego."¹⁶⁰ The description of the dialectic of the experience of the individual agent has both described the nature of individual agent itself, and reached consciousness of itself as Spirit. Precisely in realizing himself as an individual through his own activity, the agent notes that his experience both affirms his individuality, and points beyond it towards the experience of being a participant in a society of individuals. As Hyppolite admirably notes, through an examination of the structure of the experience of the agent as an individual, Hegel

160

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 227; Phänomenologie, p. 140.

concludes that "Self consciousness is not only for itself, it is also for others; it is not only subjective, it is also a datum (une chose), an objective manifestation...This is the world of spirit, this world which is spirit, which will finally be the thing itself (i.e. die Sache selbst), and this world demands the consideration not of individuality alone but of interaction, of the interplay between individualities."¹⁶¹ It is to Hegel's examination of those features of the experience of the individual that are both social and are fundamental to the experience of the individual qua individual that we must next analyze.

III. Agency and society in the Philosophy of Right.

In taking up this issue I shift my analysis from the text of the Phenomenology of Spirit to that of the Philosophy of Right. For it is in The Philosophy of Right that Hegel offers concise analysis of the question of, in Hyppolite's language, "the interplay of individualities," the question which, as shown above, arises for Hegel out of his examination of the structures of the experience of the concrete individual agent. I turn to the Philosophy of Right rather than to the Phenomenology for Hegel's analysis of the social nature of individual experience because, while Hegel treats this question in the text of the Phenomenology,¹⁶² his primary

161

Hyppolite, Genèse et Structure, pp. 299 and 300.

162

Cf. Ibid., pp. 311-313.

concern there is the explicitating of the development of the notion of Spirit,¹⁶³ whereas the Philosophy of Right directs attention specifically to the questions of the nature of society, especially political society, and of the relation between society and the individual. Also the latter text is, as is well known, one to which Marx directed sustained attention.¹⁶⁴

In Hegel's philosophical description of the experience of self consciousness in the Phenomenology of Spirit, the individual as person is one whose activity externalizes himself, bringing him into relations with others. In introducing the Philosophy of Right, an analogous description of the nature of the individual subject is offered, through an explicitation of the concept of "will." It is this concept which must first be considered.

Will is described by Hegel under three interrelated headings, which are further unified into a concrete description of will itself, and of the individual as its subject.¹⁶⁵ The first heading is that of will as abstract.

163

Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), pp. 457-461; Phänomenologie, pp. 313-316.

164

It will not be my purpose to develop a thoroughgoing interpretation of Hegel's Philosophy of Right here. This would divert attention from the overall question which I am attempting to handle. Nor will my emphasis be on the content and development of Hegel's political theory, and Marx' critique of it. Rather, I see as my task here the isolating of those arguments in the Philosophy of Right relevant to Marx' theory of man, most particularly those arguments in which Hegel considers the social features of individual experience, as well as the nature of social relationships themselves.

165

One might note here that Hegel does not first attempt to demonstrate that will is 'free will', and then proceed to a descriptive analysis of the latter. Rather, he attempts to describe the nature of 'will' systematically,

"The will contains (a) the element of pure indeterminacy or that pure indeterminacy or that pure reflection of the ego into itself which involves the dissipation of every restriction and every content either immediately presented by nature, by needs, desires, and impulses, or given by any means whatever."¹⁶⁶ Aid in understanding this difficult statement is offered in the text. Following the statement cited, Hegel refers to will in this sense as "the pure thought of oneself."¹⁶⁷ He goes on to comment that "will" in this sense involves a "unrestricted possibility of abstraction from any determinate state of mind which I may find in myself or which I may have, set up in myself, my flight from every content as a restriction."¹⁶⁸ And finally he notes that the exercise of will in this sense, "imagines that it is willing some positive state of affairs, such as universal equality or universal religious life..."¹⁶⁹

and to demonstrate freedom of will, i.e. the ability of the individual to determine himself through choice, within the context of this systematic description. This is in keeping with Hegel's understanding of philosophical method. See the "Preface" to the Phenomenology of Spirit in Kaufman, Hegel Texts and Commentary, (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1966), p. 28; Phänomenologie, p. 19, Hegel asserts that a philosophical position is such that it, "...must justify itself by the presentation of the system..." He reiterates this idea with explicit reference to the question of the nature of will in The Philosophy of Right, trans. Knox, p. 21; Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts, (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1955), p. 29. "The proof that the will is free and the proof of the nature of the will and of freedom can be established only as a link in the whole chain (of philosophy)."

¹⁶⁶ Hegel (Knox), p. 21; Grundlinien, p. 30.

¹⁶⁷ Hegel, (Knox), p. 21; Grundlinien, p. 30.

¹⁶⁸ Hegel, (Knox), p. 22; Grundlinien, p. 30.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

Given these supplementary comments, it seems that by will Hegel here means the ability of the self conscious individual to determine himself through comprehending himself as one who chooses allegiance to some universal principle, such as political equality, religiosity, etc. It is, first, a "pure thought of oneself," an act of self comprehension, and thus of self determination.¹⁷⁰ Will in this sense involves "pure indeterminacy" in that the self comprehension here described is one which abstracts from particular or determinate content, e.g. determinate forms of religious ritual, political action, etc. It involves individual self comprehension through a principle which is exclusively universal.

Insofar as this exercise of will is abstract, it is also one sided, and is so precisely because it is an exercise which abstracts from "any determinate state of mind which I may find in myself or which I may have set up in myself...",¹⁷¹ from determinate situations and experiences of will which occur for the individual either circumstantially or through choice. A description of will which is abstract in this sense is inadequate to the experience of the individual and must be supplemented. Thus Hegel notes that, "At the same time, the ego is also the transition from undifferentiated indeterminacy to the differentiation, determination, and positing of a determinacy as a content and object. Now further, this

170

It is for this reason that I describe will here as a capacity of the self conscious individual.

171

Hegel, (Knox), p. 22; Grundlinien, p. 30.

content may either be given by nature or engendered by the concept of mind. Through this positing of itself as something determinate, the ego in principle steps into determinate existence."¹⁷²

Hegel's discussion of determinate content as "given by nature" within the experience of the individual subject of will is particularly revealing, and may be dwelt upon briefly. In commenting on the Kantian moral position in the Phenomenology, Hegel asserts that:

...nature is not merely this completely free external mode in which, as a bare and pure object, consciousness has to realize its purpose. Consciousness is per se essentially something for which this other detached reality exists, i.e. it is itself something contingent and natural. This nature, which is properly its own, is sensibility (Sinnlichkeit), which, taking the form of volition, in the shape of Impulses and Inclinations, has by itself a determinate essential being of its own, i.e. has specific single purposes (einzelne Zwecke), and thus is opposed to pure will with its pure purpose.¹⁷³

The individual, Hegel here insists must be described as a concrete individual, and as such one whose experience necessarily brings him in relation to the concrete details of an external environment. This environment or "nature" in turn, is not to be understood as merely external, but in a way with which we are already familiar from the dialectic of "self consciousness," is to be understood as externality which occurs as

172

Hegel, (Knox), p. 22; Grundlinien, p. 31.

173

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 618; Phänomenologie, p. 427. For commentary on this text see W.H. Walsh, Hegelian Ethics, (London: Macmillian Co. Ltd., 1969), pp. 29-31.

essentially within the experience of the individual, as "for" the individual "impulses" and "inclinations", impulses or drives felt by the individual in relation to his environment, and thus manners in which will manifest itself in determinate fashions, in relation to determinate objects.

Three implications follow. First, it is in virtue of the experience of "specific, single purposes (einzelne Zwecke)"¹⁷⁴ of specific impulses and drives through which will is manifested in a determinate fashion, that the individual experiences himself as an individual. In virtue of that relationship to concrete nature which Hegel calls "sensibility" (Sinnlichkeit), the individual experiences himself as a concrete, particular individual. As Hegel notes in the Philosophy of Right, it is this experience of will which represents "the finitude or particularization of the ego."¹⁷⁵

Second, a consequence of this is that a further and more adequate description of will itself is required. Thus Hegel goes on in the Philosophy of Right to hold that, "The will is the unity of both these moments. It is particularity reflected into itself, and so brought back to

174

Hegel, (Baillie), p. 618; Phänomenologie, p. 427.

175

Hegel, (Knox), p. 22; Grundlinien, p. 31.

universality, i.e. it is individuality."¹⁷⁶ The act of will of the fully concrete individual is an act which wills a particular object (e.g. assents to some determinate impulse or drive), and wills a universal purpose through this relationship to a particular (e.g. will political equality through relating itself to specific established democratic processes). The act of will fully described, then, is one in which the particular and the universal are held together in a single act. This is of course analogous to the description of the individual agent offered in the Phenomenology of Spirit, where the individual is pictured as one whose action involved the realization of a concrete "design", and hence also action towards the realization of a general purpose. For Hegel here, this unity of particular impulse and universal purpose in the single act of will is necessary in order that the essential possibilities of particular impulses themselves be realized for the individual. As Reyburn notes, "For Hegel...the fixity and incoherence of natural impulses is only a first appearance and not the final truth. The practical attitude, of which they are the crude manifestation, is capable of higher things; and in rationalizing its content and building it into a consistent aim of life as a whole it is developing the intrinsic nature of impulse itself."¹⁷⁷ When determinate impulses are unified with universal purpose in a single act of will, these impulses achieve a degree of integration, consistency, and

176

Hegel, (Knox), p. 23; Grundlinien, p. 32.

177

Hugh A. Reyburn, The Ethical Theory of Hegel, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921), p. 133.

direction that they do not have of themselves.¹⁷⁸

Another and more significant implication follows from this. The activity of will in the fuller sense described above involves self determination. After initially describing will in the more adequate sense, Hegel goes on to note that, "It is the self-determination of the ego, which means that at one and the same time the ego posits itself as its own negative, i.e. as restricted and determinate, and yet remains by itself, i.e. in its self-identity and universality. It determines itself and yet at the same time binds itself together with itself."¹⁷⁹ The details of this statement concerning self determination are critical.

Hegel refers to the "restricted and determinate" as the "negative" of the "ego", the individual conscious subject. By "restricted and determinate" is meant the particular impulses and drives which the individual experiences in relation to his natural environment, as well as their particular object. Such particular impulses and drives are the "negative" of, or other than the ego in that the individual conscious subject is capable of comprehending himself through universal principles or purposes, i.e. is capable of "willing" in the first sense described by Hegel. But as noted above, the experience of the individual also necessarily includes particular impulses in relation to particular objects, "the impulses, desires, inclinations, whereby the will finds itself determined in the course of nature."¹⁸⁰

178

Cf. also Hegel, (Knox), pp. 24-25; Grundlinien, p. 34.

179

Hegel, (Knox), p. 23; Grundlinien, p. 32.

180

Hegel, (Knox), p. 25; Grundlinien, p. 35.

Because such impulses are necessary features of the experience of the individual, they are his own. But in themselves they occur disparately and in an ununified fashion, "...as a medly and multiplicity of impulses, each of which is merely 'my desire,' but exists alongside other desires which are likewise all 'mine' ...aimed at all kinds of objects and satiable in all kinds of ways."¹⁸¹ Such impulses then must be integrated and given direction within the experience of the individual, and this is effected through an act of will in which they are unified with some universal purpose.

At the same time, that act of will through which the self conscious subject comprehends himself in relation to some universal purpose is also by itself inadequate, because universal purpose needs to be embodied in some specific content, to be related to a determinate object, in order to be actualized within individual experience. The description of will in general which Hegel finally accepts is a description of one in which the universal and the determinate are unified and held together in a single act. But his means that the act of will is that through which the subject unifies elements which are at once initially disparate and implicitly unifiable within his own experience. This is one sense in which Hegel asserts that will involves self determination. The act of will effects this unification of elements within the experience of the individual, which unification in turn is necessary for the realization of individuality itself.¹⁸²

180

Hegel, (Knox), p. 25; Grundlinien, p. 35.

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Hegel, (Knox), p. 26; Grundlinien, pp. 35-36.

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Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 23; Grundlinien, p. 32.

Furthermore, the integration of impulses in themselves disparate through the act of will requires that the objects of those impulses also be transformed so that they conform to the will of the individual. This is necessary because, given integration and direction, such impulses are still directed at particular external objects, and because it is only by being brought in relation to particular and determinate objects that universal purpose can itself be actualized for the subject of will. Thus for the subject of will, the external environment is not simply external, but is that which occurs "for" the subject, that in which will can be embodied.

Bernard Bourgeois comments on this point.

...that which is willed and in which the Self discovers itself is opposed to that which this same self represents as the external world, and this is why the liberty realized in the identity of the willing Self is not a real liberty. This (i.e., real liberty) requires the overcoming of the otherness of the objective world through relation to that which is willed. Spirit then is the effort to pose in objective being that which is willed, that is, the identity of the willed and willing, freedom, and through this enterprise of the objectification of freedom, it becomes objective spirit...¹⁸³

Hegel's description of will leads to the view that the subject of will experiences 'nature' or the external environment as that which may be brought into conformity with his will, that which may be transformed in

183

Bernard Bourgeois, La Pensée Politique de Hegel, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969), p. 114. The author goes on in this text to note that Hegel's arguments concerning 'objective spirit' essentially include descriptions of the necessarily social character of the experience of the individual. Cf. pp. 116-119.

such a fashion that his will is embodied in it. Indeed, this understanding of 'nature' as the correlate of will, as that objective context in which will may be embodied, is essential to the notion of will itself, as this is described above. For the specific impulses as integrated, and thus the will itself, are directed towards particular external objects which are themselves not merely external, but are those contexts in which will may be concretely realized. I shall show presently that Hegel's additional descriptions of the individual subject of will are based on this view and employ particularly the idea that 'will' itself requires embodiment in the external environment, this leads him to the conclusion that the experience of the individual is necessarily social.

In the beginning of the Philosophy of Right proper, Hegel, under the heading of "Abstract Right," describes will in terms of its most basic manifestations as "...the inherently single will of a subject,"¹⁸⁴ as well as its most basic forms of embodiment in externality. Will is described as involving, "...a content consisting of determinate aims and, as exclusive individuality, it has this content as an external world directly confronting it."¹⁸⁵ Will involves initially those particular impulses and needs¹⁸⁶ which the individual experiences as his own, as well as the external items to which the individual stands in relation in virtue of the former. But

184

Hegel, (Knox), p. 37; Grundlinien, p. 51.

185

Ibid.

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Cf. Ibid., article 35.

will even at this stage cannot be described simply as the particular impulses and needs of the individual, because it is at the same time that in virtue of which the individual embodies or objectifies himself in the external environment. Hegel's general purpose here is to describe systematically "...the constitutive principles through which mind, as will or practical reason, embodies itself in an outer element, and is recognized by others as a free and objective self."¹⁸⁷

The most basic form of such embodiment is property, and Hegel's discussion of this includes comments relevant to the question of the relation of his position to Marx. He first notes that the 'right' of the individual to property arises from the fact that non-personal items occur within the experience of the individual as essentially in relation to himself, i.e. to the needs and impulses involved in his own will.¹⁸⁸ Thus, "A person has as his substantive end the right of putting his will into any and every thing, and thereby making it his, because it has no such end in itself and derives its destiny and soul from his will. This is the absolute right of appropriation which man has over all 'things'."¹⁸⁹

Three senses in which an item may be possessed as property are

187

Reyburn, op. cit., p. 115.

188

Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 40; Grundlinien, p. 55. "What is immediately different from free mind is that which, both for mind and in itself, is the external pure and simple, a thing, something not free, not personal, without rights."

189

Hegel, (Knox), p. 41; Grundlinien, p. 57.

distinguishable: "... (a) by directly grasping it physically, (b) by forming it, and (c) by merely marking it as ours."¹⁹⁰ Interestingly, Hegel notes of the second of these senses that, "When I impose a form on something, the thing's determinate character as mine acquires an independent externality ..."¹⁹¹ I take him to mean that the taking possession of an item through forming it involves the transformation of some item in the external world such that the item becomes appropriate to the satisfying of a determinate need involved in the 'will' of the individual, through embodying within itself the details of the individual's activity on it. Hegel here makes the same point as does Marx in his analysis of needs in relation to praxis. This can be vividly seen from the examples which Hegel utilizes here: "...the tilling of the soil, the cultivation of plants, the taming and feeding of animals, the preservation of game, as well as contrivances for utilizing raw materials or forces of nature and processes for making one material produce effects on another, and so forth."¹⁹²

The idea of the relation between the property item and the determinate need of the individual is developed by Hegel in his discussion of the 'use' of property. He says that, "...my need, as the particular aspect of a

190

Hegel, (Knox), p. 46; Grundlinien, p. 64.

191

Hegel, (Knox), p. 47; Grundlinien, p. 65.

192

Ibid.

single will, is the positive element which finds satisfaction, and the thing, as something negative in itself, exists only for my need and is at its service. The use of a thing is my need being externally realized through the change, consumption, and destruction of the thing."¹⁹³ In the use of property, the item utilized becomes for the individual an external correlate of his particular need, and this need is in turn externalized and embodied in the item being used.

But Hegel wishes to develop the concept of property, and the relation between property and will, beyond the points already noted, and he does so through apparently de-emphasizing the notion of need. In an addendum to article Forty-one, the first article under which the Philosophy of Right discusses property in general, Hegel notes that, "The rationale of property is to be found not in the satisfaction of needs but in the supersession of the pure subjectivity of personality. In his property a person exists for the first time as reason."¹⁹⁴ And in the context of the same discussion, he notes further that, "The particular aspect of the matter, the fact that I make something my own as a result of my natural need, impulse, and caprice, is the particular impulse satisfied by possession. But I as free will am an object to myself in what I possess and thereby also for the first time am an actual will, and this is the aspect which constitutes the category of property, the true and right factor

193

Hegel, (Knox), p. 49; Grundlinien, p. 67.

194

Hegel, (Knox), pp. 235-36.

in possession."¹⁹⁵ While the relation between the item of property and particular need cited above is a feature of the relation between property and will, it is not the exclusive feature of this relation. Thus a statement of this feature is not an adequate or sufficient description of this relation itself. It must be unified with the further statement that property is the externalization and objectification of individual will.

This further description of the relation of property and will is indicated in the texts above. In fact its argumentative basis is contained in the previous description of the relation of property item to need. In the property item, need is embodied as need for a particular, external item. But this is to imply that, insofar as need is for a particular external item, then the individual person is capable of recognizing the item as his own, his object, and thus is further capable of comprehending, through the details of the object, the details of that need to which the object stands in relation. Thus he is capable, through the property item, of comprehending in a "objective" fashion, i.e. through the details of an external object, the details of his own will, and therefore of his own self. Hegel concisely states that, through my relations to items of property I am "an object to myself in what I possess..."¹⁹⁶

One might recall here the discussion of will, in general, according to

195

Hegel, (Knox), p. 42; Grundlinien, p. 58.

196

Ibid.

which the exercise of will involves necessarily the embodiment of will in external objects and the unification of universal purpose with particular impulses and needs through this embodiment. Here Hegel is describing the relation to the individual to external items as his property as the most basic and primitive form of this embodiment. Through his relation to property, the individual is at least capable of comprehending the particular details of his own will.¹⁹⁷

One final but essential feature of the relation of individual will to property must now be noted. This involves Hegel's assertion that the appropriation¹⁹⁸ of property necessarily brings the individual into relationships with others. This point is made by Hegel first in his discussion of property in general. "Since property is the embodiment (Dasein) of personality, my inward idea and will that something is to be mine is not enough to make it my property; to secure this end occupancy is requisite. The embodiment my willing thereby attains involves its recognizability by others."¹⁹⁹ The claim made here is that the full

197

Cf. Reyburn, p. 125. "Property is the realization of a self-conscious will in an external thing. Since mind is essentially a self-revealing system, it must give itself an outward existence and maintain its freedom in a world of things."

198

Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 236, addendum #26 to paragraph #44. "... 'to appropriate' means at bottom to manifest the pre-eminence of my will over the thing, and to prove that it is not absolute, is not an end in itself. This is made manifest when I endow the thing with some purpose not directly its own."

199

Hegel, (Knox), p. 45; Grundlinien, p. 62.

actualization of the property relation, of the individual's appropriation of rights over an external item of property, requires that this relation be recognized as such by others. Abstracting from the specific question of occupancy, an argument for this general claim is indicated by Hegel in an addendum to the above text: "The inner act of will which consists in saying that something is mine must also become recognizable by others. If I make a thing mine, I give to it a predicate, 'mine,' which must appear in it in external form, and must not simply remain in my inner will."²⁰⁰

I take the argument which Hegel suggests here to be as follows. The individual is capable of comprehending concretely the details of his own will insofar as those details are made manifest in an object, i.e. in something external to himself. For the individual comprehends the details of his own needs through the details of objects relevant to those needs. But the property item is not simply an item relevant to some need of the individual. It is also an item in which the will of the individual has been embodied through his appropriation of it, i.e. through his taking possession of it in some way such that it is an item which has its role or purpose, in the experience of the individual, not in virtue simply of its own characters and properties, but in virtue of its relation to the individual himself, to his need.²⁰¹ Now this feature of the property item,

200

Hegel, (Knox), p. 237.

201

Cf. footnote number 198 for this sense of 'appropriation'.

that its essential function or purpose is derived from its relation to the individual and his appropriation of it, must be recognized by the individual so that he can fully recognize himself as the item's "owner," or the item itself as one within which his will is embodied, so that he can say of the item, it is "mine."

But this recognition in turn requires a foundation in that environment which is both the context of the individual and external to him, because, again, it is through the details of his will being externalized that the individual is capable of comprehending those details concretely and adequately. And the external basis for the individual's recognition of himself as "owner," as one whose will is embodied in an item, is precisely the recognition of this relation between himself and the item in question by others. Thus the individual's relation to property necessarily brings him into relations with others.

It must be noted here that Hegel is not involved in deducing the presence of others from the details of the property relationship.²⁰² Such

202

Hegel has been accused of such a method. Cf. V.R. Mehta, Hegel and the Modern State, (New Delhi: Associated Publishing House, 1968), p. 41. "What is wrong with Hegel is that he connects this perfectly legitimate way of raising problems and resolving them with a deductive method based on self-evident principles. If we have to base our conclusions on the analysis of experience, then certainly, at the same time we cannot start with self-evident principles, for every principle according to the first criterion is contingent and must correspond to some objective physical reality." But it is clear that 'deduction' in the sense used here is not a part of Hegel's analysis at this point.

an enterprise would fly in the face of Hegel's understanding of philosophical method. Rather, he is inquiring into those conditions requisite for the full realization of the property relation. One such condition is that the relation of the individual to his items of property be recognized by others.

The formalization of this recognition is contract. The general understanding of contract is asserted in the Philosophy of Right. Property is, "...an existent as an embodiment of the will (Dasein des Willens), and from this point of view the 'other' for which it exists can only be the will of another person. This relation of will to will is the true and proper ground in which freedom is existent. The sphere of contract is made up of this mediation whereby I hold property not merely by means of a thing and my subjective will, but by means of another person's will as well, and so hold it in virtue of my participation in a common will."²⁰³ It is unnecessary here to consider the full and detailed development of Hegel's discussion of contract, as it is offered in the Philosophy of Right. However, it is worth mentioning three features of the notion of contract as summarized in the text just cited. First, the partners to contract comprehend themselves as "independent property owners,"²⁰⁴ as private individuals with the discrete relations of owners to their own property.²⁰⁵ Second, the

203

Hegel, (Knox), p. 57; Grundlinien, p. 78.

204

Hegel (Knox), p. 58; Grundlinein, p. 79.

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Cf. also Reyburn, p. 139.

formalization of contract involves not simply the agreement of two or more private individuals as to the right of each, but also the "relation of will to will," in the sense of the establishment of common agreement that the rights of each be maintained. In this sense the establishment of contract involves the establishment of "a common will" of which the individual is a participant.²⁰⁶ Finally, that contract which yields the establishment of a common will is itself the formalization of that recognition by others of the individual's relation to his property which is a necessary feature of the property relationship itself. This it is a formalization of that feature of the individual's experience in virtue of which he is, as a property owner in the full sense, necessarily a social individual, a participant in society. As Hegel notes in an addendum to his general description of contract, "...in contract my will still has the character 'this,' though it has it in community with another will."²⁰⁷

It is the task of explicitating the character of this "common will," and its relationship to the individual, which at this point becomes the major focus of the Philosophy of Right. Hegel's approach to this task involves his deriving a premise from the previous discussion, and constructing two arguments on the basis of this premise. The premise which Hegel derives from the above discussion is that the individual who exercises his will, has this will itself as the objective of this exercise.

206

Cf. Above, footnote number 203; Reyburn, pp. 138-139, and p. 141.

207

Hegel, (Knox), p. 242, addendum to paragraph #71.

or that, given the individual which exercises will, "Its personality...it now has for its object..."²⁰⁸

There are two necessarily related senses in which this statement can be seen as derived from the above offered discussion. The first harkens back to Hegel's comments on needs and appropriation. And will, as already noted, includes the particular impulses and needs experienced by the individual. The individual in turn relates to such needs through the "appropriation" of property, i.e., through the taking possession of an external item in a way such that the item comes to have, as its essential purpose within the experience of the individual, its relation to his will, to his need.²⁰⁹ But to hold this is to hold that the act of appropriation has as its objective or goal the handling of that need which is resident within the will of the individual. And appropriation itself is a feature of the exercise of individual will. Thus the individual will have itself as its objective or goal of its own exercise.

Second, the exercise of individual will results in its externalization, its embodiment in an external object. But it is in virtue of this externalization that the individual is capable of comprehending the details of his will, and thus himself as a concrete individual. Thus the exercise of will is at the service of the individual subject of will, or has this individual subject himself as its objective.

These two senses in which the exercise of will has itself as its

208

Hegel, (Knox), p. 74; Grundlinien, p. 100.

