THE PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS

OF

MARX'S CONCEPTION OF MAN

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ABSTRACT

Our work is an attempt to come to grips with the basic structure of Marx's philosophical anthropology. According to Marx, man is, in the most fundamental sense, a "species-being". This conception is the focal point of our analysis. We endeavour to unpack and examine carefully both its major presuppositions and implications.

Throughout our work, we expound fully two basic conceptions which, we contend, are implied in Marx's doctrine. According to him, "Human Nature" is distinct from "External Nature". Secondly, the "Nature" of man is distinct from his "Essence".

In order to substantiate the first contention, we submit Marx's doctrine on relations to a careful examination. We discover two main types, physical or immediate relations and species or mediated ones. The latter constitute the ultimate fabric of Marx's whole system -- the "material" or "substance" of what he habitually refers to as the "infrastructure". These relations, found only within the human species, are empirical in origin but Ideal or formal in nature. This fact leads us to the conclusion that, within his doctrine, Marx presupposes man to enjoy a measure of "freedom" from the "physis", a subjectively conscious existence vis-a-vis the natural environment. This subjective consciousness enables man to live a formal existence distinct from his physical existence. Further analysis shows that man's freedom and subjective consciousness express and realisethemselves through the mediation of an Ideal Totality or Community. Man's formal or subjective existence, accordingly, is simultaneously, a Totality or Community existence. The Totality itself consists of an Ideal Hypostatization of man's productive and collective life.

To substantiate the distinction between the Nature and the Essence of man we continue our analysis of man's formal-existence. Our study shows that Marx conceives of human existence as a dynamic relationship between three distinct "moments": 1) the individual himself with his "power" for subjective consciousness; 2) his formal existence in time and space and 3) the prevailing Ideal Totality or Community. This is the substance of what we refer to as man's "mediated existence". The relationship between the three "moments" follows the syllogistic formula P - U - I, where P stands for the particular Essence of the individual, for instance, as a "citizen", a "noble", a "bourgeois"; U stands for the prevailing Community, such as Ancient Classical, Feudal or Capitalist and I stands for human Nature epitomised by the individual person in his subjective existence. The individual (I) enjoys a particular formality (P) through the mediation of the Community (U). This Trinitarian formula, we argue, constitutes the metaphysical structure of Marx's whole system.

Our analysis helps us remove the ambiguity in which Marx couches his description of man as a "species-being". According to him, as far as Human Nature is concerned, man was, is and remains a Species or Totality being. We regard this as a metaphysical presupposition regarding "Human Nature in general". As far as the Human Essence is concerned, man, as yet, is not a Species being. The historical Communities have, so far, been separatist, exclusive and inadequate in both a quantitative and a qualitative sense. The "principle" or "nexus rerum" holding people together has been "something" qualitatively different from the idealisation of man himself. This constitutes, in essence, Marx's doctrine on Alienation.

The rest of our work, occupying chapters four and five, deals mainly with the philosophical ramifications of

the two basic conceptions on Human Nature discussed earlier. The implications of the distinction between the Nature and the Essence of man are discussed in relation to Marx's doctrine on the Proletariat and the Bourgeois. We discover here a major inconsistency within Marx's analysis. In direct violation of his own doctrine, Marx treats an "ensemble of species-relations" as a totality of physical and immediate relations. To this extent, Marx institutionalises the proletariat and opens the way to a decadent "Marxism".

In the final chapter, we discuss the causal relation—
ship between "man" and "nature" within the perspective of
the vital distinction between the two. Marx implies the view
that man has first to "colonise" external nature, the "physis"
before he can relate to it actively and subjectively. This
"colonization" consists in endowing the natural environment
and "matter" with a "formality", an ideal dimension. Only
in this way can man relate to nature as man and be influenced
by it. We argue that Marx's dialectic applies only to the
human species in its relationship to "external nature". Only
man is capable of creating an Essence or Formality, distinct
from himself and subsequently negating it by means of its
anti-thesis.

Our work emphasises the Ideal and Humanistic dimension of Marx's doctrine and the relevance of some of his major ideas to comtemporary social problems.

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INTRODUCTION

In an age which has become increasingly Nominalistic the attempt to speak of the nature of man excites little enthusiasm. A. Reuben voices a common opinion when he claims that "all attempts to isolate human nature assume that there must be some entity there to be isolated. But the fact is that man not shaped by a particular culture, as anthropology reveals, has never existed." (Reuben, 153)

In <u>Capital</u>, however, Marx claims, in words reminiscent of the Scholastics, that "To know what is useful for a dog, one must study dog-nature. This nature itself is not to be deduced from the principle of utility."(Cap.1,609,n.2)² The same, Marx suggests, applies to "man". You cannot talk intelligently and coherently about what is good and useful for the human being and his well-fare unless you first study human nature. This contention provides the basic orientation for our forthcoming discussion. We shall endeavour to analyse critically Marx's own doctrine on human nature both "in general" and "as modified in each historical epoch".

It is convenient to establish beforehand one's point of view in relation to the subject matter of one's analysis since this, in turn, qualifies the nature of one's whole intellectual activity employed in the projected work. In chapter one we will discuss the difference between a philosophical and a scientific theory, arguing that even though Marx's system resists tidy characterization, it enjoys a genuinely philosophical dimension.

In chapter two we shall discuss Marx's conception of man as a "being for himself". We shall defend the view that, according to Marx, man enjoys a degree of freedom from the "physis". This freedom enables man to lead a formal existence

distinct from his <u>physical existence</u>. Man's formal existence, in turn, consists of an "ensemble of species-relations". We shall accordingly submit these relations to a careful analysis.

In the third chapter we discuss Marx's characterization of man as a "species-being". This conception draws our attention to the relationship of the individual to the community of which he is part. A species-being, in Marx's sense means, a type of being that realises and fulfils itself through the mediation of a community. Throughout this chapter we shall be concerned with this mediated existence and its implications.

In chapter four we will examine Marx's doctrine on the "bourgeoisie" and the "proletariat". We will point to a fatal mistake Marx commits within his own analysis on this subject. Briefly, on the basis of Marx's own conceptual framework and philosophical presuppositions, the proletariat (and the bourgeoisie) should be regarded as types of people and not as a narrow socio-economic class. To be a proletarian, in Marx's authentic sense, is not the same as being a boy scout, a Canadian or a wage-worker. The situation is rather similar to being a Jew or a Christian in a religious sense. The same type of commitment to certain values and imperatives is involved.

The last chapter deals with the causal relationship between "human nature" and "external nature". We shall give an analysis of Marx's dialectic of negativity and shall advance the view that Marx's dialectic applies exclusively to "human nature".

A brief discussion on the genesis and nature of alienation within Marx's system concludes the fifth chapter.

It is customary to analyse Marx's doctrine in the context of the economic, political and intellectual athmosphere prevailing in his time. This is understandable because, as his voluminous writings bear witness, Marx showed great receptivity and sensitivity to the demands, aspirations and

inspirations of his Age. The influence of Hegel, in particular, should never be under-estimated. It remains evident throughout his works even when he claims to have shaken himself free from the Idealistic contamination of his younger days. Many noted scholars have done extensive and valuable research in this field. The works of Avineri, Dupre, Hyppolite, Marcuse and McLellan, among others, provide a wealth of information on the ideological and political context in which Marx's doctrine develops. This remains an interesting area of research. However, it is not the one in which we are particularly interested.

Our dissertation, therefore, is not an historical study: this, in our view, has already been done many times over and we need not burden the reader with information which is already available. Our work is rather an interpretation of what we consider to be a right way of understanding the writings of Karl Marx.

We shall be concerned mainly with what we regard as being the unity of Marx's thought and the conceptual frame-work in which his theory on human nature develops. In other words, we shall be concerned with the basic presuppositions of Marx's doctrine and with the philosophical implications of these presuppositions. Although our aim is a critical exposition, our criticism will focus on the logical consistency and coherence of Marx's doctrine rather than on the objectivity of his account of reality.

Although we recognise the shift of emphasis, in Marx's works, from a philosophical anthropology to an empirical anthropology, we have attempted to draw out what we feel to be the necessary metaphysical under-pinnings of the entire corpus of Marx's writings.

Throughout our analysis we shall resort to different doctrinal frameworks as long as these are helpful in bringing out the correct meaning of the probelm under discussion. For example, Marx's doctrine on psychological and social individuality is discussed in contrast to the doctrine of the social contract theorists. His conception of man as a "being for himself" is expounded within the Greek-Scholastic perspective. This, we think, is justified by the nature of Marx's doctrine itself. Marx's system does not fit in tidely with any one tradition. Besides, Marx draws from different sources.

There is, however, within his system a strong undercurrent of Greek-Scholastic philosophy which we shall exploit to the full. This basic affinity should come as no surprise. German philosophy, especially as it develops in Hegel, bears strong ties with Greek thought. As Marcuse points out:

> Hegel's philosophy is in a large sense a reinterpretation of Aristotle's ontology, rescued from the distortion of metaphysical dogma and linked to the pervasive demand of modern rationalism that the world be transformed into a medium for the freely developing subject, that the world become, in short, the reality of reason. (Marcuse, 42)

The implications of this affinity are clearly drawn by S.Hook. He argues that "In turning Hegel, to use Marx's own words, 'right side up again', Marx was definitely returning

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to the position of one whom Hegel had turned 'wrong side down'
-- Aristotle. If Marx's philosophical method was Hegelian,
his fundamental starting point, as Engels admits, was Aristotelian -- an Aristotelianism saturated with temporalism,
freed from the dogma of fixed substantial form and the poetry
of the Prime Mover." (Hook, 35)

One finds in Marx's system an intellectual athmosphere congenial to the Greek-Scholastic tradition. The "Philosophia Perennis" is characterised by three fundamental factors: a)it has content -- it claims to say something substantial and significant about reality; b) it has a noetic perspective -- the "Ideal", as a type of "Logos", pervades reality and makes "being" intelligible and coherent; c)it is committed to vital issues. In spite of its speculative character, traditional philosophy is not a purely academic discipline. Its alleged insights into the "ultimate causes" are intimately related to human "praxis". These basic characteristics, we argue, are found in Marx's system. There is a similar type of knowledgeclaim regarding the significance of human existence; an analogous emphasis on an Ideal perspective and context -- substantiated by Marx's emphasis on "relational definitions", and a deep commitment to vital and living issues.

Of course, the ontological-theistic frame-work of the Greek-Scholastic tradition is not found in Marx but some of ... its purely philosophical conceptions are found, in seminal form, within his system. Marx is not a scholastic but scholasticism offers an excellent vantage-point for a serious exegesis and

appreciation of his doctrine.

It has been necessary, for us to emphasise certain aspects of Marx's writings and to neglect certain others which, in our view, do not illuminate the problem under discussion -- the philosophical foundations of Marx's conception of man.

There is, accordingly, a certain novelty in our approach to Marx's doctrine. A new approach to Marx has strong arguments in its favour. It has been acknowledged by various commentators that in spite of the volumes that have been written on Marx, a number of serious problems remain unsolved. The nature and genesis of alienation; the role of class consciousness and conflict; the precise relationship between "human nature" and external nature"; the nature and role of "praxis" as well as the dialectics of Marx's system remain ambiguous and controversial matters within Marxist scholarship.One of the fundamental questions is, "What is the precise relation between consciousness and nature?" (Dupré, 172)

Althusser, representing a different trend in Marxist scholarship, deplores the fact that Marx did not provide us 6 with the clear "dialectic" of his system.

If the "historical" approach to Marx's doctrine, in its different forms, has proved considerably unsuccessful in solving a number of vital problems, it is wise to attempt a new one. Our endeavour, therefore, should not be rejected in an a-priori or dogmatic manner. If we manage to solve, or at least clarify a number of problems, which so far remain elusive, we can regard our efforts as having been well spent.

NOTES: INTRODUCTION

1. A. Reuben, Man is the Measure. The Free Press, 1976.

Throughout our dissertation all citations, other than those from Marx, will be referred to by the name of the author and the page number. When different works of the same author are cited, the date of publication of the respective work will also be given. With regards to the citations from Marx, an abbreviated form of the title of the published work will be given together with the page number. Each work is identified in full when first cited. Additions or alterations in the citations are placed within square brackets.

In writing this thesis we have relied on some of the best English translations available. We have also read, when possible, different translations of the same work. We have compared the available translations and have tried to establish a consensus on their basis.

- 2. K. Marx, Capital, Vol.1. Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1970.
- 3. H. Marcuse, Reason and Revolution. Humanities Press, N.Y., 1968.
- 4. S. Hook, From Hegel to Marx. Ann Arbor Paperbacks, University of Michigan Press, 1971.
- 5. L. Dupre, The Philosophical Foundations of Marxism. Harcourt, Brace and World Inc. N.Y. 1966.

Dupre's questions and objections to Marx's doctrine are of particular interest to us not only because they are genuinely philosophical in character but also because they strike at the very core of Marx's system. They present a major challenge to anyone who attempts to come to grips with Marx's philosophy.

6. Cf. L. Althusser, For Maxx. Pantheon Books, N.Y. 1969, pp.174-175.

CHAPTER ONE

THE CHARACTER OF MARX'S THEORY

1:1 Philosophy and Science

In order to avoid possible misunderstanding and confusion we should, at the outset, distinguish between a scientific and a philosophical theory. The importance of drawing this distinction stems from the fact that often a theory is evaluated on the basis of its character. For example, something could be scientifically unfounded but religiously true. The doctrine of the creation is a case in point.

Only a narrow view of truth and knowledge would insist that science and only science is a vehicle of knowledge. is in this frame of mind that M. Schlick made his notorious contention about the future of philosophy: *...the fate of all 'philosophical problems" is this: some of them will disappear by being shown to be mistakes and misunderstandings about about our language, and others will be found to be ordinary scientific questions in disguise. These remarks. I think, determine the whole future of philosophy. (Beck. 244) Whatever Schlick and other scientist-philosophers claim, one would still require a clarification of what one understands by "science" and by "philosophical problems", and a further clarification of the character of the knowledge claims one In this respect one can appreciate Aquinas's contention that it is a "sin against intelligence to want to proceed in an identical manner in the typically different domains --physical, mathematical, and metaphysical -- of speculative knowledge. (Maritain, 1945, 32)

It is by no means easy to distinguish a scientific from a philosophical theory because as S. Alexander remarks

"the more comprehensive a science becomes the closer it becomes to philosophy, so that it may become difficult to say where science leaves off and philosophy begins." (Alexander, 2)

While remaining conscious of the difficulty we can say that in the perspective of the modern concept of science. which includes "all the mathematical, physico-mathematical sciences, the sciences of the phenomena" (Maritain, 1945, 20) it is commonly held that "science specializes in quantity and leaves the qualities of things to human likes and dislikes. The wishes and preferences of men have to be set aside; likewise all spiritual or purposive agencies in nature." Science, in this perspective "deals only with quantity, with energies, distances, velocities, which can be measured..." (Hocking et al.26-27) This view is implied in the prejudice against difference in kind among those philosophers who are closely associated with positivism.

One could say that there are three vital factors within a scientific theory that deserve identification:

- 1) A scientific theory admits of a certain degree of abstractness and universality which go beyond what is directly observable. It involves a number of "theoretical constructs" which "cannot be correlated with what is observed or observable." (Goudge, 64)⁵
- 2) A scientific theory, it is commonly held, does not claim to be a "vehicle of knowledge"; it does not claim to tell us how things really are. According to Goudge, "Knowledge, truth, real, actually existed, etc. do not represent scientific concepts." "It is not with the being of things," Maritain argues, "that science is occupied; it is with the mathematical links, which can be established between these designations taken from things, and which alone makes possible I say in the proper order and in the proper plane of science a communication or a well-established language, an intersubjectivation, submitted to fixed rules of signification." (Maritain, 1945, 23) This agrees with Danto's view:

*Our characterization of the sentences of science does not require that we know them in fact to be true but only that we understand them. *(Danto, 1968, 6)

overy controversial one. The soften held that philosophy is to be distinguished from science in that it is concerned with values whereas science is not. This distinction, however, is difficult to maintain. (J.H.Rendall et.8) on the other hand, it is argued that statements about what is good or bad, just or unjust, progressive, purposeful or finalistic are generally not amenable to scientific treatment. (Goudge, 158)

L. Beck claims that except within very narrow limits, science does not tell men what they should do. (Beck, 14)

It would require a separate study to do justice to this problem. Besides, our main concern in discussing the difference between philosophy and science is to determine, by comparison, the character of Marx's theory. We are fortunate in this respect because, as we shall be seeing presently, Marx commits himself to a position on this matter and, regardless of the value of his opinion, his position helps us considerably towards obtaining a description of the character of his theory.

A philosophical theory, by contrast, is generally regarded, by and large, to deal with those dimensions of reality which science shuns or overlooks. L. Beck gives five characteristics of what can be described as philosophical questions. They help to provide an insight into the nature of a philosophical theory. According to him:

- 1) "Philosophical questions are not primarily questions of fact." By this he means that "In asking philosophical questions, we are not asking for facts; at least not for the sort of facts that we get when we ask a historian or a physicist a question."
- 2) Philosophical questions are related to decisions about value. Beck cites A.E. Murphy as saying: *The

subject-matter of philosophy is the things that men take seriously, not for limited purposes, but in the basic commitments which determine, on the whole, what they make of their lives and of the world they live in.

- 3) *Philosophical questions are critical.*
- argues that "philosophers also speculate beyond the limits of all possible scientific knowledge. Questions as to whether God exists or not, whether there are ultimate values, whether there is a final purpose of existence, are not questions for which we look to science for answers. They are not questions about facts that the scientist will perhaps eventually get around to answering; they are questions about value and meaning including even the value and meaning of science itself.
- 5) *Philosophical questions are synoptic.* "By synoptic vision we mean "seeing things whole", seeing everything in their integral togetherness. This characteristic of philosophy really sums up all the other. Whereas science and many of the special branches of philosophy deal with only particular aspects of things or narrow "universes of ediscourse", philosophy itself is an attempt to remain keenly aware that we live in one world.* (Beck, 13-21)

In summary one can say that a philosophical theory,

1) claims to provide the <u>truth</u> and is, therefore, a "vehicle
of knowledge" -- it involves presuppositions and not mere
assumptions (3,5); 2) It deals with <u>reality</u> as it is in itself -- philosophy claims to provide objective and existential
truth (1,4); 3) It is committed to <u>value judgments</u> in a broad
sense (2,4).

In the perspective of the above, a theory or a doctrine is philosophical if, and to the extent that, it enjoys these three basic characteristics. For this reason, certain genuinely scientific theories, like the theory of evolution,

involve, as T.A. Goudge very well points out, philosophical and even metaphysical implications. The example of fossilremains is a case in point. Two assumptions can be made regarding them; either "that certain objects observed to be naturally embedded in the rocks are the remains of animals or plants which were alive in the distant past;" "so-called 'fossils' are objects created in situ by God when He brought the universe into existence. "(Goudge, 156) The latter assumption could be rejected for pragmatic reasons, on the grounds that "it is scientifically sterile." However, if this assumption is regarded as "a false statement" as many evolutionists tend to do it could be said that one goes beyond the limits of pure science. In this case the statement that "fossils" are evolutionary remains becomes " a true statement" and from a mere assumption turns into a metaphysical presupposition. In this case, "we do not assume it so much as presuppose it in understanding the theory of evolution. that theory is a body of knowledge then what from an instrumental standpoint appears as an assumption, is a presupposition of, though not a proper part of, the theory. we need the concept 'true' in order to formulate the presupposition ('objects called fossils are evolutionary remains' is a true assertion), we can appropriately speak of the presupposition as 'metaphysical'."(Goudge 156-157)8

Goudge gives another example to corroborate the above. This time he argues from the "existential status" of the theory of evolution. He points out that:

When speaking professionally, biologists sometimes state that evolution is a single, historical process. From a scientific standpoint, this statement is a high-level abstraction whose empirical meaning is wholly derived from its very indirect connection with what is observable in nature. But when construed metaphysically, the statement is taken to describe a real process which has gone and is going on, quite independently of any theorising about it. What is described has an existential status in its own right. (Goudge, 157)

...

The contention, therefore, is that metaphysical implications arise within the theory of evolution when its conclusions "are interpreted as being about a single, historical process having an existential status of its own, quite apart from any theories concerning it. This interpretation is not a scientifically verifiable contention. It does not belong to the framework of statements constituing evolutionary theory." (Goudge, 18) We have seen that Marx makes a similar remark with regards to the "principle of utility".

1:2 The Character of Marx's Theory

How does all this effect Marx's system? There are two preliminary remarks that one must make before attempting to answer the question. In the first place, Marx was very critical of Positivism. In a letter to Engels he once wrote that "Positive philosophy means ignorance of everything positive." (Bottomore and R.) In another letter he said:

I am studying Comte on the side because the British and French make so much fuss over that fellow. What captivates them is the encyclopaedic about him, the synthesis. But compared with Hegel it is wretched (in spite of the fact that Comte as a professional mathematician and physicist is superior to him, i.e. superior in details; but even here Hegel is infinitely greater on the whole). And this trashy positivism appeared in 1832! (Sel. Corr.180)

As we hope will become clearer throughout this work, Marx's dislike for Comte was not only or mainly on account of the latter's social views but for more fundamental and doctrinal reasons. He in fact wrote to E.S Beesly saying: "Permit me to observe by the way that as a Party man I entertain a thoroughly hostile attitude towards Comtism, while as a scientific man I have a very poor opinion of it."(Ibid.266)

One can argue that Marx's whole system militates against the narrow perspective and rigid determinism of the positivistic tradition. H. Marcuse points out that:

Marx considered society to be irrational and hence

evil, so long as it continued to be governed by inexorable objective laws. Progress to him was equivalent to upsetting these, an act that was to be consummated by man in his free development. The positivist theory of society followed the opposite theory. (Marcuse, 332)

Marcuse sums up the distinction he finds between a positivist's perspective of reality and Marx's. He writes:

The positivist idea of order refers to an ensemble of laws entirely different from the ensemble of dialectical laws. The former are essentially affirmatory and construct a stable order, the latter, essentially negative and destructive of stability. The former sees society as a realm of natural harmony, the latter as a system of antagonisms. "The notion of natural laws entails at once the corresponding idea of a spontaneous order, which is always coupled with the notion of some harmony. (ibid. 349)

Marx was also very critical of "philosophy" mainly because of what he regarded as its "speculative approach", its introversive character and its aloofness from the "outside world". "Philosophy and the study of the actual world" he once wrote, "have the same relationship to one another as masturabation and sexual love." (Ger. Id.103) 11 The philosophy Marx had mainly in mind was German philosophy "which descended from heaven to earth" in contrast to his theory which, he claims, "ascended from earth to heaven." (ibid.48) He claims that instead of "empty talk about consciousness...real, knowledge has to take...place." Marx calls this knowledge, "real, positive science." However, in the perspective of his rejection of Positivism, it is clear that Marx's idea of "science" is very different from the commonly accepted view.

While keeping in mind Marx's views on Positivism and Philosophy we must now examine the character of Marx's doctrine in the perspective of the three basic characteristics we have previously identified with a philosophical theory. Let us take the question of moral evaluation first. Marx seems to follow, in part, the "old school" in this matter and to argue that certain values and considerations are not amen-

able to scientific treatement in a narrow sense. This limitation, he claims, can be traced back to the nature itself of science. Marx's view on this matter is implied by his analysis of political economy as a science. He argues that political economy, especially as it develops scientifically within Ricardo's system, overlooks certain considerations and values. This, he states, is not an abuse on the part of its exponents but a sign of their "scientific" method. In the Manuscripts he points out that:

M.Michel Chevlier reproaches Ricardo with having abstracted from ethics. But Ricardo is allowing political economy to speak its own language, and if it does not speak ethically, this is not Ricardo's fault. M.Chevalier abstracts from political economy in so far as he moralizes, but he really and necessarily abstracts from ethics in so far as he practices political economy. (Manus.152)

Marx's argument seems to be that from the point of view of political economy as a strict science there is, per se, no contradiction in the fact that within capitalism we have a steady growth of wealth and at the same time widespread pauperization. A contradiction no doubt existed in his mind and, he would claim, in the minds of all who care to see things objectively; but it obtains from a different, wider and richer perspective of reality than political economy is capable of. This view is confirmed when Marx characterizes Ricardo's system together with its insensitivity to the sufferings of the workers, as ruthless scientific:

Thus Ricardo's ruthlessness was not only scientifically honest but also a scientific necessity from his point of view. But because of this it is also quite immaterial to him whether the advance of the productive forces slays landed property or workers. If this progress devalues the capital of the industrial bourgeoisie it is equally welcome to him. If the development of the productive power of labour halves the value of the existing fixed capital, what does it matter, says Ricardo. The productivity of human labour has doubled. This here is scientific honesty. Ricardo's conception is, on the whole, in the interest of the industrial bourgeoisie, only

because and in so far as, their interests coincide with those of production or the productive development of human labour. Where the bourgeoisie comes into conflict with this, he is just as ruthless towards it as he is at other times towards the proletariat and the aristocracy. (Surplus Val.11.118)13

Commenting on a passage from Ricardo's economic works, Marx again points out that in the latter's perspective "the 'proletariat' is sacrificed to wealth. In so far as it is irrelevant to the existence of wealth, its existence is a matter of indifference to wealth. Here mass — mass of human beings — is worth nothing. These three instances exemplify Ricardo's scientific impartiality."(ibid.126) This "impartiality", is, we suggest, the key word. By acknowledging certain values as meaningful and real and at the same time acknowledging that they are not amenable to a strictly scientific treatment Marx is rejecting "the deadly invasion of an exaggerated scientism" which D.Solle finds in the works of Althusser. (Solle, 424)

Marx's view on science seems to agree with Whitehead's assertion that "science tries to see what is general in what is particular." In this sense it could be said that science often works within a context of "phenomenal homogeneity" and ignores, if it does not negate, trans-phenomenal considerations. This can give rise to two positions with regards to those "realities" which scientific inquiry overlooks. In the first place, one can reject absolutely the existence and meaningfulness of anything which falls outside the range of scientific investigation. This is a case of agnostic or skeptical positivism. L. Beck points out: "many philosophers closely associated with positivism have argued that it is incorrect to call value judgments real judgments or propositions at all."(Beck.188) Secondly, one can involve oneself in a category mistake by applying one's scientific findings indiscriminately to all the "particulars" which have been "generalised" within one's scientific perspective.