209

Cf. again Hegel's definition of 'appropriation' at footnote #203.

object are unified by Hegel. The exercise of will has itself for its own object in that it at once brings the individual into relation objects relevant to his needs, and enables him to comprehend himself concretely through through the details of these objects. Indeed, it is in virtue of the exercise of will in this fashion that the individual is not simply a person, one who can bear rights,²¹⁰ but in an adequate sense of the term a "subject", one who can comprehend the details of his own experience, and himself in relation thereto: "...this reflection of the will into itself and its explicit awareness of its identity makes the person into the subject."²¹¹ But at the same time this individual subject of will bears a relation to others and to a common will as a seemingly essential feature of its individuality. The question which now arises for Hegel is, can the individual who is the subject of will, whose exercise of will has will itself as the object of that exercise, be validly described as simply an individual, or must such a subject be described as one whose experience is essentially social? The procedure of the Philosophy of Right involves, I think, the construction of two sustained arguments, one in support of the conclusion that it is paradoxical to describe the subject of will simply as an individual, and a second in support of the conclusion

210

Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 37; Grundlinien, p. 52. "Personality essentially involves the capacity for rights and constitutes the concept and the basis (itself abstract) of the system of abstract and therefore formal right."

211

Hegel, (Knox), p. 75; Grundlinien, p. 101.

that it is necessary to conceive the subject of will as an individual whose experience is essentially social. I take this latter point to be adequately summarized by Reyburn in the comment that, for Hegel, "Men reach individuality in social groups."²¹²

Both of these arguments are highly complex, and are presented in lengthy fashions in the Philosophy of Right. The first can be understood as comprising the entire section of the text which Hegel entitles "Morality." And elements of the second are dispersed throughout the final division of this work, "Ethical Society." However, for purposes of efficiency, both these arguments may be presented in a briefer and more integrated manner. And, as I hope the following will bear out, textual analysis itself warrants this briefer presentation.

Hegel begins the first argument with the question: what criterion might there be whereby this individual can determine those actions which he ought to do, as opposed to those which he ought to avoid. It would seem that there are two possible responses to this question: individual interest or individual happiness or welfare.²¹³ But it may readily be seen that the first of itself collapses into the second, for that which interests the individual subject is precisely that which will contribute to his welfare.²¹⁴ Thus individual welfare or happiness might initially seem to be the criterion on the basis of which the subject of will might select his actions.

212

Reyburn, p. 201.

213

Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 83; Grundlinien, p. 111.

214

Ibid.

But this criterion of itself will not do, because it is not necessary that all action result in individual welfare. Indeed, some activity may have a definitely pejorative effect on the experience of the individual. Hegel notes that, "What the subject is, is the series of his actions. If these are a series of worthless productions, then the subjectivity of his willing is just as worthless. But if the series of his deeds is of a substantive nature, then the same is true of the individual's inner will."²¹⁵ Since activity may or may not effect the welfare of the individual, some further criterion is required, on the basis of which the individual subject of will may decide through which activities his welfare will be achieved, and thus on the basis of which he may select activities themselves. And for the simply individual subject of will this criterion can only be the good as such or in itself. If he selects his actions according to this criterion, the individual will necessarily achieve his own welfare, and thus for the will of this individual, "...the end to which it devotes itself must have absolute worth and be desirable in and for itself."²¹⁶

Hegel insists, then, that the subject of will taken simply as an individual must have as the object of its will the good: "The good is the Idea as the unity of the concept of the will with the particular will."²¹⁷ Since the good as such is the object of the will of the individual subject, it must be the basis upon which he selects activities: "...since the good

215

Hegel, (Knox), p. 83; Grundlinien, p. 112.

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Reyburn, p. 172.

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Hegel, (Knox), p. 86; Grundlinien, p. 116.

must of necessity be actualized through the particular will, it is at the same time its substance, it has absolute right in contrast with the abstract right of property and the particular aims of welfare. If either of these moments becomes distinguished from the good, it has validity only in so far as it accords with the good and is subordinated to it."²¹⁸ Since the good as such functions as a criterion for the selection of actions, then the individual subject has both the right to will that which he conceives of as being in accord with the good,²¹⁹ and is obliged to do so.²²⁰ And finally, reminiscent of Kant as has been this whole discussion, the good as such must be taken as that which will promote both one's own welfare and welfare as such, and is then determinable as that which will promote the welfare of all. Thus, "...what is my duty? As an answer nothing is so far available except: (a) to do the right, and (b) to strive after welfare, one's own welfare, and welfare in universal terms, the welfare of others."²²¹

At this point in the Philosophy of Right, as I understand the text, Hegel proceeds in the development of the present argument through the construction of three subsidiary arguments, each of which leads to the

218

Hegel, (Knox), p. 87; Grundlinien, p. 116.

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Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 87; Grundlinien, p. 117.

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Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 89; Grundlinien, p. 119.

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Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 89; Grundlinien, p. 120.

conclusion that it is paradoxical to describe the subject of will having as his object the Good in the sense taken above.

First, the concept of the good, as utilized above, abstracts from any determinate content, and is determinable only as that which might promote welfare universally.²²² But if this is so, then one is faced with a two horned dilemma. For on the one hand, if the good abstracts from all determinate content, then no specific action may be considered good in itself.²²³ And on the other hand, in abstraction from determinate reference to situation, any act may be comprehended as following from a maxim which is universalizable.²²⁴ For these reasons, Hegel argues that, "...if duty is to be willed simply for duty's sake and not for the sake of some content, it is only a formal identity whose nature it is to exclude all content and specification."²²⁵

Second, the good in relation to the individual subject is meant to function as an objective standard whereby actions which ought to be done may be selected, and those which ought to be avoided may be recognized as such. That through which the individual might recognize the good, and might utilize it is as such a standard, is a particular faculty of his

222

Cf. Hegel, (Knox), pp. 89-90; Grundlinien, pp. 120-121. Hegel, unsurprisingly, makes specific reference to Kant at this point.

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Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 90; Grundlinien, p. 120. Also see Reyburn, pp. 59-60.

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Cf. W.H. Walsh, op. cit., pp. 22-23.

225

Hegel, (Knox), p. 90; Grundlinien, p. 121.

own, his conscience (Gewissen).²²⁶ Conscience is inherently individual, as the certainty of the individual as to what does and what does not accord with the good, "...the self certainty of this subject."²²⁷ But if this is the case, then the good is available to the individual only in terms of his own insights and awareness, which are inherently subjective. The good itself, then, is inherently subjective for the individual, and thus cannot function for him as the objective standard which he takes it to be. Hegel argues here that, "Conscience is therefore subject to the judgment of its truth or falsity, and when it appeals only to itself for a decision, it is directly at variance with what it wishes to be, namely the rule for a mode of conduct which is rational, absolutely valid, and universal."²²⁸

Finally, the good as such abstracts from all determinate content, and is determinable only as that which might promote welfare universally. The duty of the individual subject of will is to conform to the good in this sense. But if duty consists simply in this, it is consistent for the individual subject to will each act in such a way as to promote his own welfare privately, or, as Hegel puts it, the individual is capable, "...of elevating above the universal the self will of private particularity..."²²⁹

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Ibid.

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Hegel, (Knox), p. 91; Grundlinien, p. 122.

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IBid.

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Hegel, (Knox), p. 92; Grundlinien, p. 124.

But this is in direct contradiction to the idea of the good as an objective standard whereby specific actions might be determined as necessarily yielding universal welfare. And it directly opens the possibility of "evil," i.e., the dominance of a will "...which can draw its content only from the determinate content of natural will, from desire, impulse, inclination, etc."²³⁰ And it further opens the possibility of hypocrisy, i.e., the conviction of acting at once according to a universal norm, and from individual impulse and desire.²³¹

For these reasons then, it is paradoxical to conceive of the subject of will as having as its object the good as such. But as noted above, Hegel argues that the good as such must be conceived of as the object of the will of the subject taken simply as an individual, for it is only in taking this as the object of his will that this subject can conceive of a standard whereby actions towards the promotion of his own welfare might be determined. Thus it is further paradoxical to conceive of the subject of will as an individual taken simply.

This represents, as I see it, the argument underlying the second division of the Philosophy of Right. It is the first of the two arguments referred to previously concerning the subject of will. It is integral to Hegel's text, but must now be complemented with a second argument, towards the conclusion that the subject of will is an individual whose experience is essentially social.

²³⁰ Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 93; Grundlinien, pp. 124-215.

²³¹ Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 94; Grundlinien, p. 126.

An initial formulation of this argument can be offered through recalling the discussion of "conscience." Conscious involves the particular awareness and insights of the individual as to the "good." As such, conscience is inadequate for the individual because conscience seeks some objective standard whereby the individual may evaluate his own activities, thus integrating and unifying them into a single life, but necessarily relies on the subjective insights of the individual. "Conscience turns away from the objective unity of its elements, and presents only a subjective one."²³² Conscience is thus inadequate, but the individual still requires some objective standard for the evaluation of his actions, and this standard must arise out of and be intrinsic to will itself, because the individual is here the subject of will, i.e., one who has will itself as his object, one who has as the purpose of his exercise of will this exercise itself, and the self determination it effects.²³³ The individual subject of will requires some standard which arises intrinsically out of will itself, but which is not dependent on the caprice of his merely individual inclinations and insights. But society, as the living construct of customs, norms, mores, and laws, is

²³²Reyburn, p. 178.

²³³Cf. Ibid., p. 172. "The freedom of the will and the absolute worth of its own end can be reconciled only if in the last resort the two are identical, or at least are aspects of a single whole. The end at which will aims is that which it seeks to overcome, it is the declared essence of the will. And hence the end of free will is realized freedom." This is Reyburn's commentary on articles 127 and 128 of the Philosophy of Right, Hegel, (Knox, pp. 85-86; Grundlinien, pp. 114-115.

precisely that which can provide such a standard to the individual. Social customs, mores, and laws, as belonging to the group, are beyond individual caprice, and they simultaneously arise out of will itself, in that they are the embodiments of personal action in the objective world. Thus society can provide the individual with the standard he requires, and thus the individual subject of will must relate as such to society, or is necessarily social.

I wish to make three observations concerning this argument. First, Hegel is not here asking the question: does the individual occur in society. He assumes that the individual does so occur, and takes this assumption to be based on ordinary experience, as well as on the analysis of certain experiences, e.g., property. Hegel's question rather is, given the fact that the individual occurs in a social context, what is the relation between his experience of himself as a particular individual and as an individual whose experience is social?²³⁴

Second, the essential features of Hegel's description of society are that society involves public customs, laws, and norms, that these are themselves the expression of will, in that they arise out of the activity of personal subjects, and that, as public, they are the embodiments of

²³⁴Cf. Reyburn, p. 200. Reyburn seems to err slightly on this point. He writes: "It is needless to insist here on the dependence of the individual on society; so much may be taken for granted. Not only the developed life, but even bare existence would fail for man apart from society; and there is nothing in the whole round of his being which is not mediated by social powers. The most private and secret functions of the mind are shot through with the influences of the common life." But it does not seem that Hegel wishes to take this point for granted. Rather, such a description of the relation of the experience of the individual to his social occurrence is one which Hegel would wish to argue for.

will in the objective world. In introducing the third main division of the Philosophy of Right, Hegel asserts that "The ethical substance and its laws and powers are on the one hand an object over against the subject, and from his point of view they are--'are' in the highest sense of self-subsistent being."²³⁵ By the "ethical substance" is meant society in the sense indicated here. And abstracting momentarily from the question of the relation of society to the individual, one point here is simply that society is existence of will as objectified in the world through customs and laws.

Third, Hegel explicitly argues that society provides the individual subject of will with the standard which he, as such a subject, requires. In making the transition from "Morality" to "Ethical life," Hegel notes that, "For the good as the substantial universal of freedom, but as something still abstract, there are therefore required determinate characters of some sort and the principle for determining them through a principle identical with the good itself."²³⁶ The individual subject of will requires some standard which is capable of providing determinate content, and which involves also an adequate "principle," i.e., which arises itself out of the nature of will. The customs and laws of society are such a standard and thus are precisely what the individual requires.

To be fully a subject of will, then, the individual must derive the content of his will from society. If so, some comments on the relation

²³⁵Hegel, (Knox), pp. 105-106; Grundlinien, p. 134.

²³⁶Hegel, (Knox), p. 103; Grundlinien, pp. 139-140.

of the individual to society may now be made. Hegel's most concise statement of this relation occurs in the Phenomenology, in his assertion that society "...is spirit which is for itself, since it maintains itself by being reflected in the minds of the component individuals; and which is in itself or substance, since it preserves them within itself."²³⁷ Society is distinct and separate from the individual, because it is that which provides the objective expression of will whereby individual will may be realized. At the same time, the individual is necessary for society, in that the social expression of will can only exist through embodiment in individual consciousness. Thus the individual both depends on society and is required for the occurrence of the latter.

Statements analogous to these are made in the Philosophy of Right. Two such may be noted. Hegel asserts that, "...the ethical order is freedom or the absolute will as what is objective, a circle of necessity whose moments are the ethical powers which regulate the life of individuals. To these powers individuals are related as accidents to substance, and it is in individuals that these powers are represented, have the shape of appearance, and become actualized."²³⁸ The individual is dependent on society, in order to fully realize himself as a subject of will. At the same time, society as the objective realization of will

²³⁷Hegel, (Baillie), p. 467; Phänomenologie, p. 319.

²³⁸Hegel, (Knox), p. 105; Grundlinien, pp. 142-143.

is only actual when embodied in individual self conscious subjects.²³⁹

Thus social customs and laws "are not something alien to the subject. On the contrary, his spirit bears witness to them as to its own essence, the essence in which he has a feeling of his selfhood..."²⁴⁰ The individual derives the content of his will, and thus the content of his own experience of himself from society. He is thus identified with society, not in the sense that, as a member of society, his individuality is cancelled, but rather in the sense that it is in virtue of his social experience that he can realize his individuality as a subject of will.²⁴¹

Hegel's developments of the argument concerning the essentially social nature of the individual subject of will are lengthy and detailed in the Philosophy of Right. Indeed, these developments can be seen as the purpose of the whole remainder of this text, culminating in Hegel's doctrine of the State. I shall illustrate these developments by analyzing selected arguments from Hegel's discussion of the family, and of civil

²³⁹ Cf. Hegel (Knox), p. 259, addendum 94 to paragraph # 145. Hegel's way of presenting this point is awkward. "Whether the individual exists or not is all one to the objective ethical order. It alone is permanent, and is the power regulating the life of individuals." The point here seems to be that society as the objectification of will occurs irregardless of the existence of this or that individual, but this is not to deny that the existence of individuals is necessary to the occurrence of society.

²⁴⁰ Hegel, (Knox), p. 106; Grundlinien, p. 143.

²⁴¹ Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 106; Grundlinien, p. 144, where Hegel summarizes these points. "As substantive in character, these laws and institutions are binding on the will of the individual, because as subjective, as inherently undetermined, or determined as particular, he distinguishes himself from them and hence stands related to them as to the substance of his own being."

society as a system of needs, the former because of its interest as illustrative of Hegel's point, the latter because of this and because of certain striking analogies between it and the texts of Marx.

The family, Hegel argues, is at once the most fundamental and basic mode of the occurrence of society as an "ethical order," for within the family, members experience themselves as members of the unit rather than primarily as discrete individuals, and at the same time this unit is capable of informing or providing content for the will of the individual. He states that, "...in a family, one's frame of mind is to have self consciousness of one's own individuality within this unity as the absolute essence of oneself, with the result that one is in it not as an independent person but as a member."²⁴² The family provides an initial and immediate context in which the individual may experience himself as a member of a group, and of a group having specific customs and rules which provide content for his will.²⁴³ This is the case for the family considered as partners in a marriage, and especially in monogamous marriage each individual may experience his (her) individuality concretely insofar as he (she) is recognized as an individual by the other²⁴⁴ while

²⁴² Hegel, (Knox), p. 110; Grundlinien, p. 149.

²⁴³ Cf. Hegel, (Knox), pp. 112-113; Grundlinien, p. 152. "The identification of personality, whereby the family becomes one person and its members become its accidents (though substance is in essence the relation of accidents to itself), is the ethical mind." Also see Reyburn, p. 207. "A family has habits, capabilities, an atmosphere, as specially marked as those of individuals. No two homes are quite alike, and the difference is not a mere series of particulars but resides in an attitude of things as a whole."

²⁴⁴ Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 115; Grundlinien, p. 155.

simultaneously participating in an emotionally founded²⁴⁵ common interest and will.²⁴⁶ This is even more the case for children, who depend on the family not only for initial and necessary emotional support, but also for concrete subsistence²⁴⁷ and education.²⁴⁸

The family, then provides the individual with an immediate and emotionally founded context wherein he or she may experience himself (herself) as an individual the content of whose experience is derived from participation in a common life, and the content of whose will is derived from the rules and customs regulating that common life. But in its function as educator, the role of the family is a double edged one. It is first to instill in the individual a sense of the unity between his will and the common life in which he participates.²⁴⁹ But it is secondly, to develop within the individual the capacity of being a subject of will, and of experiencing his own will individually: "...this education has the negative aim of raising children out of the instinctive, physical level on which they are originally, to self-subsistence and freedom of personality and so to the level on which they have the power to leave the natural unity of the family."²⁵⁰ One function of familial education is to

²⁴⁵Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 110; Grundlinien, p. 149.

²⁴⁶Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 115; Grundlinien, p. 155.

²⁴⁷Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 117; Grundlinien, p. 158.

²⁴⁸Cf. Hegel, (Knox), pp. 117-118; Grundlinien, p. 158.

²⁴⁹Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 117; Grundlinien, p. 158.

²⁵⁰Cf. Hegel, (Knox), pp. 117-118; Grundlinien, p. 158.

allow the child to relate to a common life so as to develop a will that is individually his own. Thus the individual becomes capable of experiencing his will as involving desires and needs which transcend the boundaries of the familial common life and are his own.

This development is necessary in order that the individual become in an adequate sense a subject of will, one who comprehends the exercise of will as involving its own object. The development of this comprehension must occur in the context of a common life, so that will is objectified sufficiently for the individual to develop his own will. But the details of this immediate common life must also be transcended by the individual, so that he may come to comprehend his will as his own.

The individual who has realized this self comprehension is, Hegel tells us, a member of "Civil Society." And "Civil Society" itself, he tells us, must be analyzed from two points of view. "The concrete person, who is himself the object of his particular aims, is, as a totality of wants and a mixture of caprice and physical necessity, one principle of civil society. But the particular person is essentially so related to other particular persons that each establishes himself and finds satisfaction by means of the others, and at the same time purely and simply by means of the form of universality, the second principle here.²⁵¹ Civil society involves the individual, who is an individual because of private aims and needs, who is at the same time, and precisely as such an individual, a participant in social life. I make no attempt here to offer a full account of Hegel's understanding of "Civil Society."

²⁵¹Cf. Hegel, (Knox), pp. 122-123; Grundlinien, p. 165

Rather, I shall attend to those ideas on the social experience of the individual which Hegel develops in his discussion of civil society as "A System of Needs." This section is important both in exhibiting the basis of the relation between the developed individual subject and society, and, for my purposes, in containing a number of assertions which Marx might well have lauded.

Given Hegel's description of the individual, his "...aim here is the satisfaction of subjective particularity...,²⁵² of those needs and desires which are his own. The means available to the individual for the satisfaction of such needs is work. "The means of acquiring and preparing the particularized means appropriate to our similarly particularized needs is work (Arbeit). Through work the raw material directly supplied by nature is specifically adapted to these numerous ends by all sorts of different processes."²⁵³ Nature offers the context in which needs can be satisfied, but it is essentially the products of work upon nature which can become items relevant to needs.²⁵⁴ And just as items have value in terms of their ability to satisfy needs, it is work which endows them with such value: "...this formative change

²⁵²Hegel, (Knox), p. 120; Grundlinien, p. 170.

²⁵³Hegel, (Knox), pp. 128-129; Grundlinien, p. 173.

²⁵⁴Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 269, addendum 125 to paragraph # 196. "There is hardly any raw material which does not need to be worked on before use. Even air has to be worked for because we have to warm it. Water is perhaps the only exception, because we can drink it as we find it. It is by the sweat of his brow and the toil of his hands that man obtains the means to satisfy his needs."

confers value of means and gives them utility, and hence man in what he consumes is mainly concerned with the products of men."²⁵⁵

But an additional and essential character of the individual, personal subject is that needs develop and complexify within his experience, as well as simply occur within his experience. This is the case in at least two senses. First, work, as the means towards satisfying needs, is capable of becoming increasingly subtle and more complex. But then the experience of the agent becomes also more subtle and more complex, and thus too his needs.²⁵⁶ And second, as the means towards the satisfaction of needs become more complex, the means themselves may divide and qualitatively change,²⁵⁷ as the need for food results in needs for agricultural implements, land, livestock, etc. Indeed some needs appear to be non-developmental, those relevant to the subsistence of the individual, but even these are experienced by the individual as qualified by the natural environment he confronts, and the specific work which he undertakes as means towards their satisfaction.²⁵⁸ Thus needs are concretely experienced and develop in terms of the specific work undertaken towards their satisfaction.

But just as needs and work specify the experience of the individual, these features of his experience also bring him essentially into social relations. As I read the text, Hegel offers three reasons why he takes

²⁵⁵Hegel, (Knox), p. 129; Grundlinien, p. 175.

²⁵⁶Hegel, (Knox), p. 127; Grundlinien, p. 171

²⁵⁷Cf. Ibid.

²⁵⁸Hegel, (Knox), p. 268, addendum 119 to paragraph # 187.

this to be the case. First, Hegel states that it is in virtue of the multiplication of needs that the individual becomes an individual person in the full sense of the term: "...this is the first time, and indeed properly the only time, to speak of man in this sense."²⁵⁹ Hegel's reasons for this statement, offered in an addendum to the cited text, are that the multiplication of needs requires the individual to actively and intelligently plan his work, to exercise conscious self restraint so that his more significant rather than simply his most immediate needs will be handled, and that this exercise of intelligence on his own experience further qualifies the individual's experience both of his needs and of himself.²⁶⁰ But then just as the individual is capable of experiencing himself in full concreteness here, he is also capable of being experienced and recognized by others with a measure of concreteness also depending upon the development of needs.²⁶¹ Thus the individual is now capable of being a member of society with a degree of concreteness heretofore unrealized.

But further, just as needs are in their details experienced according to the work undertaken for their satisfaction, work itself, i.e., the work of the individual, is undertaken in a context in which other working agents occur, and thus is conditioned and modified by the work of others.²⁶² The fact of common work affects the conditions under which the

²⁵⁹Hegel, (Knox), p. 127; Grundlinien, p. 171

²⁶⁰Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 269.

²⁶¹Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 127; Grundlinien, p. 171. Cf. also Hegel, (Knox), p. 355, translator's note 50 to paragraph # 192.

²⁶²Cf. G.A. Kelly, Idealism, Politics, and History, Sources of Hegelian Thought, (Cambridge: The University Press, 1969), p. 355.

individual does labor, and, "...the conditions of labor create new tendencies, and each phase of the vast social machinery, constituted originally as a means, invades the realm of private ends, instituting customs and opinions which in time demand fresh satisfaction."²⁶³ Out of the details of common work, needs arise, which the individual then experiences as his own.²⁶⁴

Finally, Hegel argues, common labor in society yields divisions of labor, or as he puts it divisions of classes (Unterschiede der Stände).²⁶⁵ As needs and the means to their fulfillment multiply within society, these means, various forms of work, are severally undertaken by disparate groups and persons within society, according to their interests and skills.²⁶⁶ As a consequence, the individual agent and subject of needs is more closely drawn into social relations, and this for three reasons. First, because he is now aware that his work may yield the satisfaction of his own needs and of those of others as well.²⁶⁷ Second, because the individual is now also aware of his dependence on the work of others for needs of his own.²⁶⁸ And third, because division of labor or classes introduces further modifications into that work productive of social

²⁶³Reyburn, p. 217.

²⁶⁴Cf. Hegel, (Knox), pp. 127-128; Grundlinien, pp. 171-172.

²⁶⁵Cr. Grundlinien, # 201, p. 175.

²⁶⁶Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 129; Grundlinien, pp. 173-174.

²⁶⁷Cf. Hegel, (Knox), pp. 129-130; Grundlinien, p. 174.

²⁶⁸Cf. Ibid.

needs which the individual may then experience privately.²⁶⁹ Hegel also notes that social labor produces conventions and fashions which influence the individual's private needs and experience.²⁷⁰

Of the three above arguments, the latter two are more significant here for they lead to the conclusion that the individual member of civil society is necessarily a social individual. He is one whose experience is fundamentally social rather than simply individual and private. The concrete individual subject of needs is one who experiences needs as particular and his own, and whose basic purpose is activity or work which aims at the satisfaction of those needs. But the needs which the individual experiences as his own are themselves also socially produced. If the individual's experience of himself is most basically his experience of his needs, and if these needs are derived from society, then the individual's experience of himself includes a fundamental social dimension. It is the experience of himself as a member of society. Put more simply, the concrete individual subject is as such essentially social.

These comments on Hegel's descriptions of the family and civil society as a system of needs develop and concretize Hegel's claim that the individual subject of will is necessarily a social individual.

Much more is done by Hegel in the sections of the Philosophy of Right which my analysis has touched upon than was revealed here. In his section on the family, for example, Hegel discusses such specific questions as

²⁶⁹Cf. Reyburn, p. 217.

²⁷⁰Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 269, addendum 123 to paragraph # 192.

familial ownership of property²⁷¹ and inheritance.²⁷² In his section on civil society, Hegel describes how such society organizes and facilitates social experience through law,²⁷³ the courts,²⁷⁴ public police authority,²⁷⁵ and the economic corporation.²⁷⁶ But although I have omitted a great deal, I take myself to have analyzed the claim which is both fundamental to this section of the Philosophy of Right, and which most clearly sets Hegel into relation with Marx, namely, that the concrete individual is necessarily a social individual, a member of society, one whose experience is necessarily social experience.