There is evidence that Marx avoided these two extreme positions even if his own remains vague and ambiguous. As we have seen he acknowledged the onesidedness of a purely scientific perspective and this implies other considerations which transcend it for otherwise his judgment would be pointless. Marx distinguished between the scientist as an individual and as a scientist which again goes to show that he acknowledged the existence and meaningfulness of trans or para-scientific considerations within the individual scientist himself. He says of Ricardo:

It is not a base action when Ricardo puts the proletariat on the same level as machinery or beasts of burden or commodities, because (from his point of view) their being purely machinery or beasts of burden is conducive to "production" or because they really are mere commodities in bourgeois production. This is stoic, objective, scientific. In so far as it does not involve sinning against his science, Ricardo is always a philanthropist, just as he was in practice too. (Surplus Val.11.119)

chose to be an ox, one could of course turn one's back on the suffering of mankind and look after one's own skin."(Sel. Corr.185) It was precisely this type of indifference to human suffering which according to him characterises political economy as a science against which Marx reacted strongly. Later on we shall see how Marx accounts for this onesidedness and exclusive character of a science such as political economy. He will imply that we should develop a higher form of science; the "science of man".

Regarding the second position involving a category mistake Marx criticised those who "homogenised" reality and failed to recognise differences in kind. He pointed out, for example, that:

We speak of labouring animals, working machines, and even say poetically that the iron works in the furnace, or works under the blows of the hammer. It even screams. And nothing is easier than to prove that every "operation" is labour, for labour is -- an

operation. In the same way one can prove that everything material experiences sensation, for everything which experiences sensation is -- material. (Surplus Val.111.179)15

In <u>The German Ideology</u>, after quoting from "the true socialist" according to whom "all quibbles about names are resolved in humanism; wherefore communists, wherefore socialists? We are human being", Marx and Engels remark: "tous freres, tous amis. Wherefore human being, wherefore beasts, wherefore plants, wherefore stones? We are bodies!"(Coll.W. Vol.V.466-467)¹⁶

As far as the "noetic" character of Marx's system is concerned, it could be argued that his theory is allegedly a "vehicle of knowledge" in a philosophical sense. Marx claims to describe reality and provide the "truth". He distinguishes between a "critical" and a "non-critical" consciousness. He points out that we "must regard it as a real advance to have gained beforehand a consciousness of the limited character as well as of the goal of this historical movement" — that is, the movement of private property — "and a consciousness which reaches out beyond it." (Manus.154) This critical insight which is possible to man is again implied when Marx says:

What is called historical evolution depends in general on the fact that the latest form regards earlier ones as stages in the development of itself and conceives them always in a one-sided manner, since only rarely and under quite special conditions is a society able to adopt a critical attitude towards itself; in this context we are not of course discussing historical periods which themselves believe that they are periods of decline. The Christian religion was able to contribute to an objective understanding of earlier mythologies only when its self- criticism was to a certain extent prepared, as it were potentially. Similarly, only when the self-criticism of bourgeois society had begun, was bourgeois political economy able to understand the feudal, ancient and oriental economies.(Pol. Econ.211)17

"The reform of consciousness", Marx claims, is to be achieved "not through dogmas but by analysing mystical consciousness obscure to itself, whether "its appear in reli-

gious or political form."(Early W.209) 18 This is strikingly similar to Whitehead's contention that "'the purpose of philosophy is to rationalize mysticism, " which means, according to Beck, "to render intelligible the view of the whole that comes from imagination, speculative flights and what Whitehead calls 'direct insights into depths as yet unspoken.'" (Beck.21)

It is only because we have the potentiality for critical conssiousness that we are able to "catch a glimpse of the material conditions necessary for the emancipation of the proletariat and for the formation of a new society."(Poverty,125) Marx emphasises man's ability "to expound the real process of production; "(Ger.Id.58) he also claims that "in the measure that history moves forward, and with it the struggle of the proletariat assumes clearer outlines, [communists] no longer need to seek science in their mind; they have only to make note of what is happening before their eyes and to become its mouthpiece."(Poverty,125)

To appreciate the "noetic" value of Marx's contentions one must distinguish the method of discovery from the method of proof. For Marx the method of discovery is not purely speculative. It involves work, activity, "praxis", because both the "cognoscens" and the "cognoscibile" are undeveloped. As he writes in Capital "the problem and the means of solution arise simultaneously."(Cap.1.88) The method of proof, however, is not identical with verification as in positive science. This is where the critical awareness comes into play. Human consciousness must recognise the truth and embrace it even when verification, in a scientific sense, is not available. Marx's belief in the ability of human consciousness to see the "truth" when the approriate time comes, remains unshaken. This "seeing" is assumed in a comprehensive, intellectualistic and one could even say, a "speculative" sense.

One must, therefore, say that Marx's knowledge claims are not the type one finds in a purely scientific theory;

they do not involve mere assumptions but "metaphysical presuppositions"; they involve sentences which <u>do</u> require that "we know them in fact to be true" and therefore it is <u>not</u> enough to understand them as in the case of "scientific statements".

The third factor which argues for the philosophical character of Marx's system emerges from its "existential" dimention — existential in the sense that Marx's theory allegedly describes a "process that has gone and is going on quite independently of any theorising about it"(Goudge,157) Moreover, Marx's doctrine makes it clear that this process has also an "essential" dimension; it is intimately and causally related to the fulfilment itself of man's very being. Marcuse correctly points out that:

Freed from the limitations of a specialized science, the economic categories are seen to be determining factors for human existence even if they denote objective economic facts (as in the case of commodity, value, ground rent). Far from being a mere economic activity labour is the "existential activity" of man, his "free, conscious activity" -- not a means for maintaining his life but for developing his "universal nature". (Marcuse, 274)

In the Manuscripts Marx had written:

• Only through developed industry -- i.e., through the medium of private property -- does the ontological essence of human passion come into being, in its totality as in its humanity; the science of man is therefore itself a product of man's establishment of himself by practical activity. (Manus.165) 21

In a letter to P.V. Annekov Marx gives clear expression to the claim, running throughout his whole system, that "the social history of men is never anything but the history of their individual development, whether they are conscious of it or not."(Poverty,181) Again a reference is made in The German Ideology about man's "active life-process" which can be described in an objective and critical way but which goes on independently of man's consciousness. "Communism", Marx says, "is for us not a state of affairs which is to be

established, an <u>ideal</u> to which reality has to adjust itself. We call communism the <u>real</u> movement which abolishes the present state of things."(Ger.Id.56-57) Similarly, it is claimed that "The social structure and the State are continually evolving out of the life-process of definite individuals, but of individuals, not as they may appear in their own or other people's imagination, but as they <u>really</u> are; i.e., as they operate, produce materially, and hence as they work under definite material limits, presuppositions and conditions independent of their will."(ibid.46-47)

Consistent with this perspective, Marx does not hold the capitalist personally responsible for the social injustice he perpetrates against the workers. If man is not yet a "completed being", he cannot be held fully responsible for the evil stemming from his state of undevelopment. Marx concedes this much in an apologetic remark on the capitalist and the landlord. He writes:

To prevent possible misunderstanding, a word. I paint the capitalist and the landlord in no sense couleur de rose. But here individuals are dealt with only in so far as they are the personifications of economic categories, embodiments of particular class-relations and class-interests. My standpoint, from which the evolution of the economic formation of society is viewed as a process of natural history, can less than any other make the individual responsible for relations whose creature he socially remains, however much he may subjectively raise himself above them.(Cap.1.10)

Since "the active life process" of Marx's system, like the evolutionary process "has an existential status of its own right" what Goudge says of evolution applies to Marx's system:

We can appropriately ask whether this real process has an overall <u>direction</u>, whether it exemplifies <u>progress</u> or <u>retrogression</u>, whether it shows signs of <u>purpose</u>, whether any special significance is to be attributed to it in virtue of the fact that the process has given rise to <u>consciousness</u> or <u>mental</u> phenomena. (Goudge, 157)

Well. Marx raises most of these questions himself and often

provides answers, whatever their validity or truth value. Yet "these are metaphysical questions." To raise and answer them indicates a philosophical commitment. L. Duprè points out on this matter that "What Marx objected to was not Hegel's goal of understanding the real in its totality but his aprioristic speculative-logical approach." (Dupre, 213)

Before we pass definite judgment on the nature of Marx's theory, it is important to discuss briefly what Marx had in mind when he intimated the need for a "higher" form of science which would avoid the limitations of a "purely" scientific perspective as found in Ricardo's system. We have to find out 1) Marx's own conception of a higher form of science; 2) The reasons why Ricardo's "scientific impartiality" is inadequate and why, according to Marx, Ricardo went wrong. Let us start with the second point first.

If we analyse carefully Marx's criticism of Ricardo's system we find that, according to him, the latter's limitations stem from two distinct causes, one psychological, the other epistemological. The psychological reason can be traced back to a common malaise which Marx imputes to many scholars and thinkers, even those he admired, and which he often refers to as "juridical blindness". It consists in a mixture of prejudice and over-confidence regarding one's studies and findings. In a letter to Engels Marx wrote on this matter:

Human history fares like palaeontology. Even the best minds absolutely fail to see -- on principle, owing to a certain juridical blindness -- things which lie in front of their noses. Later, when the moment has arrives, one is surprised to find traces everywhere of what one has failed to see.(Sel.Corr.201)

This malaise expresses itself in a certain narrow-mindedness which tends to lead one to absolutise one's conclusions instead of appraising them in their correct historical perspective. When this happens a person draws unwarranted conclusions. Marx points out two instances where, according to him, Ricardo drives himself into a mistaken analysis.

On one occasion he argues that Ricardo's "mistake" in identifying the rate of surplus-value with the rate of profit is due not to abstraction as such but to "forced abstraction."

It must be noted that Ricardo commits all these blunders, because he attempts to carry through his identification of the rate of surplus-value with the rate of profit by means of forced abstraction. The vulgar mob has therefore concluded that theoretical truths are abstractions which are at variance with reality, instead of seeing, on the contrary, that Ricardo does not carry true abstract thinking far enough and is therefore driven into false abstraction. (Surplus Val. 11.437)

We have here two very important conceptions. First we have an acknowledgement of the epistemological value of "rational abstraction" which Marx never questioned. Secondly, we have an account of error analogous to the one found in Descartes. Ricardo allegedly commits a mistake because he abuses his rational power "by means of forced abstractions." In another instance Marx criticizes Ricardo because the latter presupposed that "the bourgeois mode of production is the absolute mode of production."(ibid.527) This, one could say, amounts to a charge that Ricardo went ultra vires. According to Marx, it was also "juridical blindness" that kept Ricardo from realizing the possibility of "over-production of commodities" within the capitalist system. He claims:

All the objections which Ricardo and others raise against over-production etc. rest on the fact that they regard bourgeois production either as a mode of production in which no distinction exists between purchase and sale -- direct barter -- or as social production, implying that society, as if according to a plan, distributes its means of production for the fulfilment of the various social needs, so that each sphere of production receives the quota of social capital required to satisfy the corresponding need. This fiction arises entirely from the inability to grasp the specific form of bourgeois production and this inability in turn arises from the obsession that bourgeois production is production as such, just like a man who believes in a particular religion and sees it as the religion, and everything outside of it only as false religions. (ibid.528-529)

Other alleged victims of "juridical blindness", specifically mentioned by Marx, are G.Ramsay, and R.Jones, both of whom Marx regarded as possessing a good grasp of political economy.

In <u>Capital</u> Marx contrasts the English Factory Inspectors, the best example of whom was L.Horner, who showed a degree of critical awareness and objectivity in their reports of the factory conditions, with their Scottish counterpart who, according to him betrayed "juridical blindness". He mentions specifically "Factory Inspector Stuart, himself a Scotchman, and in contrast to the English Factory Inspectors, quite taken captive by the capitalistic method of thinking." (Cap.1.311,n.2) Here we have a clear indication of the psychological factors which are responsible for one's errors in judgment. Under identical conditions of existence, both uncritical and critical consciousness are possible. 22

The other reason for Ricardo's limitation and errors, according to Marx, and which we have termed "epistemological" is more subtle but also more vital for an appreciation of Marx's theory. Marx suggests that the problem stems from the perspective of the scientific method itself, insofar as it abstracts from the human element. In other words, the limitations of a science, such as political economy and any other science. Marx claims, are identical with its "impartiality", "ruthlessness" and "stoicism". It is, therefore, a limitation which no amount of purely scientific insight or scholarship can remedy. More specifically the limitations come from the fact that science in its pure state cannot grasp or fathom the human element. In Marx's perspective, therefore, it can be said that political economy does violence to human nature by its very scientific character itself. The problem with this particular science is that its subject matter consists of "relations between persons", "social relations" existing independently of the individual but not of social conscious existence. Political economy, however, treats them as "relations between things", existing independently of human

conscious existence. It regards them in a "scientific" way as if they were "natural phenomena" — the way a chemist or any other natural scientist regards his subject matter. Its failure and violence consist precisely in regarding in a scientific way, certain phenomena which should not be thus regarded. Its stoicism, impartiality, scientific ruthlessness are misplaced and misapplied. To remove the limitations and "crude materialism" of political economy one will have to suspend it altogether — this is precisely what Marx had in mind. The evils of political economy can be eradicated only "from outside" — hence revolution not reform is called for; a revolution not necessarily in a bloody sense but as a radical change of socio-economic and productive life.

As in the case of so many thinkers, Marx claimed to see and possess the "truth" and was in the habit of dismissing as "superstructural" and inadequate that which did not agree with his system. As we have seen he took Ricardo to task for absolutising political economy and for failing to see beyond it. Still, he himself claimed to see through and beyond the capitalist system and the confines of political economy and envisage a better and more rational form of human existence. Supposing one overcomes one's "juridical blindness", something Marx clearly regarded as possible, what factor provides the critical insight which overcomes the onesidedness of "scientism" as epitomised by political economy? This is a crucial question because it involves the validity of Marx's own theory. One could say that within Marx's perspective where "the problem and the means of solution arise simultaneously," the phenomenon of "contradictions" is the main factor that gives rise to the critical awareness. But what type? Two types of contradictions are suggested by Marx's system. A contradiction can be taken in a "factual-pragmatic" or scientific sense, involving a conflict between phenomena. The best example is the one Marx himself provides, namely, the periodic cycle of crises that plague the capitalist system.

One could also take the case of slavery when it ceased to be economically viable, Nevertheless, one can speak of a contradiction involving an evaluative and "speculative" appraisal which is insightful and truly cognitive. 23 This type of contradiction appeals to the mind: it involves a critical awareness and an appraisal that transcends mere physical and empirical phenomena. Mark's views on the wages-system is a case in point. Even if wages rise, Marx would still insist. (as he in fact did insist), that a contradiction persists in the very attempt to evaluate human labour by its "necessity needs". This contradiction presupposes an element of the "ideal", of the "speculative" regarding the true nature of The two types of contradictions are not self-exclusive. For example, slavery is both an economic liability and a moral evil because it violates human nature. Capitalism is both economically irrational and humanistically decadent. It would. however, be wrong to identify the two types of contradictions, we believe "Scientific Socialism" does. A "scientific" contradiction alone lacks the necessary perspective for any constructive and positive action. A factual-pragmatic crisis tells you that something is wrong but does not, per se, provide a solution. If the contradiction is merely "factualpragmatic" both the foresight which Marx constantly implies in his works and the analytic insight on the strength of which he appraises a given situation would be impossible.

In view of the above one will have to say that what Marx understood by a new and higher form of science was something fundamentally different from what is commonly regarded as "science". He had in mind a science of man which would synthesize all the different sciences together in much the same way as Aquinas tried to do within a religious perspective. To a certain extent, what God was to Aquinas, human nature was to Marx. His works suggest that since man, as an emergent novelty is qualitatively different from the "rest of nature" man should have a special science. Since man is further the

"sovereign of nature" he should be the focal point. Reality,
Marx suggests, should be organised and interpreted <u>sub</u>

<u>specie hominis</u>. An "ordinary" science can never do justice
to a study of human nature because to it the human dimension
remains inaccessible. Human nature, he suggests, demands
a human science just as "external hature" calls for natural
science. Marx clearly implies this view when he criticises
Darwin for applying his "findings" on to the human species,
as we shall soon discuss. His view on the matter is also
indicated by his assertion that "an abstract law of population
exists for plants and animal only, and only in so far as man
has not interfered with them."(Cap.1.632)

According to Marx, the fact that the different sciences have developed independently of human welfare is symptomatic of a stage of undevelopment and alienation. He claims that "It stems from the very nature of estrangement that each sphere applies to me a different and opposite yardstick — ethics one and political economy another." (Manus.152) What applies to the relationship between political economy and ethics applies, in Marx's view, in the case of every other science. Scientism should be replaced by humanism. He claims that ultimately "natural science will lose its abstractly material — or rather, its idealistic — tendency, and become the basis of human science, as it has already become the basis of actual human life, albeit in an estranged form. One basis for life and another basis for science is a priori a lie." (ibid.143)

There is, therefore sufficient evidence to justify the view that Marx's doctrine is genuinely philosophical. In the final analysis, however, Marx's system cannot be tidely fitted into any established type of theory. It has both a scientific and a philosophical character but remains, in essence, in a class of its own. It is a discipline which has as its subject matter the human species, its development and dialectical relationship with nature.

If Marx's insight into human nature is correct, the "existential" process of human development is still going on today both in the "free" and in communist countries, and despite the different conditions of existence prevailing in each country we would find evidence of it. There is little plausibility in the contention that the dialectical process has stopped in contemporary society either capitalist or communist. The full and total man who recognises and organises his "forces propres as social forces so that social force is no longer separated from him in the form of political force" (Early W.234) and who is completely emancipated and self-actualised, has not yet materialised. Mankind is still in a process of "becoming"; it is still in its adolescence.

Marx rejected the view that history and human destiny is, in the main, to be decided or led by the view or ideas of an individual or group of individuals, including himself, in any doctrinaire fashion. He criticised Lassalle because the latter "fell into the same mistake as Proudhon: instead of looking among the genuine elements of the class movement for the real basis of his agitation, he wanted to prescribe the course to be followed by this movement according to a certain doctrinaire recipe."(Sel.Corr.214) By the same rationale he characterises as "parliamentary cretinism" the disorder "which penetrates its unfortunate victims with the solemn conviction that the whole world, its history and future, are governed and determined by a majority of votes in a particular representative body."(Revolution, 2) 25 Basically, what Marx is against is the naive view of the causal factors influencing history: a view which attributes to one person or to a particular ideology, the full responsibility for the appearance of a new stage in human development.

The historical development of human freedom will, we hope, clarify the issue better. Although freedom is by no means a clear or univocal concept and means different things to different people, "yet these meanings, though widely dif-

ferent, have something in common." (Maritain, 1945, 94) Within the Scholastic tradition, especially Thomistic, there are two essential kinds of freedom, 1) Libertas spontaneitatis -- i.e., absence from constraint external to the subject; 2)Libertas arbitrii or freedom of choice, -- i.e., absence of constraint internal to the subject. A subject can have one kind of freedom without having the other. For instance, it is claimed that an animal can have libertas spontaneitatis, (e.g. a wolf in the wilderness) but not libertas arbitrii, which is a prerogative of man, Man has, by nature, libertas arbitrii but for some reason or other may lose his libertas spontaneitatis, e.g., a prisoner or a slave. The freedom we are concerned with, at the moment, is libertas spontaneitatis which, in the case of man, has a social and political dimension. type of freedom has passed through different formulations and realisations. For example, with the "ancients", citizens actively participating in public affairs portrayed "liberty": To be alone, isolated, a "privatus" was not a sign or expression of "freedom" but a deprivation of one's freedom. the 18th and 19th centuries liberty came to mean, more and more, autonomy from the interference of the state. This was succinctly expressed by B. Constant when he said "liberty means resistence". Every type of political and social freedom, including the one we recognise and try to realise in the contemporary Western world, is not the product of mere reflection or intellectual activity of some great thinker. is rather, according to Marx, inspired and suggested by a particular mode of production prevailing at the time. He argues that "people won freedom for themselves each time to the extent that was dictated and permitted not by their ideal of man, but by the existing productive forces."(Ger.Id.115-116) This should not be taken in an anti-intellectualistic sense; neither should it detract from the intellectual achievement of gifted thinkers who were sensitive to the needs of the time and managed to overcome their "juridical blindness"; nor

should it be taken to mean that ecomomic and purely material conditions create values as such. The point is rather that certain ideas and insights become available when the spatiotemporal milieu develops to a certain point. For example, Lacordaire's insight that "Between rich and poor, strong and weak, it is liberty which oppresses and law which frees" is mainly inspired by the growing injustices within the system of "free enterprise". Marx argues in a similar manner that:

Equality and freedom are thus not only respected in exchange based on exchange values but; also, the exchange of exchange values is the productive, real basis of all equality and freedom. As pure ideas they are merely the idealised expressions of this basis; as developed in juridical, political, social relations, they are merely this basis to a higher power. And so it has been in history. Equality and freedom as developed to this extent are exactly the opposite of of the freedom and equality in the world of antiquity, where developed exchange value was not their basis, but where, rather, the development of that basis destroyed them. Equality and freedom presuppose relations of production as yet unrealised in the ancient world and in the middle ages. (Grund. 245) 26

Marx's point seems to be that freedom and equality as expressed in Greek consciousness and Greek practice were clearly different from those expressed in the feudal system where serfdom replaced slavery — again, with the rise of capitalism, another change. These changes constitute, in essence, a deliberative and rational reaction by human consciousness to a changing environment. They express themselves in the consciousness of the time and are recorded in the works of great thinkers.

A great thinker, therefore, is not one who invents or creates values (abstracting from divine inspiration), but one who is sensitive to the imperatives and aspirations of the time and recognises the need for certain modifications in traditional values or their total rejection. Strictly speaking this view merely claims that there should be an intelligent reaction to a changing environment. It is not a

relativism that is being advocated but a relationalism.
1:3 Marx and Evolution

Although a philosophical perspective of reality is different from a scientific one, philosophers are "certainly concerned with the same world as the one the scientist explores and if the latter gleans reliable information about facts and their regular consequences" the philosopher must accept it as "grist" for his mill. (Rickman, 14) 27 The theory of evolution, one can argue, provides considerable "grist" for the philosopher's mill. This theory is bound to affect philosophy and even metaphysics because if its conclusions are true "certain world-pictures have to be rejected because they conflict with them." (Goudge, 158) Other systems will have to modify or reject some of their presuppositions, For example, it is difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile the traditional doctrine of fixed essences as a priori and necessary "forms" of the different species, with evolutionary thought. Since Marx was so emphatic about his system having an empirical basis, the postulates and conclusions of evolutionary theory cannot be ignored in any analysis of his theory of human nature. Moreover, it is common knowledge that Marx "was very enthusiastic about the theory of evolution and Darwin's work. In a letter to Ferdinand Lassalle Marx once wrote: "Darwin's book is very important and serves me as a naturalscientific basis for the class struggle in history."(Sel.Corr.123) Besides there are unmistakable strains of evolutionary thought throughout his system. For example, Marx subscribes to the doctrine of "generatio aequivoca" regarding the origin of the human species, on the basis of which he rejects the doctrine of the creation. He claims that "generatio aequivoca is the only practical refutation of the theory of creation." (Manus.144)

Two important points have to be born in mind when comparing Marx's doctrine with the theory of evolution. In the first place when Marx was at the height of his intellec-

tual activity, the theory of evolution was still in its infancy. It is generally held that "consistent and detailed thought about the possibility of an evolution of living beings did not begin until about 1800."(Kenny,82)²⁸ Darwin's epoch-making work The Origin of The Species first appeared in 1859 and by that time Marx had already developed and formulated the basic structure of his theory. It would, therefore, be wrong to say that Marx based or patterned his system on a scientific theory of evolution because this was as yet non-existent. However, this does not imply that certain concepts which play a vital role in evolutionary theory are not active in his system or that he did not later endorse and make use of the positive contributions of this theory.

In the second place, Marx was not a natural scientist; his main concern was with man and his process of self-realisation throughout history or as he himself puts it with "the unfolding of the progressing human pack." (Grund.497) The terms of reference and the area of his intellectual activity were different from those of the biologist and paleontologist. Evolutionary thought within Marx's system is bound to have a modified sense. This should become clearer as we continue our analysis of his theory.

Three major ideas dominate Marx's system and are amenable to evolutionary thought, Emergence, Development and Finality. An interesting and revealing passage regarding the origin and nature of the human species is found in Theories of Surplus Value. Marx claims:

The existence of the human race is the result of an earlier process which organic life passed through. Man comes into existence only when a certain point is reached. But once man has emerged, he becomes the permanent pre-condition of human history, likewise its permanent product and result, and he is pre-condition only as his own product and result. (Surplus Val.111.491)

We have here a clear indication that Marx regarded the human species as a new form of life genetically descended

but distinct from more primitive forms of life. This is a basic presupposition of Marx which persists throughout his whole system. Both in the Manuscripts and in The German Ideology Marx speaks of mankind appearing through "generatio aequivoca" which again suggests the idea of "novelty", of a "critical point" within the evolutionary process. Moreover, Marx subscribed to Hegel's law that "mere quantitative differences beyond a certain point change into qualitative ones." In an evolutionary perspective one can interpret this law as a case of "macro evolution" following a process of micro mutations.

What deserves stress, however, is Marx's view of the human species, 1) as an emergent and "permanent pre-condition of human history"; 2) as the "permanent product and result" of human history, which strongly suggests the view that man is not yet "a completed being with an unchangeable human essence". Man is still in a state of "becoming". Marx implies that man has his destiny in his hands; man makes or unmakes himself, as is clear in the words, man "is precondition only as his own product and result." -This, we suggest, is a key concept within Marx's system especially with regards to the various socio-economic systems that have appeared in history "and which express the gradual self-realisation of the human race.

The third vital concept which Marx implies is that of finality. In a letter to Lassalle, referred to earlier, Marx says that, thanks to Darwin's work, "not only is the death-blow dealt here for the first time to 'teleology' in the natural sciences but its rational meaning is empirically explained..." (Sel.Corr.123) A study of Marx's works, however, makes it clear that this view does not rule out the concept of finality within his system. As L. Krader points out, "By teleology Marx intended a formative process which is wholly external to a natural object whether animate or inanimate or to nature as a whole." (Ethnol.Notes, 354) The idea of progress which literally pervades Marx's major works has

not only an evaluative dimension but also a finalistic and purposive one. The finality that Marx implies, however, rejects both animistic and theistic connotations and also the rigidity of a mechanistic determinism. It is a finality that is intrinsic to a process of fulfilment; that initiates itself with the emergence of man as a new form of life which has the objective potentiality but not the full actuality or realisation of its emergent status.