I do not take as necessary to my task the explanation of that doctrine of the state with which the Philosophy of Right concludes. To do so would not yield material relevant to the relation of Marx to Hegel on the question of the theory of man. I shall only point out that, for Hegel, the state is the necessary objective expression of the fundamental social dimension of individual experience.²⁷⁷ In introducing the notion, Hegel asserts that, "The state is the actuality of the ethical Idea. It is ethical mind qua substantial will manifest and revealed to itself,

²⁷¹Cf. Hegel, (Knox), pp. 116-117; Grundlinien, pp. 156-157.

²⁷²Hegel, (Knox), p. 219; Grundlinien, p. 260.

²⁷³Cf. Ibid., pp. 134-141; Grundlinien, pp. 180-189.

²⁷⁴Cf. Hegel, (Knox), pp. 140-145; Grundlinien, pp. 189-195.

²⁷⁵Cf. Hegel, (Knox), pp. 146-152; Grundlinien, pp. 197-203.

²⁷⁶Cf. Hegel, (Knox), pp. 152-155; Grundlinien, pp. 203-207.

²⁷⁷Cf. G. A. Kelly, pp. 324-326.

knowing and thinking itself, accomplishing what it knows insofar as it knows it."²⁷⁸ The state is the objective expression of that social unity which is implicit in civil society. Because of this, the state objectively manifests to its individuals as its citizens the essential social dimension of that experience which is their own. Moreover, the state is not only the expression of the implicit social unity of civil society, but it is also necessary to civil society, in that it is ultimately the objectification of social will,²⁷⁹ which will, as has been shown above, comprise the identity of society and is necessary for the full self realization of its individual members. And because of this, Hegel argues, the state exists with absolute right.²⁸⁰

But in abstraction from the question of the state, the major components of the doctrine of the Philosophy of Right relevant to the content of Marx' theory of man have been, I think, considered in this chapter. And with this, I have completed what I set out to do in this chapter, namely, to offer an analysis of those elements of Hegel's philosophical doctrine, as expressed in the Phenomenology of Spirit and the Philosophy of Right which are relevant to Marx' theory of man. These themes of Hegel may be summarized as follows:

In the Phenomenology of Spirit Hegel argues that the self conscious individual is one who experiences his own object as his "life." This

²⁷⁸Hegel, (Knox), p. 155; Grundlinien, pp. 207-208.

²⁷⁹Cf. Hegel, (Knox), pp. 155-156; Grundlinien, p. 208, Cf. also Bourgeois, pp. 123-125, Reyburn, p. 233.

²⁸⁰Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 155; Grundlinien, p. 208.

experience engenders the desire to overcome the apparent externality of the object, and this desire in turn constitutes the individual as an agent. Agency here is initially understood as work, which transforms the material environment of the agent. The product of such work objectifies its details, and makes possible individual self actualization.

The activity of the individual makes possible his objective self comprehension, and in turn brings the individual to participate in a society of agents. Such social experience is necessary in order that the individual be constituted as a self conscious individual through recognition, and in order that the individual be an agent in the full or actual sense of that term. And given this social experience, the environment is, and is comprehended as, the context of the activity of a society of agents.

Themes such as these are repeated and developed in the Philosophy of Right, in which Hegel examines the experience of the individual subject of will. This subject necessarily acts to embody its will in external objects, in the external environment. The most primitive form of such embodiment is property. The property item occurs for the individual as essentially relevant to some need of his, and the appropriation of property necessarily brings the individual into relationships with others.

The individual subject of will cannot be taken as an isolated individual, but must be described as an individual whose experience is essentially social. It is the family which provides the immediate social context in which the subject of will can develop as an individual, and

as one who can enter civil society. The individual as a member of civil society experiences private needs whose satisfaction he attempts to achieve through work. Such needs of the individual are both experienced in terms of and develop or multiply in terms of his work.

But although needs here are viewed as private, the experience of this individual is itself essentially social. His work necessarily brings him into relations with others. The details of his work are conditioned by common social labor. He recognizes himself as depending for the satisfaction of his needs on the work of others, and they on his work. And the needs which he experiences as his own, and thus as his self, are at once his own and products of society.

This summarizes the portions of Hegel's philosophical doctrine which have been examined in this chapter. What next needs to be considered is the relation of these themes in Hegel to the content of Marx' theory of man.

Chapter Four

Marx' Appropriation of Hegel

The attempt to clarify Marx' theory of man leads naturally to the question of Marx' relations to his predecessors, particularly Feuerbach and Hegel. Marx' theory of man itself, as well as the arguments explicit or implicit which support and specify it, occur in texts which are largely polemical in character, and which are largely devoted to Marx' critical evaluations of others. Consequently, a discussion of Marx' relation to Feuerbach and Hegel seems an appropriate way of comprehending Marx' anthropology.

Althusser's interpretation of Marx is instructive in this respect. For he believes that those texts of Marx in which a theory of man is developed are dominated by Feuerbach's influence. Marx' theory of man, consequently, is thought to be thoroughly Feuerbachian in content. This interpretation is at the basis of his claim that the mature Marx is a theorist of economic society for whom 'humanism' of a Feuerbachian sort and of any sort, has been overcome and classified as ideology, inadmissible within any theory of society or history which is validly "scientific." I have attempted to show, in my second chapter, that the basis of Althusser's claim is erroneous, that the content of Marx' theory of man is clearly and consciously at variance with the Feuerbachian anthropology with which Marx was familiar. But the question of Marx' relation to Hegel remains to be handled.

I shall now argue that, on the basis of the analyses of the preceding chapter, Marx' theory of man can be understood as essentially related in its content not to the philosophical doctrine of Feuerbach,

but to that of Hegel. To do this, I shall defend two major claims. First, the notions of praxis and society contained in Marx' theory of man essentially reflect the analyses of those notions already made by Hegel in the Phenomenology of Spirit and the Philosophy of Right. And second, in the Paris Manuscripts, Marx develops his argument in support of the conclusion that praxis is a more fundamental category than consciousness in an adequate theory of man, through a critical dialogue with Hegel. Thus it will be shown both that Marx is indebted to Hegel for a major portion of his anthropology, and that Marx constructs an argument in support of the distinctiveness of his own position through a critique of Hegel. In short, it is in terms of its relation to Hegel, rather than to Feuerbach, that Marx' theory of man is both positively and negatively defined.

I. Marx' Indebtedness to Hegel.

The first of the points I wish to make has to do with Marx' statements on praxis and society, and their relation to Hegel's doctrine. I shall proceed by recalling the formulation of those statements in chapter one, and by comparing them to the analyses of chapter three. I shall not attempt to show that the development of Marx' theory on these points is systematically parallel to Hegel's. I doubt that they are. But I will show that the content of Marx' theory is identical with or relevantly similar to statements for which Hegel argues at various places in the texts.

As seen in chapter one, Marx begins his discussion of praxis or productive activity by describing nature as the necessary correlate

of praxis, and this in two senses.¹ First, Marx insists that the occurrence of productive activity requires the presence of an external, maleable environment.² And second, nature itself, Marx argues, is to be understood not merely as the external environment, but as that whose own reality is such as to occur essentially for the productive agent, and as that which receives its essential determinations from the activity of this agent.³ These statements clearly reflect the position argued by Hegel.⁴ Hegel argues, first, in the transition from "Consciousness" to "Self Consciousness" in the Phenomenology of Spirit, that it is in virtue of the self conscious subject's experience of its object, its "life,"⁵ as both essentially in relation to itself and as other than itself,⁶ that this subject experiences itself in turn as the desire⁷ to

¹Cf. Chapter One, pp. 2 and the following.

²Cf. Marx, "Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, MEGA; 1, 3, 384.

³Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 325; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 160. This idea is, as seen in chapter one, an implication of Marx' notion that nature occurs for the productive agent as his "object" in that it can be determined by his own activity in such a way as to become appropriate for the satisfaction of his needs.

⁴Cf. footnote number 104, chapter three, for a more detailed discussion of the content of Hegel's theory of nature in relation to Marx.

⁵Cf. Hegel, The Phenomenology of Mind, trans. J.B. Baillie, (London: Geo. Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1931, p. 220. Hegel, Phénoménologie des Geistes, ed. Hoffmeister, (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1952), p. 135.

⁶Cf. Ibid.

⁷Cf. Ibid.

overcome this distinction between its life and itself, and consequently upon this desire is an agent. Moreover, since the object which the self-conscious subject experiences as both its own and other than itself is "...the whole expanse of the world of sense...",⁸ that agency which is appropriate to the desire of this subject is productive agency, literally, *owrk*.⁹ Hegel here argues, in brief, that it is in virtue of nature as sensuous externality that the subject experiences productive agency as appropriate to the desire which is its own.

Furthermore, in that section of the Phenomenology which he entitles "Das Geistige Tierreich und der Betrug, oder die Sache Selbet," Hegel notes that the concrete agent experiences his external environment fundamentally as that context within which his activities may be carried out.¹⁰ This means that, for the concrete agent, nature is both experienced as the essential correlate of his activities, and, as the scene of those activities, receives its basic determination from them. This idea is both repeated and developed in the Philosophy of Right, in his discussion of the productive agent as the subject of needs. There he notes both that the satisfaction of needs requires that the productive agent relate himself to nature,¹¹ and that to be appropriable as an

⁸Cf. Ibid.

⁹Cf. Kojève, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, ed. Allan Bloom, trans. J. H. Nichols, (New York: Basic Books, 1969), pp. 37-38, for commentary on this point.

¹⁰Hegel, (Baillie), p. 419; Phänomenologie, p. 285.

¹¹Hegel, The Philosophy of Right, trans. T. M. Knox, (Oxford: The University Press, 1967), p. 269, addendum 125 to paragraph #196.

object of need, must nature, receive its basic determinations from productive activity.¹² Thus with respect to the basic description of the relation of praxis to nature, Marx' doctrine can be seen as essentially Hegelian.

The import of this relation becomes more pronounced when one turns to a consideration of Marx' concept of objectification. As I have shown in chapter one (see pp.4ff) the concept of objectification is essential to Marx' theory of praxis in several related ways. In the Manuscripts of 1844 Marx first describes the product or result of praxis as "...only the resume of activity, of production."¹³ Since a product is by definition the result of productive activity, than it embodies within itself, or is in itself determined by, the details of that activity of which it is the result. This implies that the product is the realization of labor,¹⁴ of productive activity. For the product renders the details of praxis public and observable, "objective,"¹⁵ and enduring in a way which transcends the transient character of activity itself. Marx sums these ideas up in the simple statement

¹²Cf. Hegel, (Knox), op. cit., loc. cit.

¹³Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 291; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 85.

¹⁴Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 289; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 83.

¹⁵Cf. Nicholas Lobkowitz, Theory and Practice, (Notre Dame: The University of Notre Dame Press, 1967), pp. 341-342.

that, "The product of labor is labor embodied and made objective in a thing."¹⁶

The notion of objectification as included in Marx' theory of praxis, further implies the concepts of "self actualization," in one of the two uses of this term which may be attributed to Marx,¹⁷ and self satisfaction.¹⁸ It is through engaging in productive activity that the agent at once makes a product, and realizes himself as an agent of a specific sort. (It is through writing, for example, that he realizes both definite results, and himself as a writer). This realization in turn involves a further sort of self actualization, one involving self satisfaction. Since the product is the embodiment or "resume" of the details of that activity of which it is the result, the agent, in recognizing his product, is capable of comprehending his own activity in a definite and objective form, and thus himself as well. And the agent can further take satisfaction in his product as the

¹⁷Marx' use of 'self actualization' in the context of his developed theory of needs will be discussed subsequently in this chapter in terms of its relation to Hegel.

¹⁸Cf. Lobkowicz, *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.* Regarding the first point Lobkowicz correctly comments that for Marx the productive agent, "...confers his life on objects. However, this externalization must not be taken to be a translation of pre-existing ideas into reality. Rather, the inner life conferred to outer objects must be viewed as a potentiality which becomes actual in and for man by becoming the form of a reality outside man. Accordingly, objectification also connotes self-actualization..."

detailed and externalized result of his own activity, and thus of his own self.¹⁹

Each of these points is also discernable in Hegel. In the dialectic of Self-Consciousness in the Phenomenology, Hegel argues that, as a result of labor or work, the object is transformed in that it is determined by the details of that activity of which it is a result. Work overcomes the apparently simple externality of the object. And the reason this externality is overcome is identical to the first component of Marx' concept of objectification, namely, that the object as product contains within itself or is a "resume" of the details of productive activity. It receives its essential determinations from productive activity, rather than simply containing them within itself.²⁰ Further, Hegel notes, as Marx does, that the 'objectification' of productive activity in its results overcomes the transient character of that activity itself, lending it a degree of permanence. Productive activity, "...passes into the form of the object, into something that is permanent and remains..."²¹

¹⁹Cf. Marx, "Excerpt-Notes of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 281; MEGA, 1, 3, p. 546. As Marx puts this, "In my production I would have objectified my individuality and its particularity...in viewing the object I would have experienced the individual joy of knowing my personality as an objective, sensuously perceptible, indubitable power."

²⁰Cf. Hegel, (baillie), p. 238; Phänomenologie, p. 149.

²¹Ibid.

The way in which Marx sees self actualization as involved in objectification is also discoverable in Hegel. Hegel's dialectic of "Lordship and Bondage" in the Phenomenology is the place in which he first elaborates his notion of agency as work.²² There he argues that, through specific productive activities, the specific determinations of, or the "...proper being..." of the agent is actualized.²³ The product is the concrete realization of productive activity, and thus of the productive agent himself. It is his own productive activity crystalized and brought to term.²⁴

These notions are again repeated and developed by Hegel in his later description of the agent as a concrete individual in the Phenomenology. There, as seen in chapter three (see pp.267), Hegel initially posits and then argues against the position that the concrete individual agent is possessed of an "original nature," a set of possibilities and capacities which are, for Hegel, determinate and given. He argues first, that a possibility of 'design' for action becomes the individual's own precisely through his acting upon it; the individual incorporates such a possibility into his own experience through his own activity.²⁵ Second, it is through acting out his specific possibility

²²The complete explicitation of the argument at this point would require an exposition of Hegel's description of the relation between bondsman and master. However, I feel that the text justifies an abstraction from this description, in that Hegel's essential assertions concern the effects of the productive activity of the bondsman upon himself.

²³Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 239; Phänomenologie, p. 149.

²⁴Cf. Hegel, op. cit., loc. cit.

²⁵Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), pp. 429-430; Phänomenologie, pp. 293-294.

or 'design' that the individual realizes it in detail for himself, and thus realizes himself as one whose experience involves a given possibility or 'design' in concrete detail.²⁶ And finally, it is on this basis that the individual is capable of revising the details of his own possibilities for action, and of engaging in further and more sophisticated forms of action. Thus the concrete individual agent cannot be comprehended as one possessed of an 'original nature,' but rather is who 'actualizes' himself as a result of his own activity.²⁷

The major components of Marx' concept of objectification, then, are discoverable in the texts of Hegel.²⁸ This, I shall now argue, is also the case for Marx' discussion of needs, as that discussion is located in his doctrine of praxis. The discussion of needs, as was shown in chapter one, (see pp.19ff) is equally important for Marx' doctrine of praxis as is his concept of objectification. That analysis may be

²⁶Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 438; Phänomenologie, p. 300. "The real intent thereby ceases to stand in the relation of a predicate, loses its characteristic of lifeless abstracted universality; it is substance peremated by individuality..."

²⁷Again, Hegel brings in the notion of society at this point. I have postponed an analysis of this aspect of Hegel's discussion.

²⁸Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), pp. 238 and 425; Phänomenologie, pp. 149 and 290. I note briefly here that, in each of the phases of Hegel's argument cited above, 'self actualization' is related to self satisfaction as a result of productive activity. In the dialectic of self consciousness, Hegel observes that agency as work is appropriate to the desire of the self conscious individual, and notes further that the individual agent takes satisfaction in recognizing its own activity, and thus a feature of its own self, as objectified in its product. "The consciousness that toils and serves accordingly attains by this means the direct apprehension of that independent being as its self." This point is reiterated in the analysis of "Das geistige Tierreich und der Betrug;" the concrete agent apprehends his result as proceeding from and crystalizing his own activity, ~~his own self, and takes satisfaction from it.~~

summarized as follows: for Marx, a) all praxis or productive activity is rooted in the agents experience of needs;²⁹ b) needs require productive activity on nature for their satisfaction;³⁰ c) the human productive agent acts both out of 'subsistence' needs, needs which arise from the physiological structure of and whose satisfaction is required for the life maintenance of the organism, and 'human' needs, that is needs developed beyond the literal subsistence of the individual;³¹ d) human activity which aims at the satisfaction of a need may result both in the satisfaction of that need and the 'production' of some new need, thus involving the 'self actualization' of the agent in a further sense of that term.³² Just as my discussion of these claims in chapter one showed that Marx' concept of needs is essential to his theory of praxis, I want now to show that the basic components of that concept are found in Hegel.

²⁹Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 325; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, pp. 160-161.

³⁰Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 325, MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, pp. 160-161. Cf. Also Marx, Capital, trans. Moore and Aveling, (New York: International Publishers, 1967), vol. 1, p. 42, Marx, in Marx-Engels, Works, (Berlin: Dietz Verlag,), vol. 23, p. 57. This edition of the works of Marx will henceforth be referred to as MEW.

³¹Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 294; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 88.

³²Marx, The German Ideology, trans. R. Pascal, (New York: International Publishers, 1947), pp. 16-17; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 18.

In the Phenomenology, Hegel claims that the individual is an agent in virtue of an ontologically founded desire,³³ which in turn requires activity (and activity as, among other forms, literal work) on the external environment. In the Philosophy of Right, in his description of the individual as a member of civil society, Hegel goes even further. There, he describes the individual as one whose, "...aim here is the satisfaction of subjective particularity..."³⁴ and he goes on to assert that, "The means of acquiring and preparing the particularized means appropriate to our similarly particularized needs (partikularisierten Bedurfnissen) is work."³⁵ This reveals to two sides of the concept of needs already noted in Marx. Needs are those features of the experience of the individual which render him a productive agent. And further, productive activity as 'work' is required for the satisfaction of needs. Hegel implies this through stating that, "It is the products of human effort which man consumes,"³⁶ 'consumption' here meaning the final stage

³³Cf. J. O'Malley, "History and Nature in Marx," The Review of Politics, 1966, 28, (4), pp. 521-527, in which it is persuavely argued that for Marx needs may be considered ontological features of the experience of the productive agent.

³⁴Hegel, (Knox), p. 26; G. W. F. Hegel, Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts, ed. Hoffmeister, (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1955), p. 170.

³⁵Hegel, (Knox), p. 128; Grundlinien, p. 173.

³⁶Hegel, (Knox), p. 129; Grundlinien, p. 173.

of that activity through which needs are satisfied.³⁷

Furthermore as noted in chapter three, (see p,320) Hegel makes a distinction between two classes of needs analogous to that made by Marx, and considers this distinction to be critical. This is revealed in a single text.

An animal's needs and its ways of satisfying them are both alike restricted in scope. Though man is subject to this restriction too, yet at the same time he evinces his transcendence of it and his universality, first by the multiplication of needs and means of satisfying them, and secondly by the differentiation and division of concrete need into single parts and aspects which in turn become different needs, particularized and so more abstract.³⁸

Needs, here, are first classified as those proper to the "animal," i.e., as restricted to those arising from the physiological structure of the organism.³⁹ and needs which are not so limited, and thus capable of developing or "multiplying." The human productive agent is described as capable of acting from needs of both sorts, and the language of that

³⁷Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 269, addendum 125 to paragraph 193. Hegel supplements these statements with an addendum, illustrating even more concretely the relation between his doctrine and that of Marx. He states that, "There is hardly any raw material which does not need to be worked on before use...It is by the sweat of his brow and the toil of his hands that man obtains the means to satisfy his needs." This indicates first that the activity to which Hegel refers as initiated by needs is external activity, activity on nature. Second, it clearly reveals that the activity under consideration here is productive activity. And third, productive activity is required for the satisfaction of needs; nature must be 'transformed' or 'worked up into shape' in order to yield items appropriate to the needs of individuals.

³⁸Hegel, (Knox), p. 217; Grundlinien, pp. 170-171.

³⁹For confirmation of this point cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 268-269, addendum 121 to paragraph #190.

distinction recalls Marx' statement that, "...the animal produces only what is immediately necessary for itself or its young. It produces in a one-sided fashion, while man produces universally."⁴⁰

Further, the explanation offered by Marx and Hegel respectively of the development or "multiplication" of needs are related in content. This is the case, I suggest, on two counts. Marx hold the position that needs develop in virtue of productive activity undertaken towards the satisfaction of previously experienced needs. Productive activity transforms the environment such that it may both elicit new needs in the agent, and support activity which aims at the satisfaction of such needs. Through productive activity, the agent realizes himself as a specific agent, rendering himself capable of experiencing new needs, and of undertaking new and more subtle forms of activity aiming at their satisfaction.⁴¹ Now Hegel seems to suggest an analogous argument in speaking of "...the differentiation and division of concrete need into single parts and aspects which in turn become different needs, particularized and so more abstract."⁴² Needs for Hegel require 'work'

⁴⁰Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 294; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 88.

⁴¹Cf. Rotenstreich, Basic Problems of Marx' Philosophy, (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1965) pp. 34-35; Lefebvre, Dialectical Materialism, trans. John Sturreck, (London: Johnathan Cape Ltd., 1968), p. 118.

⁴²Hegel, (Knox), p. 127; Grundlinien, p. 171.

as their mode of attaining satisfaction. 'Work' in turn transforms the environment which is its object. But this means that the environment now becomes more complex, and thus capable of offering possibilities for supporting more complex and differentiated forms of work. In turn the individual who has 'worked on' this environment is thereby capable of different and more complex activities. As a result the needs of the individual are rendered more complex relative to the new forms of work which he may now undertake.

This brings us to still another similarity. In chapter one (see pp.82ff) I argued that, for Marx, consciousness is an essential feature of the structure of praxis because, only given this can we explain the phenomenon of a developed need as the basis for productive activity. Three reasons were offered for this. First, the agent must apprehend his environment consciously in order for that environment to elicit a developed need within his experience. An environment to which the individual enjoys no conscious relation can only elicit 'subsistence', species specific needs for that individual. Second, the individual must enjoy conscious awareness of his own experience in order to recognize developed needs as occurring in it. Only the experience of 'subsistence' or species specific needs, based on the physiological structure of the individual, do not require such awareness. And third, the individual must enjoy conscious awareness of his environment so that he may comprehend possibilities it promises for productive activity. Only if he is conscious of his environment is he capable of acting towards the satisfaction of the need in question.

I take these reasons to underly Marx' position that consciousness is an essential feature of human praxis. But an analogy may be seen between these reasons and a position which Hegel takes on a similar question. Hegel notes that, "The need of shelter and clothing, the necessity of cooking his food to make it fit to eat and to overcome its natural rawness, both mean that man has less natural comfort than the animal, and indeed, as mind, he ought to have less. Intelligence, with its grasp of distinctions, multiplies human needs, and since taste and utility become criteria of judgment, even the needs themselves are affected thereby."⁴³ Hegel is making at least two assertions here. First, that human action towards the satisfaction of needs such as those for shelter and food yields the development or 'multiplication' of needs. And second, this is possible in virtue of "intelligence" or "mind": mind as capable of a) distinguishing among various features of an environment, and b) distinguishing the component features of needs themselves. Thus needs can develop only in terms of their being consciously noticed, and indeed this noticing alters the character of needs themselves. Marx will offer later a critical argument against what he takes to be Hegel's position on the location of consciousness within the experience of the individual, but there is here at least an analogy between the positions of Marx and Hegel on the question of the relationships between productive activity, consciousness, and the development of needs.

Finally, it was noted above (see chapter one, p. 29) that for

⁴³Hegel, (Knox), p. 269, addendum 121 to paragraph # 190.

Marx the notion of needs as developmental introduces a further sense of 'self actualization' into his doctrine of praxis. As needs develop, the individual agent is capable of enjoying ever more subtle and complex productive relations with his environment, as well as more diversified forms of experience, in terms of the needs which are his own. It seems that Hegel has the conceptual foundation to make this same assertion, although he does not do so specifically. Hegel too argues that developing needs yields consistently complexifying forms of "work" and thus the actualization of both the environment and the individual agent.

A final point of relation between Marx' doctrine of praxis and Hegel has to do with the concept of appropriation. This concept arises in Marx' analysis as follows. (See chapter one, pp.6ff). First, since productive activity is 'objectified' in its natural result, nature is, as product, transformed according to the details of praxis.⁴⁴ The productive agent thus brings nature into definite relations to himself, or appropriates⁴⁵ nature, through his activity. Second, productive activity is determined concretely by the needs of the agent.⁴⁶ Since the product of activity embodies the details of productive activity, and since that activity is undertaken for the sake of satisfying definite

⁴⁴Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 291; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 85.

⁴⁵Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 290; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 84: "...der Arbeiter sich die Assenwelt, die sinnliche Natur, durch seine Arbeit aneignet."

⁴⁶Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 325; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, pp. 160-161. Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, trans. Pascal, pp. 16-17; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, pp. 17-18. Marx, Capital trans. Moore and Aveling, p. 42; MEW, vol. 23, p. 57.

needs, the product is capable of being appropriated or taken up by the agent for the purpose of such satisfaction.⁴⁷

A strong parallel between Marx' concept of appropriation and Hegel is found in the Philosophy of Right,⁴⁸ again in Hegel's description of

⁴⁷Cf. The Grundrisse, trans. David McLellan, (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp. 24-25; Marx, Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie, (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1953), pp. 12-13. Marx most clearly demonstrates this idea in this text of the Grundrisse, by showing that consumption is an integral feature of, and indeed the culmination of, the activity of production.