A type of finality is evident when Marx claims that "production for its own sake means...the <u>development of the richness of human nature as an end in itself."</u> (Surplus Val. 11.117-118) Marx criticises Sismondi because the latter implied that "the development of the species must be <u>arrested</u> in order to safe-guard the welfare of the individual, so that, for instance, no war may be waged in which at all events some individuals perish." This conception of reality, Marx argues, is a barren and mistaken view of the process of development of the human race:

Here again we have an indication of a "contradiction" in the "ideal" or speculative order and not in a factual-pragmatic sense alone. "The development of the capacities of the human species...at the cost of the majority of human individuals and even classes" is already regarded as a contradiction even before this situation becomes empirically manifested. In Marx's system, "contraditions" do not hand in the air or appear from no-where like the ten plagues of Egypt. They are germinal and exist latent in human existence and human consciousness as long as this existence and this consciousness are still in an undeveloped stage.

Contradictions, therefore, have an "essential" dimension; they are rooted in and help the development of the human species. As Marx understands them, they are a means to an end and obtain only within the compass of human existence.

Again finality is found in Marx's notes on Ethnology where he endorses Morgan's conception of human destiny. The latter is quoted as saying:

The human mind stands bewildered in the presence of its own creation. The time will come, nevertheless, when human intelligence will rise to the mastery over property...A mere property career is not the final destiny of mankind. The time which has passed since civilization began is but a fragment...of the past duration of man's existence; and but a fragment of the the ages yet to come. The dissolution of society bids fair to become the termination of a career of which property is the end and aim; because such a career contains the elements of self-destruction... It will be a revival, in a higher form, of the liberty equality and fraternity of the ancient gentes. (Ethnol. notes, 139) *

On the basis of the above, one realises that although Marx had a very high opinion of Darwin's work he disagreed on two very important factors. On the one hand, unlike Darwin, he regarded the human species as different in kind from the rest of the animal kingdom and in a class of its own.

Marx considered it invalid to apply the "laws" of natural evolution indiscriminately and universally to the human species. He ridicules Darwin for projecting a type of conflict which exists only within the human species on to the rest of living nature. In a letter to Engels he wrote:

It is remarkable how Darwin recognises among beasts and plants his English society with its division of labour, competition, opening up of new markets; "inventions", and the Malthusian "struggle for existence". It is Hobbes's bellum omnium contra omnes, and one is reminded of Hegel's Phenomenology, where civil society is described as a "spiritual animal kingdom," while in Darwin the animal kingdom figures as civil society. (Sel:Corr.128)

The point Marx emphasises is that the struggle going on throughout human history, within the human species, is * The words, "in a higher form" have been added by Marx humself.

different in kind from the struggle for existence which
Darwin discovered in plant and animal life. The motivation
and causal factors in each case are different. With the
human species, it is a matter of development mediated by
human consciousness and therefore conflict is bound to disappear when full human realisation is achieved. In fact
Marx strongly rejected, what he regarded as false and "naive",
the view that "the antagonism of class-interests, of wages
and profits, of profits and rent are a social law of nature"
(Cap.1.14) With the rest of living nature the motive is the
brute survival of the fittest. In the case of man a new
motive is involved. Here we have an indication of how far
Marx's conception of human nature was from that of Hobbes.

As a result of an invalid application of laws which apply to one type of living beings onto a totally different one, Darwin, according to Marx, failed to realise that, contrary to what he had imagined, he had refuted rather than confirmed Malthus. In a letter to Engels Marx points out that:

Darwin whom I have looked up again, amuses me when he says he is applying the "Malthusian" theory also to plants and animals, as if with Mr. Malthus the whole point were not that he does not apply the theory to plants and animals but only to human beings — and with geometrical progression — as opposed to plants and animals. (Sel.Corr.128)

In a letter to L. Kugelmann, Marx reiterates the same idea while criticising F.A Lange:

Herr Lange, you see, has made a great discovery. The whole of history can be brought under a single great natural law. This natural law is the phrase (in this application Darwin's expression becomes nothing but a phrase) "struggle for life", and the content of this phrase is the Malthusian law of population or, rather, overpopulation. So, instead of analysing the "struggle for life" as represented historically in various dedinite forms of society, all that has to be done is to translate every concrete struggle into the phrase "struggle for life", and this phrase itself into the Malthusian "population fantasy". One must admit that this is a very impressive method — for swaggering, sham-scientific, bombastic ignorance and intellectual

laziness.(Sel.Corr.239-240)

Marx also disagreed with Darwin on the question of finality. Marx's system is fundamentally finalistic. The process which he describes and accounts for has an aim and goal towards which mankind is according to him, slowly and painfully edging. "A purpose which lacks particular definition," he once wrote, "is no purpose at all, just as any action without aim is an aimless, senseless action." (Early W.93)

1:4 Marx's Method

We have already indicated the peculiarity of Marx's system as being both scientific and philosophical. This characteristic is bound to show itself in his method. One finds in Marx an emphasis on observation and critical analysis of "questions of fact" accompanied by an extensive use of "abstract thinking".

Earlier we pointed out an important distinction between the method of discovery and the method of proof. can also endorse Dupre's view that for a dialectician, "the content of philosophy is identical with its method."(Dupre, 213) These two conceptions, we argue, are not self-exclusive. The first distinction emphasises the spatio-temporal dimension of human knowledge and its empirical origin, as far as its "form" and "content" are concerned. It does not, per se, reject completely an element of "speculation" within human knowledge in the sense of "seeing, appraising and contemplating" a truth which comes into existence in time and space and which does not necessarily have an empirical nature. This is the type of "truths" Marx was concerned with. Speculation entails 1)a noetic activity; 2) a type of transcendence or subjectivity; 3) a perspective of an Ideal order in contrast to a mere factual-pragmatic or psychological one. Traditionally, the speculative and the Ideal have been associated with the "a-priori" but this is not necessary. One's views on the matter, we suggest, depend in the final

analysis on one's ontological and epistemological presuppositions. In the perspective of man as essentially incomplete, true knowledge, (including Marx's own theory), cannot simply be a matter of "reflection and will power"; it cannot be purely speculative or didactic but rather a result of practical activity -- of "praxis" within an insightful context. This does not necessarily mean that what is true today will be false tomorrow. As we shall be discussing later on, the situation in Marx's case seems to be that what is false today will be true tomorrow and this is a totally different matter. Marx presupposes "non-truth" as the point of departure and claims to foresee the "truth" as a result and aim of the human developmental process -a movement in which man himself remains the main author and Knowledge, in his system, consists in an awareness or insight into reality which becomes possible after change and progress have been accomplished. When, therefore, he claims in Thesis X1 "On Feuerbach": "The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it", this judgment need not be taken in an antiintellectualistic sense. One could say that Marx resorted to a historical and developmental vantage point instead of to any a-priorism or intuitive insight "sub specie aeterni". His emphasis was on the method of discovery. He stated explicitly that:

It was, of course, only possible to discover all this when it became possible to criticise the conditions of production and intercourse in the hitherto existing world, i.e., when the contradiction between the bourgeois and the proletariat had given rise to communist and socialist views. (Coll.W.Vol.V.419)

To appreciate fully the above one has to distinguish between the ability and potentiality for critical insight and the actual realisation of this insight — a distinction which, we argue, is crucial to an understanding of Marx's system and which is sustained by his own works. For Marx, the contradiction between "bourgeois and proletariat" is the highest

form of contradiction. (Ger.Id.78,84-85,87,91-94) The historical character and pitch of this contradiction provides the perspective on a social scale for a critical awareness and an intelligent appraisal not only of the present but also of man's whole developmental process in history.

Marx distinguished between "infantile" and "rational" abstraction. By the former he had in mind an intellectual activity that ignores historically essential differences within a given concept or phenomenon and is, according to him, unable "to grasp historic processes." This type of abstraction, for example, "demonstrates that economic relations everywhere express the same simple determinants, and hence that they everywhere express the equality and freedom of the simple exchange of exchange values; this point entirely reduces itself to an infantile abstraction." (Grund. 249)

Another reference to this type of abstraction is found in <u>The Poverty of Philosophy</u> where Marx parodies one type of abstraction:

The metaphysicians who, in making these abstractions, think they are making analysis, and who, the more they detach themselves from things, imagine themselves to be getting all the nearer to the point of penetrating to their core — these metaphysicians in turn are right in saying that things here below are embroideries of which the logical categories constitute the canvas...If all that exists, all that lives on land and under water can be reduced by abstraction to a logical category — if the whole real world can be drowned thus in a world of abstractions in the world of logical categories — who need be astonished. (Poverty, 106)

The "metaphysicians" Marx had in mind in the above probably were those thinkers who claimed to give, a-priori, a full and accurate account of human spatio-temporal existence. These often ended up by absolutising and reifying an empirical status quo which, given time and development, would change radically.

"Infantile" abstraction is, according to Marx, insensitive to historical and "essential" changes within the same substance, concept or category. It makes us speak of "man", labour, exchange, property, population etc., as stable and "completed" phenomena.

What Marx understood by a "rational" abstraction is indicated clearly in the following example. He states:

Production in general is an abstraction, but a rational abstraction in so far as it really brings out and fixes the common element and thus saves us repetition ... [though some] determinations [within the productive process] will be shared by the most modern epoch and the most ancient...no production will be thinkable without them...nevertheless, just those things which determine their development, i.e., the elements which are not general and common, must be separated out from the determinations valid for production as such, so that in their unity — which arises already from the identity of the subject, humanity, and of the object, nature — their essential difference is not forgotten. (Grund.85)

Another example of "rational" abstraction is given

when Marx says:

Capital in general, as distinct from the particular capitals, does indeed appear...only as an abstraction; not an arbitrary abstraction, but an abstraction which grasps the specific characteristics which distinguish capital from all other forms of wealth -- or modes in which (social) production develops. These are the aspects-common to every capital as such, or which make every specific sum of values into capital. (ibid.449)

What applies to capital applies to "man", freedom, labour etc., — the major working concepts within Marx's system. For Marx, therefore, abstraction, when used correctly, is a vital and valid instrument in scientific investigation; in certain cases, he claims, it is the only method available to analyse the facts: "In the analysis of economic forms...neither microscopes nor chemical reagents are of use. The force of abstraction must replace both."(Cap.1.8) Marx criticised the "philistine's and vulgar economist's way of looking at things [which] stems from the fact that it is only the direct form of manifestation of relations that is re-

⁺ D.W.Ryazanskaya translates "vertandige" as "sensible". Cf.Pol.Econ.190.

flected in their brains and not their <u>inner connection</u>.

Incidentally, if the latter were the case what need would there be of <u>science</u>? (Sel.Corr.191) This intriguing idea is reiterated when he states that "all science would be superfluous if the outward appearance and the essence of things directly coincided."(Cap.111.817) The same frame of mind is likewise evident when he states that "the general and necessary tendencies of capital must be distinguished from their forms of maifestation."(Cap.1.316) These are types of distinctions one finds within the Greek-Scholastic tradition and not within the natural and positive sciences of phenomena.

On the basis of the above, one could say that what Marx rejected was the "speculative and a-prioristic" approach as a method of discovery regarding matters of fact in time and space. Those who follow this method, according to him, are not really concerned with the "logic of the subject matter [empirical reality] but [with] the subject matter of logic." (Early W.73) This approach, according to him, leads one to imagine that "the ordinary empirical world is not governed by its own mind but by a mind alien to it." (ibid.62) By contrast he claims that his method of approach:

Starts out from the real premises and does not abandon them for a moment. Its premises are men, not in any fantastic isolation and rigidity; but in their actual, empirically perceptible process of development under definite conditions. As soon as this active life-process is described, history ceases to be a collection of dead facts as it is with the empiricists (themselves still abstract), or an imagined activity of imagined subjects, as with the idealists. (Ger.Id.47-48)

Here Marx is endorsing the empiricists' method of discovery but presupposing the speculative philosopher's method of appraisal and account.

The peculiarity of Marx's system and method manifests itself in the manner in which he analysed and accounted for the various economic and social systems that appeared in

history. It is clear from what Marx says that he rejected both idealistic and materialistic pre-determinisms. The various economic systems were, for him, neither pre-ordained phenomena representing the unfolding of the Absolute or the realisation of economic categories; nor were they determined in any rigid and necessitarian sense as historicism suggests. He states explicitly that:

It would therefore be unfeasible and wrong to let the economic categories follow one another in the same sequence as that in which they were historically decisive. Their sequence is determined, rather, by their relation to one another in modern bourgeois society, which is precisely the opposite of that which seems to be their natural order or which corresponds to historical development. The point is not the historical position of the economic relations in the succession of different forms of society. Even less is it their sequence "in the idea" (Proudhon) (a muddy notion of historical movement). Rather, their order within modern bourgeois society. (Grund. 107-108)

Marx analysed the various historical epochs within the perspective of the capitalist system which he regarded as the highest stage within "the pre-history of human society". (Pol. Econ. 22) He argues that:

Bourgeois society is the most developed and the most complex historic organization of production. The categories which express its relations, the comprehension of its structure, thereby also allows insights into the structure and the relations of production of all the vanished social formations...The bourgeois economy thus supplies the key to the ancient, etc. (Grund.105)

The capitalist system is, therefore, the theoretical framework in which Marx analyses the various economic and productive phenomena. Moreover, in contrast to the political economists, Marx insists that the perspective which capitalism offers is not an "absolute" but a transitory one. Although capitalism provides a trans-historical perspective as far as the ealier modes of production are concerned, it remains a historical stage that has eventually to be trans-

cended. In other words, capitalism points to a stage "beyond" it. This indicates the "speculative" character of Marx's over-all perspective. He claims:

Much more important for us is that our method indicates the points where historical investigation must enter in, or where bourgeois economy as a merely historical form of the productive process points beyond itself to earlier historical modes of produc-In order to develop the laws of bourgeois economy, therefore, it is not necessary to write the real history of the relations of production. But the correct observation and deduction of these laws, as having themselves become in history, always leads to primary equations -- like the empirical: numbers e.g. in natural science -- which point towards a past lying behind this system. These indications together with a correct grasp of the present, then also offer the key to the understanding of the past -- a work in its own right which, it is to be hoped, we shall be able to undertake as well. This correct view likewise leads at the same time to the points at which the suspension of the present form of production relations gives signs of its becoming -- foreshadowings of the future. Just as, on the one side the pre-bourgeois phases appear as merely historical, i.e., suspended presuppositions so do the contemporary conditions of production likewise appear as engaged in suspending themselves and hence in positing the historic presuppositions for a new state of society.(ibid.460-461)

The above citations, we suggest, provide a clear indication that Marx distinguished between the method of discovery and the method of account and evaluation. Empirical and historical phenomena are the "material" on which Marx works but his analysis is not limited to their historical and phenomenal incidence. In Capital he makes a very intriguing remark on the British thinkers. "The English" he says, "...have a tendency to look upon the earliest form of appearance of a thing as the cause of its existence."(Cap.l. 403) This comment, in our view, contains, in essence, Marx's attitude towards British Empiricism. His system militates against the whole empiricist tradition, especially, as far as the interpretation and appraisal of social history is concerned.

There is also implied, in the above citations from the Grundrisse, a rejection of historicism. On this matter one would do well to bear in mind the important distinction drawn by Opler "between historicism proper that is, the determination of a phenomenon by an earlier invention or discovery, and the same invention or discovery as a mark or register of the degree of development of a society." (Ethnol. Notes.51) It is evident from what we saw that Marx regards capitalism as "a mark or register of the degree of development of a society."

Since, according to Marx, the capitalist system is the perspective in which historical and empirical phenomena are analysed and organised, it is, as we pointed out, to that extent meta-historical and metempirical, though remaining spatio-temporal. The capitalist system was for Marx not just another mode of production; it was the highest mode of production of its kind in which the contradictions latent within earlier forms are brought to their logical conclusions. Marx's appraïsal of the capitalist system vis-a-vis the previous modes of production can therefore be regarded as being "speculative". Two vital questions present themselves with regards to this matter. Firstly, what has the capitalist system got which other systems lack and which entitles it to serve as the "logic", the frame-work and the perspective for a correct analysis of the other modes of production? Secondly, what enables Marx to see beyond the capitalist system and to claim that this system itself points to a stage "beyond"? ' To assert that capitalism will create its own contradiction and negate itself is not very illuminating. Besides it leaves the first question unanswered. As we hope will become clear within this work, capitalism represents, within Marx's system, the complete rule of a crudely materialistic imperative over mankind, expressed by the "movement of private property". It constitutes the total negation and violation of man. expected people to react intelligently against this situation

and suspend it, thus effecting the "negation of the negation".

If Marx is correct in his analysis one is entitled to claim that the human species is moving slowly but steadily towards a unity of ideology, a universal moral and ethical consciousness. This conclusion is suggested by the universal and "world-historical" character of Marx's proletarian revolution(Ger.Id.56); by the international and "civilizing influence of capital" in relation to which all earlier modes of production "appear as mere local developments of humanity and as nature-idolatry"(Grund.409-410) and by Marx's contention that the "development of capitalist production creates an average level of temperament and disposition amongst the most varied peoples. It is as truly cosmopolitan as Christianity."(Surplus Val.111.448)

NOTES: CHAPTER ONE

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- 9. T.B. Bottomore and M. Rubel, <u>Karl Marx</u>; <u>Selected Writings</u> in <u>Sociology and Social Philosophy</u>. Penguin Books, 1973.
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- 16. The German Ideology. K. Marx, F. Engels, Collected Works, Vol.V. Inter. Pub. N.Y. 1976.
- 17. K.Marx, A Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy. Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1971.
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- 20. The use of Latin terms and expressions throughout this work is limited to a few phrases which we think convey our thought in a precise and concise way. Marx himself resorted to Latin for the same purpose.
- 21. See also Ger. Id. p.42.
- 22. In Ch.lV we shall see how Marx himself succumbed to "juri-dical blindness" in his doctrine on the proletariat.
- 23. Later on we shall be distinguishing between a "discrepancy" and a contradiction.
- 24. This contention is amenable to two interpretations. It can be taken to mean that we should submit man and human existence to the regimen of a strict, positive science. This seems to be the basic presupposition of "Scientific Socialism". Within a strictly scientific perspective, Marxism can and often does degenerate into a "psychological habit of thinking, a compulsion to see things in a dialectical way, based on a number of past experiences." (Dupré, 217) Alternatively, Marx's contention can be interpreted as demanding the subordination, in both a practical and ethico-rational sense, of the natural sciences to a more comprehensive "science of man". The positive and natural sciences, in this perspective, should become anthropocentric. They will obtain their significance, intelligibility and purpose, sub specie hominis.
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CHAPTER TWO

HUMAN NATURE AND EXTERNAL NATURE

In the previous chapter we cautioned against treating Marx's system as purely and strictly scientific in spite of what Marx himself claims. A similar caution is suggested with regards to Marx's materialism. Marx called himself a materialist and insisted that his doctrine was materialistic. It is vital, nonethless, to understand correctly what he meant by this characterisation.

2:1 Marx and Materialism

Anyone who attempts to come to grips with Marx's materialism must take into account the fact that Marx drew a radical distinction between the human species as a new form or quality of life and the rest of nature. He emphasised, in counterposition to "all hitherto existing materialism", the uniqueness of man vis-a-vis "external nature". As matter which thinks, as a part of subjectively-conscious-matter, man is, to Marx, sui generis. This view is implied in the distinction he draws between "so-called nature" and "humanity's own nature" (Grund. 488) Thus, within his system, the uniqueness of man is not a mere biological curiosity as is, for instance, the Austr alian platypus. Man has "something" which non-human nature, mere matter, the "physis" does not possess. It is vis-a-vis "so-called nature" or "external nature" that man's uniqueness comes out.

Marx argues against Feuerbach that although "the priority of external nature remains unassailed", the latter would
be radically different if man did not exist. Even the alleged
"'pure' natural science" which Feuerbach speaks of, Marx says:

Is provided with an aim, as with its material, only through trade and industry, through the sensuous

activity of men. So much is this activity, this unceasing sensuous labour and creation, this production, the basis of the whole sensuous world as it now exists, that, were it interrrupted only for a year, Feuerbach would not only find an enormous change in the natural world, but would very soon find that the whole world of men and his own perceptive faculty, nay his own existence, were missing.

Marx then adds that this "differentiation" between "pure" nature and "hominised" nature "has meaning only insofar as man is considered to be distinct from nature." (Ger.Id.63) The distinctness of man from nature deserves emphasis because this is what ultimately makes possible a vital polarity between the two. In fact it is clear from what Marx says that not only is man distinct from "external nature" as such, but, in accordance with his distinct nature, man provides a new aim and a new causal agency within the universe. The transformation of "nature" by "man" is not to be regarded as a mere natural or physical one, as takes place, for example, in evolutionary or biological development. Once man has emerged as a distinct type of being, nature and its laws, movement or development will no longer be the same. "Nature", Marx claims, "the nature that preceded human history, is not by any means the nature in which Feuerbach lives, it is nature which today no longer exists anywhere."(ibid.63) This view is further confirmed by Marx's contention that "an abstract law of population exists for plants and animals only, and only in so far as man has not interfered with them. "(Cap.1.632) If man is different from the rest of nature, from "so-called nature", he does not fall completely under the "laws of nature". If man is sui generis, his development and causal agency are similarly sui generis.

According to Marx, the major fallacy with political economists and other thinkers was to treat man as a mere natural being and to identify the laws and movement that apply exclusively to human nature with ordinary natural laws. (Cap.1. 18) This led to the illusion of the social Darwinists that

the age-long "contradiction", one part of humanity(the majoity) sacrificed for the welfare and development of another part (the minority), is an eternal and necessary law. He writes:

It is necessary that the mass of the labourers would not be masters of their own time and slaves of their own needs, so that human (social) capacities can develop freely in the classes for which the working class serves merely as a basis. The working class represents lack of development in order that other classes can represent human development. This in fact is the contradiction in which bourgeois society develops, as has every hitherto existing society, and this is declared to be a necessary law, i.e., the existing state of affairs is declared to be absolutely reasonable. (Surplus Val.111.97-98)

The same frame of mind is implied in his criticism of Darwin, Malthus and Positivism because these too, according to him, treat human nature as if it were indistinguishable from "external nature" and subject to its laws.

Again, it is clear from what Marx says that man imposes himself on "external nature" and shows his superiority to it. Compared to man, external nature is "inorganic" and passive. It lacks subjective vitality and constitutes man's "inorganic body". Accoring to Marx, man is "the sovereign of nature"(Surveys, 306). "For man", Marx says, "the supreme being is man." (Early W.251;257) Man, he claims further, is "the lord of creation".(ibid.266) These contentions would be meaningless if man were a mere sum of physical energies or mere natural qualities. If such were the case, man would at most be distinct from other natural beings but not from "external nature" as such. For this contrast to obtain, man: must have that "something" lacking in the rest of nature --"something" which transcends the mere physical and mere natu-It is in the context of this conception of man that one can appreciate Marx's denunciation of political economy which "knows the worker only as a beast of burden as an animal reduced to the minimum bodily needs."(ibid.290)

The uniqueness of man vis-a-vis the whole rest of nature is also implied in Marx's criticism of the doctrine of

political economists who confuse relations between <u>people</u> with relations between <u>things</u>, and this gives rise to a"crude materialism". This fallacy stems from an implicit or explicit identification between the "trans-physical" and the "physical". It is the basis of fetishism. Marx points out that:

The crude materialism of the economists who regard as the <u>natural properties</u> of things what are social relations of production among people, and qualities which things obtain because they are subsumed under these relations, is at the same time just as crude am idealism, even fetishism, since it imputes social relations to things as inherent characteristics, and thus mystifies them. (Grund.687)

In his early works, Marx had directed a similar criticism against Hegel's political philosophy which encourages a type of "physicalism". Marx had pointed out that:

Spiritualism can be seen to degenerate into the crassest materialism. At the apex of the political state birth is the decisive factor that makes particular individuals into the incarnation of the highest political office. At the highest level political office coincides with man's birth in just the same way that the situation of an animal, his character and mode of life, etc., are the direct consequences of its birth. The highest offices of the state thus acquire an animal reality. Nature takes revenge on Hegel for the contempt he has shown her. If matter is to be shorn of its reality in favour of human will then here human will is left with no reality but that of matter. (Early W.174)

Marx's point is clear and crucial to an understanding of his type of materialism. "External nature", mere matter, the "physis", does not produce or create kings, nobles, citizens, slaves etc., all of which are real and distinct phenomena nonetheless. These are not physical or mere natural properties; they are creations of "thinking matter" and not of mere matter. Marx endorsed the central thesis of Ferdinando Galiani that "the real wealth...is man" which agrees perfectly with his conception of man as the "sovereign of nature". His comments on Galiani's thesis are very interesting. They help to clarify further his conception of man

and of materialism. He states:

The whole objective world, the "world of commodities", vanishes here as a mere aspect, as the merely passing activity, constantly performed anew, of socially producing men. Compare this "idealism" with the crude, material fetishism into which the Ricardian theory develops in the writings "of this incredible cobbler", McCulloch, where not only the difference between man and animal disappears but even the difference between a living orgnism and an inanimate object. And then let them say that as against the lofty idealism of bourgeois political economy, the proletarian opposition has been preaching a crude materialism directed exclusively towards the satisfaction of coarse appetites. (Surplus Val. 111.267)

Marx's strong reaction against the charge that "the proletarian opposition has been preaching a crude materialim" argues for a cautious approach towards his type of materialism. Moreover, his ridicule of that "incredible cobbler, McCulloch" suggests that he rejected both reductivism and monism. If "thinking matter" is distinct from and in anti-thetical relationship to non-thinking matter there cannot possibly be one principle of being and activity within Matter or Nature. Marx's position, as occasionally suggested by himself, approaches close to that of critical naturalism. According to Beck:

Critical naturalism is based upon a broader conception of nature than that found in materialism. Materialists begin with a conception of nature as essentially the the subject-matter of the natural sciences, and contrast nature to the realm of value, spirit, culture, and mind; then they "reduce" the latter realm to the former and say that the world is ultimately only what it is found to be in physics. Critical naturalists, on the other hand, do not begin with a distinction between what is natural and what belongs allegedly to some other realm of being; they say that the distinction between what is natural and what is not is predicated upon too thin and homogeneous a conception of nature. (Beck, 418)

Consequently, critical naturalism is distinct from both traditional materialism and idealism rejecting the monism of both these systems; it acknowledges the distinct reality

of the ideal -- the "realm of value, spirit, culture and mind" -- without either reducing it to the "physical" or accounting for it through a resort to the super or transnatural. Thus, an expanded conception of both matter and nature is implied.