⁴⁸Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 238; Phänomenologie, p. 149. An argument in Hegel's treatment of the dialectic of Self Consciousness in the Phenomenology also points up how Marx is related to Hegel on the concept of appropriation. For Hegel, the self conscious subject is an agent in virtue of 'desire'; this agency involves work in that, as directed at the object, "...labor shapes and transforms the thing." This is to say that work or productive agency overcomes the apparently simple externality of nature through causing its object to involve within itself labor's own determinations. Productive activity then involves 'objectification' in Marx' sense of that term. And then, through this activity, the agent brings his object into some definite relation with himself, or 'appropriates' that object. In turn, productive activity is undertaken towards the fulfillment of a need, in this case the desire of the subject to overcome the apparently simple externality of that object which he recognizes as both other than himself and as essentially related to himself as his own 'life.' The 'appropriated' object is capable of satisfying, albeit partially, this desire.

There is an analogy between this argument in Hegel and 'appropriation' in Marx. But the analogy limps on two points. First, Marx seems to discuss appropriation in terms of definite needs (Bedürfnisse), whereas the desire (Begierde) which Hegel describes here is a generalized desire. Second, Hegel argues that both this desire and the activity consequent upon it have their source in the conscious experience of the subject, whereas Marx wishes to argue in general that conscious experience derives from the practical relations of agent to environment, praxis, while simultaneously being an essential structural feature of praxis.

the individual as a member of civil society. Individuals act out of determinate aims or needs,⁴⁹ and the experience of these determinate needs results in the individual's undertaking productive agency or work.⁵⁰ The effect of this activity is the transformation of the natural environment,⁵¹ yielding products which may be 'consumed',⁵² that is, which may be taken up or 'appropriated' by the individual towards the satisfaction of needs.⁵³ Hegel here discusses the relationships between needs, productive activity, and 'consumption' or appropriation in a way more clearly resembling Marx' use of 'appropriation'. For Hegel means to argue here that the individual undertakes productive activity in virtue of the experience of definite needs, that literal productive activity must be undertaken towards the satisfaction of these, and that the final feature of this activity is the using or appropriating of products.

This brief analysis shows, I think, the positive relationships between the key concepts of Marx' theory of praxis and parts of Hegel's thought. Both describe nature in relation to productive activity in a

⁴⁹Hegel, (Knox), p. 122-126; Grundlinien, pp. 165 and 169-170.

⁵⁰Cf. Hegel, (Knox), pp. 128-129; Grundlinien, p. 173.

⁵¹Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 129; Grundlinien, p. 173. See also Hegel, (Knox), p. 269, addendum 125 to paragraph # 196.

⁵²Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 129; Grundlinien, p. 173.

⁵³Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 269, addendum 125 to paragraph # 196.

way that is generally similar. Those concepts which comprise Marx' notion of 'objectification' are discoverable in Hegel. There is a strong similarity between Marx and Hegel in terms of the function of needs in experience of the productive agent, and an analogy between Marx' concept of 'appropriation' and Hegel's comments on the relation between product and need.

I consider next the relation of Marx to Hegel on the question of society and the relation of the individual to society. It will be more difficult to bring out this connection, since the relationships on this point are not as clear cut as those obtaining on the question of praxis. But I shall try to show that, in spite of critical differences, some strong similarity obtains between Marx and Hegel on the question of the productive agent as social.

We saw in chapter one (pp. 40-44) that, for Marx, praxis renders social relationships possible. Marx' argument for this statement was twofold. First, insofar as the appropriable product resulting from productive activity is external to the producer, then it can be taken up for use both by that producer and by others.⁵⁴ Thus the product introduces into the environment of the individual the possibility of his activity's being related to by others.⁵⁵ And second, since the product is the

⁵⁴ Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 290; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 84.

⁵⁵ Cf. Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, pp. 17-18; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.5, pp. 18-19.

objectification of the agent himself, of his own activity as determined by those definite needs which he experiences as his own, and since another who appropriates this product does so in virtue of his experience of relevantly similar needs, it follows that productive activity makes possible interaction between concrete individuals. "In your satisfaction and your use of my product I would have had the direct and conscious satisfaction that my work satisfied a human need;...that it created an object appropriate to the need of another human being."⁵⁶

Concepts analogous to those employed by Marx in arguing that the structure of praxis renders social relationships possible are found in Hegel's analysis of the concrete individual agent, in "Das Geistige Tierreich und der Betrug." In his initial description of agency here, Hegel asserts that concrete agency involves as its result some external object or product. And this product embodies within itself some feature of the concrete nature of the agent, the "...subjectively presented purpose..." (Zweck)⁵⁷ in virtue of which the details of his activity are determined.⁵⁸

Hegel goes on to argue that it is in virtue of the externality of the product or object of the concrete agent that this agent comes into

⁵⁶Marx, "Excerpt-Notes of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 291; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 546.

⁵⁷Cf. Hegel, Phänomenologie, p. 286.

⁵⁸Cf. also Hegel, (Baillie), p. 426; Phänomenologie, p. 290. "The work produced is the reality which consciousness gives itself."

relationships with others.⁵⁹ The object of activity externalizes the details of that activity of which it is a result. But insofar as the object is external, persons other than its producer are capable of relating to it. In this sense, to say that, "the work is..." is to say that "...it is for other individuals..."⁶⁰ And since the product is in itself determined by the details of the activity of which it is a result, and thus some features of its producers own self, those others who relate themselves to the agent's own product also relate themselves to the agent's self. Thus concrete activity yields interaction between concrete individuals.

There are both points of similarity and differences between Hegel's and Marx' arguments. But both would claim that the event of concrete agency implies social relationships, and Marx would agree with Hegel's subsequent argument that the concrete agent is necessarily a social

⁵⁹Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 426; Phänomenologie, p. 291. This point is shown in a single text, one couched in the language of Hegel's analysis of this phase of the Phenomenology. "The work is thus thrown out into a subsisting form where the specific character of the original nature does in fact come out as against other determinate natures, encroaches on them, just as these in their turn encroach on it, and is lost as a vanishing moment in this general process."

⁶⁰Hegel, (Baillie), p. 426; Phänomenologie, p. 291.

individual.⁶¹

⁶¹In passing, let me note some points of difference. Hegel begins his analysis of the experience of the concrete agent with an analysis of the individual's experience of himself as possessed of an "original nature." Marx does not analyze this concept in arguing that social relationships are engendered through praxis, although the analysis of Marx' position vis a vis Prudhon in chapter two shown that he would agree with Hegel's position that this concept is not viable. Cf. Marx, The Poverty of Philosophy, (New York: International Publishers, 1963, p. 32; Marx, Misère de la Philosophie, (Paris: Editions Sociales, 1946), pp. 31-32. Marx here argues that the concept of 'homo economicus' which comprehends the individual in society as one who undertakes productive activity in virtue of certain innate and definite needs will not do. One might hold here that Marx argues against the concept of the agent as possessed of an "original nature" in Hegel's sense of that term.

Further, Marx does not distinguish or analyze the distinction between specific "design" and general purpose, the analysis of which, as pointed out in chapter three, is crucial to Hegel's description of the experience of the concrete agent.

And finally, it seems that Hegel would consider the argument concerning the necessary sociality of the individual found in his introduction to the dialectic of Self Consciousness to be more fundamental than the argument exhibited here, because in that latter dialectic it is argued that interpersonality is necessary in order that the self conscious subject be itself fully, i.e., in order that the desire which constitutes the experience of that subject be adequately handled from within its own experience. Marx makes no analysis of general desire, and thus no such argument is available to him. Cf. O'Malley, Review of Politics, 1966, p. 524. O'Malley notes that even the need for a 'human' society, i.e., one in which those economic factors responsible for alienation are overcome, is the result of definite developments in the interacting forces and relations of production. Nonetheless, Marx and Hegel do agree concerning the limited question of the relation between productive activity and social experience.

Marx of course further argues that society conditions the details of praxis, the concrete productive activities of individuals, occurring within it. In the context of Marx' arguments, the meaning of this statement was seen to be twofold. First, as the systematization of productive activities, society offers such activities in definite forms as options to its members.⁶² And second, individual activity itself both utilizes materials which are socially provided, and provides an externalized result which is capable of being further determined by the social milieu into which it is introduced.⁶³ Here the details of productive activity are influenced by the fact that, "...what I make from myself I make for society, conscious of my nature as social."⁶⁴

Hegel in the Philosophy of Right defends this same point in his analysis of needs. He first describes the multiplication of needs as arising from "...the differentiation and division of concrete need into single parts and aspects which in turn become different needs, particularized and so more abstract."⁶⁵ As the means for the satisfaction of concrete needs become more complex, those needs themselves differentiate and become particularized. In Hegel's language, such needs become

⁶²Cf. Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, trans. Pascal, p. 18; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 19, where Marx describes society as such a system, and then notes that society "...is itself a 'productive force'."

⁶³Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 306; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 116, where Marx introduces this point through the example of scientific activity.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Hegel, (Knox), p. 127; Grundlinien, p. 171.

"abstract,"⁶⁶ i.e., become the differentiated and particular elements of a need which is yet single, and in which they are included.

These differentiated needs, or elements of needs, however, now enable their subject to relate concretely to the productive activity of others. For the activity or work of others may relate itself to those differentiated needs which the individual experiences as his own. As Hegel puts it, "Needs and means, as things existent realiter, become something which has being for others, by whose needs and work satisfaction for all alike is conditions."⁶⁷ If, to take a basic example, the individual's need for food differentiates itself into the needs for land, seed, livestock, and agricultural implements, then he may be dependent on the productive activity of others for the last two, or perhaps three, materials required for his own productive activity.

Three implications follow from this analysis, each of which approaches the conclusion that the productive activity of the individual is conditioned by the socially systematized milieu of productive activities within which he is located. First the differentiated needs which the individual as an individual experiences are in their content influenced by the details of the activity of others as that activity relates to these needs.⁶⁸ For example, the individual's need for

⁶⁶Ibid., (# 191).

⁶⁷Ibid., (# 192).

⁶⁸Cf. Ibid. "The abstract characteristic, universality, is the characteristic of being recognized and in the moment which makes concrete, i.e., social, the isolated and abstract needs and their ways and means of satisfaction."

agricultural implements is determined as the need for implements of a specific sort, in virtue of the activity of others which renders these concretely available to him. Second, the concrete activity of the individual is in turn conditioned by the activity of others, as is the activity of others conditioned by the individual's own work.⁶⁹ This is the case because, on the one hand, the details of individual's work derives from those differentiated needs which are influenced in their content, and, on the other hand, the activity of others is here undertaken in response to the needs of the individual whose content his own work manifests.⁷⁰

These two implications alone support the conclusion that the productive activity of the individual is conditioned by the social milieu, that the activity of the productive individual is conditioned by his specific relations to the actions of others. This conclusion is further strengthened by the fact that, for the human productive agent, needs are experienced as arising out of his social context. Hegel notes that in virtue of the two points just discussed it can be said that, "This social moment thus becomes a particular end--determinant (Zweckbestimmung) for means in themselves and their acquisition, as well as for the manner in which needs are satisfied."⁷¹ Since the content of the differentiated, particular needs of the individual are contentually influenced by his

⁶⁹Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 298, addendum 120 to paragraph # 189, Hegel recognizes this point in this text.

⁷⁰Cf. Reyburn, *The Ethical Theory of Hegel*, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1921), p. 217. Reyburn recognizes that social production yields "...division of labour..." but does not analyze the argument for this which I take to be implicit in Hegel's text.

⁷¹Hegel, (Knox), pp. 127-128; Grundlinien, p. 171

actual relations to the productive activity of others, the content of these more generic needs of which the noted differentiations are particular elements is also influenced by these relations, as are the active means available to the individual for the satisfaction of these more generic needs.

The general conclusion that follows is that, for Hegel, the options for productive activity available to the individual are essentially conditioned and constituted by the individual's relations to the productive activity of others, i.e., by his social relations. This conclusion is thoroughly amenable to Marx' doctrine of the relation of individual and society, although Marx does not offer a single and unified argument for it, such as can be found in the texts of Hegel. Both authors share an insistence that society comprises a systematization of productive activities, and that this systematization essentially influences the productive acts of society's individual members; both are capable in this sense of asserting that "...society itself produces man as man..."⁷²

From this we can see further points of similarity between the positions of Marx and Hegel regarding the essentially social nature of the experience of the productive individual. The first involves a reference to Marx' concept of "totalization." It was seen in chapter one (see pp. 60 ff) that, for Marx the subject of praxis, as social, is in principle capable of "totalization," i.e., of self actualization in a

⁷²Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 305; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 116.

consistently developing fashion. For society, as the systematization of various forms of productive activities offers these various forms of activities to the individual as real options, thus expanding the horizons of his options for praxis. In addition, society itself is the source of needs which the individual as social may experience as his own, and thus may operationalize in his productive activity. Hegel seems to recognize at least the second of these two influences of society on the individual clearly. In the point we were just considering, Hegel claims that the differentiated, particular needs of the individual are influenced in their content by the individual's relations to the activities of others. One implication of this is that the needs of the individual differentiate and specifically particularize themselves precisely in terms of these relations. It is in virtue of this differentiation that the individual is capable of engaging in ever more complex forms of productive activity. So if these differentiations are to be comprehended in terms of the individual's relations to others, then it is in virtue of these relations that his actuality as an agent consistently develops, and that he becomes a more 'total' subject of praxis.⁷³

⁷³Cf. Reyburn, op. cit., p. 217. Also cf. Hegel, (Knox) pp. 129 and 128; Grundlinien, pp. 173 and 172. Hegel's language in the Philosophy of Right is ambiguous concerning this point. Reyburn notes that, "The very division of labour which springs up in the economic world in order to satisfy needs begets new ones..." This would seem consistent with the statements discussed above. But unhappily, Hegel's own language concerning "division of labor" (Teilung der Arbeiten) is equivocal. At one point he asserts that, "By this division, the work of the individual becomes less complex, and consequently his skill at the section of the job increases, like his output." This comment would for Marx describe the 'fragmentation' rather than the 'totalization' of the individual. But, as I hope my argument above shows, Hegel's texts lay down the

One final analogy between Marx' doctrine of the essentially social nature of the productive individual and Hegel involves the position expressed in Marx' assertion that, "To be objective, natural, sentient and at the same time to have an object, nature, or sense outside oneself or be oneself object, nature, and sense for a third person is one and the same thing."⁷⁴ It was seen in chapter one (see pp.67ff) that this statement means that insofar as the individual agent enjoys real relations of praxis with his environment, he is describable both as a subject, in this case a subject of needs, and as an object, one whose experience is capable of being determined by the actions of others.⁷⁵ The full determination of the experience of the individual involves the individual's being the object of the acts of others, as well as being the subject of his own needs and activities. It is the social environment which allows the individual to be such an object, and thus society which determines his experience with necessary concreteness.

premisses upon which he might discuss "division of labor" in a more general fashion, thus arriving at a sense of Reyburn's comment, then, is not fundamentally in error. And Hegel does at least assert, with regard to the experience of needs, that, "...this social moment has in it the aspect of liberation, i.e., the strict natural necessity of need is obscured, and man is concerned with his own opinion, indeed with an opinion that is universal, and with a necessity of his own making alone..." This means that the social individual is capable, in virtue of his social nature, of experiencing and acting upon a broader range of needs than the hypothesized a-social agent might be capable of enjoying.

⁷⁴Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, op. cit., p. 325; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 161.

⁷⁵Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 326; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 161. A being which is not itself an object for a third being has no being for its object, that is, is not related objectively, its being is not objective."

Hegel, as I see it, offers an argument which has a similar conclusion. For Hegel, the individual human agent must be described as one for whom needs "multiply" or develop.⁷⁶ One necessary form of this "multiplication" of needs is the differentiation of more generic needs into their particular components or elements.⁷⁷ This differentiation in its details occurs in terms of the individual subject's relations to the activity of others.⁷⁸ But this means that the concrete individual is the object of the activities of others, as well as the subject of his own needs and activities. In fact he must be such an object in order to be a concrete individual agent in an adequate sense. Thus for Hegel as for Marx, the concrete agent is one who must be described as the object of the activities of others, as well as the subject of his own activities and needs.

II Marx' Critique of Hegel

To this point I have considered analogies between the positions of Marx and Hegel with regard to the questions of the nature of productive activity, and the essentially social nature of the productive agent. Regarding the latter question we have seen that both Marx and Hegel claim that, a) productive activity renders possible social relations between concrete individuals; b) society conditions the details of such activity available to its individual members; c) society renders possible

⁷⁶Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 127; Grundlinien, p. 171.

⁷⁷Cf. Ibid.

⁷⁸Cf. Ibid., (192).

the 'totalization' of the agent; d) society allows the individual to be determined as the object of the activities of others, as well as the subject of his own activities and needs.

But at this point there is a divergence between the positions of Marx and Hegel, one whose ramifications will be critical for the remainder of my argument. Both Marx and Hegel argue that the individual is essentially social, but the contents of their respective arguments for this assertion point up significant differences between them. Marx attempts to show that society and praxis imply one another. All genuinely productive activity results in "objectification." This objectification involves the externalization of the agent. As so externalized, the individual is in principle capable of entering into social relationships. Conversely, the experience of the individual includes determinations introduced therein by others, and these are determinations of the individual as an agent. In his active relationships with the external world, the individual utilizes materials and productive options which are constituted by society, and his needs themselves are socially as well as individually constituted. The argumentative details of these assertions were exposed in chapter one, and need not be repeated here. But the conclusion to be drawn is that, for Marx, to say that the individual is necessarily social is to say that society and praxis imply each other.

Hegel also argues that the individual must be described as necessarily and essentially social. At certain junctures in his thought he also maintains that concrete social relations arise out of productive

activity, as well as that society essentially conditions productive activity. But it does not seem to be the case that Hegel's basic argument concerning the essentially social nature of the individual leads to the same specific conclusion as Marx' arguments. The two arguments most basic to Hegel's conclusion that the individual is necessarily a social individual are those involving his analyses of the subject of will in the Philosophy of Right, and the subject of self consciousness in the Phenomenology of Spirit. I shall mention the first briefly, and analyze the second in more detail.

In the Philosophy of Right it is the individual subject of will who must occur as a social individual. The subject of will is one who requires consciousness of the "...desirable in and for itself..." as a standard for his activities.⁷⁹ But if this subject is taken simply as an individual, an examination of its experience reveals a number of anomalies. First, since the good as object of the individual's will abstracts from all determinate content, it offers no adequate standard for the evaluation of a specific action as good.⁸⁰ Second, as an individual, the subject of will is thrown back upon a dependence on the caprice of his own conscience for awareness of "the good" and thus cannot be said to possess the objective ethical standard which he requires.⁸¹ And third, the individual is forced to constitute his own experience as a standard for his acts, and again is denied an ethical standard which is objective.⁸²

⁷⁹Reyburn, p. 172, Cf. also Hegel, (Knox), p. 87, Grundlinien, p. 116.

⁸⁰Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 90; Grundlinien, p. 121.

⁸¹Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 91; Grundlinien, p. 122.

⁸²Cf. Hegel, (Knox), p. 92; Grundlinien, p. 124.

Hegel goes on to argue that just as the subject of will cannot be adequately comprehended as a mere individual, he may be adequately comprehended as an individual whose experience is essentially social, as an individual participating the life of society. For society is the product of will, as the embodiment of personal activities in the concrete world.⁸³ It is at the same time a system of customs and norms which is both objective, as transcending the caprice of individual experience taken simply, and determinate in content.⁸⁴ If the individual subject of will is described as participating the life of society, then society can be described as providing that determinate and objective ethical standard which the individual requires. Thus the individual subject as will, in order to be an adequate subject, must be, and must be comprehended as, one who participates the life of society, or one whose experience is essentially social.

The above merely restates briefly an argument developed in greater detail in chapter three. But this restatement calls attention to a notable contrast between the positions of Marx and Hegel. Both Marx and Hegel argue that the individual is essentially social, but differ in respect of the arguments which each offers in its support. For Marx, to say that the individual is essentially social means that society and praxis are mutually implicative. For Hegel, this claim means that the conscious subject must be social in order that he be an adequate subject of will, who requires social life. And for Hegel, the social life in which this subject participates is the life of ethical mind embodied in

⁸³Cf. Bernard Bourgeois, La Pensee Politique de Hegel, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969), p. 114.

⁸⁴Cf. Hegel, (Knox), pp. 108-109; Grundlinien, p. 147.

the world or in being, of mind as "objective."

The contrast between the positions of Marx and Hegel is heightened when one turns to an analysis of Hegel's argument for this position in his introduction to the dialectic of Self Consciousness in the Phenomenology of Spirit. There, we may recall, Hegel argues that the self conscious subject must experience relationships with others, must be recognized by others, in order that the desire which initially constitutes self consciousness may be adequately explained, and in order that the self conscious subject may comprehend himself as a personal individual. This point may be briefly resumed.

The self conscious subject is constituted through a desire to overcome that contradiction in its object through which that object appears as both its own, its 'life,' and as other than itself.⁸⁵ In virtue of this desire, the self conscious subject is an agent who works to transform its object.⁸⁶ But agency as work is not a fully adequate manner in which the self conscious subject may relate to its own desire, and this for two reasons. First, although work transforms the object, the externality and independence of this object from its subject still remains, and the object continues to be experienced by the subject as external and independent.⁸⁷ And second, the subject comprehends its own desire in terms of the details of the object at which this desire is directed.⁸⁸

⁸⁵Hegel, (Baillie), p. 220; Phänomenologie, p. 135.

⁸⁶Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 238; Phänomenologie, p. 149.

⁸⁷Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 225; Phänomenologie, p. 139.

⁸⁸Cf. Ibid.

If this object is experienced as fundamentally external to the subject, the subject experiences the content of his desire as other than and external to himself. This means that the self conscious subject here does not and can not comprehend itself as a personal individual.⁸⁹

But this subject may more adequately relate to its desire, and may comprehend itself as a personal individual, if it is recognized as such by another self consciousness, if its experience is intersubjective. For here, first, the other is the object of the original self consciousness, and is at the same time its self, as the recognition of itself. Thus here the externality of the object is more thoroughly overcome than is possible when the object is the object of work.⁹⁰ And second, in that the object of the self conscious subject is, for that subject, the recognition of itself, then this object provides the subject with an adequate basis on which to comprehend itself as a personal individual.⁹¹ Moreover, the self conscious subject must comprehend itself as a personal individual. For this subject to be adequately a self conscious subject, it must not only exist as the source and locus of its own desire, but must also comprehend itself as such. Thus the full constitution of the self conscious subject requires that this subject be recognized by another self consciousness, that it occur in a context which is intersubjective or, broadly speaking, social.

⁸⁹Cf. Hypolite, Studies on Marx and Hegel, trans. John O'Neill, (New York: Basic Books, 1969), p. 162.

⁹⁰Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), pp. 225-226; Phänomenologie, p. 139.

⁹¹Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), pp. 226-227, and 229; Phänamoneologie, pp. 140 and p. 141.

It was important to recall this argument, in order to see its bearing on Hegel's conclusion that the individual is necessarily social. As was the case in the previous argument, it is here the conscious subject whose experience includes, and must include, a social dimension. Further, this subject requires some social dimension in order that its experience be adequately realized as a conscious subject. In this case, the subject is the self conscious subject of experience, and a social dimension to its experience, recognition by another, is requisite in order that the subject comprehend itself as a personal individual. And finally, the 'society' or 'intersubjective' milieu which Hegel describes here is essentially a series of relationships between individuals who are to be described primarily as conscious subjects.

I consider this argument from the Phenomenology of Spirit more fundamental than the argument found in the Philosophy of Right. The latter is devoted to arguing that certain conditions are necessary in order that the personal individual be an adequate subject of will, whereas the former argues that certain conditions are necessary in order that the subject be a personal individual at all, i.e., comprehend itself as such. But in both arguments the general issue is the same, for in both social relations are described as necessary for the adequate constitution of the conscious subject, and in both 'society' is described as a system of relations between conscious subjects.

Marx' description of society, and of the individual in relation to society, differs from this description of Hegel's. Several texts, among them the Paris Manuscripts and the German Ideology illustrate this.

First, society for Marx, is to be understood as a system of productive relations, or as a series of relations between productive individuals. When in the Paris Manuscripts Marx asserts that, "...what I make from myself I make for society, conscious of my nature as social,"⁹² the import of this statement is that the individual's "...nature as social" derives from the fact that productive activity is that which brings the individual into social relations: "...I make for society..." Social relations then are to be described most fundamentally as productive relations.⁹³

Second, Marx insists on describing the individual who is essentially social as the productive individual or subject of praxis, the agent. The texts cited above from the Manuscripts of 1844 indicates that for Marx it is productive activity or praxis which brings the individual concretely into social relations. And in the German Ideology as well, men, that is, social beings, distinguish themselves essentially through which "...they begin to produce their means of subsistence..."⁹⁴

⁹²Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844, in Easton and Guddat, p. 306; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 1, p. 116.

⁹³Cf. Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, trans. Pascal, p. 18; MEGA, 1, 5, p. 19. This is also implied in the German Ideology, in Marx' statement that, "By social we understand the cooperation of several individuals, no matter under what conditions, in what manner and to what end. It follows from this that a certain mode of production or industrial stage, is always combined with a certain mode of cooperation, and that this mode of cooperation is itself a 'productive force'."

⁹⁴Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, trans. Pascal, p. 7; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 10.

Marx' descriptions of society and of the social individual, then, differ from Hegel's description of those notions. Two further points must be added as well. Marx not only differs in his description of society and the social individual from Hegel, he objects to the Hegelian description. Marx insists on describing society, the subject of the process of history,⁹⁵ as essentially constituted through productive relations. Hegel and the Young Hegelians were unable to comprehend history adequately in Marx' opinion because they did not comprehend the subject of the historical process, society, in this fashion.⁹⁶ Further, Marx' basis for holding that society is fundamentally a system of productive relations is his position that man is fundamentally a productive agent, a subject of praxis. For Marx, it is the structure of praxis which renders social relations possible. Also, society is described as a system of productive relations because it is taken by Marx to be a system of relationships between productive agents.⁹⁷ It would seem then that Marx' quarrel with Hegel's description of social relationships rests on a basic objection to certain aspects of Hegel's description of the social individual.

⁹⁵Cf. Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, trans. Pascal, p. 18; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 19. "Further that multitude of productive forms accessible to men determines the nature of society, and hence that the 'history of humanity' must always be studied and treated in relation to the history of industry and exchange."

⁹⁶Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, trans. Pascal, p. 4; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 8.

⁹⁷Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, trans. Pascal, p. 17; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 19.

It is at this point that the question of Marx' attitude to Hegel's description of the individual and of productive activity comes to the fore. I have shown that Marx' doctrines of society and praxis bear strong analogy to certain concepts found in Hegel's texts. Lobkowitz goes so far as to assert that, "...almost everything which Marx says about labor can be traced back to Hegel."⁹⁸ And Marx himself seems to be generally aware of this. Marx gives Hegel credit for grasping "... the nature of work,..." and comprehending "...objective man, authentic because actual, as the result of his own work."⁹⁹ This indicates, I suggest, Marx' recognition that those categories required to describe "work" or praxis adequately are to be found in Hegel. But Lobkowitz is also correct in noting that on this point, Marx, "...dissociates himself from Hegel easily...",¹⁰⁰ for much of the portion of the Paris Manuscripts devoted to Hegel is comprised of a number of sustained arguments against Hegel's view of the individual in relation to his own praxis (or 'work').

I shall devote the remainder of this chapter to showing that, while Marx recognizes his debt to Hegel for those concepts which he utilizes to describe the nature of praxis, he nonetheless levels a critical argument against what he takes to be Hegel's description of human nature. The kernel of this argument is that, for Marx, Hegel's description of the human individual as a conscious subject renders it

⁹⁸Lobkowitz, Theory and Practice p. 321.

⁹⁹Marx, "Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 321; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 156.

¹⁰⁰Lobkowitz, op. cit., loc. cit.

impossible for him to theoretically describe the individual as an agent, a subject of praxis. This means that Marx' main quarrel with Hegel pertains to the relationship of the categories of consciousness and praxis in an adequate theory of human nature. Several commentators have pointed this out generally. Lobkowitz, for example, notes that, "...the difference consists in Hegel viewing the transformation effected by bodily labor as a premise and a subordinate form of the ultimate, reconciling transfiguration achieved by speculative thought, while Marx is and increasingly will be induced to see all theoretical activities as only an epiphenomenon of labor and practice in general."¹⁰¹ But then Lobkowitz goes on to say that the basis of Marx' objection to Hegel on this point is that Marx, "...accuses Hegel of camouflaging man's alienation..."¹⁰² Marx does indeed assert this,¹⁰³ but his objection to Hegel is something more fundamental. Calvez points out that Marx objects to Hegel's doctrine of consciousness on two specific points: that Hegel can only account for specific phases of conscious experience in terms of their pointing beyond themselves to some succeeding phase,¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 340.

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 341.

¹⁰³Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 321; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 257. "provisionally, let us say this much in advance: Hegel's standpoint is that of modern political economy. He views labor as the essence, the self confirming essence of man he sees only the positive side of labor, not its negative side."

¹⁰⁴Cf. Calvez, La Pensée de Karl Marx, (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1956), p. 355.

and that Hegel can only account for the development of conscious experience as a whole in terms of this development's pointing beyond itself to the achievement of absolute knowledge.¹⁰⁵

I shall consider these of Marx' objections to Hegel subsequently, but in the context of showing that they depend on the more fundamental objection that Hegel, in describing the individual as essentially a conscious subject, is unable to proceed from this to a description of the individual as a productive agent. This argument is critical for Marx, because it leads him to conclude that the individual must be described as fundamentally a productive agent, because such a description of the individual can proceed to a further description of him as a conscious subject. It is in the sense brought out in this argument which Marx constructs against Hegel that Marx holds praxis to be the fundamental category of an adequate theory of human nature, and the category in terms of which 'consciousness' is to be understood.

Marx' argument against Hegel's description of the individual as essentially a conscious subject focuses initially on Hegel's correlative description of the nature of the object in relation to the conscious subject. And the point to which Marx calls attention in his criticism of Hegel involves an interpretation of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit from the standpoint of its last chapter. Given Hegel's doctrine of absolute knowledge, what are the implications of that doctrine for a concept of the "object" in general? Marx' response to this question is

¹⁰⁵Cf. Ibid., p. 355.

that, "The main point is that the object of consciousness is nothing more than self-consciousness, or that the object is only objectified self consciousness, self consciousness as object.¹⁰⁶ There are of course implications in this statement concerning the meaning of self consciousness as well as concerning the meaning of the object as such. But it is with the latter that Marx finds his primary interest. And that meaning, for Marx, amounts to this: that an object is an object in virtue of some determination which it receives from the subject to which it is related, and that, for Hegel, the determination which an object receives from its subject is that of the object's "being for" the subject as conscious subject. Or, for Hegel, as Marx reads the texts, the subject which determines the object as object, which 'constitutes' the object as such, is only a conscious subject. Therefore that determination which is constitutive of the object is exclusively a mental, Marx would say 'spiritual' (geistige) determination. And this doctrine has, for Marx, two unfortunate implications. First, it implies that the human subject can only be validly understood to be a conscious, or better, a self-conscious, subject. For Hegel, human nature, man, is equivalent to self consciousness."¹⁰⁷ And second, the object as conceived by Hegel can be

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 322; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 157.

¹⁰⁷ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 323; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 158.

exhaustively described through a description of those conceptual or 'spiritual' determinations through which it is constituted by the subject.¹⁰⁸

Marx justifies this critical interpretation of Hegel's doctrine of the object by a series of statements, which he draws from the last chapter of the Phenomenology of Spirit, and which he takes to accurately describe Hegel's understanding of the relationship between the object of consciousness and consciousness itself. First, "...the object as such presents itself to consciousness as something vanishing."¹⁰⁹ Insofar as an item is considered to be simply an isolated datum with no definite relation to a subject, then such an item cannot be referred to as an 'object' in the proper sense of the term. Or, insofar as an item is described simply in terms of those characteristics which are proper to it as an isolated entity, simply as it occurs "in itself," then there is no way in which one can, from that description alone, determine the nature of that item in terms of its being located in the range of experience of a subject. And thus such an item cannot be referred to as an object, because to be an object means to be located in the range of experience of a subject, in some determinable fashion. This point calls to mind Hegel's description of the supposed object of "sense certainty"

¹⁰⁸Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, op. cit., p. 324; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 159. "Totality of its aspects gives the object implicitly a spiritual nature, and it truly becomes this nature for consciousness through the apprehension of every one of these aspects as belonging to the self or through what was earlier called the spiritual relation to them."

¹⁰⁹Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 323; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 158; Hegel, (Baillie), p. 789; Phänomenologie, p. 549.

towards its "object," namely that its object is an isolated datum containing all its determinations in itself, then it cannot be validly described as an object; the only thing which can be said of the item is that, "...the thing is; and it is merely because it is. It is - this is the essential point for sense knowledge, and that bare fact of being, that simple immediacy, constitutes its truth."¹¹⁰ This description of the object is the ultimate implication of that attitude of consciousness towards its object and towards itself which Hegel in the "Introduction" to the Phenomenology entitles the "natural standpoint."¹¹¹ And the virtue of this attitude is found in its being overcome through the describable development of consciousness itself.

The description of an item as isolated and simply intrinsically determined, then, will not do as a description of the object qua object of consciousness. And it will not do because, as noted above, from such a description alone no determination can be made of the location of the object in the range of experience of the subject. In order to surmount this difficulty, some description must be offered which shows the object to receive an essential determination from the subject, from consciousness. And this is the case because only from such a description of the object can it be shown that the object counts necessarily in the range of experience of the subject. It is for this reason that Hegel, according to Marx' restatement of his position, now asserts that,

¹¹⁰Hegel, (Baillie), p. 150; Phänomenologie, p. 80.

¹¹¹Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 135; Phänomenologie, p. 67.

"...it is the externalization of self consciousness which establishes thinghood."¹¹²

Great care must be taken in the interpretation of this text. Marx is not, I think, accusing Hegel of maintaining that the distinction of consciousness and its object is the result of some original bifurcating act of the ego, a position which Hegel himself in the Phenomenology refers to as "...a onesided, unsound idealism..."¹¹³ Rather, I take Marx at this phase of the Manuscripts to be attributing to Hegel a more subtle doctrine of the relation of consciousness and object, involving several claims. "Thinghood" or objectivity involves an item's being "for another as well as involving simply intrinsic determinations, and that its being for another, for consciousness, is a real and essential determination of the thing, not merely a further determination added on to those which it might already involve. Three features of this statement must be noted. A formal definition of the object is, on the one hand, being offered here. An item is an object in virtue of its being for another. The successful elucidation of this definition would surmount the difficulties consequent upon describing the object as an isolated datum. Further, the object's being for another is an integral aspect of the constitution of the object, not simply in general but in its specificity. That means that, insofar as an object is determined as being for another, this determination interacts with other determinations of the thing to

¹¹²Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 323; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 158. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 789; Phänomenologie, p. 549.

¹¹³Hegel, (Baillie), p. 276; Phänomenologie, p. 278.

constitute the specific character of the object, or as Hegel would say to "work it up into shape."

Marx does not interpret Hegel as asserting that an item might, as it were, enter the range of the experience of a subject as determined in an essentially complete fashion, and then receive the additional determination of being for another, from consciousness, as if this were merely a further determination superimposed upon the already constituted datum. Determinations are not added to the object the way items are added to a list. Rather, as the dialectic of thing and property in the Phenomenology shows, any determination of a given object interacts with its other determinations to constitute the total character of the object.¹¹⁴

Finally, just as being for another is a determination of the object, it is a determination of the object. That item which is determined as for another possesses this feature as integrated with other features pertaining to it, such that this is an essential moment of the specific object as such or in itself; a determination of the object itself; a determination of the object itself, albeit one received. It is necessary to stipulate this in order to avoid the implication that, given Hegel's doctrine, the distinction between subject and object ultimately collapses in favor of a view which would naively understand the object as a mere "externalization" of consciousness, a determination by consciousness of itself as other, to be ultimately and dialectically overcome. This would be a version of that Idealism which Hegel takes to be "onesided" and "unsound." Rather, Hegel attempts to maintain the integrity of the object

through arguing that its being for another is an essential moment of its own character, and Marx, I would suggest, recognizes this. What Marx does recognize as collapsing, and this will be a crucial point in a later stage of his argument, is the distinction of an object's being for another and its being for itself. He recognizes Hegel to assert that, insofar as being for another is a feature which the object itself possesses, it would make no concrete sense to speak of the object as it might be, or to ask what it might be, without this feature. Being for another is simply an integral aspect of the object as such. And the texts of Hegel seem to reveal that Marx is correct in this recognition.¹¹⁵

I offer these comments as an explanation of Marx' claim that, for Hegel, "...it is the externalization of self consciousness that establishes thinghood."¹¹⁶ Two other points immediately follow. First, that in virtue of which an object is an object, its being for another, is a determination which the object receives from a source other than itself taken simply. It is received from the subject to which it is present. And this is to say that it is received from consciousness, for it is

¹¹⁵Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 175; Phänomenologie, pp. 99-100. As early as the end of the dialectic of perception in the Phenomenology, Hegel asserts the dialectic to have shown that any suggestion, "...which separated self existence and existence for another, drops away all together. The object is really in one and the same respect the opposite (Gegenteil) of itself - for itself 'so far as' it is for another, and for another 'so far as' it is for itself. It is for self, reflected into self, one; but all this is asserted along with its opposite with its being for another.

¹¹⁶Cf. footnote number 125.

consciousness that can realize an object as both other than itself and present to itself. If this is so, then it is also the case that for a thing to be an object is equivalent to its being for consciousness, capable of being realized or known by that consciousness to which it is present. There is, then, a fundamental equation between objectivity and intelligibility. And second, the determination of the object is something that consciousness does. It involves the act of consciousness' "externalizing" itself, relating itself to that which is other than itself. Thus consciousness is itself active in its relation to the object, rather than being simply a passive recipient of the content of the object. Consciousness knows the object, and thus knows that which it has actively determined.

These observations concerning the nature of the object and its relation to consciousness are observations made in the abstract. The questions which immediately pose themselves are: What are the details of that determination through which an object is for another as well as is itself? How is it that this determination is integrated with other features so as to preserve the autonomy of the object? And what are the details of that activity through which consciousness effects a determination in the object? Unfortunately, answers to these questions cannot be given here, but the reason for this is that, ultimately, the satisfactory answer to these questions for Hegel is the Phenomenology of Spirit. Hegel would argue that it is only through the dialectical exposition of the experience of consciousness in its several interrelated moments that the full detail of the nature of the object as concretely

experienced, as well as the nature of the experiencing subject, are revealed. And Marx hopes to offer an account of the relation of the object consciousness, realizing that in Hegel's own eyes only the detailed development of the Phenomenology itself offers the ultimate description and justification of that structure. However, Marx feels that if the structural features of Hegel's understanding of objectivity can be isolated and revealed, fruitful critical reflection may ensue.

Moving ahead in his analysis of this structure, Marx asserts that the understanding of consciousness as active in determining the object has implications for both a doctrine of consciousness and a further description of the object as well, "...that this externalization has not only a negative significance but a positive significance as well."¹¹⁷ The positive significance, that which relates to a doctrine of the object, is stated by Marx in a fortuouly complex assertion taken from the Phenomenology:

...for self consciousness, the negative of the object or its self transcendence has a positive significance--self consciousness thus knows this negative of the object--since self consciousness externalizes itself and in this externalization establishes itself as object, or establishes the object as itself on behalf of the indivisible unity of being for itself.¹¹⁸

This text holds crucial importance for Marx' understanding of Hegel's doctrine of the object. It refers, first of all, to the object as "the negative" of self consciousness, as that to which consciousness relates

¹¹⁷Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 323; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 158. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 789; Phänomenologie, p. 549.

¹¹⁸Ibid., (MEGA, pp. 158-159).

through "self transcendence." This is again to assert the real otherness of the object in relation to consciousness itself. But still, to say that an item is an object in virtue of consciousness' "self significance" concerning the nature of the object. For the object is as such constituted through some activity involving the "externalization" of consciousness relates itself to the object as its own other. And this activity is one through which, Marx states, consciousness "...establishes itself as object or establishes the object as itself..."¹¹⁹

How can this be? If it is the case that there is a real distinction between consciousness and its object, how can there nonetheless be an identity between them? The response to this question contains, I think, the key to Marx' critique of Hegel's doctrine of the object. The object is, as has already been said, constituted through some activity whereby consciousness "externalizes" itself. Now this means that while it is distinct from consciousness, the object is determined in such a fashion as to be available to consciousness. It is for another. And what must an object be, in order for it to be in a valid sense of the term "for consciousness"? Marx' response in a word would be, Intelligible. Consciousness is that which apprehends the intelligible. An item must be intelligible in order for it to be an object for consciousness. And an item is determined as intelligible through some activity whereby consciousness "externalizes" itself, relates itself to that which is other, and brings that other into relation to itself.

¹¹⁹Cf. Ibid.

For Marx, this understanding of the nature of the determination of the object implies the assertion that there is an identity between consciousness and its object, an identity that is not numerical but, as it were, specific. Consciousness is rational, and determines its object as intelligible. The object, in turn, is intelligible, that is, is for consciousness. It is in this sense that consciousness "externalizes itself" with regard to its object and establishes the object "as such." Consciousness establishes "...the object as itself..."¹²⁰ by bringing the object in relation to itself, determines it as intelligible, constitutes it as something which consciousness can relate to and apprehend in virtue of its intelligibility. It is in this sense that the object is the "self transcendence"¹²¹ of consciousness; it is that which is constituted by consciousness as intelligible.

To complete an examination of the text at hand, we need to consider two other statements made in it. One is that "...self consciousness thus knows the negativity of the object...";¹²² the other that the object is established "on behalf of the indivisible unity of being-for-self..."¹²³ For in these statements the development of the discussion up to this point culminates. That through which an item is determined as an object

¹²⁰Cf. Ibid.

¹²¹Cf. Ibid., (MEGA, p. 158).

¹²²Cf. Ibid.

¹²³Cf. Ibid., (MEGA, p. 159).

is both a received determination, and one which is an integral and essential feature to the identity of the specific object. Now we have seen that, in Marx' critical exposition of Hegel's doctrine, for an item to be an object is for it to stand in relation to consciousness in virtue of its being intelligible. And it is the integral nature of this determination that Marx wishes to stress at this point.

Intelligibility is not a feature that is added to an item in virtue of its standing in relation to consciousness. An object is not intelligible and other things as well, for example sweet, white, a cube, etc. Rather, an item is an object in virtue of its contents being intelligible contents, capable of being apprehended by consciousness. But this is to say that the object is and only is its intelligible contents, that its identity is exhausted by its intelligible contents, that the complete description of the intelligible contents of a given object would be a complete and exhaustive description of that object itself. Nothing else could or would be said of it.

This is the significance of Marx' observing that the object is established in terms of "the indivisible unity of being-for-self." The term "being-for-self" is used in a way typical of the early chapters of the Phenomenology: a thing is for itself if it is a unity of differences. For an item to be sweet, white, a cube, is for it to contain differences within itself. But qua object, an item is "for itself" in that it contains these differences within itself as a unity, and these contents are intelligible contents. And again, the point of cardinal importance in Marx' eyes is that this unity of different, intelligible contents is

the object; the object is nothing more than this specific, "indivisible unity of being-for-self."¹²⁴ Thus the access that consciousness has to its object is expressed in the statement that "...self-consciousness thus knows this negativity of the object...."¹²⁵ Consciousness recognizes its object as distinct from itself. But simultaneously consciousness has access to the object in that it "knows" its object. The object is that which, given its character, is capable of being known by consciousness. Consciousness relates to the object through knowing the object, and this relation is the only access which consciousness has to the object because, Marx holds, Hegel's position leads him to the conclusion that the object is only a unity of disparate intelligible contents, and thus is only accessible in terms of the knowing activity of consciousness itself.

This analysis I take to reflect the "positive significance" of Hegel's doctrine of objectivity as understood by Marx, the implications of that doctrine as they bear on a fuller description of the nature of the object itself. But Marx also tells us that this doctrine contains a "negative significance," implications that lead to a fuller description of the nature of the conscious subject. And these implications are stated in a text that once again refers to the "externalizing" activity of consciousness: "...there is also present this other moment in the process, that self consciousness has transcended and reabsorbed into itself this externalization, this objectivity, and is thus at one with

¹²⁴Cf. Ibid.

¹²⁵Cf. Ibid., (MEGA, p. 158).

itself in its other being as such."¹²⁶

Of prime importance in this statement is the implication that, given the role of consciousness in relation to its object, then consciousness is capable of grasping itself as self consciousness. Since the object is determined as such through an initial activity of consciousness, then consciousness, in knowing its object, knows both that which is other than itself and that for which it is responsible. This is the sense in which consciousness "reabsorbes" into itself its own activity of "externalization": consciousness knows that which is both its other and that which is constituted through its own activity. Put otherwise, in knowing its object consciousness enjoys a relation both to the object and to itself. Consciousness relates to itself in virtue of that which it knows as other being the result of its own determining activity. Consciousness relates to its own activity in knowing this result. Thus it is, "...one with itself in its other being as such."¹²⁷ Or, given the terms of the above relation, consciousness can validly be described as self consciousness, as well as consciousness taken simply. The dialectic of the general structure of consciousness in relation to its object reveals that consciousness relates to its object and to itself within this structure.

A point of methodological importance underlies this phase of Marx' analysis, and it is one which he takes to have accurately borrowed from Hegel. It is that, on the one hand, a description of subjectivity can

¹²⁶Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, pp. 323-324; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 159. Cf. Hegel, (Baillie), pp. 789-790; Phänomenologie, p. 549.

¹²⁷Ibid.

be obtained from an analysis of the structure of the relation of subject to object, and that, on the other hand, only those statements which can be obtained from this analysis are ones which can validly be taken to describe the nature of the subject. To speak of the subject at all is to speak of that which occurs in definite relations, in relations to objects. The subjects occurrence is its occurrence as one term in this relation. Thus it is an analysis of this relation which, in the first place, must be undertaken in order to understand what the subject is as one term in this relation.

Furthermore the occurrence of the subject is not simply found in, but also exhausted in, being a term in this relation. Thus to describe what the subject is in this relation is to describe it exhaustively. Or, a full analysis of the structure of the relation of subject to object provides the only theoretical context from which statements descriptive of the nature of subjectivity itself can be validly drawn. Hegel is able, for example, to analyze this structure in such a fashion as to describe subjectivity as involving self consciousness, and this because self consciousness is a feature of the subject contained within, and therefore revealed by an analysis of, the relationship of consciousness to its object. An analysis of the nature of the object, then, allows him to make certain assertions concerning the nature of the object as well. But only such assertions as are grounded in an analysis of this sort will be valid and acceptable.

This point is stressed by Marx through two subsequent statements which all but conclude his interpretive exposition of Hegel's doctrine of

the object. First, the structure of the relation of consciousness as subject to its object is such that this structure, "...is the movement of consciousness, and consciousness is therefore the totality of its phases."¹²⁸ The nature of consciousness is wholly contained in the structure of its relation to the object as described above, and is wholly described in the doctrine which is a description of that structure. Consciousness is that which "externalizes" itself, actively relates to that which is other than itself, determines that other as an object, knows this object, and in knowing the object relates to itself as well, is self consciousness. Nothing more need or may be said of consciousness, or of the subject, for nothing more is derivable from the above analysis. Correspondingly, the above analysis must be taken as offering an exhaustive description of the nature of the object as well: "...consciousness must similarly have related itself to the object in all of its aspects and have grasped the object in terms of each of them."¹²⁹ Just as the subject is that which occurs only in its relation to the object, the object is that which occurs only in its relation to the subject. Thus all "aspects" of the object, so Marx reads Hegel, are discoverable in terms of the above analysis. The object is in general that which is other than consciousness and is determined as being for its

¹²⁸ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844, in Easton and Guddat, p. 324; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 159. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 790, Phänomenologie, pp. 549-550.

¹²⁹ Cf. Marx, Ibid. Hegel, (Baillie), p. 790, Phänomenologie, p. 550.

other, for consciousness, as well as that which holds this determination within itself as an integral element of its own unity.

In fine, Marx holds that this description of the nature of the object reveals a description of the subject as well as a description that is for Hegel both adequate and complete. It is adequate in that it contains all that is necessary for a fundamental understanding of the nature of the object, and of the subject in relation to it. It is complete insofar as it is an analysis of the source and the only source of information from which a doctrine of the object and a description of the subject in relation to the object can be derived. Thus this relation, Marx asserts both in reference to Hegel and through Hegel's terminology, is significant both "...for self consciousness itself..." and "...for us..."¹³⁰ For self consciousness, the structure of the relation described above is the structure of its experience of its object and itself. For us, for the philosophical analyst, this structure is that and that alone which must be described in order that an adequate understanding of the object, and consequently of the subject also, might be developed.

Adequate, that is to say, for Hegel. But is this theory actually complete and adequate description of the nature of the object? Marx' response to this is negative, but it is a response based not on insights concerning the consistency of the position which he outlines and attributes to Hegel. Marx' objection is rather that, given the internal consistency of the above position, it becomes impossible for Hegel to

¹³⁰Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 323; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd.3, p. 158; Hegel, (Baillie), p. 790; Phänomenologie, p. 549.

speak of the object as object of agency, or of the subject as agent. In Marx' eyes, Hegel's position is incapable of including a crucial and experienced phenomenon, that of agency. On this ground it is an inadequate view of man.

The details of Marx' objection must be outlined here, and this can be done briefly given the exposition already seen. First, Marx takes the above description of the object in general to be one which Hegel views as essentially complete in all its phases. And in particular he emphasizes that for an item to be an object is for it to be for another, for consciousness. An item is determined as an object by consciousness, consciousness brings items as objects into some relation with itself, and that relation at its basis involves the thing's being intelligible. An item is an object if it stands in some relation to consciousness whereby it can be known.

But this means that it would be superfluous for Hegel to go on to assert that the object is also something which receives determinations from the subject as an agent. And more than superfluous; to assert this would be for Hegel to violate the consistency of his own position. To be sure, Hegel does speak of consciousness as "acting" on its object in an extended sense of that term. But this is activity only on a cognitive level, and distinct from "real" activity, for which Marx' model is physical action which would yield some actual and productive transformation of an environment. Hegel is unable to speak of agency in this latter sense in relation to the object, because he has already argued that for a thing to be an object is for it to be an intelligible

item for consciousness. No ingredient of "real" agency is necessary in order for a thing to be so determined. And if the details of Hegel's description of the object as an intelligible item for consciousness form an essential and complete description of the object, then he would be inconsistent to go on to assert that the object is this and also that which the subject can further determine through actual and transformative agency. There is thus no way in which Hegel can speak of the object as object of agency at all.

This phase of Marx' objection alone seems to him damning enough. But he goes on in the Manuscripts to develop a further implication of Hegel's position which he takes to be even more critical. Because Hegel is on his own terms unable to speak of the object as object of agency, he is also unable to describe the subject or self as agent.