2:2 Species-relations

The main object of Marx's interest is "capital" which for him is not a "thing" but a "relation" -- money, property, exchange-value, labour, together with Society and the "essence" of man are likewise "relations" or "totalities of relations". Relations, then, are the subject matter of Marx's system, therefore, their careful scrutiny is warranted. Since with Marx the ideological, political, moral, religious and philosophical super-structure ultimately depends on these relations, this matter is further emphasised. The status of the realm of mind ultimately depends on the status of the realm of mind ultimately depends on the status of the relations which are "their lord and master". Marx's position on this matter is intransigent. He states that:

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. (Pol. Econ. 20)

Marx repeatedly characterises the relations, he is interested in, as "material". The problem is to understand what he means by this qualification. If we analyse Marx's doctrine carefully we realise that within his system different types of relations are implied. The nature of a relation depends on the nature of its <u>basis</u> which is distinct from it. In <u>Theories of Surplus Value</u> Marx draws a vital distinction, (found also within the Greek-Scholastic tradition), between the "power of a thing" and the "relation" of a thing. He writes:

The <u>relation</u> of a thing to another is a relation of the two things and cannot be said to belong to either. Power of a thing, on the contrary, is something intrinsic to the thing, although this, its intrinsic quality, may only manifest itself in its relation to other things. For instance, power of attraction is

a power of the thing itself although that power is "latent" so long as there are no things to attract. (Surplus. Val.111.141)

Marx elaborates this distinction further and points out that:

If we speak of the distance as a relation between two things, we presuppose something "intrinsic", some "property" of the things themselves, which enables them to be distant from each other. What is the distance between the syllable A and a table? The question would be nonsensical. In speaking of the distance of two things, we speak of their difference in space. Thus we suppose both of them to be contained in space, to be points of space, and only after having them equalised sub specie spatfi we distinguish them as different points of space. To belong to space is their unity. (ibid. 143)

According to Marx, therefore, extension is an "intrinsic property" sustaining the relation of "distance" between two physical bodies. This is an example of a physical
relation which does not obtain between the "syllable A and
a table." By contrast, Marx points out that the relation between commodities, namely, the exchange-value, has no such
physical or mere natural basis. He writes:

But what is this unity of objects exchanged against each other? This exchange is not a relation which exists between them as natural things. It is likewise not a relation which they bear as natural things to human needs, for it is not the degree of their utility that determins the quantities in which they exchange. (ibid.144)

The above is of the utmost importance for an understanding of Marx's whole system. It deserves our careful attention. We realise that Marx not only distinguishes the relation between commodities — one of the fundamental "production relations" — from physical and natural relations, but argues that the <u>basis</u> of the former relation is not found <u>in</u> the correlates themselves, in their physical or natural dimension. It exists "beyond" and "outside" these dimensions. What, therefore, is the nature of its basis?

We are, of course, interested solely in the "ontic" status of the basis of the exchange-relationship between commodities; in the philosophical rather than the economic nature of that factor or quality which serves as the "unity" between commodities making them commensurate. (According to Marx, the economic substance of exchange-value is "socially necessary labour").

Marx reiterates the view that "barter" or simple exchange of use-values taking place in pre-capitalist times, is radically different from the exchange of commodities mediated by "exchange-value" within the capitalist system. In barter or simple exchange of commodities the basis of the exchange relationship is need or utility -- "something" intrinsic to the correlates as in the case of a physical or natural relation. By contrast, within the capitalist system, the exchange of commodities takes place on the basis of "exchangevalue" which "is a generality in which all individuality and peculiarity are negated and extinguished. "(Grund. 157) "Generality" is the key word here. It reveals the type of basis sustaining the exchange relationship between commodities within the system of exchange-value. In the system of commodity production, Marx says, "exchange value obtains a separate existence, in isolation from the product."(ibid.145) Later on, Marx repeats the same vital idea: "The exchange-value of a commodity," he writes, "acquires an existence of its own alongside the commodity."(ibid.165) This means (as we hope will be further confirmed later on in our work), that, for Marx, the basis of the exchange relationship between commodities is a type of universal, a concrete universal, which mediates between the different commodities. In the exchange relationship, Marx claims:

I equate each of the commodities with a third; i.e., not with themselves. This third, which differs from them both, exists initially only in the head, as a conception, since it expresses a relation; just as, in general, relations can be established as existing only by being thought, as distinct from the subjects

which are in these relations with each other. (ibid. 143)

This is the reason why Marx insists that the basis of exchange-value is neither a physical nor a natural power or quality <u>intrinsic</u> to the commodities. The basis is extrinsic to the correlates and appears "as something alien and objective, confronting the individuals, not as their relation to one another, but as their subordination to relations which subsist independently of them and which arise out of collisions between mutually indifferent individuals." (ibid.157)

We can therefore say that, in contrast to "physical" relations which obtain <u>immediately</u> between the correlates, the exchange relation between commodities is a <u>mediated</u> one. Although exchange-value, within the capitalist system, is "the objective connection" between people existing as "an alien and independent" thing, Marx argues that:

Certainly, this objective connection is preferable to the lack of any connection, or to a merely local connection resting on blood ties, or on primeval, natural or master-servant relations. Equally certain is it that individuals cannot gain mastery over their own social interconnections before they have created them. But it is an insipid notion to conceive of this merely objective bond as a spontaneous, natural attribute inherent in individuals and inse-. parable from their nature (in antithesis to their conscious knowing and willing). This bond is their product. It is a historic product. It belongs to a specific phase of their development. The alien and independent character in which it presently exists vis-a-vis individuals proves only that the latter are still engaged in the creation of the conditions of their social life, and that they have not yet begun. on the basis of these conditions, to live it. -(ibid. 161-162).

"Capital", "property", "labour sans phrase", "money", as well as, "citizenship", "nobility", "slavery" etc. are all examples of this type of mediated relations which we shall henceforth refer to as "species relations". All of these relations obtain on the basis of an abstract objectification, a third mediating factor extrinsic to the correlates. This makes species relations different in kind from physical and

other <u>immediate</u> relations. Any illusions or mistake on this matter, according to Marx, leads either to fetishism or to Idealism. The former position regards the basis of a species relation as a natural quality intrinsic to the correlates. It confuses a relation between <u>people</u> with a relation between <u>things</u>. The latter position regards the basis as something a-priori or absolute.

So, in Marx's system exist two main types of relations, namely, immediate and mediated relations. Immediate relations have their basis intrinsic to the correlates in the form of a "power" or "quality". Physical and natural relations are of this kind. Mediated relations obtain through a third factor existing in the form of an abstract objectification. An abstraction can be regarded as being of an ideal order. Therefore those relations which have this type of basis have an ideal existence. Production and social relations, in Marx's sense, are of this kind.

If this is correct we realise that "species relations" are ideal phenomena not only because they are distinct from physical and natural relations, but also because their basis cannot be reduced to physical or natural energy or other quality which can be calculated mathematically. These relations involve an element of transcendence from the natural and physical environment. For example, Marx points out that "gold and silver, in and of themselves, are not money. Nature does not produce money any more than it produces a rate of exchange or a banker...To be money is not a natural attribute of gold and silver and is therfore quite unknown to the physicist, chemist, etc. as such." (Grund.239)

No relation can be understood without its basis. In the case of species-relations one has to look "beyond" the correlates to find this basis. Moreover, this basis changes with the different epochs. Marx points out in this respect:

> In each historical epoch, property has developed differently and under a set of entirely different social relations. Thus to define bourgeois property is no

thing else than to give an exposition of all the social relations of bourgeois production. To try to give a definition of property as of an independent relation, a category apart, an abstract and eternal idea, can be nothing but an illusion of metaphysics or jurisprudence. (Poverty, 154)

Needless to say, Marx's advice does not apply to mere possession as a physical relation which, in itself, is not subject to historical change and which is found also among animals.

If species-relations transcend the physical and natural environment, the ideological and theoretical superstructure and social forms of consciousness which they breed and sustain must also enjoy the same ideal and transcendental character. In other words, the distinctness and transcendence of the "realm of mind" is already presupposed with regards to species-relations. This, in our view, rules out epiphenomenalism and sensationalism.

The logical conclusion from the above is that the type of abstraction involved in/study of physical and natural phenomena, i.e., of "external nature", must be different from the type of abstraction involved in a study of human and social phenomena, i.e, of "human nature" and related phenomena. difference emerges from the fact that natural and physical phenomena allegedly have the basis for their intelligibility within themselves while human nature has it in a third factor. namely, a concrete universal, an ideal hypostatization. intelligibility of "human nature" is, accordingly, not agcessible to the positive and natural sciences as such. With regards to "human nature", a noetic, evaluative and conscious element is involved. Production and social relations. in Marx's sense, have to be acknowledged and identified by human consciousness before they influence people because their basis is in the "realm of consciousness" and not of the "physis".

The difference between "external nature" and "human nature" does not keep Marx from insisting that a "scientific" study of human nature is possible. He claims that production

and social relations and their movement can be examined and organised "with the precision of natural science". (Pol.Econ.21) This is possible, according to him, because although their basis is of an abstract and ideal order it is real and objective nonetheless and not a mere subjective phenomenon. As we shall continue to see, Marx is emphatic that no other being creates or enters into production and social relations. Animals and other natural or physical beings (including man as natural and physical) are involved in physical and natural relations but not in species-relations. These are the prerogative of human existence as human.

If the above is correct, we realise that in analysing Marx's system we are not dealing with "material phenomena" in the accepted sense but with a type of phenomena traditionally regarded as "ideal". Marx's preserve, therefore, is a theory that concerns real, objective phenomena which have an empirical origin but an abstract, formal or ideal nature. Accordingly, however surprising it may sound, the "economic infrastructure" which consists of an ensemble of species-relations and which Marx emphasis so much, is of an ideal order. This means that what Marx understands by "economic relations" is fundamentally different from what is commonly understood. In fact, Marx explicity states that:

The materialisation, etc., of labour is...not to be taken in such a Scottish sense as Adam Smith conceives it. When we speak of the commodity as a materialisation of labour — in the sense of its exchange— value — this itself is only an imaginary, that is to say, a purely social mode of existence of the commodity which has nothing to do with its corporeal reality; it is conceived as a definite quantity of social labour or of money. (Surplus Val. 1.171)2

Moreover, and even more intriquing, technological relations -- relations stemming from human "poiesis" and "techne" in contrast to relations stemming from human "praxis" -- contrary to what is commonly held, are not part of the infrastructure. This is explicitly stated by Marx when he points

out that "political economy...has nothing in common with technology." (Pol.Econ.51) Again in the <u>Grundrisse</u> he states categorically that "political economy is not technology." (Grund.86) (As we shall discuss later on, technological relations are a type of <u>physical</u> relations and not species-relations.)

2:3 Freedom from the Physis

We have analysed the nature of species-relations which constitute the subject matter of Marx's system. We must now analyse the nature of that being who alone is capable of positing this type of relations, viz., the human being. The nature of an agent is manifested by the nature of his operations and activities. The ideal nature of man's species-relations indicates an intrinsic element of transcendence and "freedom". This view is found in Marx's Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts. "Man", Marx writes, "is not merely a natural being, he is a human natural being. That is to say, he is a being for himself. Therefore he is a species being, and has to confirm and manifest himself as such both in his being and in his knowing." (Manus.182) Marx's characteristic of man as 1) a "being for himself" and 2) as a "species being", deserve careful and separate examination.

In order to understand what Marx is driving at when he characterises man as a "being for himself", it is important first to see what he understands by a "natural being". This is so because the characterisation of man as a "being for himself" is given in contrast to the characterisation of a "mere natural being".

When criticising Hegel's philosophy in the Manuscripts Marx gives an analysis of what he understands by a natural being. To be such, he claims, is synonymous to being a "suffering being", having an object outside oneself, being dependent on something else beyond the confines of oneself. A natural being is, therefore, fundamentally a relatum. This

relational character which implies a state of dependence, namely, the fact of having one's nature "outside" oneself, 'is, Marx argues, essential to being a natural and therefore a real being. This is important, insofar as it helps us bring out a fundamental idea of what Marx understood by the real. To be totally self-sufficient, independent and autonomous is synonymous to being a non-entity. He writes:

Man is directly a natural being. As a natural being and as a living natural being he is on the one hand endowed with natural powers of life -- he is an active natural being. These forces exist in him as tendencies and abilities -- as instincts. On the other hand, as a natural, corporeal, sensuous, objective being he is a suffering, conditioned and limited creature, like animals and plants. That is to say, the objects of his instincts exist outside him, as objects independent of him; yet these objects are objects that he needs -- essential objects, indispensible to the manifestation and confirmation of his . essential powers. To say that man is a corporeal, living real, sensuous, objective being full of natural vigor is to say that he has real, sensuous, objects as the objects of his being or of his life, or that he can only express his life in real, sensuous objects. To be objective natural and sensuous, and at the same time to have object, nature and sense outside oneself, or oneself to be object, nature and sense for a third party, is one and the same thing. Hunger is a natural need; it therefore needs a nature outside itself, an object outside itself, in order to satisfy itself, to be stilled. Hunger is an acknowledged need of my body for an object existing outside it, indispensable to its integration and to the expression of its essential being. The sun is the object of the plant -an indispensable object to it, confirming its life -just as the plant is an object of the sun, being an expression of its life-awakening power of the sun, of the sun's objective essential power. A being which does not have its nature outside itself is not a natural being, and plays no part in the system of nature. A being which has no object outside itself is not an objective being. A being which is not itself an object for some third thing has no being for its object; i.e., it is not objectively related. Its be-ing is not objective. An unobjective being is a nullity -- an un-being. (Manus. 181-182)

In the perspective of the above Marx adds: "man is not

merely a natural being: he is a <u>human</u> natural being. That is to say, he is a being for himself." The contrast between a "being for himself" and what we can term, " a being for external nature", i.e., a "mere natural being", is worth noting. This is a reiteration of the fundamental anti-thesis between "human nature" and "so-called nature". As a "natural being", man needs and depends on "external nature" for his very existence; as a "being for himself" this dependence is qualified by man's own <u>human</u> nature. This qualification is crucial to Marx's whole system. It entails two basic contentions: 1) "man" enjoys a measure of transcendence and "freedom" from the "physis", an element of trans-physicality; 2) this transcendental dimension expresses itself in human social existence, in the prevailing community. Our immediate concern is with the first presupposition.

By defining man as a "being for himself" in contrast to a "mere natural being" Marx, in our view, is claiming that man has himself, his distinct human nature, as the aim of his life and of his activity. He writes:

Man is a species being, not only because in practice and in theory he adopts the species as his object (his own as those of other things), but -- and this is only another way of expressing it -- also because he treats himself as the actual, living species; because he treats himself as a universal and therefore a free being. (ibid.112)

Man could not possibly make himself and his species the aim of his existence if he did not enjoy a "subjective integrity" and distinctness vis-a-vis the external environment or "so-called nature".

Here, a word of caution is necessary. By "man", Marx has in mind the <u>human species</u> as a type of being and not an individual in the sense of Bentham's "English shop-keeper". (Cap.1.609) The subjective integrity and distinctness of man vis-a-vis "external nature" should not be interpreted in the perspective of Hume's "problem of personal identity". Within the framework of Marx's presuppositions even to speak

of the human individual as a stable and complete actuality is meaningless. As we shall continue to see, psychological individuality itself together with the intellectual scruples and doubts regarding personal identity, which this developed individuality makes possible, are, according to Marx, a result and not the point of departure of human history. The potentiality for full individuality and personal identity, however, is presupposed from the moment the human species emerged as a distinct form of life.

Marx regards the "subjective integrity" of the human species as a fact which manifests itself in man's productive and experiential activity. This can be verified, he suggests, when one realises that man does not produce merely under the impulse of physical need, but is capable of rising above the "realm of necessity". Man, Marx argues, "produces even when he is free from physical need and only truly produces in freedom therefrom". (Manus.113) Some twenty years later the same vital idea is reiterated when he says:

The realm of freedom actually begins only where labour which is determined by necessity and mundane considerations ceases; thus in the very nature of things it lies beyond the sphere of actual material production. (Cap.111.820)

To appreciate Marx's doctrine on the relationship between "man" and "external nature" we have to understand correctly the type of "freedom" he is advocating when he uses such expressions as "realm of freedom", "freedom from physical need", "freedom from necessity and mundane considerations". It is clear from what Marx states that the "realm of freedom" which "lies beyond the sphere of actual material production" presupposes an objective potentiality in man to transcend the confines of his immediate physical existence. This objective potentiality, therefore, denotes a "freedom" from the immediacy and necessity of the "physis", from "total dominion of brute necessity, the ananke of the Greek philosopher " (Rickaby, 48); 4 a freedom, i.e., from the necessity and de-

terminism of the laws of "external nature". It is because man is not "totally dominated by brute necessity" that he can and should aspire to the "realm of freedom".

It is significant that Marx contrasts the nature and activity of man with the nature and activity of animals in order to clarify his position. The animal, Marx states, is in immediate relationship with its natural environment. It does not enjoy freedom from necessity. It, therefore, does not have itself or its species as the aim or object of its life activity in a <u>subjective</u> sense. The animal, for Marx, is a "mere natural being"; it does not rise above the realm of the "physis", the "realm of necessity". All that it does and has is part and parcel of "external nature". 5

The animal is immediately one with its life activity. It does not distinguish itself from it. It is its life activity. Man makes his life activity itself the object of his will and of his consciousness. He has conscious life activity. It is not a determination with which he directly merges. (Manus. 113)

Thus, Marx finds in man an element of transcendence, of trans-physicality and this is what makes man a "being for himself", a quality that enables man to enjoy a subjective integrity vis-a-vis the environment. It is due to this "transphysicalism" that man is capable of duplicating himself, of "folding back on himself", so to speak, in both his intellectual and practical activity. "Man", Marx claims, "duplicates himself not only as in consciousness intellectually but also actively, in reality and therefore, he contemplates himself in a world that he has created. "(ibid.114) However much, as a "natural being" man needs an object outside himself, he does not lose completely his subjective integrity in it. Man is able to keep a certain "distance" from his natural environment and physical activity because he is able to "stand out" in his subjective existence. In his relationship to "external nature", man remains the point of departure and the point of return. By defining man as a "being for himself". Marx

is thereby acknowledging and presupposing an <u>initial</u> antithesis between "human nature" and "so-called nature". L.
Durpre very well points out that "If man as conscious being
is opposed to nature at all he must be opposed to it from the
very beginning. Otherwise, the dialectic will never get off
the ground."(Dupre, 222) From what we have seen so far and
as we shall continue to see, this precisely seems to be Marx's
basic pre-supposition.

The contrast Marx draws between human and animal activity is reminiscent of Feuerbach's views on the matter. In The Essence of Christianity, Feuerbach had written that "the brute has only a simple, man a twofold life; in the brute, the inner life is one with the outer."(Manus.241) The meaning here is, as we have seen, that the "intensional" life of the animal is allegedly totally dominated by "brute necessity". In the case of man, the "intensional" life is a distinct realm of existence enjoying a measure of freedom.

It is important to emphasise that the difference between the human and the animal relationship to nature is, according to Marx, one of kind and not of degree. This is evident when Marx writes that in contrast to man who rises above the sphere of necessity, "an animal only produces what it immediately needs for itself or its young. It produces one sidedly, whilst man produces universally. It produces only under the dominion of immediate physical need"(ibid.113) The different kind of relationship implies a difference in the "being" itself of both men and animals.

The contrast between man and animals and the philosophical implications of the difference Marx finds between these two forms of life can be better appreciated in the perspective of two contentions Marx makes with regards to animals. He claims, first of all, that animals do not make progress in the proper sense of the word. They do not objectify themselves or involve themselves in any developmental process in a subjective and self-perfecting way. The phenomenon of adap-

tation and biological and evolutionary development is not ruled out, but this has nothing to do with what Marx has in mind. According to him:

The various shaping of material life is, of course, in every case dependent on the needs which are already developed, and the production, as well as the satisfaction, of these needs is an historical process, which is not found in the case of a sheep or a dog...although sheep and dogs in their present form certainly, but malgre eux, are products of an historical process.(Ger.Id.87)

Biologists, nowadays, speak of "exosomatic" or "extrapersonal" development in contrast to organic development.

Animals, it is generally held, develop in the main organically, "by the modification of organs (or behavior) or the emergence of new organs (or behavior). Human evolution proceeds, largely, by developing new organs outside our bodies or persons...

These new organs are tools, or weapons, or machines or houses...
Man instead of growing better eyes and ears, grows spectacles, microscopes, telescopes, telephones and hearing aids."(Popper, 238) The essence of this conception is found in Marx's doctrine on the relationship between man and the rest of nature. He writes in fact:

Nature builds no machines, no locomotives, railways, electric telegraphs, self-acting mules etc. These are products of human industry; natural material transformed into organs of the human will over nature, or of human participation in nature. They are organs of the human brain, created by fine human hand; the power of knowledge, objectified. The development of fixed capital indicates to what degree general social knowledge has become a direct force of production, and to what degree, hence, the conditions of the process of social life itself have come under the control of the general intellect and been transformed in accordance with it. (Grund. 706)

The imposition of "the human will over nature" is, in our view, the key concept. We have here a reiteration of the vital idea implied by Marx throughout his works that man .

"interferes" with nature -- a view that already indicates

the peculiar type of activity of which man is capable. In Capital Marx writes that:

A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labour-process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement. He not only effects a change of form in the material on which he works, but he also realises a purpose of his own that gives the law to his modus operandi, and to which he must subordinate his will. (Cap.1.178)

What deserves special attention here is Marx's view that man "also realises a purpose of his own that gives the law to his modus operandi and to which he must subordinate his will." Herein lies the germinal idea, running throughout Marx's whole system, that man is determined by his own "logos" developed by means of his own practical and conscious activity. This forcefully brings out the role of the intellect and of "theoria" within Marx's system. He explicitly makes the will subordinate to the intellect — a major postulate within the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition. It is in the perspective of this conception that we can fully appreciate the vitality and significance of Marx's contention that "men are both the authors and actors of their own drama". (Poverty, 115) The imposition of the human "logos" over external nature is implied also when Marx states:

Labour is, in the first place, a process in which both man and Nature participate, and in which man of his own accord starts, regulates, and controls the material re-actions between himself and Nature. He opposes himself to Nature as one of her own forces, setting in motion arms and legs, head and hands, the natural forces of his body, in order to appropriate Nature's productions in a form adapted to his own wants.(Cap.1.177)

It can be fairly stated that, within the perspective of Marx's system the interference of man with nature and its

laws constitutes one of the distinctive characteristics of human productive activity. Regarding this matter, two major factors have to be recognised: 1) This interference is to be understood in the perspective of that type of activity Marx refers to as "praxis"; 2) This interference could not be possible if man were a mere part of nature as he homogeneous, type of substance: if, that is to say, the "logos" of human nature were identical with the "laws" of "external nature". For example, the moon does not "interfere" with the laws of nature when it eclypses the sun; neither does a river when it floods and washes away the surrounding area, nor an erupting volcano when it ravages the country-side. All of these are different manifestations of the "laws of nature". A being "free" to some extent from the "br necessity" of natural laws can interfere with nature, and t its laws and manipulate them for better or for worse. This being in Marx's conception, is man.

By "freedom from necessity", therfore, Marx does not mean freedom from mere want, from poverty and hunger -- which is a purely empirical phenomenon, but freedom from the "realm of need" itself. For instance, a lion that has just gorged itself on its prey after a successful hunt is "free" from want and if its "territory" is abundant with potential and easy victims, his "freedom" is relatively enduring. However, within Marx's perspective, the lion is not free from the "realm of necessity" itself nor capable of transcending this realm. Of course, Marx does not say that man's "freedom from the realm of necessity" is total or absolute. Indeed, he claims that the satisfaction of this realm of necessity is the basis for realising and enjoying the "realm of freedom" (Cap.111.820)

Marx's position entails a type of freedom which is traditionally associated with deliberative and reflective action -- something which presumably, is not found among

animals. There is a remarkable similarity between Marx's position and the one found within the Thomistic doctrine.

J. Rickaby, who represents this tradition writes on this matter:

An insensible thing, having no consciousness whatever, has no light to guide it to a choice; and, where there is no light, there is no liberty. A thing of this sort is not wholly passive, else it would be void of existence, but the active powers which it has are blind... A creature with senses, but without intellect and reason, has no reflex consciousness, no faculty of advertence to its own being and condition as such. Therefore, it acts always either on native impulse or by virtue of a training received from without. An agent like this is moved by springs of feelings, more or less complicated, which are not at its own command: it is not free (Rickaby, 46)

Marx's second contention about animals is consistent with the above. He argues that as "natural beings" animals use nature and depend on it "physically" and "naturally". This follows from his analysis of a "natural being" as fundamentally a relatum. However, Marx contends that their relationship is not a subjective one. Animals do not assert themselves as subjects and do not realise a purpose of their own distinct from their nature itself. Since they lack subjectivity they remain incapable of genuinely active relationship with nature. In The German Ideology, Marx goes so far as to claim that "The animal does not enter into 'relations' with anything, it does not enter into any relation at all. For the animal, its relation to others does not exist as a relation."(Ger.Id.51) Marx's point is that the animal does not enter into formal or species relations as people do. This is what he means when he claims that "For the animal. its relation to others does not exist as a relation." _In__ the Grundrisse the same idea is reiterated. He writes:

Basically the appropriation of animals, land etc. cannot take place in a master-servant relation, although the animal provides service. The presupposition of the master-servant relation is the appropriation of an alien will. Whatever has no will, e.g. the animal

may well provide a service, but does not thereby make its owner into a <u>master</u>. (Grund.500-501)

In the <u>Manuscripts</u> Marx attempts to substantiate his views by analysing the "productive activity" of both animals and men. The contrast, by his account, is striking. He writes:

Admittedly animals also produce. They build themselves nests, dwellings, like the bees, beaver, ants, etc. But an animal only produces what it immediately needs for itself or its young. It produces one-sidedly, whilst man produces universally...An animal produces only itself, whilst man reproduces the whole of nature. An animal's product belongs immediately to its physical body, whilst man freely confronts his product. An animal forms things in accordance with the standard and need of the species to which it belongs, whilst man knows how to produce in accordance with the standard of every species, and knows how to apply everywhere the inherent standard to the object. Man therefore also forms things in accordance with the laws of beauty. (Manus.113-114)

We have here first of all, a reiteration of the idea that man imposes his "will" and "logos" on "external nature" and this is what makes it possible for him to form things "in accordance with the laws of beauty." Apart from this, Marx's aim is to demonstrate that, in its contact with Nature, the animal enters only into physical and natural relations. Consequently, it appropriates the natural environment and the natural object directly and immediately. Man, by contrast, has first to modify the object physically and appropriate it in an "ideal" context, in a mediated way, that is, by means of species-relations. Marx points out in this respect that:

Human objects are not natural objects as they immediately present themselves, and neither is human sense as it immediately is — as it is objectively —human sensibility, human objectivity. Neither nature objectively nor nature subjectively is directly given in a form adequate to the human being. And as everything natural has to have its beginning, man too has his act of origin — history — which, however, is for him a known history, and hence as an

act of origin it is a conscious self-transcending act of origin. (ibid.182)

An example will help us clarify the issue satisfactorily. A lion urinates in a number of places in order to mark its territory and keep aliens out. People, likewise, set up hedges, put up stakes, build fences and walls, more or less for the same purpose. In the perspective of Marx's system, however, there is a radical difference between the "territorial imperative" found among animals and that found among In the case of the animal this "imperative" can be reduced to a natural relation of utility, a case of mere possession rooted in instinct. In the case of people, the "terrritorial imperative" entails a species-relation and the distinct phenomenon of property. This "relation of production" is based on an abstract objectification, namely, the "community" as a distinct phenomenon, in and through which one possessions are regarded and treated as property. It is the "com- . munity" as an Ideal Totality complementing human physical existence that "defines" the terms and nature of one's property and property rights. Marx points out on this issue:

As soon as the first animal state is left behind man's property in nature is mediated by his existence as a member of a communal body, family, tribe, etc.. by his relationship to other men, which determines his relationship to nature. (Surplus Val.111.378)

Concomitantly with the establishment of the physical boundary, whether it be organic or exosomatic is to some extent immaterial, there is involved, in the case of people, an element of the <u>Ideal</u> stemming from human conscious and social existence forming the basis of "Right", "law", "morality", "politics", viz., all ideology — something which, one presumes, does not obtain within the animal kingdom. We have still to witness a moral, legal or aesthetic sense, as an ideological phenomenon and not as a set of psychological and instinctive drives or inhibitions, among animals. The point, therefore, is that man appropriates nature by means of species-relations which

are of an empirical origin but not of an empirical nature, while animals do not.

If what has been discussed above regarding the element of transcendence and freedom of the human species is correct, we realise that, in Marx's perspective, man is not reducible without remainder to a quantum of physical or neurophysiological energy. The human dimension which, as we shall continue to see, Marx equates with the social and historical, is sui generis; a <u>distinct</u> though not <u>separate</u> phenomenon of man's life. This suggests the view that within Marx's perspective, man leads a double existence -- an existence consisting of physical and natural relations, viz. immediate relations, common to all "natural being" and amenable to scientific analysis in the accepted sense; an existence consisting of species-relations which, as we have seen, are mediated by a concrete universal existing extrinsic to and independently of, the separate individuals. This, "existence" is not amenable to scientific treat ment in a positivistic sense. "realm, of freedom" which denotes human existence as human, has its own "logos" which cannot be reduced to the movement of the "physis" or to mere matter in motion. This accounts, in our view, for the tension between philosophy and science within Marx's system and for the frequent inconsistencies in many of his contentions regarding the development and future of the human species.

The doctrine of the "double existence" of the human species remains a difficult and elusive one within Marx's system and yet there is an abundance of evidence pointing to it. It is sufficient to point out that, since species-relations are distinct from and irreducible to physical and natural relations, a totality of them, constituting man's species-existence, must a fortiori be also distinct from a totality of immediate relations. Moreover, since species-relations are "free" from the "physis" their totality must likewise represent the "realm of freedom".

Specifically, the "double existence" of man is implied in the distinction Marx draws between "life-Activity" and "material life". (Ger.Id.92) Marx's analysis of "human needs" further confirms this vital distinction. He speaks of "necessity needs" and "social and historical needs". Necessity needs are defined as "those of the individual himself reduced to a natural subject".(Grund.528) The full significance of this definition can be appreciated both in the perspective of the distinction drawn earlier between, a mere natural being" and a "human natural being", and in the perspective of "social and historical needs". The "reduction" implied in the nature of "necessity needs" has not only a quantitative but also a qualitative dimension. "Necessity needs", regardless of the quantitative factor of their development and satisfaction, denote a realm of existence common to/mere natural being, namely, "physical existence". They can never do full justice to the human species as human. The realm of physical existence, "the world-view of practical need", Marx claims, in words reminiscent of the Scholastics, "is by nature narrowminded and rapidly exhausted."(Early W.240) This is not a mere naive conception of the "younger" Marx. It is reiterated in Capital. He writes:

Just as the savage must wrestle with Nature to satisfy his wants, to maintain and reproduce life, so must civilised man, and he must do so in all social formation. With his development this realm of physical necessity expands as a result of his wants; but, at the same time, the forces of production which satisfy these wants also increase. Freedom in this field can only consist in socialised man, the associated producers, rationally regulating their interchange with Nature, bringing it under their common control, instead of being ruled by it as by the blind forces of Nature; and achieving this with the least expenditure of energy and under conditions most favourable to, and worthy of, their human nature. But it nonetheless still remains a realm of necessity. (Cap.111.820)

"Historical and social needs", by contrast, denote a realm of existence exclusively human. These needs refer

both to a distinct dimension of "necessity needs" as far as people are concerned and to specifically different needs, which we can properly call "species needs". Examples of the latter are the need for culture, education, socialization, self-fulfilment etc.. It is clear from what Marx says that, for example, the "necessity need" for food and shelter in man should be distinguished from a similar need in animals. In the case of man, a "moral" evaluation is involved in the determination and "measurement" of this need. Marx is explicit about this. He argues that "there is no such thing as the value of labour in the common acceptance of the word." (Sel.Works, 209)8 One of the reasons for this is that, as he points out in Capital, in the determination of its value "there enters...a historical and moral element "(Cap.1.171) which is not amenable to a mere mathematical calculation. "Our desires, and pleasures" he argues further, " spring from society; we measure them therefore, by society and not by the objects which serve for their satisfaction. they are of a social nature, they are of a relative nature." (Wage lab. and Cap.33) This exposes the violation which, in Marx's perspective, political economy and the wages-system rpetrate against the worker. The "science of wealth" treats man as if he were "a mere natural being". Hence both the human and moral dimension of his necessity needs and his specifically "species needs" are ignored. Marx writes:

It goes without saying that the proletarian, i.e., the man who, being without capital and rent, lives purely by labor, and by a one-sided, abstract labor, is considered by political economy only as a worker. Political economy can therefore advance the proposition that the proletarian, the same as any horse, must get as much as will enable him to work. It does not consider him when he is not working, as a human being; but leaves such considerations to criminal law, to doctors, to religion, to the statistical tables, to politics and to the poorhouse overseer. (Manus.72)

"The value of the labouring power", Marx contends further,

"is formed, by two elements — the one merely physical, the other historical or social. Its <u>ultimate limit</u> is determined by the <u>physical</u> element, that is to say, to maintain and reproduce itself, to perpetuate its physical existence, the working class must receive the necessaries absolutely indispensable for living and multiplying...Besides this mere physical element, the value of labour is in every country determined by the <u>traditional standard of life</u>. It is not mere physical life, but it is the satisfaction of certain wants springing from the social condition in which people are placed and reared up." Marx adds, "This historical or social element, entering into the value of labour, may be expanded, or contracted, or altogether extinguished, so that nothing remains but the <u>physical limit</u>." (Sel. Works, 225)

The "double existence" of the human species and the distinct reality of these two "realms" of existence are implied also in the emphasis Marx puts on "free time", time free from the production of material life and devoted to. "the full development of man." In the Grundrisse Marx points out that if man is to live an authentic human life he must "step to the side of the productive process instead of being its chief actor."(Grund.705) Marx's point is that the less time spent in actual material production, the more time man has available for distinctly human activities -- activities that are free from "necessity and mundane considerations." "The less time the society requires to produce wheat, cattle etc.. the more time it wins for other production, material or mental."(ibid.172) Marx describes how free time is created by the capitalist mode of production and, in this way, this system itself gives rise to a basic requirement for human emancipation: "capital...quite unintentionally...reduces human labour, expenditure of energy, to a minimum. This will redound to the benefit of emancipated labour, and is the condition of its emancipation. "(ibid. 701) Later on he adds, "The saving of labour time[is] equal to an increase of free time; i.e., time for the full development of the individual, which

in turn reacts back upon the productive power of labour as itself the greatest productive power". This means that "Free time — which is both idle time and time for higher activity — has naturally transformed its possessor into a different subject, and he then enters into the direct production process as this different subject." (ibid.711-712)

What deserves noting is Marx's emphasis on the need for time free from "necessity and mundane considerations". This free time will enable man to engage in "higher activity" and "mental production" -- two factors relating to a "realm of existence", according to him, systematically ignored by captalism. Beyond the "realm of necessity" and "mundane considerations" Marx says, "begins that development of human energy which is an end in itself, the true realm of freedom, which, however, can blossom forth only with this realm of necessity as its basis. The shortening of the working-day is its basic prerequisite."(Cap.111.820)

2:4 Praxis or Social Activity

We pointed out earlier that the "interference" by man in "external nature" and its laws should be interpreted in the perspective of Marx's concet of "praxis". Throughout his system Marx uses the term "praxis" and not "poiesis" to denote and describe that "activity" which, according to him, both shows the true nature of man and is vital for human development. His choice of terms, we argue, is significant and purposive. It should not, therefore, be regarded as an oversight on his part or worse, attributed to ignorance. There is evidence that Marx had a solid knowledge of Greek and therefore must have known perfectly well the fundamental difference between these two terms.

Within the Aristotelian. (and Thomistic) tradition, "poiesis" is different from the movement of the "physis". The objects or products of "poiesis" (making) "owe their coming to be to an extrinsic principle (arche), the maker and not

to an intrinsic principle of change, i.e., nature (physis). (Georgiadis,57) on the basis of what we have discussed so far regarding Marx's doctrine on the animal, we would have to say that strictly speaking, animal activity is not a case of "poiesis". Although "animals also produce. They build themselves nests, dwellings, like the bees, beavers, ants etc." they remain "immediately one with their life activity." Translated in Aristotelian language, this means that the "products" or objects of animal activity "owe their coming to be...to an intrinsic principle of change, i.e. nature, (physis)".

Poiesis is also different from "praxis" (doing/acting).
The basis of this difference within the Aristotelian tradition seems to be two-fold:

1) "Poiesis" involves a "transient" action while "praxis" involves an "immanent" one. Aristotle claims that "making has an end other than itself...but the end of action cannot be other action: for good action itself is the end." (Georgiadis, 59) In this respect, we can say with C.Georgiadis that while "poiesis" is "heterotelic" -- "making is directed towards an end other than itself, namely, the production of something distinct from itself". "praxis" is "autotelic" -- "the end of acting is identical with the activity itself."(ibid.58) 2) The "arete" involved in "poiesis" is "techne", while the "arete" involved in "praxis" is a type of "theoria" which is distinct from "art" or "skill". Aristotle again claims that "making and acting are different...; so that the reasoned state of capacity to act is different from the reasoned state of capacity to make."(ibid.59) We can say that in the case, of "polesis" the "arete" involved refers to a factua pragmatic perspective and consists in the skill, art or expertise of the "maker". It manifests itself in the result. involved in "praxis", by contrast, refers to a holistic perspective, a comprehensive "theoria" which transcends a mere

factual-pragmatic situation and calls for personal commitment and moral evaluation. This means that while the object of "poiesis" can be understood and appraised independently of the agent, "praxis" and its object have to be appraised within the perspective in which they occur. Both the "theoria" and the "agent" are involved. On this matter Aristotle writes: "The products of arts have their excellence in themselves, so that it is sufficient that they have come to possess a certain quality. But acts done in accordance with the virtues are not done justly or temperately insofar as they themselves have/certain quality, but insofar as the agent is of a certain quality, when he does them."(ibid.58-59)

The above analysis was necessary to help us understand the type of activity Marx was interested in and which he termed "praxis". Marx's "praxis" has a wider meaning than the traditional one. It denotes human social and experiential activity or, simply, human social labour, both "mental" and "physical". It is vital to remark that social activity in Marx's sense is not collective activity in a mere physical or natural sense -- a phenomenon found among ants, bees and other gregarious animals. Marx's "praxis" denotes common and concerted activity subsumed under and sustained by a dominating "social theoria". This uniting principle is neither "in" the individual as in the case of "techne" in relation to "poiesis". nor "in" nature as the immanent principle of movement. is extrinsic to the individuals and their activity. It constitutes the "community" and always accompanies human existence though, as we shall see, in different forms.

To a large extent the physical co-existence and copresence of the workers is irrelevant as far as "social labour" is concerned. In Marx's perspective people can work
together without their "activity" being regarded as "praxis"
-- as was the case with the slaves. Slave activity was
regarded as being similar to the movement of the instrument,

the slave being regarded as an "instrumentum vocale". By contrast, the "activity" of the free farmer, even when done alone, was regarded as <u>social labour</u>, "praxis", giving rise to corresponding "relations of production" and a subsequent ideological superstructure. Marx contends that:

Social activity and social mind exist by no means only in the form of some directly communal activity and directly communal mind, although communal activity and communal mind — i.e., activity and mind which are manifested and directly revealed in real association with other men — will occur wherever such a direct expression of sociability stems from the true character of the activity's content and is adequate to its nature.

Marx continues saying that,

Also when I am active <u>scientifically</u>, etc., -- when I am engaged in activity which I can seldom perform in direct community with others -- then I am <u>social</u>, because I am active as a <u>man</u>. Not only is the material of my activity given to me as a social product (as is even the language in which the thinker is active); my <u>own</u> existence <u>is</u> social activity, and therefore that which I make of myself, I make of myself for society and with the consciousness of myself as a social being. (Manus.137)

What, therefore, makes an individual's activity social activity or "praxis" in Marx's sense is its subsumption under the community as an Ideal Totality and not its mere physical collectivity.

Although Marx's "praxis" is different from Aristotle"s, a basic similarity remains. First of all, for Marx, social activity is autotelic and has an immanent dimension. It perfects and fulfils the human species. We saw in the previous chapter that, as Marcuse very well points out, for Marx productive activity has an "essential" dimension. We have seen that Marx defines man as a "being for himself". To be "for oneself" in Marx's sense, is precisely to be "autotelic", i.e., to have one's "essence" and one's "logos" as the aim of one's existence and activity. This is possible

because man enjoys a measure of "freedom" from the "physis".

Secondly, as in the case of Aristotle's praxis,
Marx's social activity obtains in a holistic perspective and
this activity and its result cannot be appraised in isolation
of the social milieu in which they are performed. Marx
points out, in effect, that "from the taste of wheat it
is not possible to tell who produced it, a Russian serf, a
French peasant or an English capitalist." (Pol. Econ.28)
Here "serf", "peasant" and "capitalist" labour are types of
social activity. The social existence of wheat as a product
of corvee in the case of the serf, use-value in the case of
the peasant, and exchange-value in the case of the capitalist,
are types of historically social products. Both types of
phenomena obtain within the social milieu prevailing at the
time.

We must, therefore, rule out as invalid any attempt to equate Marx's "praxis" with the traditional "poiesis". results of "poresis" are "things" which "once produced have an independent status and character of their own". (Georgiadis 59) By contrast, "praxis", in Marx's sense, has species-relations as its proper product and result. These "relations" are neither "things" nor "activities" in the accepted sense; they are social phenomena, the totality of which, as we shall see, constitutes the human community, human social existence. Marx, for example, was not interested in gold and silver as "things", products of the extractive industry; neither was he interested in houses in so far as these are .the result of man's "poiesis"; nor in machines in so far as these are part of the technology. He was interested in gold and silver as money, in houses as property and in machines as capital. "Money", "property" and "capital" are "species relations", the historical, formal and social existence of gold and silver, houses and machines respectively. This social existence of "things" as species relations is a reality distinct from the things themselves, from the objects "nature" (the physis), from the products of "poiesis"

and from the results of "praxis" in the traditional sense.

It is in the perspective of the above, we suggest, that we should interpret "productive activity" in Marx's system and not as an activity that merely produces "things". In The German Ideology it is stated that:

The mode of production must not be considered simply as being the production of the physical existence of the individuals. Rather it is a definite form of activity of these individuals, a definite form of expressing their life, a definite mode of life on their part. As individuals express their life, so they are (Ger.Id.42)

To sum up, Marx's "praxis" is different from "poiesis" insofar as, 1)its products, strictly speaking, are not things but social relations; 2)the arete involved is not reducible to the "techne", art or skill but is a social theoria and 3)it is fundamentally autotelic. It fulfils and completes man himself.

2:5 The Formality of Human Existence

We have examined Marx's conception of man as a "being for himself". According to our analysis, this expression denotes an element of freedom in man from the "physis". Man posits himself as the aim of his existence and to this extent is "autotelic". We saw that, on the basis of this "freedom", man leads a double existence, "physical" and "trans-physical". Since this "other" existence consists of species-relations and these are "formalities", social and ideal phenomena, it is appropriate to speak of man's formal existence in contrast to, and as distinct from, his physical existence. This leads us to Marx's second characterisation of man as a "species-being".

This characterisation is found extensively throughout Marx's early and later works. The expressions, "species-essence", "species-being", "species-existence", "species-activity", and "species-relations" appear frequently and they are contrasted with "material life", "physical life", "physical

relations" and "natural relations". Marx also identifies "species activity" with "self-activity" and again contrasts it with "material life".(Ger.Id.92) Clearly, then, species-existence and material or physical existence are not the same and this again shows that for Marx, as for Feuerbach, man has a "double existence", namely, as man and as a physical or material substance. As this whole work will attempt to show, it was Marx's dream that one day these two dimensions of man's life would harmonise into one and "the conflict between man's individual sensuous existence and his species-existence will have been superseded".(Early W.241) "Only at this stage", Marx argues, "does self-activity coincide with material life, which corresponds to the development of individuals into complete individuals and the casting-off of all natural limitations."(Ger.Id.93)

Although Marx uses the expression "species-being" extensively, he never fully explains, in clear and unambiguous terms, what he meant by it. This is unfortunate since the "species-being" conception is most vital and strategically important within his system. Accordingly, a mis-conception on this matter must inevitably lead to host of problems and a subsequent distortion of Marx's system. The dialectic of negativity, causality and finality in Marx's system, alienation, exploitation and class-struggles as well as his envisaged millennium, to mention a few of the major ideas, cannot be understood and appraised correctly without a thorough grasp of what Marx understood by "species-being".

As should be evident by now, by "species" Marx had in mind an abstract objectification, an ideal hypostatization accompanying human social existence and serving as the <u>basis</u> of all the species-relations people enter into. It is a type of Universal in and through which the individual realises and fulfils himself or from which he is excluded. Marx refers to it by a variety of terms: "Nexus rerum", "social bond", "community", "society", the "One", or "Whole", etc. We shall

generally refer to it as the Ideal Totality. This Totality, as earlier pointed out, is neither an a-priori or a timeless one, nor a mere natural one, i.e. a mere shadow or epiphenomenon of physical existence as the totality found among gregarious animals, such as ants and bees. It is distinct from the separate individuals to the extent that many individuals, throughout history, have been excluded from it. Slaves are a case in point. Although in the realm of the Ideal, the Totality is a real and objective phenomenon identical with human social existence and distinct from the "physis". It represents the "other" existence of man, i.e., the "realm of freedom" and denotes man formal existence, as As a Totality it consists of a body or sum of "speciesrelations" which hypostatise into an abstract objectification, an ideal duplication of mankind brought about in its specific form by human "praxis" itself. "Species", in Marx's sense, therefore, refers to a man-made Ideal Totality through the mediation of which mankind, on both an individual and a social basis, seeks fulfilment and realisation. A "species-being" is therefore a "Totality-being". Marx contends that"

The relations of production in their totality constitute what are called the social relations, society, and specifically, a society at a definite stage
of historical development, a society with a peculiar,
distinctive character. Ancient society, feudal society, bourgeois society are such totalities of production relations, each of which at the same time
denotes a special stage of development in the history of mankind. (Wage Lab. and Cap.28)

It is important to note that Marx does not say that man should or ought to be a "species" or Totality being. He regards this type of existence as a fact, a datum. Totality existence is identical with <a href="https://www.numan.n

supposed as being co-extensive with human life itself. As we shall discuss in the next chapter, Marx suggests four main types of Ideal Totalities within the "pre-history of human society", that is to say, from the moment of the emergence of the human species right up to and including the capitalist era. Marx's major interest was with these Ideal Totalities or Communities and hence with this "species" or formal existence. Accordingly, within the confines of his system, it is reasonable and useful to speak of the logic of human existence, namely, the "logic" of the different Ideal Totalities which appeared in history, their genetic descent, inter-connection and development.

Marx claims further that the prevailing Ideal Totality, though a creation of human praxis and having an empirical origin, invariably came to be regarded as a "being-foritself", enjoying it own raison d'etre, independently of people, and mystified. It thus became a universal fetish, in virtue of which real individuals were appraised. The Ideal Totality, in its historical form, came to be regarded as the Universal "essence of man", the constitutive nature of real individuals. Its historical form became idealised and absolutised. A real individual was "man"-in so far as and to the extent that he was subsumed under the prevailing Totality. It thus became possible for an individual man to lose his human status because of his "social", "communal", or Totality status as was the case In primitive times, the "Race", the "Gens", with slaves. the "Phratrae" was regarded essential to being a human. In that primitive consciousness, Marx implies, membership in the prevailing "community" was asserted as the essence of man. Those individuals excluded from this Ideal Totality could . be, and often were, exterminated. Similarly, citizenship. was regarded as "essential" to one's humanhood in Ancient In the context of Marx's system, the prevailing Ideal Totality or "Nexus Rerum" of classical antiquity could

be described as <u>Political</u> in character. The citizen was regarded as fully human, the slave not. It was not simply a matter of ignorance or perversity. Human consciousness was reflecting immature conditions of existence. As a consequence of this an objective account of social and political phenomena could not be made. The "social" and the "political" were not regarded as idealisations or formalisations of human empirical existence but were treated as <u>ontological</u> qualities and mystified. The distinction, for instance, between a citizen and a slave was regarded as <u>metaphysical</u>, denoting the <u>being</u> itself of the individual concerned.

Marx's system, therefore, suggests the view that often, if not invariably, the Ideal Totality in its historical form, "ossified" and came to be regarded as an a-priori and ontological one. Consequently, millions of real individuals were deprived of human-hood either totally or in part because, for some reason or other, they were excluded from the Totality. According to him, this situation obtained both in theory and in practice. He argues that:

Philosophers have declared people to be inhuman, not because they did not correspond to the concept of man, but because their concept of man did not correspond to the true concept of man, or because they had no true understanding of man. (Coll.Works, Vol. 5. 430)

Marx's verdict, one could say, does not constitute a total rejection of everything philosophers have said. His criticism is directed against the widespread philosophical practice of confusing an Ideal Totality, which represents human social existence in time and space, with an ontological and a-priori one. Marx's system does not, for instance, reject Aristotle's conception of man as a deliberative or rational animal but only his further conception that man is a "zoon politikon" in the narrow sense that those who were not fortunate enough to thus qualify, were regarded and treated as sub-human or "natural slaves". This judgment applies to all those values, vital ideals, imperatives and principles which

at one time or other were considered inviolable, absolute and constitutive of the human essence. This, in itself, does not reject the validity of knowledge nor advocate any agnostic positivism or skepticism.

In Marx's system, therefore, the Ideal Totality can be regarded as the Universal Essence which every epoch asserted and established depending on its material conditions of existence. The character and form of human existence correspond to the character and form of the prevailing Ideal Totality. As an Ideal objectification of man's conscious existence, a duplication of himself, the individual's own very existence, personality, values, ideals, ambitions, prejudices, imperatives etc:, depend on the nature of the Totality prevailing at the time. This Totality, not necessarily a homogenous phenomenon, acts like a mirror in which man contemplates and realises himself. This is explicitly suggested in an intriguing note in Capital. Marx argues that man's self-realisation and recognition is similar to the valuerelation between commodities. As seen earlier, this exchangerelationship does not obtain immediately, on the basis of a natural or physical quality within the commodities. via the mediation of "socially necessary labour" which, Marx claims, acts as the "middle term". Commodities, therefore are allegedly commensurate "sub specie laboris". This situation, Marx says, is similar to the one regarding man's social and personal recognition. Man's self and social recognition and realisation are not immediate endowments of human existence. They come about via the mediation of an Ideal Totality.:

In a sort of way, it is with man as with commodities. Since he comes into the world neither with a looking glass in his hand, nor as a Fichtian philosopher, to whom "I am I" is sufficient, man first sees and recognises himself in other men. Peter only establishes his own identity as a man by first comparing himself with Paul as being of like kind. And thereby Paul, just as he stands in his Pauline personality, becomes

to Peter the type of the genus homo. (Cap.1.52)

2:6 Freedom Through Totality Existence

Man, according to Marx, is not only a species or Totality being but one that develops his individuality and personality "only through the process of history". The more we go back in history, Marx claims, we find that man's subjective existence manifested itself/and was epitomised by the race, the gens, the community etc., rather than by the particular individual. The community enjoyed an identity vis-a-vis other communities while real individuals found their conscious and psychological individuality and self-identity in and through this Totality. Personal individuality, Marx claims, is a result and not the point of departure of human history. He writes:

It is of course very simple to imagine that some powerful, physically dominant individual, after first having caught the animal, then catches humans in order to have them catch animals; in a word, uses human beings as another naturally occuring condition for his re-production (whereby his own labour reduces itself to ruling) like any other natural creature. But such a notion is stupid -- correct as it may be from the standpoint of some particular given clan or commune -- because it proceeds from the development of isolated individuals. But human beings become individuals only through the process of history. He appears originally as a species-being, clan being, herd animal -- although in no way whatever as a Zoon Politikon in the political sense. Exchange itself is a chief means of this individuation. the herd-like existence superfluous and dissolves it. (Grund.496)

What we have to bear in mind here is that the initial or primordial "herd-like existence" is already qualified as human. The unifying principle is not mere instinct but a "conscious instinct" (Ger.Id.51) an "ideal" phenomenon. This implies subjective consciouness on the part of man and an objective potentiality for individual and personal self-identity which comes about through man's own "praxis".