This implication is drawn by Marx from considerations already seen. The subject is nothing more (or less) than that for which objects occur. A description of what the subject is as it stands in relation to objects that are "for it" will be an exhaustive description of the subject. Now for the Hegel of Marx' exposition, three descriptive assertions can be made concerning the nature of the subject. First, since to be an object is to be an intelligible item for a subject, the subject by consciousness itself, the subject must be capable of activity on the level of cognition. And third, consciousness is self consciousness; it knows its object as the result of its own activity. But these statements, Marx holds, exhaust the assertions which Hegel can validly make towards a description of the nature of the subject. And they in no way either

mention or necessarily imply that the subject is an agent in what Marx would take to be an actual sense of the term: an individual who acts on a real and external environment in such a way as to transform it and produce within it. Hegel is unable to describe the subject as agent, and is thus unable to include in his theory of subjectivity a crucial and experienced feature of selfhood.

Marx' critique of Hegel's doctrine of objectivity, then, is twofold. First, Hegel is capable of describing the object only as the intelligible object for consciousness.¹³¹ Second, and in view of this, it becomes further impossible for Hegel to describe the subject as anything other than active self consciousness: "...the self is only man conceived abstractly...For Hegel, human nature, man, is equivalent to self consciousness."¹³²

Hegel, then, whom Marx praises as the only one of his predecessors to have grasped "...the nature of work..."¹³³ and to have comprehended "...objective man, authentic because of his own work,"¹³⁴ is ultimately condemned by Marx as unable to account for agency in a concrete sense, as being able only to describe action as the "labor of the concept." In

¹³¹Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 324; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 159.

¹³²Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, pp. 322, and 323; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 158.

¹³³Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 321; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 156.

¹³⁴Ibid.

Marx' terms, "The only labor Hegel recognizes is abstract, mental labor."¹³⁵

And that because his underpinning doctrine of the object in relation to consciousness allows him only to describe the subject as active self consciousness.

In view of these difficulties, a new doctrine must be developed, a "...consistent naturalism or humanism..." one "...distinct from Idealism and materialism as well, and at the same time unifying the truth of both."¹³⁶ Such a doctrine would describe objects as objects of the subject's "...drives..." which "...exist outside of him as independent..." as "...objects of his need, essential and indispensable to the exercise and confirmation of his essential capacities."¹³⁷ It would at the same time describe the subject as concrete agent, asserting that, "Self consciousness is rather a quality of human nature..." and not that, "...human nature is a quality of self consciousness."¹³⁸

Three general comments may now be made concerning the above critical argument which Marx levels against Hegel. First, Marx' argument is directed specifically at Hegel's description of the conscious, or better the self conscious subject, and one conclusion he derives from this

¹³⁵ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 322; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 257. "Die Arbeit weoche Hegel allein kennt und anerkennt, ist die abstrakt geistige."

¹³⁶ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 325; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 160.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 323; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 158.

argument is that given this description, Hegel is unable to validly proceed to a description of the individual subject as a real agent. Thus Lobkowitz is correct in his claim that, at issue between Marx and Hegel is, in Marx' eyes, the question of the relationship of consciousness and praxis as categories within a theory of human nature.¹³⁹

Second, the criticism which Marx levels against Hegel here may not be taken as "Feuerbachian" in content. Marx in the Paris Manuscripts does credit Feuerbach with leveling three accurate criticisms against Hegel. Feuerbach had corrected Hegel in holding that the individual must be described through the totality of his determinations rather than simply those which pertain to him as a self conscious subject.¹⁴⁰ He had defended this statement by refuting Hegel's employment of the dialectical method in relation to sense consciousness.¹⁴¹ And Feuerbach had insisted that, of those concrete determinations of the individual which must be descriptively and argumentatively located in a theory of human nature, one essential such determination is the sociality of the individual.¹⁴² Now the first of these seems identical with that criticism of Hegel made in the argument we have just considered. But this is not in fact the case. For Feuerbach's criticism is that Hegel is unable to comprehend

¹³⁹Cf. Lobkowitz, Theory and Practice, p. 340.

¹⁴⁰Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 316; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 152.

¹⁴¹Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 317; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 152.

¹⁴²Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 316; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 152.

the individual as the subject of sense consciousness, in relation to the object of perception as completely determined.¹⁴³ And Marx himself, as shown in chapter two, goes on to criticize Feuerbach as capable of describing "...the object, actuality, sensuousness...conceived only in the form of the object or perception (Anschauung), but not as sensuous human activity, practice (Praxis), not subjectively."¹⁴⁴

Marx, it seems, might go on to construct an argument against Feuerbach's position strongly analogous to the argument outlined above against Hegel, concluding that Feuerbach is capable of describing the object only as object of perception and imagination, and thus is also incapable of validly describing the individual as an agent or subject of praxis. McLellan is incorrect in holding that, in the Paris Manuscripts, Feuerbach's concept of the relation of the individual subject to its object is "...taken over and elaborated by Marx, being at the root of his conception of the relationship of man and nature."¹⁴⁵ Marx does credit Feuerbach for an improvement on Hegel's concept of the object in his realization that the object needs to be described as sensuous. But ultimately Feuerbach is unable, given his theoretical foundation, to adequately describe this object as the object of praxis, or the individual as a concrete agent. This is of course precisely the question at issue

¹⁴³Feuerbach, Principles of the Philosophy of the Future, trans. Vogel, (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1966), p. 51; Feuerbach, Sämtliche Werke, ed. Bolin and Jodl, (Stuttgart: Fr. Frommans Verlag, 1904), vol. 2, p. 296.

¹⁴⁴Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," in Easton and Guddat, p. 400; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 533.

¹⁴⁵McLellan, The Young Hegelians and Karl Marx, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969), p. 108.

in Marx' criticism of Hegel, and thus this criticism cannot be taken as identical with Feuerbach's, or as Feuerbachian in content.

The third general comment to be made is that, it is in virtue of this argument that Marx finds justification for holding that praxis must be taken as the fundamental category in a theory of human nature, or that man must be described as fundamentally a productive agent. Evidence for this is offered in the text. Immediately after his formulation of the argument outlined above, and after having noted that Hegel is capable of comprehending the object only as intelligible object and the subject as self conscious subject,¹⁴⁶ Marx goes on to assert that, "An objective being acts objectively, and would not act objectively if objectivity did not lie in its essential nature. It creates and establishes only objects, because it is fundamentally part of nature."¹⁴⁷ This is to say that the individual must be conceived both as one who enjoys concrete relations to "nature" if it is to be taken as actual, or as an "objective being," and that these relations must be taken as ones in which the individual is understood to "act objectively," i.e., in which his action is taken as both directed at his external environment and governed by his needs.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 324; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 159.

¹⁴⁷ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 325; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 160.

¹⁴⁸ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 325; MEGA, Abt. 2, Bd. 3, p. 161.

Following Marx' argument against Hegel's position immediately as it does, this assertion shows that, in Marx' eyes, his argument against Hegel is also his justification for the position that productive action or praxis is the fundamental category through which human nature is to be comprehended. In Marxian terms this justification may be stated as follows.

A position which defines the individual as essentially a conscious subject, as one whose essential relations to his own experience are conscious relations, is unable also to account for the individual as a productive agent. However a position which describes the individual as fundamentally a subject of praxis or a productive agent can, and indeed must, proceed to a description of the individual as a conscious subject. It can be shown, as seen in chapter one, that consciousness is itself a feature of the structure of praxis¹⁴⁹ in fact a necessary feature of it. Now inasmuch as a theory of man which takes the individual as fundamentally an agent can also and indeed must also describe the individual as a conscious subject, and since a theory of man which takes the individual as essentially a conscious subject cannot also describe the individual as a productive agent, then the former theory is more adequate than and preferable to the latter. Furthermore, the latter theory is able to adequately describe the individual's social relations, and the effects of society of the individual, phenomena which an adequate theory of man must describe and explain. Thus Marx' justification for a theory of man which asserts the fundamentality of

¹⁴⁹Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, pp. 294-295; MECA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 88.

praxis.

It may be noted here that this criticism which Marx levels against Hegel is a theoretical, philosophical criticism. Marcuse, at one point in Reason and Revolution, suggests that Marx' critique of Hegel is basically a social critique, based on the notion that Hegel's doctrine of the relation of the individual to society is unable to account for the alienation and suffering of the proletariat.¹⁵⁰ This, I suggest, is an error. Marx may indeed be able to make this criticism,¹⁵¹ but the argument outlined above is one which criticizes Hegel not on the bases of the relevance of his position to social experience, but on the theoretical adequacy of that position.

I have argued that it is in virtue of the argument discussed above that Marx feels justified in holding that the category of praxis is the most fundamental concept in an adequate theory of man. I have also claimed that this argument represents Marx' most basic criticism of Hegel. I shall now support this claim by considering three further criticisms of Hegel offered by Marx in the Manuscripts of 1844, and by showing that each of these criticisms depends on the above argument.

Two of these criticisms are noted by Calvez. Calvez observes first that Marx criticizes Hegel for the latter's method of analyzing the experience of consciousness, and his use of "sublation," "Aufheben,"

¹⁵⁰Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960), p. 261.

¹⁵¹If, e.g., he were to respond to Hegel's formulation of the notion of "division of labor."

within that method. Hegel can analyze any given phase of conscious experience only in terms of that phase's pointing beyond itself to some succeeding phase. This is to say, however, that the function of consciousness is to point beyond itself to some more sophisticated form of consciousness, and that consciousness does not exercise a significant function of itself within the material experience of the individual.¹⁵²

Marx does make such a criticism of Hegel. In the Paris Manuscripts, he asserts that, for Hegel, "Since abstract consciousness,--the form in which the object is conceived--is in itself only a moment of distinction in self consciousness, the result of the movement is the identity of self consciousness with consciousness (abstract knowledge) or the movement of abstract thought no longer directed outward but proceeding only within itself. That is to say, the dialectic of pure thought is the result."¹⁵³ This means that for Hegel, specific phases of conscious experience make sense only in terms of their succeeding phases, or that his position results in a "dialectic of pure thought..." But why might this result be objectionable?

It is objectionable for Marx because, first, it fails to account for specific phases of conscious experience as enjoying a function within the experience of the individual of themselves, and second, because that position which results in describing conscious experience as a "dialectic of pure thought" is one which describes the individual as essentially a

¹⁵²Cf. Calvez, p. 344.

¹⁵³Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 321; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 156.

self conscious subject, and thus is unable adequately to proceed to a description of the individual as a productive agent. But then both forms of this criticism are based on the argument outlined above. For, first it is because of that argument that Marx is able to insist that the individual both needs to be described as a subject and praxis, and needs to be described fundamentally as such. And second, as shown in chapter one, it is in virtue of Marx' doctrine of the fundamentality of praxis that he is able to assert that conscious experience plays an essential role in relation to specific "material" experiences of the individual, i.e., specific experiences of the individual as an agent, rather than simply a role in relation to succeeding phases of conscious life itself.

Calvez also notes that Marx criticizes Hegel for being able to analyze specific phases of conscious experience only in terms of their relation to abstract knowledge.¹⁵⁴ The texts of Marx again illustrate that this is a criticism which he levels against Hegel. "Since Hegel's Encyclopedia begins with logic, with pure speculative thought, and ends with abstract knowledge--with self-consciousness, self-comprehending or abstract act, that is, superhuman, abstract mind [Geist]--it is altogether nothing but the expanded essence of philosophical mind, its self-objectification."¹⁵⁵ Marx criticizes Hegel for being able to make sense of specific phases of conscious experience only through showing their necessary relation to "abstract knowledge," to a phase of conscious

¹⁵⁴ Calvez, p. 345.

¹⁵⁵ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 318-319; MEGA, pp. 153-154.

experience which comprehends all previous phases of consciousness, and integrates them within itself.

But again, why might this be objectionable? It is objectionable only if one can show that the primary function of conscious experience is not to yield some all-comprehending form of consciousness, but to comprehend, or to render possible, some other dimension of the experience of the individual subject of consciousness. For Marx, the demonstration of this depends on the position that praxis is more fundamental than consciousness in the experience of the individual, because it is only given this that he is able to go on to argue that the function of consciousness is to enable the individual to comprehend his own productive activity and to render him a possible subject of praxis. Marx does argue that consciousness plays this role, as shown in chapter one. But the position on which this argument depends, that man is fundamentally a subject of praxis, emerges clearly in the argument against Hegel sketched above.

Finally, Marx in the Paris Manuscripts criticizes Hegel for being unable to adequately comprehend the genesis of human history. He asserts that Hegel, "...found only the abstract, logical, speculative expression of the movement of history, not the actual history of man as a given subject..."¹⁵⁶ Now to understand this criticism, we must remember that for Marx, human history is essentially the history of man as a productive agent.¹⁵⁷ Why is Hegel unable to comprehend history in this fashion?

¹⁵⁶Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat," p. 317; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 152-153.

¹⁵⁷Cf. Marx and Engels, The German Ideology, trans. Pascal, p. 7; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 10.

In Marx's eyes, he is unable to do so essentially because he is unable adequately to comprehend man as a productive individual. Hegel is only capable of comprehending man as a conscious subject, and for this reason he is only capable of comprehending the historical process in its "...abstract, logical speculative expression..." Here again Marx' criticism is derived from his justification of the fundamental role of praxis.

Since the other criticisms Marx makes against Hegel's description of the individual as essentially a conscious subject are justified by the assumption that praxis is the fundamental category in an adequate theory of man, it follows that Marx' argument in support of this claim constitutes his most basic complaint against Hegel.

But what are the implications of this for Marx' theory of man? These implications are twofold. First, in virtue of this argument Marx feels driven by theoretical necessity to describe the individual as fundamentally a productive agent. But second, this for Marx involves the taking of those concepts which Hegel himself employs to describe human agency, and locating them at the basis of his own theory of human nature. At the end of chapter one I raised two questions: How does Marx justify a theory of human nature which involves praxis as its fundamental category? And: What are the relations of Marx' theory of man to the doctrines of Hegel and Feuerbach? Both of these questions have now been answered. Marx justifies praxis as the fundamental category in his theory of human nature through his argument against Hegel's description of the conscious subject in relation to its object. While Marx endorses

in a general fashion certain Feuerbachian criticisms of Hegel, his own theory of man leads to a rejection of Feuerbachian anthropology. Marx' own anthropology involves concepts which are, on the questions of praxis and society, in the main imported from Hegel's texts. Thus Marx' theory of man, as revealed in the Paris Manuscripts and allied texts, is in no sense a "Feuerbachian humanism." Rather, Marx' theory of man is defined, positively and negatively, in relation to Hegel.

Chapter Five

The Role of Marx' Anthropology

In the Introduction, as well as in the second chapter, I have mentioned an hypothesis concerning the function of Marx' theory of man within his larger theoretical framework. In the Introduction, I described Marx' theory of man as 'normative', that is, as one which provides Marx with principles or norms enabling him to comment on other topics such as alienation and the economic details of productive activity. In the second chapter, I noted that from Marx' theory of man principles follow through which the possibility of the genesis of history itself can be comprehended.¹ In this final chapter I shall elaborate these statements and give some indications of how Marx' theory of man functions as a 'normative' theory, one from which principles or norms follow which enable him to comprehend the possibility of human history, as well as to describe and evaluate specific human historical situations, such as the alienation of the worker in capitalist society, and the economic condition of the wage laborer.²

¹cf. Shlomo Avineri, The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx, (Cambridge: The University Press, 1968), p. 85.

²My use of 'normative' here is an extended, but I do not think illegitimate use of that term. I understand a norm to be a principle through which phenomena not directly referred to by the principle itself may nonetheless be adequately comprehended, as well as a principle through which such phenomena may be evaluated. Marx' theory of man functions for him as 'normative' in both of these senses, that is, it is for his broader theory a principle in both of these senses.

I. The Comprehension of History

Marx' understanding of history seems to include at least three assertions, whose formulations occur in various texts. The first is the assertion that history originates from human productive activity:

"...life involves before everything else eating and drinking, a habitation clothing, and many other things. The first historical act is thus the production of the means to satisfy these needs, the production of material life itself...The second fundamental point is that as soon as a need is satisfied, (which implies the action of satisfying; and the acquisition of an instrument), new needs are made, and this production of new needs is the first historical act."³ Second, history is to be taken as the history of human self actualization: "...the entire so called world history is only the creation of man through human labor, and the development of nature for man..."⁴ And finally, history is to be understood as a process whose subject is society,⁵ society itself providing the context in which the historical process can occur, and in terms of which the historical process can be explained. Marx' most concise formulation of the content

³ Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, pp. 16-17; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd. 5, pp. 17-18. The seeming contradiction in these statements will be subsequently discussed and resolved.

⁴ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," Easton and Guddat, p. 314; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd. 3, p. 125.

⁵ Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 18; MEGA, Abt.1, Bd. 5, p. 19. That society is the subject of the historical process is, as I see it, an implication of the text at this point.

of this assertion is found in his statement of the doctrine of 'historical materialism' in the famous "Preface" to the 1859 Critique of Political Economy.

In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite social relations, which are independent of their will, namely relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure, and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness...At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production... From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution. The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole immense superstructure.⁶

Here Marx notes that society is the subject of the historical process, and describes those interacting features within society in terms of which history occurs.

How are these three statements related? I suggest that the first statement is, in part, a response to the question, how is human history as a process possible? This is a necessary question for a theory of history. The data which it tries to explain is the data of a process, and therefore we must ask the question, how is one to make sense of there being such a process at all? Moreover Marx' statements seem to insist

⁶Marx, A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, trans. S. W. Ryazanskaya, ed. Maurice Dobb, (New York: International Publishers, 1970), pp. 20-21; Marx Engels, Werke, (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1961-1971), vol. 13, pp. 8-9. This edition of the works of Marx will hereafter be noted as MEW.

that this question be specified so as to ask, how can one make sense out of human history as a process, and as a specifically human process?⁷ If history is to be explained, it must be explained as a process which is specifically human, in order that history be distinguished from and described in distinction from other processes of development, for example processes implicit in nature.⁸

The first of the assertions listed above is a response to this question. Marx' doctrine of praxis supplies him with an account of the possibility of man's being involved in a process which is at once specifically human and distinctly historical. There are three reasons for this. First, praxis itself is a constant process in which man

⁷Cf. R. G. Collingwood, The Idea of History, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), pp. 210-217. Marx is not alone in this assumption. Collingwood, in the text cited, explicitly argues that a theory of history, functioning as the basis of an historiography, must be one which adequately distinguishes human historical affairs from the mere process of natural events. For a gloss on Collingwood's arguments see also Fackenheim, Metaphysics and Historicity, (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1969), pp. 17-19.

⁸But cf. Engels, "Introduction" to The Dialectics of Nature, in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, (New York: International Publishers, 1968), pp. 342-357; MEW, vol. 20, pp. 311-327, in which Engels seems to collapse this distinction. Marx, as I hope subsequent comments will show, would argue that this distinction must be maintained if human history is to be adequately described.

engages.⁹ It involves his productive activity on nature, and his necessary transformation of nature towards the satisfaction of needs.

But second, and more significantly, praxis is also that process in virtue of which man is specifically distinguished. On the one hand, it is in virtue of the structure of human praxis that man overcomes the 'species specificity',¹⁰ which characterizes the relation of non-human forms of life to their environment, and is able, in Marx' language, to produce "universally."¹¹ Human productive activity transforms the environment so that the environment can elicit new needs within the experience of the agent. Such activity also 'actualizes' the agent so that he can be the subject of new needs. Consequently he can also be an agent who may act in more complex and diverse fashions on the environment, rather than in a

⁹Cf. Engels, The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State, "Preface to the First Edition, 1844," in Marx-Engels, Selected Works (New York: International Publishers, 1968), p. 455; MEW, vol. 21, pp. 27-28. "According to the materialist conception, the determining factor in history is, in the last resort, the production and reproduction of immediate life. But this itself is of a twofold character. On the one hand, the production of the means of subsistence, of food, clothing and shelter, and the tools requisite therefore; on the other hand, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species." Petrovic's gloss on this text, in Petrovic, Marx in the Mid-Twentieth Century, (New York: Anchor Books, 1967), pp. 97-99, and pp. 112-113, is that, for Marx and Engels, praxis is that process in which man both universally engages, and which distinguishes man specifically.

¹⁰Cf. Berger and Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality, (New York: Anchor Books, 1967), p. 47.

¹¹Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 294; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 88.

way fixed by given biological limitations.¹² Marx insists that praxis, as characterized by 'universality' is in this fashion, specifically distinguishes the human agent.¹³ On the other hand, praxis also structurally requires the occurrence of consciousness as a feature or 'moment' of itself. Marx himself asserts this in the Paris Manuscripts,¹⁴ and in chapter one I suggest an argument towards this assertion, concluding that only if consciousness is an essential feature of praxis can the development of needs in relation to productive activity be accounted for. In order for developed needs to be experienced by the agent as functional bases for his activity, he must be capable of relating both to this environment and to himself in a way which transcends the instinctual¹⁵ or species specific relation of self to environment enjoyed by the animal. And this relation can only be a conscious relation. But the development of needs itself is essential to the structure of human praxis. Therefore, the occurrence of consciousness is an essential feature of human praxis.

Praxis, then, is a process in which man necessarily engages, and one through which he is specifically differentiated. But, it is also a

¹²Cf. Berger and Luckmann, op. cit., pp. 47-48, for further explicitation of this concept.

¹³Cf. Marx, op. cit., loc. cit.

¹⁴Cf. Marx, Ibid. "Conscious life activity (bewusste Lebenstätigkeit) distinguishes man immediately from the life activity of the animal."

¹⁵Cf. Macmurray, Persons in Relation, (London: Farber and Farber Ltd., 1961), p. 48, in which "instinct" is defined in a way consistent with this argument, as "...a specific adaptation to environment which does not require to be learned."

a process which is itself distinctly historical. By this I mean that praxis is a process which is not merely repetative or cyclic. No process of change which is merely repetative or cyclic deserves to be entitled historical.¹⁶ Rather, an historical process must be one of the development of some subject through differentiated and internally distinguishable phases. And human praxis itself is such a process, in virtue of its involving the development and proliferation of needs. This is the point to Marx' assertion, cited above, that the "...production of new needs is the first historical act."¹⁷ Productive activity is rooted in needs,¹⁸ and needs are those experienced occurrences in virtue of which productive activity is undertaken. The details of specific instances of praxis are selected in relation to the content of those needs at whose satisfaction they aim. But Marx also argues that human praxis structurally involves both activity towards the satisfaction of needs, and the development out of that activity of new needs which may function as bases for new forms of activity. This means that human praxis itself is not a mere cyclic or repetative process, not simply consistent repetition

¹⁶Cf. Engels, "Introduction" to The Dialectics of Nature, loc. cit., pp. 345-346; MEW, vol. 20, pp. 311-312. Even Engels, in spite of the ambiguities of this text, argues that history cannot be comprehended as a mere cyclic process of change, and must be comprehended as a process involving the development of some subject, through distinguishable phases.

¹⁷Cf. Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 17; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 18.

¹⁸Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844" in Easton and Guddat, p. 325, MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 160.

of instances of behavior identical in detail. Rather, praxis involves a development through successive and inter-distinguishable phases, as those needs which function as the bases of productive activity themselves develop and undergo differentiation. And these comments show too why Marx, in the texts from The German Ideology cited above, refers to both "...the production of material life..." and the "production of new needs..." as "...the first historical act..."¹⁹ It is the same productive act, through which subsistence needs are handled by the human agent, and from which new needs develop for that agent, and thus it is this single act which is initially historical.

These comments suffice to show that it is in virtue of his doctrine of praxis that Marx can assert, in broad terms, that man is historical. For it is in virtue of his doctrine of praxis, that Marx can assert that man engages in a process which is both specifically human and distinctly historical. Parenthetically, we should note that the doctrine of praxis also provides Marx with a broad orientation for the doing of history, to wit that orientation which comprehends human history as the history of human productive activity, upon which Marx insists in The German Ideology.

One may note also that it is through his doctrine of praxis as located in his theory of man that Marx is able to assert, as he does in the Paris Manuscripts,²⁰ that history is the history of human self actualization. For self actualization is also an intrinsic feature of the exercise of human productive activity. The productive agent

¹⁹Cf. Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, pp. 16-17; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, pp. 17-18.

²⁰Cf. footnote four.

'actualizes' himself, as shown in chapter one, both through realizing himself as an agent who has engaged in and brought to term some specific instance of activity, through the objectification of his labor in a product, and through the development of those needs which arise out of his activity itself, and which enable him to be an agent in a fuller and more diversified sense. That process in virtue of which Marx can say that man is historical is the same process which allows him to assert a doctrine of human self actualization.

It is also the doctrine of praxis, one may argue, which allows Marx to hold that history is necessarily social history, or that the subject of the historical process is society. Marx asserts this in a passage in the "Preface" to the 1859 Critique of Political Economy cited above. The basis of that assertion is, I think, contained in the analysis I made in chapter one concerning the relation of praxis and society, in Marx' theory of man. (See pp.37ff). That theory involved, first, the claim that social relationships are to be understood as possible in virtue of praxis. Productive activity results in a product which is both appropriable towards the satisfaction of a need, and, because objectification is a feature of praxis, embodies the details of the agent's activity in external form.²¹ But insofar as relevantly similar needs are shared by individuals, then some individual other than the producer is capable of appropriating the product towards the satisfaction of some need of his own. Since the product objectifies the details of the activity of its producer, then

²¹Cf. Marx, "Excerpt-Notes of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, op. cit., p. 281; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 546.

that other, in appropriating the product, relates himself not only to the product but also to its producer.²² Finally, it is the individual's product which introduces into his experience (or environment) the possibility of his being a subject of interaction. For interaction requires that some feature of the individual be externalized, in order that it be acted upon, and it is the product which renders such externalization actual. Thus social relationships are to be understood as most basically productive relationships, and praxis in turn is to be understood as that which renders social relationships possible.