Marx criticises the "small and big Robinsonades" who

saw the "eighteenth century individual...not as an historical result, but as the starting point of history; not as something evolving in the course of history, but as posited by nature, because for them this individual was in conformity with nature, in keeping with their idea of human nature".

He continues:

The further back we trace the course of history, the more does the individual, and accordingly also the producing individual, appear to be dependent and to belong to a larger whole. At first, the individual in a still quite natural manner is part of the family and of the tribe which evolves from the family; later he is part of a community, of one of the different forms of the community which arises from the conflict and themerging of tribes. It is not until the eighteenth century that in bourgeois society the various forms of the social texture confront the individual as merely means towards his private ends, as external necessity. But the epoch which produced this standpoint, namely, that of the solitary individual, is precisely the epoch of the(as yet) most highly developed social (according to this standpoint, general) relations. Man is a Zoon Politikon in the most literal sense: he is not only a social animal, but. an animal that can be individualised only within society.(Pol.Econ.188-189)

Mark's presupposition, therefore, is that as a type of being, the human species always enjoyed a subjective existence vis-a-vis its natural environment. But the form of realisation and expression of this subjectivity became a reality on a personal and particular basis only as a result of history, Man's activity, therefore, 'does not, strictly' speaking, create his subjective existence but modifies and expands it to include and apply to separate and particular men. counterposition to the social contract theorists, the movement in social history is, according to Marx, from the communal to the individual consciousness. This implies that the medieval must have enjoyed more personal individuality than the ancient classical; the modern more than the medieval. What we have / to bear in mind here is that Marx is concerned with the average, normal individual who reflected the epoch, not with the exceptional individual who could very well have been ahead

of his time.

In further confirmation of the above Marx contends that what deserves explanation is not the unity which the human species had throughout history with the natural environment, but its gradual and historical separation; not the formation of communities and societies but the breaking up, the fragmentation of original and primitive communities:

It is not the <u>unity</u> of living and active humanity with the natural, inorganic conditions of their metabolic exchange with nature, and their appropriation of nature, which requires explanation or is the result of a historic process, but rather the <u>separation</u> between these inorganic conditions of human existence and this active existence, a separation which is completely posited only in the relation of wage labour and capital. (Grund.489)

The "ontic" status of the Ideal Totality deserves careful treatement. It is not to be confused with the Ideological Superstructure which itself emanates from this Ideal Totality. As we have seen the Totality consists of an ensemble of species-relations, production and social relations in Marx's sense. This means that within Marx's conceptual framework we have to distinguish two "levels" or "orders" of the Ideal, namely, objective and subjective. The objective order denotes the abstract objectification which accompanies human existence and which stands for the community and the community relations. It also denotes the "realm of freedom" and of "praxis" in Marx's sense. It is identical with the "infrastructure" in Marx's system. The subjective (and intersubjective) order of the Ideal denotes the "realm of mind" in the traditional sense -- the ideas, ideals, theories, values etc. stemming from and sustained by the "objective" basis. In Marx's system this "order" stands for the ideological, moral, philosophical and political superstructure.

It cannot be sufficiently emphasised that as an Ideal phenomenon, the "Totality", "community" or "Nexus Rerum". should not be confused, as is often done, with the mere co-

existence of people in their physical, empirical dimensions. The Ideal Totality should be regarded as a concrete Universal, the "One" or "Whole" which keeps people together and in which and through which the individual finds his recognition and realisation — or his exclusion. Of course, the community in its empirical and physical dimension is the "material substratum" of the Totality, just as the "use-value" is the material substratum of "exchange-value". Nonetheless, it would be a serious mistake to identify the two. Ants and bees, for example, are gregarious animals but not "species" or "Totality" beings in Marx's sense. It is instinct, i.e., a natural relation or ensemble of relations that keeps them together and not an Ideal Totality which can be distinguished from and by them. An animal "community" is thus radically different from a human one.

As in the case of man's subjective integrity, Marx finds proof of man's species-being or Totality-existence within human productive activity itself. He writes:

In creating a world of objects by his practical activity, in his work upon inorganic nature, man proves himself a conscious species being, i.e., as a being that treats the species as its own essential being, or that treats itself as a species being... It is just in his work upon the objective world, therefore, that man first really proves himself to be a species being. This production is his active species life. Through and because of this production, nature appears as his work and his reality. The object of labor is, therefore, the objectification of man's species life: for he duplicates himself not only, as in consciousness, intellectually, but also actively, in reality, and therefore he contemplates himself in a world that he has created. (Manus.114)

In the <u>Grundrisse</u> while discussing the phenomenon of exchange of products between people, he states that the very fact that the needs of one person are satisfied by the product of another, a phenomenon which does not exist within the animal kingdom, shows that the human being is a species or Totality being:

The fact that this need on the part of one can be

satisfied by the product of the other, and vice versa, and that the one is capable of producing the object of the need of the other, and that each confronts the other as owner of the object of the other's need, this proves that each of them reaches beyond his own particular need etc., as a human being, and that they relate to one another as human beings; that their common species—being is acknowledged by all. It does not happen elsewhere — that elephants produce for tigers, or animals for other animals. For example, a hive of bees comprises at bottom only one bee, and they all produce the same thing. (Grund. 243)

In the above, the idea that "their common species-being is acknowledged by all" is ambiguous. It is one of Marx's reiterated contentions that the true and common "essence" of man expressed by the Ideal Totality has never been grasped or established on a social basis. Accordingly, one must say that although a "common denominator", in the shape of the prevailing totality or "Nexus Rerum" is acknowledged between people, the <u>substance</u> or this Totality has always been one-sided, circumscribed and inadequate.

One should recognise two vital aspects with regards to the Ideal Totality:

- 1)Its "being" which confirms, in Marx's view, that man is a species being.
- 2)Its "form" and "substance" which historically are symptomatic of an immature state of human existence. By "form" we mean the conscious state in which the Totality exists, as, for example, based on "conscious instinct", "Superstition", "Prejudice" or "Skepticism", which mark the four major Ideal Totalities in their chronological sequence. By "substance" we mean the character and content of the Totality, as, for example, "Gregarious", "Political", "Socio-biological" and "Economic". 15

Briefly, then, man is a Totality-being but his Totality is not a stable, a-priori or absolute one. It is initially and for a long time a frustrating one because it stand for "something" other than "man" himself -- whether it be the "Tribe", "The State", "The Estate", "Property" etc.

Marx's general view of the historical Totalities registering the different stages within the "prehistory of human society" is found in The German Ideology. He writes:

The illusory community, in which individuals have up till now combined, always took on an independent existence in relation to them, and was at the same time, since it was the combination of one class over against another, not only a completely illusory community, but a new fetter as well. In a real community the individuals obtain their freedom in and through their association. (Ger.Id.83)

The communal relationship into which the individuals of a class entered, and which was determined by their common interests over against a third party, was always a community to which these belonged only as average individuals, only insofar as they lived within the conditions of existence of their class — a relationship in which they participated not as individuals but as members of a class.(ibid.85)

The Totality is both the product of man and the <u>cause</u> of his realisation or frustration. His real existence, is, accordingly, effected by it. On this question the "early" Marx had written:

If man's feelings, passions, etc., are/merely anthropological phenomena in the (narrow) sense, but truly ontological affirmations of being, and if they are only really affirmed because their object exists for them as a sensuous object, then it is clear: ...that they have by no means merely one mode of affirmation, but rather that the distinct character of their existence, of their life, is constituted by the distinct mode of their affirmation. manner the object exist for them, is the characteristic mode of their gratification ... Only through developed industry -- i.e., through the medium of private property -- does the ontological essence of human passion come into being, in its totality as in its humanity; the science of man is therefore itself a product of man's establishment of himself by practical activity. (Manus.165)

We can say, in conclusion, that the conception of man as a "species being" is a further qualification of the earlier one of man as a "being for himself". Man realises and expresses his "subjective consciousness", his "freedom from the

physis" through the mediation of his Totality existence.

2:7 Marx and Humanism

munism" as degenerate whether as "(a) still political in nature — democratic or despotic; (b) with the abolition of the state, yet still incomplete, and being still affected by private property (i.e., by the estangement of man)."(Manus. 135) He regards this communism as the epitome of the human degradation represented by private property; it is "thus merely one form in which the vileness of private property, which wants to set itself up as the positive community" — what we have been calling the Ideal Totality — "comes to the surface."(Manus.135) Marx's point seems to be that crude communism brings to its logical conclusion that state of affairs which immediately precedes it, viz., "the rule of capital" or of private property. He claims in fact that:

The dominion of material property bulks so large that it wants to destroy everything which is not capable of being possessed by all as private property. It wants to do away by force with talent, etc. For it the sole purpose of life and existence is direct, physical possession. The task of the labourer is not done away with, but extended to all men. The relationship of private property persists as the relationship of the community to the world of things. (ibid.113)

Whatever the historical role and its place in Marx's whole system, it is evident that Marx himself regards it as morally decadent. The major reason for this judgment is that it is materialistic. "Crude communism"idolises the "realm of necessity". Its "nexus rerum" or "social bond" is "property" even though now it is "communistic" rather than "private", and this shows itself in the "sense of having". Marx's appraisal of "crude communism" implies a sense of values and priorities within his system. This is confirmed by his description of true communism.

Communism [is] the complete return of man to himself

as a <u>social</u> (i.e., human) being -- a return become conscious, and accomplished within the entire wealth of previous development. This communism, as fully developed naturalism, equals humanism, and as fully developed humanism equals naturalism; it is the <u>genuine</u> resolution of the conflict between man and nature and between man and man -- the true resolution of the strife between existence and essence, between objectification and self-confirmation, between freedom and necessity, between the individual and the species. Communism is the riddle of history solved, and it knows itself to be this solution. (ibid.135)

What deserves our immediate attention in the above is Marx's identification of naturalism with humanism when both are fully developed. This indicates the intimate nelationship between man and "external nature", whose full development coincides with the development of the human species itself. In other words humanism emerges, in Marx's perspective, as the crowning of the evolutionary process and will manifest itself in a correspondingly humanistic Totality. Man is the apex of reality in the sense that man brings "external nature" to its full maturity and in so doing achieves his own plenitude. He argues on this matter that:

Industry is the actual, historical relationship of nature, and therefore of natural science, to man. If, therefore, industry is conceived as the exoteric revelation of man's essential powers, we also gain an understanding of the human essence of nature or the natural essence of man. In consequence, natural science will lose its abstractly material — or rather, its idealistic — tendency, and will become the basis of human science, as it has already becomes the basis of actual human life, albeit in an estranged form. (ibid. 143)

Marx continues emphasising the intimate relationship between man and "nature" and again intimates the need for one comprehensive "science".

All history is the preparation for "man" to become the object of sensuous consciousness, and for the needs of "man as man" to become (human) needs. History itself is a real part of natural history -- of nature developing into man. Natural science will in time incorporate into itself the science of man, just as the science of man will incorporate into itself natural science: there will be one science...The

social reality of nature, and <u>human</u> natural science, or the <u>natural science about man</u>, are identical terms. (ibid.143)

One of Marx's major criticims of traditional philosophy was that the latter did not integrate man with the social productive process due, according to him, to its "speculative" method of discovery. Traditional philosophy, according to him, did not take the productive process and human history seriously. The ideal or formal element in human life was accordingly idealised and pushed into an order or realm of being separate from the Natural and temporal. He claims:

A psychology for which this, the part of history most contemporary and accessible to sense, remains a closed book, cannot become a genuine, comprehensive and real science. What indeed are we to think of a science which airily abstracts from this large part of human labor and which fails to feel its own incompleteness. while such a wealth of human endeavor, unfolded before it, means nothing more to it than, perhaps, what can be expressed in one word -- "need", "vulgar need"? The natural sciences have developed an enormous activity and have accumulated an ever-growing mass of material. Philosophy, however, has remained just as alien to them as they remain to philosophy. Their momentary unity was only a chimerical illusion. The will was there, but the means were lacking. Even historiography pays regard to natural science only occasionally, as a factor of enlightenment, utility, and of some special great discoveries. But natural science has invaded and transformed human life all the more practically through the medium of industry: and has prepared human emancipation, although its immediate effect had to be the furthering of the dehumanization of man. (ibid.142)

The idea, suggested towards the end of the above passage, that industry leads to human emancipation and full realisation through an initial process of dehumanisation reappears in the Grundrisse when Marx refers to the phenomenon that, while the "capitalist realization process...has the tendency to heighten the productive forces boundlessly" and in this way opens up for man the actual possibility to experience the realm of freedom, "it also and equally makes one-sided, limits, etc.,

the main force of production, the human being itself."
(Grund.422)

"Humanism" in the words of J. Maritain, "...tends essentially to make man more truly human, and to manifest his original dignity by enabling him to participate in everything which can enrich him in nature and history. It demands that man develop his powers, his creative energies and the life of reason, and at the same time labour to make the forces of the physical world instruments of his freedom." (Maritain, 1945.1) Generally speaking, humanism emphasises man's potentialities and expresses the need and desire to expand man's full dimensions and awareness of himself. Humanism can and does have different expressions, depending very much on one's metaphysical presuppositions. As an illustration, the humanism of the Age of Splendor of classical Greece is different from the humanism of the Christian Era. syncrasies of each type of humanism stem essentially from a particular conception of human nature prevailing at the time or at least within the mind of the humanist. If, for instance, the dignity and significance of man is acknowledged via the mediation of religious considerations, in the context of a theocentric perspective, one will normally argue that the supernatural is an essential dimension of humanism. This.appears to be the case with J. Maritain. He argues that we should not "define Humanism by excluding all reference to the supernatural and foreswearing all transcendence" He contends further that: :

The peculiar vice of classical humanism...concerns not so much what this humanism affirms, as what it negates, denies and divides. It is what we may call an anthropocentric conception of man and of culture... We might say that the error in question is the idea of human nature as self-enclosed or self-sufficient. (J.Maritain, 1945, 2)

Maritain expresses, in general, the humanism entailed by traditional Christian philosophy. We can call it theocentric humanism. On the basis of what has been discussed earlier, one must say that Marx's conception of man is different from that of Maritain and so too is his humanism. Indeed, regarding humanism, Marx's complaint seems to be the direct opposite of what Maritain contends.

Within the perspective of the "logic" of human existence which Marx's analysis sustains, one would have to argue that a genuine and complete humanism has never existed throughout human history; indeed, accoring to Marx, the necessary conditions for its existence were not available. If the prevailing Totality has never, so far, been adequate, this inadequacy has, per force, to reflect itself in the humanism and ideology of the epoch. In Marx's perspective, "man as such" or "man as man" has never been asserted or established as an Ideal Totality or concrete Universal. What has been historically established was a substitute for humanism, in the form of the idealization of Statehood, Social hierarchy, Religion, Nationality, the Monarchy etc., as the various works of art bear witness. The Pyramids, for example, were not erected in homage of mankind as such, but to a historical formality, to a qualified recognition of man/God, i.e., the Pharaoh. Man, in his naked existence as man, stripped of all the historical trappings. and gloss, has been, in the main, systematically negated, abused and often decimated in favour of historical and social symbols or formalities, such as, the monarchy, nobility, citizenship, religion etc. In Marx's perspective, therefore, notwithstanding the historical achievements in the humanities, what has so far been asserted and established was not a real direct humanism but an indirect one. Man has never been recognised and respected directly but by proxy, in and through a circumscribed Totality, whatever its character. Further, the very attempt to seek human dignity outside man himself constitutes, according to Marx, a negation of man. In other words, the implication is that what you fail to recognise directly in man you virtually reject. This is the

root cause of the historical violation and destruction of humanism from Marx's vantage point. In the name of what was regarded as the "essence" of man, real men, real human beings who, for some reason or other, were regarded as being deprived of this "essence" were sacrificed in their millions. Marx's suggests the view that the dignity of man has either to be acknowledged as a natural fact, a truth of consciousness, or rejected. If we are incapable, for some reason or other, to acknowledge the dignity and inviolability of the human being, resorting to some a-priori or supernatural realm will not avail us anything as history, very well, testifies.

NOTES: CHAPTER TWO

- Al. K. Marx, <u>Surveys From Exile</u>. The Pelican Marx Library, Vol.2,1973
- 2. K. Marx, Theories of Surplus Value, Part One. Progress Publishers, Moscow. 1969.

 The equivalence between the "imaginary" and the "social" is worth noting. It confirms the view that, within Marx's system, social or species relations are ideal or abstract relations.
- 3. We are interested neither in the historical genesis of this expression nor in a comparative study of it in the works of other authors, e.g. Hegel and Sartre. Our concern is with its significance and role in Marx's works.
- 4. J. Rickaby, Free Will and Four English Philosophers. Books for Libraries Press, Freeport, N.Y, 1969.
- Though Marx does not provide an adequate account of the different "orders of being" -- inorganic, organic, sensitive etc. -- he acknowledges these forms of existence as distinct manifestations of natural phenomena. Marx's main concern was with the human form of life. He contrasts man with animals in order to bring out the uniqueness of the human species and not to downrate the animal. Marx never regards the animal as a "machine". In Capital he remarks on Descartes'view on this matter and attempts to explain why the latter reduces animals to "automata". He writes: "It may here be incidentally observed, that Descartes, in defining animals as mere machines, saw with eyes of the manufacturing period, while to eyes of the middle ages, animals were assistants to man, as they were to Von Haller in his 'Restauration der Staatswissenschaften.'"(Cap.1.390, note) For Marx, man is the "sovereign of nature" and "external nature" is his "inorganic body" which serves as a means for his fulfilment and realisation. is something man should use with respect and concern.
- K. Popper, <u>Objective Knowledge</u>. Oxford Clarendon Press, -1972.
- See also pp.48,138-139.
- 8. K. Marx, F. Engels, Selected Works, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1968.

- 9. K. Marx, Wage Labour and Capital, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1970.
- Out that by "human energy" Marx does not have in mind the "energy" of the physicist which can be measured mathematically. I Maritain who is strongly adverse to materialism uses the expression "human energy" to denote the full potential of man in all his natural dimensions. Moreover, Marx himself pointed out that if we are to understand and follow his analysis of the capitalist system we have to realise that we are dealing with the type of phenomena the chemist and physicist qua scientists are not and cannot be concerned with. Similarly, when Marx says that at a certain point in human development "theory also becomes a material force once it has gripped the masses" (Early W.251) it would be infantile to argue that by "material force" he means physical energy, the product of "mass X velocity". Theory remains theory, a phenomenon distinct from the "physis".
- 11. C. Georgiadis, "Aristotle's Perspective on Human Technical Work", <u>Dialecics and Humanism</u>, Vol.V, 1978,No.3.

 This paper brings out the distinction between "poiesis" and "praxis" in Aristotle's doctrine in a clear way. We shall follow it in part but we take full responsibility for the conclusions we draw from it.
- 12. Failure to grasp this fundamental distinction between "things" and their "social" or "formal" existence as species relations grounds the fatal misconception of economism and technologism.
- 13. Consistent with our "approach" to Marx we are not interested in the origin and historical background of this expression. Our interest lies in its conception and role-in Marx's system.
- 14. Marx's "Ethnological Notes" give ample evidence of his views on this matter.
- 15. These Ideal Totalities will be discussed fully in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

HUMAN NATURE AND THE HUMAN ESSENCE

In the previous chapter we saw that Marx draws a crucial distinction between "human nature" and "external nature". We saw that man's physical existence, consisting of physical or natural, i.e., immediate relations, is to be distinguished from his formal existence, consisting of species relations which are mediated by an Ideal Totality forming the infrastructure of human social existence. We must now continue to examine the doctrine of the "double existence" of man within a philosophical perspective suggested by Marx's distinction between "human nature in general and...human nature as modified in each historical epoch." (Cap.1.609)

The view that man is not yet fully developed is an idea that recurs frequently within Marx's work. Marx speaks of man "who is not yet a true species-being". (Early W.226) He reiterates the view that man must realise "his essential powers" (ibid. 374) and contends that human feelings, emotions, artistic, cultural and moral values will become different and genuinely human "if we assume man to be man and his relation to the world to be a human one. "(ibid.379) The difficulty arises when one tries to analyse Marx's doctrine in its proper perspective and draw its philosophical implications. The urgency of the problem is emphasised by the fact thatthe idea of a distinction between an "authentic" and an "unauthentic" human life has been formulated and can be accomodated by different systems which militate against Marx's own one. Marx criticises the Humanitarian and Philanthropic schools which resort to a speculative and dualistic perspective in an attempt to account for the distinction or discrepancy between what man is and what he ought to be.

The whole theory of the Humanitarian school, he claims:

Rests on interminable distinctions between theory and practice, between principles and results, between idea and application, between form and content, between essence and reality, between right and fact, between the good side and the bad side.

The philanthropic school is the humanitarian school carried to perfection. It denies the necessity of antagonism; it wants to turn all men into bourgeois; it wants to realise theory in so far as it is distinguished from practice and contains no antagonism. (Poverty, 114-115)

Marx draws a vital distinction between historically conditioned man and the full man who eventually will overcome and suspend this conditioning without, however, subscribing to a voluntaristic or dualistic account of this problem. Within Marx's perspective, man's conditioned existence is not to be regarded as a "fall", a "mistake" or a "departure" from the Truth but as the initial point of departure of human existence in time and space. The human being is moving away from a presupposed state of negation; from an inadequate "formal" existence to an adequate one.

In Thesis Vl "On Feuerbach", Marx states that "the human essence is no abstraction inherent in each individual. In its reality it is the ensemble of social relations." Within the traditional metaphysical perspective the "essence" or "form" of something refers to its "quiddity", its constitutive nature, or "that which makes something be what it In this context, Marx's characterisation of the human essence as "the ensemble of social relations" emerges as a relativistic one, lacking objective integrity and perspective. Yet, in the previous chapter, man was defined as a "being for himself" enjoying a distinct identity vis-a-vis the "rest of nature" -- a definition which transcends the empirical mode of existence and realisation. This is a conception of man as a "stable" reality enjoying a distinct "ontic" status showing itself in his subjective integrity. The problem is how to reconcile these two conceptions. The difficulty arises, in part, because the distinction between human nature in

general and as historically modified emerges, in Marx's perspective, as neither merely "accidental" in the traditional sense, (which would imply the presupposition of an essence as a stable and complete actuality), nor as a "substantial" one, (which would destroy the integrity and continuity of the human species)

Marx was against two common views regarding human nature. On the one hand, he rejected the view of man's essence as a stable, autonomous and time-less form or actuality. He, with equal emphasis, rejected as superficial, the view of man as a mere sum of percepts -- a conception which identifies man with his historical manifestations. As E. Fromm very well points out:

Marx was opposed to two positions: the unhistoric one that the nature of man is a substance present from the very beginning of history, and the relativistic position that man's nature has no inherent quality whatsoever and is nothing but the reflex of social conditions. (Fromm, 1962, 31)1

The rejection of both the "unhistoric" and the "relativistic" positions is implied when Marx contends that:

As soon as man's active life-process is described, history ceases to be a collection of dead facts as it is with the empiricists -- themselves still abstract -- or an imagined activity of imagined subjects as with the idealists. (Ger.Id.48)

One of the major problems in understanding Marx's system stems from the ambiguity and vagueness of his terms. His conception of man as a "species-being" is a case in point. Marx is emphatic that man is a species being in a fundamental and enduring sense. "The human being", he claims, "is in the most literal sense a Zoon politikon, not merely a gregarious animal, but an animal which can individuate itself only in the midst of society."(Grund.84)² On the other hand, he claims that man is not yet a speciesbeing, that so far man has lived a life of "separation", intensional if not physical, and of egoism; a life in which the private interest has ruled over the common one. Species life, within Marx's system, is identical with human life.

We can say, therefore, that, according to him, man is a human being in one sense; he is not yet, but should become a human being in another sense. The "is" denotes, in each case, a different type of existence. If we lose sight of this distinction we can easily fall into a category mistake. Moreover, outside the perspective of this distinction; the "generative idea" of Marx's doctrine on human nature and its development remains a mystery.

Marx's position can be greatly clarified if we distinguish the Nature of man from his Essence, a distinction strongly suggested by his system. Human Nature stands for the "being" of the human species; the human Essence denotes its "formality". As an illustration, the invitation to "assume man to be man" or the "individual as individual" (Ger:Id.91), implies a double denotation with regards to human existence. As far as his "being" or Nature is concerned, man was, is and remains the same. In this respect, we have seen that "once man has emerged he becomes the permanent pre-condition of human history." As far as the actual realisation of his emergent status, i.e. his "formality" or "ideal existence" as a human being, is concerned, man is still in the making and it is history that both sustains and registers man's realisation process. Man is the "permanent product and result of human history." "All history", Marx claims, "is nothing but a continuous transformation of human nature." (Poverty, 147) Moreover, the "being" and the "formality" of human existence, as we shall continue to see, are mutually and causally inter-related. Marx's further contention that man is "precondition only as his own product and result" again implies this. In other words, man's "being" or Nature determins his "formality" or Essence; his "formality" in turn determines his "being".

Apart from this, the allusion to "man as man" or "the individual as individual" has a normative and evaluative dimension and points to a fundamental and significant dis-

tinction between all the different <u>pseudo</u>"formalities" of man, throughout the "pre-history of human society", and an adequate and genuine one which he envisaged. We can, therefore, say that Marx's doctrine on human nature and its development implies three basic ideas:

1)Man's "being" or Nature is <u>distinct</u> from his "formality" or Essence. This is an enduring situation and stems from the peculiar nature of man as a "Species" or "Totality" being. This makes human existence, as human, a <u>mediated</u> existence.

2)The Nature and Essence of man are mutually and causally related.

3) The distinction between the Nature and the Essence of man has been, throughout history, one of opposition but should eventually become one of correspondence and harmony. Let us examine each of these points separately.

3:1 The Nature and the Essence of man

In order to understand the distinction Marx suggests between human Nature and the human Essence it is imperative to grasp what Marx understands by these two phenomena. we take a closer look at his doctrine on Species-being we realise that this conception denotes two distinct types of realities. It refers, first of all, to a "quality" or "power" in the human being identical with his Nature and sustaining his distinct existence vis-a-vis "external nature". We can call this the "ontic" or metaphysical dimension of man's species-existence. Secondly, Species-being refers to the "formality" and actual state of realisation of this "quality" or Nature, at a certain point in its historical existence. The "formality" denotes man's "ideal existence", his social and historical status, either as a member or as an outcast vis-a-vis the prevailing Totality or Community. Each of these distinct realities deserve careful examination.

The "ontic" status or Nature, denoted by Marx's characterisation of man as a Species-being, follows from

what has been discussed in the previous chapter. It is implied also in his doctrine on relations. We saw that Marx distinguished the "power" or "quality" in a "relatum" from the relation itself. This applies universally. Man, as subject, remains distinct from his relations. In other words, on the basis of Marx's own conceptual framework, we must distinguish the "power" or "quality" in man which enables him to enter into species relation from the relations themselves, an ensemble of which constitute the Essence or "formality" of man. The existence of this "power" or "quality" is something we have to presuppose rather than observe or measure; something we arrive at by implication rather than verification.

Regarding this "quality" or "power" in man we have to establish how it exists and in what it consists. As far as its "ontic status" is concerned, this "quality" is neither a physical nor a mere natural one, a "quality" that lends itself to "scientific" calculation or measurement, as in the case of "extension" and "utility". Still, it is not an ontological hypostatization, a stable and autonomous substance or essence. We must, therefore, regard this "power" in man as a metaphysical "quality", a type of potentiality which we have to presuppose to exist in man since his emergence as "thinking matter". Since it is neither a physical quality nor a subsisting Essence or Actuality in an ontological sense, we have to regard it as an emergent "moment" in human existence identical with human Nature itself, distinguishing man from the rest of nature.

From what we have seen so far, we know that this "moment" in human existence consists in <u>subjective consciousness</u>. This subjectivity deserves careful treat ment and should be analysed both in relation to "external nature" and in relation to the human individual himself. We have also to keep in mind that this "subjectivity" exists as a "moment" in human existence and not as a subsisting quality or onto-

logical hypostatization.

In relation to external nature, subjective consciousness denotes an auto-telic existence. Per se, this subjectivity means simply that human consciousness has its own subject or basis distinct from the "physis". a type of consciousness that enjoys a certain "freedom" from the physical environment and its reflexes. This makes it possible for this consciousness to be objectified and in this way be "shared" by, and communicated to, others in an intelligent and evaluative way. Human activity does not "dissolve" itself completely in the "physis" as happens in a mere natural or physical activity. The final point of reference in human "praxis" is the human species itself as distinct from the "physis". Here a subject-object relationship is involved. As was discussed earlier, Marx claims that man, in contrast to the animal, "makes his life activity itself the object of his will and of his consciousness. He has conscious life activity. It is not a determination with which he directly merges." This shows, among other things," that the human perceiver is not himself merely one of a series of discrete perceptions. Of course, the step from this "subjectivity" to an a-priori or supernatural hypostatization remains unwarranted. Subjectivity entails conscious referability and responsibility. It makes the subject an agent in a formal sense and emphasises his measure of freedom from the "physis" and its modes. From Marx's point of view the 'ontological hypostatization of subjective consciousness is a Greek mystification, carried over in and dominating Western thought.

The above is a reiteration of the view that Marx recognises the nature of the "ideal" in so far as it is a real phenomenon distinct from and irreducible to the "physis" and its modes -- the nervous system, mere physical coexistence, instinct, sensations etc., -- without regarding it as either ontological, a-priori or supernatural. It is,

we suggest, a naturalist's account of the "ideal".

Human subjective consciousness must also be analysed in relation to the individual and this is were the real difficulty arises. It is clear from what Marx says, that, as far as the individual is concerned, his subjective existence is not autotelic in any autonomous or autocratic sense. In other words, Marx's doctrine makes it evident that subjective consciousness is not to be identified with self consciousness, either in the rationalistic sense epitomised by Descartes or in any "relativistic" or "subjectivistic" sense. Although human consciousness is a hypostatized consciousness, this objectification does not have an individual or personal basis. It is not a product of self-conscious and selfcontained individuals. This is confirmed by the "fact" that, as seen earlier, the basis of man's species-relations and of his "formal" existence itself, his existence as man, exists in the form of an abstract objectification, an Ideal Totality, the Community or Society, distinct from the individual himself. This means that in the case of man and his speciesrelations, constituting his Essence or Formality, we have to distinguish further the power, potentiality or quality in man, enabling him to create and enter into this type of relations, from the basis which sustains them. Herein lies the fundamental difference between Marx's position and that of both Idealism and Conceptualism. The Idealist identifies the power with the basis and hypostatizes the latter; the Conceptualist also identifies the two but hypostatizes the power. This makes the human substance "absolute" and "autonomous" and turns man into a "completed being".

Within Marx's system, instead, (since the Ideal Totality is the basis of man's species-relations and of the realisation of his subjectivity and since it exists as a concrete unversal, an ideal hypostatization distinct from the individual), the <u>basis</u> has to be regarded as another "moment" in human existence. The individual has the power but not the

basis of his subjective consciousness. This means, (as we shall continue to see), that man's subjective or ideal existence as man, his human formality, is intrinsically communal, a Totality subjectivity or individuality and not one of self-containment and isolation. Man finds and realises himself in and through a community. Man's subjective existence is simultaneously a Community or Totality existence. Marx contends that:

Above all we must avoid postulating "Society" again as an abstraction vis-a-vis the individual. The individual is the social being. His life, even if it may not appear in the direct form of a communal life in association with others -- is therefore an expression and confirmation of social life. Man's individual and species life are not different, however much -- and this is inevitable -- the mode of existence of the individual is a more particular, · or more general mode of life of the species, or the life of the species is a more particular or more general individual life... Man, much as he may therefore be a particular individual (and it is precisely his particularity which makes him an individual, and a real individual social being), is just as much the totality -- the ideal totality -- the subjective existence of thought and experienced society for itself; just as he exists also in the real world as the awareness and the real mind of social existence, and as a totality of human manifestation of life. Thinking and being are thus no doubt distinct, but at the same time they are in unity with each other. (Manus_137-138)

The Totality or Community is, therefore, not a shadow or epiphenomenon of the "physis" because it is a hypostatized Ideal phenomenon enjoying a distinct existence. It is neither a product of the deliberate will-power of self-conscious, self-sufficient and independent monads, nor an a-priori or absolute phenomenon. It consists in the ideal objectification, rationalisation or formalisation of the empirical conditions, emanating from the subjective consciousness of human existence.

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To sum up on this important and elusive point, subjective existence is mediated by an Ideal Totality --

being neither subjectivistic, nor autonomous, nor autocratic. We regard the "power" or "quality" for subjective consciousness, in the human individual, as one "moment" in his existence and the Ideal Totality, (through the mediation of which he realises and expresses his subjectivity), as another "moment". Human individuals do not enjoy a subjective existence distinct or separate from the community existence as such, however much they are distinct and can separate themselves from the formality of a particular community. Man is definitionally and constitutively a species or Totality being. No human being exists without a potentiality for subjective existence; no subjective existence is possible without an Ideal Totality.

One finds in Marx's works three types of arguments regarding man's species or community Nature:

Anthropological — based on historical studies on human existence in ancient and modern societies. (In his later years Marx found support and confirmation for his ideas in the outstanding work of Henry Morgan).

Economic — based on the experiential fact that man produces in a communal milieu; exchanges and shares his talents, activities and products with other people, a phenomenon, Marx claims, no other living being experiences because no other being hypostatizes his existence in a conscious and

Analytic. Marx's doctrine on human nature and activity shows that the human being inevitably and necessarily enters into species relations; man relates to "external nature" and to other people via an Ideal Totality and therefore confirms his species—nature and of others in his "praxis".

subjective way.

On the basis of Marx's analysis, the attempt itself by man to restrict, estrange or deny one's speciesnature or that of others entails species relations. Man cannot but relate as a Totality-being in the very attempt to
isolate himself from or deprive his fellowmen of, human-

hood. For instance, slavery and bondage presuppose the subjectively conscious existence and species-being of the bonded as a "quality" identical with and inseparable from, his very being. Slavery, bondage, submission etc., in a formal sense, as Ideal phenomena, which are reacted to or against in a subjective way, are possible only because the subdued possess a will and consciousness that can be dominated and ruled by another. It is possible for one to become a "master" in a formal sense only because another can and does acknowledge one as such and oneself as a slave. Hegel, according to Marx, calls these "reflex categories". (Cap.1.57, note 1) The implication here is that unless these "titles", social symbols, or formalities are reciprocated in a subjective way they will not obtain, as is the case with animals and other natural beings. We cannot, for example, "enslave" trees, animals or stones, in the proper sense of the word, because these, allegedly do not enjoy a subjective will and consciousness. As we have seen, mere natural beings are already dominated by "brute necessity".

The nature of one's subordination is, therefore, determined, in part, by one's nature itself. In the case of man, his subordination involves his subjective and formal existence. One's isolation or exclusion from the prevailing Community involves species-relations. People are not excluded or isolated from a particular Community, which stands for "humanity" in its formal or official dimension, in the way animals, trees or stones are. In the case of people, the exclusion is "formal" and not merely physical or empirical; it involves an appeal to the subjective existence of the excluded. The phenomenon itself of human exploitation and dominance entails, therefore, an implicit (and subconscious) acknowledgment by the oppressor that his victim enjoys a subjective existence. This confirms the "ontic" homogeneity of the human species in spite of the ignorance, abuse, bias and bigotry on this matter, characterising human social and historical existence and its "superstructural ideology". Only "juridical blindness", rooted. in undevelopment and sustained often by a resort to a mystified and an allegedly a-priori "Truth", prevented some of the outstanding "men of ideas" from recognising this fact.

In the previous chapter we said that a particular individual or class of individuals could be and often was, part of a physical association but not part of the Community or Ideal Totality. In the light of the above, we have to qualify this statement. Those individuals who were excluded from the community still remained Totality or Species beings in an "ontic" sense, however much, from the point of view of the prevailing Community they were regarded as "sub human", "instrumenta vocales", "natural slaves" or "mere chattels of the earth". This confirms the view that, according to Marx, man's species existence is not merely historical and empirical but also "metaphysical". Man is by nature a Species-being. This is a philosophical presupposition and not a mere assumption.

It is time now to pass on to the other "reality" suggested by the conception of Species-being. The "formality" of human existence denotes the actual state of realisation of an individual's subjective existence. It is evident that. within Marx's system, this "formality" is not to be regarded as an a-priori, ontological and stable essence or form. is neither to be regarded as an immediate reflex of the empirical conditions because this would destroy the subjectivity of human conscious existence. If this were the case, the "formality" of an individual's existence would have to be reduced to a mere epiphenomenon or shadow of the "physis". This would abolish the vital distinction between "human nature" and "external nature". Nor sould the "formality" be regarded as a product of self-sufficient, autocratic and self-contained individuals since subjective consciousness is not identical with self consciousness. In Marx's system, the "formality" represents the "moment" of

actuality or realisation of an individual's subjective existence as distinct from the "being" itself of this subjectivity. It is the Ideal correlate, the "content" or "substantiality" of his subjective conscious existence in time and space. It remains distinct both from the subjective existence itself which is identical with his Nature and from the Ideal Totality or Community in virtue of which the individual realises his particular formality.

Marx's doctrine on this matter implies two major conceptions. Firstly, the implication is that human individuality, personal and self-identity, in a formal and conscious sense, (as distinct from his subjective existence), is realised via an abstract objectification and ideal duplication of oneself in one's activity. Secondly, human individuality undergoes development and as a result of history and of human praxis the individual posits himself as object, in his psychological, conscious and social atomicity, thus becoming individualised. Marx is emphatic that "human beings become individuals only through the process of history..."

Exchange itself is a chief means of this individuation."

(Grund.496) Of course, the possibility itself of this happening stems from man's subjective existence.

Regarding the "substance" of human individuality,
Marx argues, man"comes into the world neither with a looking
glass in his hand, nor as a Fichtian philosopher, to whom
'I am I' is sufficient". The individual's identity and
substantiality, that which he regards as his essence and individuality, is an objectification of his social and conscious
existence. So, man objectifies his existence, turns it into
an ideal phenomenon and identifies with it. His individuality, therefore, depends on the nature and character of his
objectification. To objectify, in Marx's sense, does not
mean to make something physical but to idealise one's activity and the product of one's activity turning them into formalities, species relations or abstract hypostatizations.

These objectifications are habitually reified and absolutised, turned into "essences" in the traditional sense and this is where the problem and confusion start. The reaction to this mystification by the empiricists and traditional materialists has been to reject both the reification and the ideal nature of the objectifications or formalities. This leaves us only with the "physis" and its modes, with "things" and their immediate relations. Marx avoids both the reification and the trivialization of the "ideal". The source of one's "formality" is not "things" or the "physis" and its modes but species relations. Because of his subjective consciousness man objectifies his existence, turns it into an ideal hypostatization vis-a-vis himself and identifies with or recoils from it.

The above is confirmed by Marx's doctrine on the "objective individual", that is, "the individual defined as Roman, Greek etc."(Grund.495) This is a reiteration of Marx's earlier criticism of Hegel who, according to him.

Forgets that the essence of the 'particular person' is not his beard and blood and abstract <u>Physis</u>, but his <u>social quality</u>, and that the affairs of state are nothing but the modes of action and existence of the social qualities of men.

Accordingly, Marx argues, "state function and activities ... are linked to the individual by a vinculum substantiale, by an essential quality in him." (Early W. 77-78)

The <u>objective</u> character of man's individuality and self-identity is implied also when Marx claims that:

Before it is replaced by exchange-value, every form of natural wealth presupposes an essential relation between the individual and the objects, in which the individual in one of his aspects objectifies himself in the thing, so that his possession of the thing appears at the same time as a certain development of his individuality: wealth in sheep, the development of the individual as shepherd, wealth in grain, his development as agriculturist, etc. (Grund. 221-222)

It is only when "exchange-value" becomes the Ideal Totality, the "Nexus rerum", that the distinction between "subjective

consciousness" and its "formality", i.e., man's objective individuality, develops into a <u>separation</u> between the "personal and the class individual."(Ger.Id.84)

The realisation process of human self-consciousness and individuality can be best appraised if we bear in mind that Marx's anthropological perspective is radically different from the one of Hobbes and from that of the Social Contract theorists. According to Marx, the emergence of man, as a being that enjoys subjective consciousness, takes place within a gregarious milieu. The "herd instinct" that formerely held the anthropoids together becomes, at one point. in the evolutionary process, a "conscious instinct". (Ger. Id.51) This registers a radical "break" within nature, between "so-called nature" and "humanity's own nature" -- an evolutionary stage where subjective consciousness in the universe is initially realised. The "Nexus Rerum" or unifying principle becomes a subjectively conscious one; it turns into an Ideal Totality distinct from the physical existence of the individuals and its reflexes, to the extent that the very life of the individuals gradually comes to be assessed and appraised in virtue of this Totality. The formalisation of human empirical existence commences. The behavior patterns, imperatives, rituals etc., that formerely were rooted in instinct and other natural factors become subjectively conscious patterns, imperatives and rituals -that is, species relations or formalities that individuals consciously and actively identify with, with which they are identified or from which they are excluded. If, as Marx presupposes, the human species emerged within a gregarious milieu, this anthropological fact must show itself in human psychology and human consciousness. This must, also, be taken into account in any analysis of human conscious existence, including political and social existence. Mankind does not start its human existence from scratch. This means that the evolutionary stage transforming the "herd instinct"

into a "conscious instinct" does not immediately turn the "herd" into a "community" or "society" of self-conscious and argumentative individuals who try to forge some sort of arrangement on how best to put into effect their newly acquired "freedom"; nor does the initial stage of human existence in a formal sense, consist of a fictituous "state of nature" -- a "bellum onmium contra omnes". presupposition here is that self-assertive and selfseeking monads attempt. by force or guile, to preserve their lives and limbs in an autonomous way, but finally realise that their hope for survival lie within a social milieu where they cede their individual rights in return for the protection by a powerful Leviathan. Marx regards these as superficial myths and illusions of Hobbes and of the Social Contract theorists -- "the small and big Robinsonades " who anachronistically impute to a primitive state of social existence, a conscious, psychological and social maturity appearing only in the modern age. These thinkers mistake the result of social history with its point of departure. Their fallacy can be traced back to an implicit or explicit confusion between subjective consciousness and self-consciousness.

In reality, Marx argues, man embarks on his human existence within a communal milieu. The first major stage in his formal existence, i.e., as a human being, is accomplished when he experiences a subjective relationship with his natural environment. This marks a degree of "freedom" from the physis but not from his social milieu which becomes an ideal phenomenon, an abstract objectification.(Ger.Id.51) The empirical conditions of existence assume a formal and social dimension with regards to the individual. This is what distinguishes the primitive human community from the gregarious life of animals even if this difference, at first, does not show itself empirically. For example, the physically or quantitatively inferior members become "menial"

workers or "slaves", that is, qualitatively inferior -inferior in a formal, evaluative and Ideal sense; brute force becomes formal authority; group identity becomes lovalty and allegiance: possessions become property; land occupation becomes sovereignty; racial differences, colour, physiological features etc. become racial inferiorities or superiorities and the socio-economic status quo idealises into "order" and "justice". We have here the historical rationalisation and formalisation of factual phenomena -a type of rule by human reason or subjective consciousness over the "physis", rather than the rule of the "physis" over human consciousness as suggested by traditional materialism, economism, technologism and similar monistic determinisms. The "freedom" which the human species as an emergent form of life enjoys over the natural and physical conditions of existence expresses itself in this "colonisation" of the "physis" by human consciousness. man's physical and natural relations transform themselves into species relations mediated by an Ideal Totality.

It is in this perspective that we should interpret Marx's contention that "Right is only the official recognition of fact."(Poverty.87) This is neither antiintellectualistic nor relativistic in the traditional sense. Marx is not simply endorsing Protagoras's position that "man is the measure". Firstly, it depends on the type of "facts" we are dealing with. The "facts" Marx was mainly concerned with are those social ones which exist as species relations or formalities. which are not epiphenomena of the physis, the totality of which constitute the infrastructure sustaining what traditionally is regarded as the Essence of man. Secondly, Marx's system suggests the view that if the social or formal fact persists the "Right" persists because, for him, "Right" is the superstructural, i.e., legal expression of man's species existence. For example, the "fact" of human life as human, (i.e. as a formality mediated by an Ideal Totality in virtue of which an individual is regarded as human) with its dignity and value, vis-a-vis animal life, persist and so too does the Right to this life. By contrast, the "fact" of nobility, male dominance, white supremacy as Ideal, formal or social phenomena fortunately have not persisted and neither have the respective "Rights". Moreover, in the perspective of Marx's system, every Right has always been conditioned by the historical and social character of the "formal fact" in question. When, for instance, the life of a slave was not formally and socially recognised as human life, the "Right" to this life for the individual slave did not exist. cient Greek and Roman history bears this out. At one time, not so long ago, the life of black people was not officially recognised as human because the coloured races were not formally regarded as members of the human species by the "superior" white races.

Briefly, then, according to Marx, the social milieu is the source of the Ideal and the Ideological. Marx's position, we suggest, can be regarded as a type of relationalism or objective relativism.

3:2 The Causal Relationship Between the Nature and the Essence of man.

So far we have acknowledged three "moments" within Marx's conception of human existence: human Nature which we have identified with the individual's subjective consciousness; the human Essence which represents the individual's particular formality and the Totality or Community, which exists in the form of a concrete Universal or Ideal hypostatization. Our immediate concern is to examine the relationship between the Nature and the Essence of man in the framework of these three "moments".

The main clue in our investigation is provided by the nature itself of species relations. With regards to

these we have to distinguish the power that gives rise to them from the basis that sustains them and both of these from the relations themselves. The power is "in" the individual human being, the basis exists as a concrete universal and the relations constitute the formality with which the individual identifies. An individual, therefore, subjectively identifies with a particular formality through the mediation of the prevailing Totality or Community. The solution to our problem is clearly discernable. The relationship between human Nature and the human Essence is a mediated one and follows the syllogistic formula P - U - I, where P stands for the formality or Essence; U stands for the Ideal Totality or middle term and I stands for the in-This conception is confirmed when Marx writes that "A negro is a negro. In certain circumstances he becomes a slave. "(Cap.1.766, n.3) The three "terms" are evident. We have the "negro" as a real individual with his "ontic" status as a human being: the "slave" which we can regard as "his "formality" or Particular Essence and the "certain circumstances" as the Middle term or Universal in and through which the identification between the "negro" and the "slave" obtains. The case of the negro slave, found originally in the Neue Rheinische Zeitung reappears in a more elaborate form in the Grundrisse. Marx writes:

Society does not consist of individuals, but expresses the sum of interrelations, the relations within which these individuals stand. As if someone were to say: Seen from the perspective of society, there are no slaves and no citizens: both are human beings. Rather they are that outside society. To be a slave, to be a citizen, are social characteristics, relations between human being A and B. Human being A, as such, is not a slave. He is a slave in and through society. (Grund.265)

We have here a clear indication of both the nature and role of "society" in Marx's sense. As we pointed out in the previous chapter, Society or the Community, for Marx, is not the mere physical co-existence of discrete individuals.

It denotes an Ideal Totality. It is evident that the same Totality or Community sustains different particular formalities or what we can call "Totality-types".

Society, therefore, expresses the "sum of interrelations, the relations, within which these individuals stand." Of course, it is of the utmost importance to understand the nature of these relations correctly. If they are absolutised, turned into a-priori and ontological phenomena we fall, according to Marx, into the speculative and Idealistic fallacy. The political and social effect of this fallacy is, often, conservatism and a reactionary ideology and policy. The status quo is absolutised and a resort to an alleged pre-ordained order or harmony is made. This can often degenerate into fascism especially when the alleged evil and anarchic nature of man is underscored and the differences between people are inflated into ontological differences.

If, on the other hand, we reduce social relations and their totality into mere physical and natural phenomena we fall into crude materialism and fetishism. This breeds economism and technologism. The first mistake is implied in the attitude of the slave dealer. Marx writes:

The slave-holder considers a Negro, whom he has purchased, as his property, not because the institution of slavery as such entitles him to that Negro, but because he has acquired him like any other commodity, through sale and purchase. But the title itself is simply transferred, not created by the sale. The title must exist before it can be sold, and a series of sales can no more create this title through continued repetition than a single sale can. What created it in the first place were the production relations. (Cap.111.776)

Marx's point is that, according to the slave dealer, the negro is a marketable item, just like any other commodity, to which he has, on payment, a just and inalienable <u>right</u>. The implication is that, for the slave dealer, the negro is a slave <u>by nature</u>. This dealer does not or will not

realise that he is able to buy or sell negros only because the "title" of slavery has been previously created by society. This title is a species-relation, an ideal phenomenon or social formality with which the wretched negro is forcefully identified by a slave-owning society. The dealer's right to his human merchandise is subject to the institution of slavery and shares its infamy.

The second mistake is epitomised by the capitalist who cannot realise that his particular Formality as a "bourgeois" depends on an Ideal Totality which posits exchange-value as its principle and not on the mere possessions of material things. If "money" is not turned into the "Community", the bourgeois formality could not come into existence. Marx argues:

Wakefield discovered that in the Colonies, property in money, means of subsistence, machines and other means of production, does not as yet stamp a man as a capitalist if there be wanting the correlative — wage-worker, the other man who is compelled to sell himself of his own free-will. He discovered that capital is not a thing, but a social relation between persons, established by the instrumentality of things. (Cap.1.766)

The three "moments" within human existence pervade the inner fabric of Marx's doctrine. They are involved whenever species-relations are posited. Since the latter constitue the subject-matter of Marx's analysis the syllogistic formula must be regarded as fundamental to the "logic" of his whole system. His major working concepts, such as productive forces, production relations, labour, capital etc. must of necessity be analysed within this "meta-physical" perspective. If this is so we have to draw three important conclusions.

. Firstly, if human Nature is distinct from "external nature", so too are its "laws". The laws and movement of "external nature" obtain in a "unilateral" and immediate way and do not involve the trinitarian formula which characterise the movement of human Nature. Marx's system sug-

gests the view that at a certain moment in evolution, subjective consciousness emerges in the universe in the form of human conscious existence. From that moment, as far as man is concerned, "theoria" replaces "energeia" and the "rule of reason" supersedes the rule of the "physis". As we saw earlier Marx states that man "not only effects a change of form in the material on which he works but he also realises a purpose of his own that gives the law to his modus operandi and to which he must subordinate his will."

The Ideal which is a product of subjective con- . sciousness is, for Marx, sui generis. It is distinct from the "physis" and its "modes" but not absolute or a-priori. The Ideal is identified with the collective existence of a type of individual who enjoys subjective consciousness, namely, the human being. The nature of the Ideal remains the same since the moment of its emergence but its character changes with change in social existence. It bears repeating that, in Marx's system, the Ideal is distinct from the Ideological . The Ideal denotes species relations, abstract objectifications and is therefore objective. The Ideological, by contrast, denotes ideas, categories, theory --the superstructure -- and is, therefore, subjective. distinction between the Ideal and the Ideological is implied when Marx says that "The abstraction, or idea...is nothing more than the theoretical expression of those material relations which are their lord and master. "(Grund. In another instance, Marx claims that "the Ideal is ... nothing else than the real world reflected by the human mind and translated into forms of thought."(Cap.1.19) The "reflection" of the "real world by the human mind" refers to the Ideal hypostatization or formalization of human collective existence and consists of a Totality of species relations. Their "translation" into "forms of thought" refers to the Ideological and theoretical superstructure.