The first point to be noticed here is that, for Marx, it is the same process through which man can be described as historical, and through which man can be described as in principle social, a possible subject of social relationships or member of society. This offers an initial indication that, for Marx, the historical process is also a social process. In addition, one finds a second assertion concerning the relationship of praxis and society in Marx' theory of man, in the statement that the actual details of the productive activity of the individual are conditioned by the individual's actual social relationships. The general argument already seen for this statement begins from the notion that society is to be understood most basically as a system of productive activities in relation. As such a system, society is itself a "productive

²²Marx, "Excerpt-Notes of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 281; MEGA Abt., 1, Bd. 3, pp. 546-547.

force" (Produktiv-Kraft)²³ in two senses. Society as the system of interrelated productive activities, offers those activities as options to its members. Society also offers its members²⁴ "material" for productive activity. By "materials" Marx means things such as the scientific or technical categories, language, and technical instruments through which productive activity is carried out.²⁵ It is as a "productive force" which offers options for productive activity to its members as well as the "materials" which specify the details of that activity, that society conditions and systematizes the details of praxis occurring within it.

Praxis, then, is that which proceeds in virtue of which man is historical, in virtue of which he is social, and one whose concrete realization is conditioned by actual society. It is this last point, the expression given it by Marx is the Grundrisse, which is critical for my present argument.

In the "General Introduction" to the Grundrisse, Marx notes that society conditions and controls the productive options available to its members, in that society involves, "...first, a distribution of the means of production, and secondly, which is another determination of the same relationship, it is a distribution of the members of society among various kinds of production (the subjection of individuals to certain relationships

²³Marx-Engels, The German Ideology, Pascal, p. 18, MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 5, p. 19.

²⁴Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 306; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 116.

²⁵Cf. Ibid.

of production)."²⁶ Four points concerning this assertion are worth noting. First this assertion reiterates the idea that society offers productive options to its members, in stating that society "distributes" "means of production..." Second, as an obvious corollary of the first, this "distribution" conditions the productive options available to the individual members of society. But third, the content of these options must materially depend on the concrete "means of production" actually available within a given social context. And fourth, the realized productive options available to individuals as members of society are also their most fundamental social relationships, as "relationships of production." This means that society, which is made possible through praxis, is, at the same time, made up of definite relations of its members to those productive possibilities presented to them as available options by society itself.

I suggest that Marx' assertion that society conditions the details of productive activity, may in part be rewritten to read, society is comprised at its basis of relations of production. I say in part, because in this rewriting the question of society as providing "materials" for productive activity is, for the moment, set aside. But given this qualification, it can be seen that the statement "society is comprised at its basis of relations of production" is a partial development of the second proposition noted in that portion of my outline of Marx' theory of

²⁶Marx, The Grundrisse, trans. D. McLellan, (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 30; Marx, Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen-Ökonomie, (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1953), p. 17.

man in which the relationship of praxis and society is described. To state that society at its basis involves, or that social relationships are to be comprehended most basically as relations of production, is to state, as Marx does in the Grundrisse, that society involves a distribution of the members of society among the various kinds of production.²⁷ But this in turn is to state that society conditions and controls the productive possibilities available to its members.

From this point, I shall argue that Marx' assertion in the "Preface" to the 1859 Critique of Political Economy to the effect that society is the history is both based on and finds its justification in Marx' theory of man. I take this to be the case for two reasons. First, Marx' description of the "economic structure of society"²⁸ involves a re-statement and partial development of the two propositions concerning the relation of society and praxis found in his theory of man which I have considered here. Marx describes this economic structure as composed of "the material productive forces of society" in interaction with "the existing relations of production" operative within the social system.²⁹ By "material forces of production" I take Marx to mean the actual productive activities undertaken in society, along with the techniques and technical instruments through which those activities are undertaken.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Marx, Critique of Political Economy, ed. Dobb, p. 20; MEW, vol. 13, p. 8.

²⁹ Marx, Critique of Political Economy, ed. Dobb, p. 21; MEW, vol. 13 pp. 8-9.

Marx understands the basic "structure" of society as composed of these because he has previously argued that social relationships are in general rendered possible through praxis. Thus he must also comprehend actual society as fundamentally involving those concrete productive activities through which society itself is realized. And of course concrete productive activity cannot be considered in abstraction from the techniques and instruments through which production is undertaken; these latter are integral features of the act of production. Marx' comment concerning society as involving productive relations is also a restatement, and here a development, of a proposition contained within his theory of man. Society must involve at its basis both forces of and relations of production, because society is both rendered possible by and also conditions the concrete productive activities undertaken by its members. Marx' comment on "relations of production" is a comment on a manner in which society exercises this latter role.

Second, in the Preface of the Critique of Political Economy Marx goes on to describe how it is the case that society is the subject of the historical process.) Society undergoes history in virtue of forces of production outstripping existing productive relations. "At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production...From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution."³⁰ Developments of

³⁰Marx, Critique of Political Economy, ed. Dobb, p. 21; MEW, vol. 13, p. 9.

actual productive activity in a society, along with developments in instruments and techniques, render the social distribution of labor among members of society outmoded. These productive relations must then themselves change and develop, in order to become adequate to developed productive forces. Thus the "economic structure of society" undergoes transition, and thus society undergoes history.

Now the question here is, how is it possible for forces of production to undergo the development which Marx indicates? If society "distributes" productive activity among its members, and systematizes it thereby, might one not assume that society thus renders productive activity static, capable of cyclic, i.e., nonhistorical, repetition, but not of real developmental change? The response to this question drawn from the content of Marx' theory of man, is that praxis structurally involves the possibility of its own development, through yielding both transformations of the environment upon which it is exercised, and the development of those needs on which it is based.

The environment as transformed by praxis is thereby capable of being the scene of new and more diversified forms of productive activity. The agent, as the subject of new needs, is capable of engaging in new and more complex forms of praxis. The actual productive force residing at the basis of society is thus itself capable of undergoing real development. Because of this, it is capable of developing from phase to phase such that those social relations appropriate to the earlier phase become outmoded in the latter, and require revision. It is because of praxis as structurally involves the possibility of its own development that the

economic basis of society is capable of a transformation which can be validly entitled historical. And thus Marx' notion of society as the subject of the historical process is both explained and specified in terms of concepts initially laid down in his theory of man.

These observations concerning the relationship of Marx' theory of man and his understanding of history may now be exhibited in a unified fashion. I have suggested that Marx' comprehension of history is based on his theory of man, and that this understanding includes the assertions that history is the history of human productive activity, that history involves human self actualization, and that society is the subject of the historical process. Regarding the first of these statements, I have pointed out that it is in virtue of his being a subject of praxis that man can be described as historical, because praxis itself is a process which is both distinctly historical and specifically human. But praxis is also that process from which social relationships result. The process which renders man historical is the same as that which renders him social; this in general implies an identification of human with social history.

Further, Marx' description of society as involving productive forces and relations is a restatement of and a partial development of the view of the relationship of society and praxis initially asserted in his theory of man. The justification for Marx' assertion that social productive forces develop in such a fashion as to outmode prior productive relations is also found among those concepts through which praxis is defined in Marx' theory of man. Finally, it is also through concepts found in his theory of man that Marx can describe history as the history of human self

actualization. Thus Marx' comprehension of history is both explained and justified by concepts initially laid down in his theory of man. It is through his theory of man that Marx can both comprehend the possibility of and describe the structural outlines of human history.

This last statement is a statement of one function which the theory of man exercises within Marx' broader theoretical schema. It allows us to assert that Marx' theory of man is 'normative' in the sense that it provides principles through which other phenomena, here history, may be comprehended. But Marx' theory of man is also 'normative' in the sense that it provides principles or norms in terms of which specific historical phenomena may be comprehended and critically evaluated. It is to this theme that I now turn, and to an examination of Marx' descriptions and critical evaluations of alienation as a social phenomenon, and of the condition of the wage laborer in capitalist society.

II. The Problem of Alienation.

Marx gives his most thorough elucidation of his renowned concept of alienation in the Paris Manuscripts, in the manuscript entitled "Alienated Labor." He there identifies the alienated individual as the producer located in a society characterized by "the division between capital and labor,"³¹ indicating, as Garaudy points out, that for Marx

³¹ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 288; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 81.

alienation, "has its objective base in the actual living conditions of the worker."³² Marx goes on to describe the condition of alienation under four interrelated headings, the first two of which, I suggest, are the more significant for my analysis.³³ And he expresses the first of these headings, "alienation from the product of labor," by the statement, "...the worker is related to the product of his labor (Produkt seiner Arbeit) as to an alien object (fremden Gegenstand)."³⁴

The meaning of this statement must first be indicated. And the text itself offers two clues towards determining this meaning. Marx first asserts that, "The externalization³⁵ of the worker in his product means not only that his work becomes an object, an external existence, but also that it exists outside him independently, alien, an autonomous power, opposed to him."³⁶ Marx also states that, "So much does the appropriation

³²Garaudy, Karl Marx, The Evolution of his Thought, trans. Nan Apotheker, (New York: International Publishers, 1967), p. 58.

³³But cf. Gajo Petrovic, Marx in the Mid-Twentieth Century, p. 84. Petrovic considers the second and third of the expressions which Marx gives to the concept of alienation to be the more fundamental, holding that the first and fourth are derived from these. While it is not my purpose to offer a total analysis of 'alienation' in Marx, I resist this suggestion. I shall offer reasons in the body of my text for holding that the first and the second of Marx' expressions of the concept of alienation are the more fundamental, from which the third and the fourth are derived through reference to the theory of man.

³⁴Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 289; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 83.

³⁵'Externalization' must here not be taken in the more generic sense in which Marx uses the term, but in its narrower sense, as a feature of productive activity occurring under conditions of alienation.

³⁶Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 389; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, pp. 83-84.

of the object appear as alienation that the more objects the worker produces, the fewer he can own, and the more he falls under the domination of his product, of capital."³⁷

These statements, taken in conjunction, indicate the meaning of "alienation from the product of labor" for Marx. Under conditions of the "division between capital and labor"³⁸ the worker is a productive agent, but is so in such a way that the results of his activity are produced in order to be handed over to, or appropriated by, another, the possessor of "capital." It is of the essence of capital that products immediately belong, not to their producers, but to those who control the means of production. One might assert here that, under the conditions to which Marx refers, the worker's product is essentially and directly appropriable not towards the satisfaction of his own needs, but towards the satisfaction of the (economic) needs of another.

As essentially appropriable by another rather than by its producer, the product bears no direct relationship to its producer himself, and to those needs in virtue of which he is a concrete agent. This is the meaning of Marx' statement that the product in relation to its producer "exists outside him, independently..." When Marx says that the worker "falls under the domination of his product..." he means that the product is produced, not for the purpose of some direct relation to its producer

³⁷Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 289; MEGA Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 83.

³⁸Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 288; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 81.

which it may eventually enjoy, but simply for its own sake. Production here is controlled, in other words, not by the concrete needs of the worker or productive agent himself, but by the demands of the product, and the determination of those demands through the requirements of the possessors of capital. Marx sums up this point by noting that 'alienation from the product of labor' involves the worker's "...loss of and subservience to the object..."³⁹ It is a loss in that the product bears no relation to the concrete experience of its producer, and a subservience in that the producer, as a worker, is dominated not by concrete needs of his own but by standards and requirements which he apprehends as determined by the product in itself.⁴⁰

The question which arises now however is, how Marx justifies the description of the above conditions as 'alienated'? A condition which Marx describes as 'alienated' must be one which he comprehends as problematic,⁴¹ a state of affairs deleterious to the individual which must be overcome. But why might a state of affairs in which the product bears

³⁹Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 389; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 83.

⁴⁰Cf. Garaudy, op. cit., p. 59. "Hence the creator finds himself separated from the product of his labor, which no longer belongs to him but to the owner of the means of production, i.e., slave master, or feudal lord, or capitalist boss. His labor is thus no longer the fulfillment of his own goals, his personal projects; it fulfills the goals of someone else."

⁴¹Cf. Rotenstreich, Basic Problems of Marx' Philosophy, (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1965), pp. 144-161. Rotenstreich shows that, historically, 'alienation' does not consistently bear this broad connotation, but that it must connote some intrinsically problematic condition for Marx.

no direct relation to the concrete experience or needs of its producer, and in which production is controlled by the relation of the product itself to the other for whom it is appropriable, be considered problematic or deleterious, and thus one involving alienation?

I suggest that Marx' justification for entitling the above condition 'alienated' is discoverable in his theory of man. There, Marx develops concepts concerning man as a productive agent in relation to the object or product of his activity. He claims that, a) productive activity yields a transformation of 'nature' or the external environment upon which it is exercised; b) the result of such activity is an external product; c) the product is related to its producer in that it is appropriable by him for the satisfaction of some need of his own; d) the activity of the individual is rooted in some need concretely occurring within his experience. It seems that these assertions, developed in Marx theory of man, are now used by him as norms through which he might comprehend and critically evaluate the condition of the productive individual in a system involving "...the division between capital and labor..." and through which he might be justified in entitling that condition 'alienated.'

Within this system, first, the result of the individual's activity is an external product. But further, this product is, in its details, essentially non-appropriable by him. And third, to repeat the preceding statement in different terms, the product in its details relates not to the need of its producer, but to the needs of another. Given this, then the structural relation between agent and product which Marx describes in his theory of man is violated. The structure of praxis itself, as

undertaken by the agent, is violated in virtue of the social context within which the productive individual is located. And it is because of this structural violation of praxis under given social conditions that Marx is able to entitle the relation of agent to product under those conditions 'alienated'.

Marx, then, utilizes the concepts concerning the relation of agent to product to evaluate a given historical relation of agent to product pejoratively. More specifically, he holds that the absence of a direct relationship of the product to its producer violates that principle which describes the produce as appropriable by its producer. And he holds that the determination of the details of the product by the requirements of another violates the principle through which praxis is described as rooted in need, and concretely selected in terms of the needs of the individual agent. It is because the given relation obtaining between producer and product involves these violations that Marx comprehends it as problematic. And it is because of these violations that this relation of producer to product is deleterious to the former. Since the agent by reason of the social division of labor and capital is unable to apprehend his product as in its details related to himself, and is unable to act according to standards derived from needs of his own, then he is unable to be an agent in the full and adequate sense of that term offered by Marx' theory of man.⁴² Thus it is in terms of principles laid down in

⁴²Cf. Garaudy, op. cit., loc. cit. "Man in his work ceases to be a man, i.e., a human being who determines his own ends, and becomes a means, a moment in the objective process of production, a means for producing commodities and surplus values."

that theory that Marx justifies comprehending and evaluating the specific relation of producer to product in the capitalist mode of production as one alienated.

Parenthetically, one may note that the responsibility for that relation of producer to product which Marx entitles "alienated" rests with the social division of labor and capital, i.e., with social conditions. It is consistent with Marx' theory of man for him to assert that social conditions yield this alienated relationship, because of the second proposition concerning the relationship of praxis and society in my outline of that theory. In that praxis is conditioned by society through social "distribution" of the members of society among various forms of productive activity, this social distribution can occur so as to result in a relation of agent to product which Marx evaluates pejoratively.

I have claimed that Marx' analysis of "alienation from the product of labor" is based on his theory of man. The same claim may be made for his analysis of "alienation from the process of labor." These two discussions of alienation are intimately related, and the concepts employed in the first will also be found in the second.

Marx begins his discussion of this aspect of "alienated labor" by asserting that "alienation from the process of labor" is a necessary feature of alienation from the product. He supports this through a familiar statement concerning objectification. "How could the worker stand in an alien relationship to the product of his activity if he did not alienate himself from himself in the very act of production? After

procreating, or at most in his shelter and finery, while in his human functions he feels only like an animal."⁴⁷ To sum up these points, the production of an "alien" product is itself a process of activity whose details are controlled by some one other than the agent, a process which aims only indirectly at the satisfaction of his needs, and one in which the individual is unable to comprehend himself and his action out of the conjunction of his own subsistence and human needs.

But again the question arises, why does Marx conceive of a process of activity bearing these characteristics as "alienated," i.e., as a process which is problematic and deleterious to its subject? Why is it not proper for processes of activity to be controlled by someone other than the agent? Why is that activity which aims only indirectly at the satisfaction of need deleterious? And finally, why might at least some processes of activity be not undertaken towards the satisfaction of subsistence needs exclusively?

Marx, as I read the texts, offers two responses to these questions, both based on the content of his theory of man. His first response is that activity as described above occurs in violation of certain features of the nature of praxis, and of man's nature as an agent. In the context of this response, the question of the relation of praxis and needs again comes to the fore. And the above description of activity aimed only indirectly at the satisfaction of needs must be stated more accurately here. By this, Marx does not mean action which is apprehended in its details as instrumental towards the satisfaction of a need (e.g., the act

⁴⁷ Ibid.

of assembly line manufacture which, because of its resulting compensation, enables the worker to purchase food). It is this latter sort of productive process from which the agent is alienated, because, in principle, productive activity is rooted in needs, and is performed because of the relevance of the details of a given instance of productive action to the needs which the agent concretely experiences. When the agent can apprehend no relationship between the actual details of his activity and the content of his own needs, then this activity may, Marx holds, be legitimately described as a process from which the agent is "alienated." Again, it is the content of his theory of man which enables Marx to comprehend a given phenomenon as involving alienation; here, the process of action is alienated in that it violates a feature of praxis described in that theory.

As a result, one may also see why, for Marx, that activity whose details are controlled not by the agent, but by another, is activity from which the agent is alienated. In principle concrete action is selected by the agent in terms of its relevance to his needs. The individual thus "controls" his own activity. To say that the details of action are controlled by another, is to say that while this activity has relevance to the requirements or needs of another,⁴⁸ the agent is not able to experience

⁴⁸Cf. Garaudy, op. cit., pp. 59-60. "In all systems of private ownership of the means of production, the worker is not only estranged from the product of his labor, but from the very act of his labor. His boss not only dictates the aims but also the means and methods of his work... They are predetermined, designed in a vacuum, in an entirely dehumanized form and to rhythms of tools and machines that often become hallucinating... Here alienation is depersonalization."

or apprehend his concrete activity as "his own," as having discernable relevance to his experience.⁴⁹ Again he is "alienated" from his activity: "It belongs to another. It is the loss of his own self. (Verlust seiner selbst.)"⁵⁰

Finally, Marx seems to hold in this context that, while it is through human productive activity that the satisfaction of subsistence and human needs is conjoined, in that the very production of means of subsistence, the "first historical act" as Marx puts it in the German Ideology, results in the development of new needs, the agent who is alienated from the process of his activity is, because of this alienation, unable to experience this conjunction as a feature of his action. And this, in turn, is itself a further source of alienation.⁵¹

It is clear that Marx' theory of man provides him with principles whose normative employment allows him to speak of "alienation from the process of labor." It is the theory of man which allows Marx to evaluate a given condition of activity as involving "alienation." But there is also a second manner in which Marx describes activity not related to the needs of the agent and controlled in its details by another. This involves the

⁴⁹Cf. Marx, op. cit., loc. cit. Thus Marx' statement, "...the external nature of work for the worker appears in the fact that it is not his own but another person's, that in work he does not belong to himself but to someone else."

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Cf. Ibid.

concept of "self-actualization."⁵²

"Self actualization" is taken by Marx as a structural feature of praxis, in two senses. First the agent, in engaging in productive activity, actualizes himself as a definite agent. Second, the agent, through his action, realizes for himself new needs, which may in turn function as the basis of new and more diversified forms of action. But if the individual is not able to apprehend his action as "his own," in the sense described above, then he is not able to apprehend his activity as his own, since it is controlled by another, nor can his activity be a relevant source for the development of new needs for him, since the action is not relevant to his needs initially, but to those of another. Thus, given productive action under these conditions, self actualization is denied to the agent. Another reason from the theory of man for entitling such action "alienated" is provided by Marx.

The above discussion presents an identification of Marx' meanings for, and the justifications for his descriptions of alienation from the product and the process of labor. In the text of the Paris Manuscripts, Marx moves from the unification of these two descriptions to a discussion of alienation under a third heading: man's alienation from his "species being." I turn my attention now to that discussion.⁵³

In chapter one, (see pp.12ff), I differed from Lobkowitz' general interpretation of Marx' doctrine of 'species being'.

⁵²Cf. Lobkowitz, Theory and Practice, (Notre Dame: The University of Notre Dame Press, 1967), pp. 344-345, 349-51. Lobkowitz hints at this idea, but does not thoroughly develop it from the text.

⁵³Cf. Marx, op. cit., loc. cit.

But in terms of his comments on the alienation of man from his species being, it is the question of the "universality" of human praxis which is uppermost in the texts of Marx.

A single citation illustrates this point. Marx states in the Paris Manuscripts that, "By degrading free spontaneous activity to the level of a means, alienated labor makes the species life of man a means of his physical existence."⁶⁰ In this statement, Marx first refers back to his discussion of alienation from the process of labor. Such activity is a "means" towards the satisfaction of needs, but an "indirect" one, i.e., one whose details bear no discernable relation to the actual needs of the agent. Using this notion as a basis for his present analysis, Marx' point here is twofold. First because the agent is unable to experience his activity and its results as relevant to his needs, he is unable to experience his own relation as an agent to nature as actual, i.e., as one through which nature is transformed through activity of his own, towards the satisfaction of needs of his own. And second, because of this, the agent is also unable to realize himself as one who produces universally. For "universal" production depends upon the agent's becoming the subject of new needs, which in turn depends upon his realizing himself as one who has acted towards the satisfaction of prior needs of his own. Since this latter possibility is unavailable to the agent alienated from the product and process of alienation, then the former is unavailable to him also. Thus this individual is unable to experience his productive relation to

⁶⁰Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 295; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 89.

nature as "actual," in the sense noted above, and is unable to produce "universally." He is thus, Marx holds, alienated from his "species being."⁶¹

Here again Marx' discussion of alienation is directly related to his theory of man. That theory shows the structure of human productive activity to involve the possibility of man's being a "species being." It is the vitiating of that possibility that Marx here refers to as alienation.⁶²

Marx finally discusses alienation in the Manuscripts as alienation of man from his fellows.⁶³ Marx' discussion of this is both brief and oblique, and is summed up in the following statement. "What holds true of man's relationship to his work, to the product of his work, and to himself, also holds true of man's relationship to other men, to their labor, and

⁶¹Cf. Petrovic, op. cit., p. 83. "...by alienating his own activity from himself, man in fact alienates his essence from himself and himself from his essence. Man is in essence a creative, practical being, and when he alienates his creative activity from himself, he alienates his human essence from himself." In this comment 'creative' and 'universal' may be taken as synonyms.

⁶²One might note here that Marx' critique of alienation also essentially involves those concepts describing praxis which are discoverable in Hegel. Cf. L. Easton, "Alienation and History in the Early Marx," Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, 1961-62, vol. 22, no. 2, p. 194. Easton, commenting on the relation of Marx' notion of alienation to Hegel, notes that, the part of the Phenomenology of Spirit which seems to have attracted Marx most is the section, "...which concentrates on 'wealth' and 'state power,' namely, 'Spirit in Self-Estrangement,' The Discipline of Culture and Civilization." He holds (p. 194) that the image of Rameau's Nephew (Diderot) in this section is the source of Marx' concept of alienation. But Marx' explicit critique of alienation involves more fundamentally those concepts involved in his doctrine of praxis which Marx derives from Hegel.

⁶³Cf. Garaudy, op. cit., p. 59. Garaudy, curiously, omits reference to this heading.

and to the object of their labor."⁶⁴ The claim implicit in this statement seems to be as follows. The individual is an actual agent in virtue of his ability to produce products universally towards the satisfaction of his needs. Under conditions of alienation, this ability is vitiated. But the individual also experiences relations with others most fundamentally in virtue of his agency, of praxis. If then the individual is alienated from his own activity and its results, he will also be alienated from his relationships with others. He is unable to experience his activity as actually his own, and thus is further unable to experience those others who relate themselves to his activity as relating actually to himself. This heading under which Marx describes alienation, then, is derived from the first two headings described above.

It has been seen then, that Marx' descriptions of "alienation" in the Paris Manuscripts are both based on and justified by his theory of man. This illustrates another function of Marx' theory of man, in addition to its enabling him to comprehend the possibility of and the general structure of history. Marx' theory of man provides principles through which he is able to comprehend specific historical phenomena and evaluate them as involving alienation. It is a "normative" theory in this sense.

Parenthetically, comment might be made on a statement of Lobkowitz concerning the relation of the theory of human nature to the notion of alienation in Marx. In Theory and Practice, Lobkowitz states that "...neither Hegel nor Marx measures man's 'alienated state' against either

⁶⁴Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844," in Easton and Guddat, p. 295; MEGA, Abt. 1, Bd. 3, p. 89.

a trans-historical human nature or against a 'logically predetermined' future. Rather, they measure it against a human potentiality revealed by the phenomenon of alienation--against a human potentiality which, though at first it emerges in an alienated state, allows one to envisage a previously unknown possibility of ultimate human self-actualization."⁶⁵

Some correction needs to be made of this statement. Certainly Marx does object to a "transhistorical theory of human nature" in one sense, as seen in chapter two (see pp. 8 ff) in comments on Marx' relation to Feuerbach and Prudhon. Marx would not allow a concept of alienation which asserted that human nature universally and transhistorically involved some definite need (e.g., that man be agricultural) whose denial (e.g., by technology and urbanization) yields a deleterious effect to the denied subject. But Marx' notion of alienation is based on his theory of man, and there is one significant sense in which that theory is transhistorical. It is a theory which describes the structural outlines in terms of which all human historical possibilities are realized. Man is, for Marx, capable of realizing historical possibilities because he is a universal productive agent, because his agency necessarily results in social relationships, and so forth. And it is specific historical frustrations of these structural human possibilities which Marx in the Paris Manuscripts identifies as alienation. To be sure, specific human possibilities and needs are realized historically and must be comprehended empirically. But such realizations occur in virtue of the structure of man's nature as a conscious, social productive agent. This nature is intelligible

⁶⁵Lobkowitz, Theory and Practice, p. 315.

and can be described in a theory.

We have seen that Marx' theory of man has a 'normative' use when included in his analysis of alienation. We shall now see this also to be the case in Marx' analysis of wage labor in capitalism.

III. The Critique of Wage Labor.

A summary of Marx' critique of the condition of the wage laborer is found in his Wage Labor and Capital,⁶⁶ first presented in Marx in lecture form in Bursels in 1847,⁶⁷ and re-edited by Engels for publication in 1891.⁶⁸ This essay is both remarkably consistent with portions of Capital,⁶⁹ and offers in a brief and unified form Marx' economic description and critique of the question at hand.

Marx opens this essay by describing the apparent relationship of labor power and wages within the capitalist system of production. The wage laborer is defined as one possessed of labor power, that is, the capacity to actively produce for definable periods of time. It is his labor power, as so defined, which the wage laborer sells to the capitalist,

⁶⁶ Cf. Marx, "Wage Labor and Capital," "Introduction" by Engels, in Marx-Engels, Selected Works, pp. 64-94; MEW, vol.6, pp.397-423, 593-599.

⁶⁷ Cf. Engels' "Introduction" to "Wage Labor and Capital," loc. cit., p. 64; MEW, vol.6, p. 593.

⁶⁸ Cf. ibid., p. 71; MEW, vol. 6, p. 599.

⁶⁹ Cf. especially Capital, vol. 1, pp. 167-176, "The Buying and Selling of Labor Power;" MEW, vol. 23, pp. 181-191.

the owner(s) of the means of production, in the marketplace.⁷⁰ Through the selling of labor power, the wage laborer receives definite compensation.

Thus the initial condition of the wage laborer is determined in that, "...what they sell to the capitalist is their labor power. The capitalist buys this labour power for a day, a week, a month, etc. And after he has bought it, he uses it by having the workers work for a stipulated period of time."⁷¹ Two features of this statement may be noted. First, inasmuch as the wage laborer sells or exchanges his labor power in the market place, he relates to his own labor as to a commodity,⁷² that is, an item exchangeable for some other item of equivalent value.⁷³ And wages are simply that compensation which the wage laborer realizes in the sale or exchange of his labor power. "The exchange value of a commodity, reckoned in money, is what is called price. Wages are only a special name

⁷⁰Cf. Engels' "Introduction" to "Wage Labor and Capital," loc. cit., p. 68; MEW, vol. 6, p. 597. Engels shows that it must be 'labor power' rather than actual labor which the wage laborer exchanges for compensation. "What the economists had regarded as the cost of production of 'labour' was the cost of production not of labour but of the living worker himself. ...At the most, he might sell his future labour, that is, undertake to perform a certain amount of work in a definite time. In so doing, however, he does not sell labour (which would first have to be performed) but puts his labor power at the disposal of the capitalist for a definite time (in the case of time-work) or for the purpose of a definite output (in the case of piece work) in return for a definite payment; he hires out, or sells, his labour power." Cf. also Capital, vol. 1, (Moore and Aveling), p. 539; MEW, vol. 23, p. 559.

⁷¹Cf. Marx, "Wage Labor and Capital," loc. cit., p. 73; MEW, vol. 6, p. 399.

⁷²Cf. Ibid.

⁷³Cf. Capital, Moore and Aveling, vol. 1, p. 55; MEW, vol. 23, p. 70

for the price of labor power, commonly called the price of labour, for the price of this peculiar commodity which has no other repository than human flesh and blood."⁷⁴ The wage laborer, then, is one who exchanges his labor power as a commodity, in return for wages, the price of this commodity.

The question which Marx raises at this point is, how are wages, the price of labor power, determined in definite forms? But this question cannot be handled by itself; a more fundamental question must be raised. Since labor power functions as a commodity, its price and value must be determined in relation to the price and value of commodities in general. Therefore, in order to comprehend definite wages in relation to labor power one must treat the question, how is price and value in relation to commodities in general determined?

The characteristic feature of a commodity is that, "...it is directly exchangeable with other commodities."⁷⁵ This means that commodities, in spite of their disparate characteristics as utility items, involve severally a relationship to some common denominator in terms of which their exchangeability may be measured.⁷⁶ And that to which commodities commonly relate is the generalized labor of which they are products. Commodities are, "...the products of social activity, the result of expended energy, materialized labour. As objectifications of social labour, all commodities are crystalizations of the same substance."⁷⁷

⁷⁴Marx, "Wage Labor and Capital," loc. cit., p. 74; MEW, vol. 6, p. 399.

⁷⁵Marx, Capital, Moore and Aveling, vol. 1, p. 55; MEW, vol. 23, p. 70.

⁷⁶Cf. Marx, Capital, Moore and Aveling, vol. 1, p. 57; MEW, vol. 23, p. 71.

⁷⁷Marx, Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, ed. Dobb, p. 29; MEW, vol. 13, p. 16-17.

One speaks of general or "abstract"⁷⁸ labor here because, as commodities, products have in common not that they are the detailed results of concrete instances of relevantly similar productive activities, but that they are generally the results of definite amounts of expended labor time; "...as exchange values they represent the same homogeneous labour, i.e., labour in which the individual characteristics of the workers are obliterated. Labour which creates exchange value is thus abstract general labour."⁷⁹

The value of a commodity, then, is constituted and determined in virtue of its embodying expended labor power. In Capital, Marx notes that the definite values of commodities are constituted in virtue of the commodities embodying definite amounts of labor power,⁸⁰ and that the values of commodities vis a vis others are determined by the respective amounts of "socially necessary" labor time they respectively embody, that is, the time, "...required to produce an item under normal conditions of production, and with the average degree of skill and intensity prevalent at the time."⁸¹

In Wage Labor and Capital, Marx relates the above comments to the question of the price of the commodity, through noting that the basic price

⁷⁸Cf. Marx, Political Economy, ed. Dobb, p. 29; MEW, vol. 13, p. 17.

⁷⁹Marx, Political Economy, ed. Dobb, p. 29, MEW, vol. 13, p. 17. Cf. also Capital, Moore and Aveling, vol. 1, p. 45; MEW, vol. 23, p. 60.

⁸⁰Cf. Capital, Moore and Aveling, vol. 1, pp. 38-39; MEW, vol. 23, p. 53.

⁸¹Ibid. Also, "Commodities, therefore, in which equal quantities of labour are embodied, or which can be produced in the same time, have the same value."

of a commodity is equivalent to the cost of its production.⁸² Cost of production is the sum of the costs of materials and instruments, plus expended labor power,⁸³ which the capitalist must realize through price in the exchange of his commodity, in order to realize the value of that commodity.⁸⁴ The basic price of a commodity, then, abstracting from the fluctuations of profit and loss attributable to variations or competition⁸⁵ and supply and demand⁸⁶ in the economic market, is equivalent to that amount of labor power expended in the production of the item both directly, in terms of direct expenditure of labor time, and indirectly, in terms of the labor time expended in the creation of those materials and instruments necessary for productive activity. This price is also equivalent to the cost of the production of the item accrued by the capitalist.⁸⁷

On the terms of the above, labor power, that which is exchanged by the wage laborer for compensation, must have a price and a value. However an anomaly is apparent here, in that labor power must both have a value, if it can be exchanged by the wage laborer as a commodity, and also be the

⁸²Cf. Marx, "Wage Labor and Capital," loc. cit., pp. 77-79; MEW, vol. 6, pp. 403-405.

⁸³Cf. "Wage Labor and Capital," loc. cit., p. 79; MEW, vol. 6, p. 405.

⁸⁴Cf. "Wage Labor and Capital," loc. cit., p. 77-78; MEW, vol. 6, pp. 403-404.

⁸⁵Cf. "Wage Labor and Capital," loc. cit., p. 76; MEW, vol. 6, p. 402.

⁸⁶Cf. "Wage Labor and Capital," loc. cit., p. 77; MEW, vol. 6, p. 403.

⁸⁷Cf. "Wage Labor and Capital," loc. cit., p. 79; MEW, vol. 6, p. 405.

source of the values of all other commodities,⁸⁸ as that which all products as commodities share in common. How then can the definite value and price of labor power be determined? Marx' way of answering this question is to re-phrase it, to ask, "What, then, is the cost of production of labor power"?⁸⁹ Since there is a relation of equivalence between the value, price, and cost of a commodity, then the price and value of labor power as a commodity may be determinable if the cost of its production is determinable. And this latter feature of labor power is, Marx argues, determinable as, "...the cost required for maintaining the worker as a worker, and developing him into a worker...The price of his labor will, therefore, be determined by the price of the necessary means of subsistence."⁹⁰ The value, and therefore the basic price of any commodity, is equivalent to its cost of production. But the cost of the production of labor power is that necessary for the worker's subsistence. Thus the price of labor power is that compensation which the worker must receive in order to maintain his subsistence. And in that the cost in question here is socially determinable in a definite form, then the value and basic price of labor power is also definitely determinable in society.

These assertions are subject to two qualifications. In referring to the cost of the production of labor power as that cost necessary for the subsistence of the worker, Marx does not mean here to refer to the minimal

⁸⁸Cf. Capital, Moore and Aveling, vol. 1, p. 537; MEW, vol. 23, p. 557
Marx notes the anomaly referred to at this point.

⁸⁹"Wage Labor and Capital" loc. cit., p. 79; MEW, vol. 6, p. 406

⁹⁰"Wage Labor and Capital" loc. cit., p. 80; MEW, vol. 6, p. 406.

subsistence of the individual worker. For one thing, that which is necessary for the maintenance of the capitalist mode of production is not simply the individual worker, but rather the consistent supply of labor power. Thus the cost of the production of labor power is not equivalent to that necessary for the subsistence of the individual worker, but rather that necessary for the maintenance of that class of persons who exchange their labor power for wages. The "...wage minimum, like the determination of the price of commodities by the cost of production in general, does not hold good for the single individual, but for the species."⁹¹ Thus the individual worker must, for example, receive in compensation wages adequate for his own subsistence and that of his family. And second, Marx means to refer here not to bare subsistence, but to socially tolerable subsistence, that is to a level of subsistence minimally adequate to the aspirations and needs acquired by the working class from the concrete social environment in which that class is located.⁹² It is not, then, necessary for Marx to argue that a characteristic of that class which exchanges its labor power for wages is impoverishment.

But given these qualifications, Marx feels it legitimate to hold that the situation of the wage laborer in capitalist society is characterized by his exchanging his labor power for wages equivalent to the cost of his production, that is equivalent to the socially tolerable

⁹¹"Wage Labor and Capital," loc. cit., p. 80; MEW, vol. 6, pp. 406-407.

⁹²Cf. "Wage Labor and Capital," loc. cit., pp. 84-85; MEW, vol. 6, p. 412.

or adequate subsistence of the class of wage laborers in society, and for Marx this is to further explain and defend the assertion that the wage laborer relates to his own labor power as a commodity, that is as an item bearing a definite exchange value in the social economic market.

It is of this situation of the wage laborer that Marx wishes to offer a critique. And this critique is expressed by Marx in two ways, the first of which depends upon the second, and the second of which, I shall propose, is dependent upon the content of Marx' theory of man.

Marx first asserts that, "within the relation of capital and wage labor, the interests of capital and the interests of wage labor are diametrically opposed."⁹³ For this statement itself Marx offers two justifications: a) the relation of rise in wages to rise in profits is necessarily an inverse relation, because profit is measured by that price received for a commodity in excess of the cost paid out by the capitalist for the labor power expended in the commodity's production;⁹⁴ b) it is the necessary interest of the capitalist to maintain a class of wage laborers, for it is only in virtue of a class of persons who exchange their labor power for wages that the production of commodities may be maintained.⁹⁵

But the first of these reasons is not sufficient to support Marx' assertion that the interests of the capitalist and working classes are necessarily antagonistic or "diametrically opposed." Given that wages

⁹³"Wage Labor and Capital" loc. cit., p. 88; MEW, vol. 6, p. 415.

⁹⁴Cf. "Wage Labor and Capital" loc. cit., pp. 86-87; MEW, vol. 6, pp. 413-414.

⁹⁵Cf. "Wage Labor and Capital," loc. cit., p. 83; MEW, vol. 6, p. 410.

may maintain the working class at a socially tolerable, or perhaps even acceptable, level of subsistence, then the 'interest' of this class need not necessarily be antagonistic to that of the capitalist class; it may simply differ from the interests of this latter class. Thus in order to support his assertion that the interests of the capitalist and working classes are necessarily antagonistic, Marx if forced to fall back on the second of the two reasons noted above. But how would the interest of the capitalist class in maintaining the existence of the 'working class' indicate a necessary conflict of interests or antagonism between these two classes? This could be the case only if it were necessarily in the interest of the 'working class' not to be maintained as such, that is not to maintain itself as a class of persons which exchanges its labor power for wages.

It is this last expression which leads to the second of Marx' expressions of his critique of the condition of the wage laborer in capitalist society. The interests of wage labor and capital can, in Marx' view, be considered necessarily antagonistic only if it is necessarily against the interest of wage labor to relate to its own labor power as a commodity, i.e., to exchange this labor power for wages. But this is to say that there must be some inherent and demonstrable problematic feature or features to the situation of relating to one's own labor power as a commodity. How might Marx show this to be the case?

Early in the text of Wage Labor and Capital, Marx asserts that, "...the exercise of labour power, labour, is the worker's own life activity, the manifestation of his own life. And this life activity he

sells to another person in order to secure the necessary means of subsistence. Thus his life activity is for him only a means to enable him to exist. He works in order to live. He does not even reckon labour as a part of his life, it is rather a sacrifice of his life. It is a commodity which he has made over to another. Hence also, the product of his activity is not the object of his activity."⁹⁶ This statement contains, I suggest, two arguments whose conclusion is that the situation of the wage laborer in relating to his own labor power as a commodity is inherently problematic. Both of these arguments depend on the content of Marx' theory of man, and both, perhaps unsurprisingly, bear similarities to Marx' analysis of alienation.

First, insofar as the wage laborer exchanges his labor power for wages, he then expends that labor power in a fashion indifferent as to what the results of his activity might be. To paraphrase an example offered by Marx,⁹⁷ the individual's activity might produce one quarter of corn or two ounces of gold, and yet receive the same item in exchange for his expended labor power, wages in a definite amount. But this means that the direct relation of the individual to his activity is not a relation to the determinate result of his activity, but to the compensation received in the exchange. And on the basis of Marx' theory of man, this situation is problematic on two counts.

The individual first is here unable to experience the result of his

⁹⁶Cf. "Wage Labor and Capital," loc. cit., p. 75; MEW, vol. 6, p. 400.

⁹⁷Cf. Capital, Moore and Aveling, vol. 1, pp. 62-63; MEW, vol. 23, pp. 77-78.

activity as the genuine embodiment of the details of his activity, because the purpose of his action is not the production of some definite product, but the realization of wages. It is wages, not the product, which, as it were, crystalize the activity of the individual. This is the meaning of Marx' assertion that, for the wage laborer, "...the product of his activity is not the object of his activity."⁹⁸ For the wage laborer the product does not objectify his activity because, for him, his activity directly realizes not the product itself but wages.⁹⁹

Second, the activity of the wage laborer is not a direct but rather a problematically indirect means towards the satisfaction of needs. The details of the laborer's activity do not correspond to a definite need of his own: His labor power is expended for the purpose of realizing wages, which then may be utilized for the handling and satisfying of needs. Thus Marx asserts that the wage laborer's "...life activity is for him only a means to enable him to exist."¹⁰⁰

The wage laborer, then, does not experience his product as the objectification of his own activity, and does not experience his activity and its result as relevant to his own needs, that is, as 'his own'. This situation, given Marx' theory of man, is problematic and deleterious to the individual. And the reason for this is the same as that cited above in the discussion of Marx' concept of alienation. Given this situation, the structure of praxis is violated, and the individual is unable to be an

⁹⁸Cf. "Wage Labor and Capital," loc. cit., p. 75; MEW, vol. 6, p. 400.

⁹⁹Cf. Capital, Moore and Aveling, vol. 3, pp. 821-823; MEW, vol. 25, pp. 828-829.

¹⁰⁰"Wage Labor and Capital," loc. cit., p. 75; MEW, vol. 6, p. 400.

agent in an adequate sense of that term, one who experiences his product as the concrete objectification of his own activity, and as appropriable in some sense relevant to needs of his own. Marx here utilizes concepts found in his theory of man concerning the product as involving objectification and appropriability to evaluate the condition of the wage laborer in capitalist society.

Furthermore, that activity from which commodity value results is "...abstract, general labor...",¹⁰¹ that is, a measurable quantity of labor related to a labor in general. The wage laborer, in exchanging his labor power for wages, then, exchanges his capacity to expend labor power in general, in whatever way in which the corresponding member of the exchange may see fit. That is, the wage laborer exchanges here his capacity to produce commodities, and thus his labor power is for him "...abstract, general labour..." He exchanges, within the limits of his talents, abilities, and skills, his capacity simply to produce whatever commodities might be at the moment required. Marx expresses this by saying that, "He does not even reckon labor as part of his life..."¹⁰²

The meaning of this can now be shown. In that the wage laborer exchanges essentially his capacity simply to produce the commodities required at the moment, whose character is their value based on labor which is 'abstract', the individual's relation to his own activity is an 'abstract' relation. He relates to his own activity here as the general means whereby

¹⁰¹Marx, Political Economy, ed. Dobb, p. 29; MEW, vol. 13, p. 17.

¹⁰²"Wage Labor and Capital," loc. cit., p. 75; MEW, vol. 6, p. 400.

possibility of self actualization in virtue of his own activity is vitiated for the wage laborer.

The text cited above from Marx in part may now be cited fully. "He does not even reckon labor as a part of his life, it is rather a sacrifice of his life."¹⁰³ Since the wage laborer does not relate directly but only abstractly to the details of his own activity, he fails to achieve self actualization through that activity. This is a "...sacrifice of his life," because, as seen in Marx' theory of man, the possibility of self actualization is one integral to the human subject of praxis. The situation which vitiates this possibility, then, violates the nature of man as an agent. Thus again Marx evaluates negatively the situation of the wage laborer, and again this evaluation is based on and justified by the content of Marx' theory of man.

We have seen then, that Marx' theory of man is given a noarmative employment within his larger theoretical framework. It enables Marx to comprehend and evaluate the phenomenon of alienation, the condition of the wage laborer in capitalist society, and furnishes him with principles through which he comprehends the possibility of as well as the structure in general of human history. I take this to indicate not simply that there occurs a theory of man within the texts of Marx, but also that that theory plays an integral role in his overall thought. If the brief analysis of Marx' normative employment of his theory of man is correct, then it must be held that that theory enjoys an integral and basic location within the larger theoretical doctrine which Marx' texts exhibit.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

A summation of the argument of my theses may now be presented. I offer this under the following five brief headings.

First, I have argued that a theory of man is validly discoverable in the early texts of Marx. The contral text in which this theory is found is the "Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844." My method of determining the content of this theory has been textual analysis. From the Paris Manuscripts and allied texts, I isolated the main assertions comprising Marx' theory of man. The arguments which Marx takes to justify and elucidate those propositions were exposed. When an argument for a proposition contained in Marx' theory of man was implicit in the text rather than explicit, my test for its utilization was a twofold one. I have, in my exposition of Marx' theory of man, utilized only those implicit arguments germane to that theory which are consistent with other propositions in that theory and consistent with explicit arguments offered by Marx in support of those other propositions.

The content of Marx' theory of man involves sets of propositions concerning productive activity or praxis, social relationships, and consciousness. Marx argues that man's fundamental relationships to nature and to himself must be understood as productive relationships or relationships of praxis. The individual himself must be understood fundamentally as a subject of praxis, a productive agent. Praxis itself involves the transformation of nature, objectification, and appropriation. The human agent is, for Marx, 'one who acts in virtue of both subsistence and human needs, and whose activity is 'universal' rather than 'species specific'. On this basis, Marx argues that the human agent is one who

experiences self actualization through praxis.

Moreover, praxis both renders possible and is conditioned concretely by the individual's social relationships. Productive activity is in principle social, and as such enables the individual to experience 'totalization' and to be determined as an object through the activities of others as well as through his own activity as a subject of praxis. Marx argues that consciousness is a feature of and an essential feature of praxis. Consciousness is a feature of praxis in that it is a relation of the individual to his environment and to himself founded on the more fundamental productive relationship. But it is also an essential feature thereof, because only given this can another essential feature of the structure of praxis be legitimately explained, namely, the development of human needs. The individual subject of praxis must then be described as a conscious agent.

Second, Marx' theory of man can not be validly described as 'Feuerbachian' in its content. Marx in the Paris Manuscripts does credit Feuerbach with making certain legitimate objections against Hegel. But Marx, within the context of his theory of man, objects to the content of Feuerbach's anthropology with respect to the relation of praxis to nature as its object, the nature of consciousness, including sense consciousness, in relation to its object, and man as one who enjoys concrete social relationships. For Marx, Feuerbach's view of nature does not allow him to give an adequate account of nature as the object of praxis. Correlative to this, Feuerbach is unable to describe the object of consciousness as one which receives its fundamental determinations from praxis. Thus he

is unable to describe consciousness as an essential feature of praxis. Consequently, he is only able to describe the individual as a conscious subject, not as a conscious agent. Marx also argues that Feuerbach is able to describe social relationships only abstractly. Feuerbach asserts that man is essentially communal, but he is unable to describe social relations as actual or concrete relationships between agents, and he is also unable to account for the social character of human needs.

The content of Marx' theory of man cannot therefore be described as 'Feuerbachian'. Althusser's position with regard to the interpretation of Marx' theory of man will not stand. Althusser suggests, a) that the theory of man discoverable in the early texts of Marx is contentually a repetition of Feuerbachian 'humanism', and b) that this theory must be judged as irrelevant to those mature texts in which Marx develops communism as a science, for in those texts Marx rejects Feuerbach's anthropology and classifies it as ideology. I have attempted to refute the first of these two suggestions, showing that Marx' theory of man as revealed in his early texts is no repetition of, but rather involves at its basis critical objections to, the anthropology with which Marx was familiar from the texts of Feuerbach. Although I have not dealt directly with the second of Althusser's suggestions; I feel that my manner of dealing with the first calls the second strongly into question.

Third, I have argued that, on the question of the relation of Marx' theory of man to Marx' predecessors, that relation which is critical for the formation of, and for contemporary comprehension of the theory of man, is Marx' relationship to Hegel. This is the case for two reasons. First,

there are strong analogies between Marx' concept of praxis and arguments concerning agency in Hegel's texts, and analogies as well between Marx and Hegel on the question of the individual as necessarily social, or as one whose experience essentially involves social relationships. Thus Marx' doctrine of praxis can be at its main points comprehended as a restatement of those arguments employed in Hegel's texts concerning the individual as an agent.

But second, Marx finds the chief justification of his claim that praxis as the fundamental category through which human experience is to be described, and upon which a valid theory of man must be based, in an argument which he constructs against his understanding of Hegel's position on the relationship of consciousness to its object. This is significant for two reasons. First, this argument does not involve Marx' rejecting the Hegelian concepts through which agency is described. Rather, it involves his insistence that those concepts be maintained as descriptive of agency or praxis, but also that praxis itself be located differently in a theory of man than Hegel's position allows. Second, it is this argument which provides Marx with justification for holding that man is essentially an agent, a subject of praxis, and that, within a theory of man, praxis must be taken as the fundamental category. And this is critical to Marx' overall position. Marx must be able to hold this in order to hold that man's fundamental relationships to himself and to nature are productive, that it is in virtue of his being an agent that he achieves self actualization, that it is in virtue of his being an agent that man both enjoys social relationships and is essentially social, and

that consciousness, while an essential and necessary feature of the structure of productive activity, is yet a feature thereof. These features of Marx' theory of man are essential to it, and Marx can only hold them if he can also hold the position that man is fundamentally a productive agent. But Marx finds justification for holding that position through the argument, exhibited in chapter four, which he directs against Hegel.

Thus the content and structure of Marx' theory of man, both positively and negatively, can best be understood in terms of his relationship to Hegel. On the one hand, those concepts employed by Marx to describe productive agency are discoverable in Hegel. Indeed, for the most part, the concepts utilized by Marx to describe social relationships are also exhibited in Hegel's texts. On the other hand, Marx develops a central and crucial argument in his theory of man, through the construction of an argument directed against Hegel.

Fourth, I have tried to show in this chapter how Marx' theory of man is integrally located within his larger theoretical framework. It is this theory of man which allows Marx to comprehend the human historical process because it is, on the one hand, through his doctrine of praxis that Marx is able to describe man as historical, and on the other hand, through his doctrine of the relation of praxis and society that Marx can go on to describe society as the subject of the historical process, and justify that description. Furthermore, Marx employs principles taken from his theory of man to comprehend and evaluate historical phenomena such as alienation, and the condition of the wage laborer in capitalist society. The theory of man, then, is not simply found in Marx' texts; it plays an

integral and essential role in Marx' total theoretical schema.

Finally, it might be suggested here that Marx' theory of man is not for him 'ideological', as Althusser claims it to be. The theory of man as outlined above is not, for Marx, the expression of the experience of a given society, or a given class within society. It is rather for Marx a theory which exposes the possibility and the structure of human historical development, and which allows us to comprehend given historical experiences accurately. As such, Marx' theory of man does not fall prey to his own condemnations of humanisms as ideologies, seen for instance in his condemnations of the Young Hegelians as ideologists in the German Ideology, but is rather able to play a role both integral to and consistent with Marx' mature aims.

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