If one fails to distinguish between the Ideal and the Ideological one paves the way to Idealism and rationalism. Marx argues that:

Relations can be expressed, of course, only in ideas, thus philosophers have determined the reign of ideas to be the peculiarity of the new age, and have identified the creation of free individuality with the overthrow of this reign. Their error was all the more easily committed, from the ideological stand-point, as this reign exercised by the relations (this objective dependency, which, incidentally, turns into certain definite relations of personal dependency, but stripped of all illusions) appears within the consciousness of individuals as the reign of ideas, and because the belief in the permanence of these ideas, i.e., of these objective relations of dependency, is of course consolidated, nourished and inculcated by the ruling classes by all means available. (Grund.164-165)

Within Marx's system, subjective consciousness can be described as a "flambeau" which bathes the empirical environment with its "light" and gives it an Ideal existence. ' It is not a creation of man but an emergent "moment" in human existence. Subjective consciousness is not distinct from the nature of the human individual himself but from its effect, its product, viz. the formalization of the individual's empirical existence. Marx's system suggests that the nature and role of this "flambeau", traditionally regarded as the "light of reason" have been generally misunderstood. been hypostatized into a subsisting soul or spirit instead of being regarded as a "moment" in human existence, per se, without content and substance; its activity has been regarded as a power to dematerialize, a power to abstract a presupposed a-priori form or essence subsisting "within" a given object. Marx, by contrast, regards subjective consciousness as a power to hypostatize, in an ideal sense, one's empirical existence; not a power to extract a hidden essence but to create onto things an essence. It is a power to "formalize" or metamorphose rather than to dematerialize. What has traditionally been regarded as an abstractive or extractive

activity emerges as an idealising and formalising activity. So, according to Marx, man has been contemplating and "in-tuiting" his own Ideal hypostatizations and formal creations.

Another conclusion is that the particular formality or Essence has to be regarded both from the point of view of the individual himself and from the point of view of the social environment or Totality. This follows from the nature of species-relations and the doctrine on "reflex categories". The human Essence, in its particular form, is both holistic and conscious in a subjective sense. A particular formality depends for its intelligibility and existence on its basis, the prevailing Community. An individual cannot be said to epitomise a particular formality unless he consciously and subjectively identifies himself with it. identity has to be reciprocal. This means, as we shall see in the case of the two major "formalities" viz. the "bour-. geois" and the "proletariat", that an immediate and tidy identification between a socio-economic class and a "formality" or Totality-type is a violation of Marx's own system. Marx occasionally edges towards this mistake. Many of his ardent followers thrive on it.

Both the holistic and the subjectively conscious character of an individual's particular "formality" can be clearly seen in the case of Alex Hailey's ancestor. The "old African", Kintu Kinte, was regarded and "defined" as a slave by the American society or Community but Kintu Kinte regarded himself as a free man, a Mandingo warrior. He never gave up his "formality" and had to pay a price for it. Kinte's own "formality" was not an individualistic or apriori one. It was rooted in the tribal Totality from which he had been abducted.

Marx's doctrine on the human Essence is, in part, a rejection of the absolutist and autonomous character of the traditional substance. The human Essence is not known "in

spite of" but in and through the environment. It is, therefore, fundamentally relational. On the other hand, since
the Ideal environment, throughout the "pre-history of human
society", is undergoing change and development the individual's
"formality" must, a fortiori, also be regarded as developmental, changing with the epochs and recording, at the same
time, the degree of human development.

The third major conclusion concerns the nature of individuality within Marx's system. It is often contended that Marx did not give sufficient importance to the individual; that he often sacrificed the individual to the social or communal interest. Historical communism has done little to dispel or disprove this view. There is, we argue, scant, if any, doctrinal basis for this contention. The very fact that Marx advocated a form of social existence where the individual is able to live and realise himself "as an individual" and "man as man", instead of as a historically conditioned person, clearly suggests the opposite of what the above allegation implies. One of Marx's major complaints was precisely that so far the individual has not been able to realise himself fully and authentically. The problem is, as we are seeing, that Marx reinterprets both the "individual" and the "social".

One's view on individuality and society depend on one's doctrine and presuppositions on human nature itself. If the nature of man is, implicitly or explicitly, regarded as that of an autonomous, independent and self-sufficient monad or as that of a lone wolf, we would have to regard social life as either a limitation of one's individuality and freedom or as a necessary evil. If man is autonomous and self-sufficient he loses what he cedes to the Community. This presupposition on human nature breeds the distinction between the "private" or individual interest and the "general" interest as two anti-thetical ones. "Justice" will consist in holding a balanced course between the two.

From Marx's point of view, the doctrine on the in-

dividualistic and autonomous nature of man, a Hobbesian legacy, is both insidious and false; the distinction between the "private" and the "general" interest is a historical hoax.

With Marx, human individuality is not contrasted with communality. The human individual as human is constitutively and definitionally a community individual. 11 To appreciate Marx's position we have to keep in mind the vital distinction between the "being" or Nature of one's individuality and its actual "formality". The "being" is intrinsically communal -- a fact, for Marx, forcefully substantiated by the social character of the "content" or "substance" of one's individuality throughout history. Whether one regards oneself as a "citizen" in the ancient classical sense, or as a "noble" in the feudal sense, or as a "bourgeois" in the capitalist sense, one ipso facto posits the social nature of one's individuality and selfidentity. The different "formalities", despite their pseudo, circumscribed and separatist character, obtain exclusively within a social or communal milieu. It is only within the confines of a social context that, e.g. a skin pigment, a type of labour or activity, possession of certain objects, membership in a group, etc., obtain an Ideal dimension and become "formalities" with which an individual / . subjectively identifies. One's human individuality and personality, both genetically and constitutively, have no residual content of their own, distinct from one's idealised social existence. This, for Marx, is a "Truth" transcending the idiosyncracies and vicissitudes of man's historical existence. If the "being" of human individuality is communal so should be its "formality". Moreover, since man's "formality" is mediated by an Ideal Totality, the character of the latter should itself sustain, express and correspond to the individual's communal nature. But this has not been the . case throughout history. Marx's analysis of human nature

shows that the various historical Totalities separate rather than unite men. They not only sustain a circumscribed individuality — the individual as X, as Y, as Z — instead of the "individual as individual" but also breed divisions, classes and hence, social conflict. We have to say, therefore, that until and including the capitalist system, the <u>nature</u> of man's individuality has been communal but its <u>formality</u> has been "private" and separatist because the Ideal Totality has been inadequate.

Marx's doctrine, therefore, rejects Rousseau's distinction between "homme" and "citoyen". Man is defined as a "citizen", a Zoon politikon, in the sense of a Totality or Community being and not in the narrow Greek sense. The mistake of the Social Contract theorists stems, he maintains implicitly, from their failure to distinguish the communal nature of human individuality from its historical form of realisation throughout history. They criticised social or community existence itself, which is identical with human existence as such, instead of/historical mode and expression.

Likewise, Marx rejects the legitimacy of the distinction between the "general" and the "private" interest. Throughout history, these "interests" or imperatives, which denote man's formality in time and space, have never been genuine alternatives. According to him, the "general interest" has been and remains in reality "private" and sectarian interest in disguise -- elevated into, and given the role of. an Ideal Totality. "The general interest is precisely the generality of self-seeking interests".(Grund.245) This "interest" has, therefore, a common role or status but a private and sectarian nature. Marx advocated the rule of an "interest" and of an Ideal Totality that unites people and enables them to express themselves fully. This isn't something that has to be imposed or enforced on people by any "central committee" or "Politburo"; neither is it something that follows with any physical necessity. It has to be remembered that we are

dealing with Ideal phenomena and a subjective consciousness neither of which is amenable to brute necessity or violence. We are dealing with "moments" in human existence whose interrelationship, as described and presupposed by Marx, is neither "physical" nor purely arbitrary. Here the force of consciousness and of "Reason" prevails. The same process and the same type of "movement" which led people to establish "citizenship", "Birth", "Money" etc., as Ideal Totalities will, in time, under proper conditions, lead people to establish Humanism as the "Nexus Rerum". The role of the Ideal and of consciousness remains crucial.

As we have seen, man's Ideal existence is what makes possible community life, a life of unity, harmony and cooperation as well as of formal separation, exclusion and conflict. It is the Ideal that makes us persons or deprive us of personality because it enables us formally to hypostatize our existence and prevents us from losing ourselves in the "physis".

We realise, therefore, that for Marx, the Community or Society as such is not a threat to, or a limitation of, one's individuality or personality. Indeed, given its communal nature, human individuality will not only realise itself but expand, flourish and find its fulfilment and satisfaction in and through a Community, in communion with others, which is, incidentally, a basic Christian conception. Man, according to Marx, (and the Scholastics) should work with and not against his nature. But this nature has first to be understood correctly.

It is in the perspective of the above that we should interpret Marx's rejection of the "Rights of man" as distinct from the "Rights of the citizen". Marx's argument is that, in their historical expression, these "Rights of man" constitute the "Right" of <u>separation</u> and <u>exclusion</u>. (Early W. 229-232) They are "Rights" that do violence to human nature itself and stem from a mistaken view of the latter. Only

a superficial reading of Marx's doctrine would interpret his views as a rejection of human freedom and an invitation to a totalitarian regime.

Marx's doctrine emphasises the view that the human individual is not self-sufficient either physically, emotionally, consciously or Formally. It is the nature of man to be a Totality being. This fact he can never escape. This does not mean that once an individual has absorbed the vital forces of his social existence he cannot separate himself physically and consciously from the social milieu. In this case, however, the situation is similar to that of one who keeps his breath. He will survive as long as the oxygen he has trapped in his lungs sustains him. But even here he immediately shows that he is a breathing animal. Moreover, the trapped oxygen that sustains him is not his own creation. He inhaled it from the surrounding athmosphere.

3:3 Distinction of Opposition and Distinction of Correspondence.

It is clear from what has been discussed so far that, in Marx's system, the distinction which exists between human Nature and the human Essence has been, and still is, one of opposition. Until and including the capitalist era, the Ideal Totalites have consisted of various hypostatizations of undeveloped conditions of existence. This has given rise to pseudo Essences, abstract objectifications which, when absolutised, became fetishes or totems in virtue of which the individual obtaind a measure of recognition or was totally or partially rejected. Marx argues that eventually the Formality or Essence of man, in both its Universal and Particular dimension, should become adequate and represent, in a genuine manner, man's communal nature. Man should be confirmed and not negated by his Essence. When this happens, the distinction between human Nature and the human Essence becomes one of correspondence.

To appreciate this conception we have to keep in mind

the trinitarian formula which constitutes human existence. This is an enduring situation. Man is a Species-being and therefore his Essence or Formality remains for ever a mediated one. However, depending on the character of the Totality, his Formality can be either direct or indirect. We must not confuse a "mediated" identification or realisation with an "indirect" one. Mediated is the opposite of immediate: indirect is the opposite of direct. It is possible to have a mediated but a direct relation. For example, in Thomistic epistemology, human knowledge is regarded as being mediated but direct. A mediated relation is direct when the medium is truly representative, and a genuine duplicate, of the correlate. If the medium is something qualitatively different from the correlate the mediation becomes indirect and distortive. If we apply this to the problem under discussion, we realise that as long as the Ideal Totality is something qualitatively different from the formalization of humanity itself, i.e., unless humanity as such is established as an abstract objectification, an Ideal hypostatization on a social and universal basis, the individual Essence or Formality remains indirect. this happens his dignity, status, recognition, self-identity and personality are not established in a direct way but through the mediation of something qualitatively different from himself. Man has hypostatized his geographical situation and membership in a clan and made Citizenship the basis of his human-hood -- Ancient Greece and Rome: idealised the particular circumstances of his biological origin and made Birth the criterion of his human dignity -the Feudal era; he has formalised his physical and material possessions and made Property the symbol of respect, social recognition and self-identity -- the capitalist era. means that, in these cases, "Citizenship", "Birth" and "Property" are directly acknowledged and man as "citizen", "noble", "proprietor" is indirectly acknowledged.

The different historical Totalities, in Marx's perspective, have had a limiting and confining effect on the human species in both a qualitative and a quantitative sense. On the one hand every historical Totality has excluded, partially or fully, the majority of the people; on the other hand, it has provided a limited and one-sided recognition and realisation to those individuals who were regarded as particular embodiments of it. This situation will continue until humanity itself is hypostatized into an Ideal Totality. this happens, Citizenship, Birth, Property, Colour, Religion, Race etc. become trivialities as far as the Community existence is concerned. Thus the dignity of man will be recognised directly. The Totality becomes qualitatively identical with the Particular and subsequently, "classes", "divisions", sectarian interests etc., will be suspended as social formalities.

The development of the human species, as described by Marx, involves a process of liberation, the liberation of man from false and pseudo Essences which negate rather than confirm him. Man, therefore, progresses through negation rather than through positive imposition, a process which reaches its climax within the capitalist system — the epitome of human negation. The negation of this Totality results in a positive situation because it involves a double negation — "the negation of the negation".

The process of liberation, we shall have occasion to clarify and substantiate, according to Marx, passes from "objective individuality" characterising the pre-captialist eras, to a "subjective" but empty individuality within the capitalist era. This is a necessary stage in so far as it expresses the freedom of man from limited and one-sided objectifications and pseudo individualities. This state of dehumanisation and "spiritual poverty" should have a sobering effect on man; it should help him recognise the illusions and prejudices of the past and the moral vacuity of the pre-

sent. This should enable people to recognise their true nature because now they are brought face to face with themselves in their naked existence. This makes possible, for the first time in history, a personal individuality, an individuality that is outgoing and which is vitalised and enriched by a corresponding Totality. This is an individuality of participation and not of separation. The individual enhances and fulfils himself by involvement in his human kin and the natural environment -- man's "inorganic body".

Given the nature of the Ideal and the role of subjective consciousness, Marx's doctrine presupposes both that people are able to choose a rational mode of existence and that they will eventually choose wisely when the conditions are fully developed.

For a better appreciation of Marx's philosophical anthropology a descriptive account of the main Totalities, recorded in Western history is of great value. Marx implies four major ones which can be chronologically characterised as, "Gregarious", "Political", "Socio-biological", and "Economic". What we have to keep in mind, throughout the following, is that each of these Totalities is Ideal in nature. Each exists as an abstract objectification, a concrete universal. The different Totalities are characterised and labelled according to the nature of their empirical basis. 3:4 The Gregarious Totality

One of Marx's major postulates is that phychological individuality and conscious self-identity are a result and not the point of departure of human history. He claims, as we have seen, that "human beings become individuals only through the process of history. [Man] appears originally as a species-being, a clan being, herd animal." Marx contends further that:

Originally, life in the community and, through its mediation, the relationship to the earth as property, are basic presuppositions of the reproduction both of the individual and of the community. Among

pastoral peoples, land and soil appear merely as precondition of the migratory life, hence appropriation does not take place. Fixed settlements with soil cultivation follow -- thus landed property is initially held in common, and even where it advances to private property the individuals connection to it appears as posited by his relation to the community. It appears as a mere fief of the community. (Grund. 740)

Initially, according to Marx, mankind led a life similar to that of gregarious animals, although it already enjoyed an "ontic" status separating it from the "rest.of nature". This initial state of human existence is implied when Marx says that the "oldest of all (is the) horde organization with promiscuity; no family; only mother right can have played any kind of role here."(Ethnol.Notes,102) A little later he reiterates the idea that the first stage of human existence involved:

Promiscuous intercourse. Leben in Horde; no marriage; far below the lowest savage now living. The ruder flint impliments ...attest extreme rudeness of man's condition, after he had emerged from his primitive habitat and commenced, as a fisherman, his spread over continental area. Primitive Savage. The consanguine family...recognised promiscuity within defined limits, and those not the narrowest, and it points through its organism to a worse condition against which it interposes a shield.(ibid.125)

The "worse condition" to which even this primitive "horde organization" points to can be identified with the stage in which
"mankind, when ignorant of <u>fire</u>, without <u>articulate language</u>,
and without <u>artificial weapons</u>...depended...upon the spontaneous fruits of the earth."(ibid.127)

Regarding this primitive stage of human existence, L. Krader remarks that within Marx's perspective:

the horde is a form of organised society; however, family and society are indistinguishable under these circumstances. Taken as an abstraction this prehistory of family and society is then developed by Marx... such that in the first ethnic period for which there is empirical evidence, the family in its consanguine form is not separated from society, i.e., in this sense it is "the first organized form of society" (ibid.63)

During this stage, the individual was psychologically subsumed under and lost in the Totality; the distinction between the Particular Essence and the Universal Essence or Totality did not yet obtain. This is implied when Marx says:

The patriarchal family marks the peculiar epoch in human progress when the individuality of the person began to rise above the gens, in which it previously had been merged; its general influence tended powerfully to the establishment of the monogamian family. (ibid.119)

Even more explicitly, he claims that "in this early condition of society, the <u>individuality of persons was lostlin the gens</u>." (ibid.150)

The material or empirical basis of the Gregarious character of this Totality lies in its total lack of property either movable, immovable, private or communal. The "nucleus, the first form" of property, according to Marx, "lies in the family, where wife and children are the slaves of the husband."(Ger.Id.52) As we are seeing, at this initial stage, there is no family either in the patriarchal or monogamian sense — the family, here, is identified with the "horde" and this, according to Marx, made "paternal authority impossible". (Ethnol.Notes,119). Besides, the natural surroundings could be considered as possession but not as property. Property, both communal and private is, according to Marx a phenomenon that appeared later in human history. This idea is confirmed when Marx writes that:

Hegel...correctly takes ownership, the simplest legal relation of the subject, as the point of departure of the philosophy of law. No ownership exists, however, before the family or the relations of master and servant are evolved, and these are much more concrete relations. It would, on the other hand, be correct to say that families and entire tribes exist which have as yet only bossessions and not property. (Pol.Econ.207)

We have here a clear distinction between the <u>infrastructure</u> consisting of species-relations, i.e. "the family or the relation of master and servant", which are "much more concrete relations" and the <u>superstructure</u>, in the form of "ownership, the simplest legal relation." This confirms what

we discussed in the previous chapter regarding the "territorial imperative". Clearly, in Marx's system we have to distinguish between, (a) mere possession, which is a non social relation; (b) property, which is a species-relation, a social and Ideal phenomenon and (c) "Property" as a "vital ideal", an idea or category which is part of the ideological superstructure. This is the political and moral dimension of property. (c) depends on (b) and changes as the latter changes. But (b) remains distinct from (a). It remains sui generis and expresses man's Ideal existence.

A point that deserves stress is the fact that in speaking of the "horde" Marx is already presupposing the emergence of the human species as a distinct form of life, enjoying it own "ontic" status vis-a-vis the rest of nature. It is a form of life already qualified as human that "in the means of subsistence advanced from natural fruits in a restricted habitat to scale and shell fish of the sea and finally to bread roots and game." (Ethnol.Notes, 127)

Allusions to this "Gregarious Totality" held together and sustained by "conscious instinct", though limited and far between, are found in Marx's major works. In The German Ideology it is said that:

This beginning is as animal as social life itself at this stage. It is mere herd-consciousness, and at this point man is only distinguished from sheep by the fact that with him consciousness takes the place of instinct or that his instinct is a conscious one. (Ger.Id.51)

In the Grundrisse he writes:

As soon as consumption emerges from its initial state of natural crudity and immediacy -- and, if it remained at that stage, this would be because production itself had been arrested there -- it becomes itself mediated as a drive by the object.(Grund.92)13

This initial Totality representing an "unproductive stage" of human existence is implied also in Capital where Marx says:

An immeasurable interval of time separates the state of things in which a man brings his labour-power to market for sale as a commodity, from the state in which human labour was still in its first instinctive stage. We pre-suppose labour in a form that stamps it as exclusively human. (Cap.1.178)

It is only after men have raised themselves above the rank of animals, when therefore, their labour has been to some extent socialised, that a state of things arises in which the surplus-value of the one becomes a condition of existence for the other. At the dawn of civilisation the productiveness acquired by labour is small, but so too are the wants which develop with and by the means of satisfying them.(Cap.1.512)

3:5 The Political Totality

Although Marx distinghishes between the "patriarchal and ancient communities" as well as between the "Asiatic, Slavonic, ancient classical and Germanic ones" and their respective characteristics, one can, for the sake of economy, group these communities together as "Political Totalities". Also, this classification finds support in the fact that, among other things, the property relations prevailing within these different communities have a basic similarity. According to Marx, not only does the phenomenon itself of Property as a "legal relation" first make its appearance at this stage in human existence, but it also remains mainly and fundamentally communal in character in each case. He claims:

Property...originally means -- in its Asiatic Slavonic, ancient classical, Germanic form -- the relation of the working (producing or self-reproducing) subject to the conditions of his production or reproduction as his own. It will therefore have different forms depending on the conditions of this production. Production itself aims at the reproduction of the producer within and together with these, his objective conditions of existence. This relation as proprietor -- not as a result but as a presupposition of labour, i.e., of production -- presupposes the individual defined as a member of a clan or community (whose property the individual himself is, up to a certain point).(Grund.495)

A little later he adds:

All forms in which this property appears presuppose a <u>community</u>, whose members, although there may be formal distinctions between them, are, as members of

it proprietors. The original form of this property is therefore itself direct common property (oriental form, modified in the Slavonic; developed to the point of antithesis, but still as the secret, if antithetical, foundation in classical and German property). (ibid.497)

Marx's view that throughout these communities "the individual [is] defined as a member of a clan or community", accounts for the "Political" characterisation of this Totality. In this respect, one can say that the Political Totality spans the primitive commune which was bound together through "blood-ties" and where the community was "the substance of which the individuals were mere accidents, or of which they form purely natural component parts" (ibid.474) with the communities of classical antiquity where the Totality reaches its climax in State or Nation-hood. The commune as "the whole" or Totality, Marx contends, "here consists not merely of its parts. It is a kind of independent organism", whether it exists "as a coming together", where the city as such is missing, "or as a being-together", as in the case of Rome. (ibid. 483)

What deserves attention is Marx's implicit idea that it is here that the subject-object relationship is expressed for the first time though in limited form. This registers the first step towards human self-consciousness and self-assertion — the first move towards actualising and realising the human potential for individuality and personal identity. The binding link between people or the "nexus rerum" at this stage is no longer predominantly instinctive as in the previous stage but becomes increasingly conscious and juridical; it becomes more explicitly an Ideal Totality. The individual obtains his identity in and through the mediation of his membership within the Totality. This mature into the phenomenon of the "objective individual, i.e., the individual defined as Roman, Greek etc."

The distinction between the Particular Essence and the Universal one, Marx implies, appears and matures further with the latter dominating and providing the perspective for

the former. This breeds the distinction between "civil society" as the <u>infrastructure</u> and the "political society" as <u>superstructure</u>, (the latter, according to Marx gradually assuming mystical and ethical dimensions). The State, whether in the form of customs and laws or as a fully fledged institution, becomes "sacred", a fetish. "In Greece", Marx contends, "civil society was the slave of political society." (Early W.138) Hence only citizens were regarded as <u>fully</u> human. At another instance, Marx claims that "men became slaves when their political existence has been destroyed." (ibid.179) Within this type of Totality "relations of personal dependence" prevail.(Grund.158) However, the relationship between the individuals is not yet truly personal because personality itself was heavily dependent on the Political Totality itself. According to Marx,

Co-operation, such as we find it at the dawn of human development, among races who live by the chase, or, say, in the agriculture of Indian communities, is based, on the one hand, on ownership in common of the means of production, and on the other hand, on the fact, that in those cases, each individual has no more torn himself off from the navel-string of his tribe or community, than each bee has freed itself from connexion with the hive. (Cap.1.334)

The same applies to later stages within this type of Totality. Although here,

their relations appear to be more personal, (individuals) enter into connection with one another only as individuals imprisoned within a certain definition, as feudal lord and vassal, landlord and serf, etc., or as members of a caste etc. or as members of an estate etc. (Grund.163)

The major social or class relationship develops into that between citizen and slave(Ger.Id.44). Individuals become graded embodiments of the Political Totality with respective claims to the communal property. Marx argues, for example, that "since the patrician represents the community in a higher degree, he is the possessor of the ager publicus. (Grund.478-479)

3:6 The Socio-Biological Totality (the Medieval)

The third major Totality implied in Marx's analysis of the "pre-history of human society" is, in many respects, very similar to the previous one. Marx himself often mentions vital characteristics common to both ancient and medieval communities. He says, for example, that:

Relations of personal dependence (entirely spontaneous at the outset) are the first social forms, in which productive capacity develops only to a slight extent and at isolated points.(Grund.158)

It is clear that these "relations of personal dependence" apply both to classical antiquity where the "objective individual" is already developed, and to feudal times.

There are, however, two important reasons why a distinction can and should be made. In the first place, this stage marks an important development in the "property relations". In the second place, one's Particular Essence becomes more and more a question of hierarchical placing depending on one's birth. Hence, we have characterised this Totality as Socio-Biological.

In the <u>Grundrisse</u> Marx claims that capitalist property relations dissolve two important "forms in which the worker is a proprietor, or in which the proprietor works."

The first dissolution involves man's relation "to the earth-land and soil -- as natural conditions of production." This property relation, Marx indicates, existed within the Political Totality. The second dissolution concerns the "relations in which the worker appears as proprietor of the instrument." The Totality in which this type of property thrives is clearly indicated when Marx adds:

Just as the above form of landed property presupposes a real community, so does this property of the worker in the instrument presupposes a parti-*cular form of development of manufactures, namely, craft, artisan work; bound up with it, the guild-corporation system etc...Here labour itself still half artistic, half end-in-itself etc. Mastery... Medieval cities. (ibid.497)

The difference between these two phases of human history is implied when Marx contends further that:

Antiquity had no inkling of a privileged guild-system such as prevailed in the history of medieval cities; and already here the martial spirit declined as the guilds defeated the aristocratic lineages, and was finally extinguished altogether; and consequently, with it, the cities' external respect and freedom. (ibid.478)14

The relevance of all this to the question of Marx's doctrine on human nature lies in the fact that the human Essence, according to Marx, consists of an "ensemble of social relations". If these relations change considerably, one is bound to have a different Essence. This is precisely the reason which justifies the distinction between the Political and Socio-Biological Totalities. Since the Particular Essence is dominated by prevailing Totality it remains of the utmost importance to idenify accurately the character of the "super- and subordination of individuals to one another." (ibid.159)

As in the former case Marx insists that neither true individuality nor genuine personal relationship exist within this Totality. He argues:

As regards the illusion of the "purely personal relations" in feudal times, etc., it is of course not to be forgotten for a moment (1) that these relations, in a certain phase, also took on an objective character within their own sphere, as for example the development of landed proprietorship out of purely military relations of subordination; but (2) the objective relation on which they founder has still a limited, primitive character and therefore seems personal. (ibid.165)

Although different from the previous one, this Totality remains fundamentally "political" in character. Marx argues with regards to Feudal society that this,

had a directly political character, i.e., the elements of civil life such as property, family and the mode and manner of work were elevated in the form of seignory, estate and guild to the level of elements of political life. (Early W.232)

The major difference between this Totality and the previous one lies in the factors which were socially dominant in deciding one's status within the Community. The idea is suggested that, within this era, an individual finds his identiy and recognition according to the social status determined by one's Birth. This means that at this stage in the human developmental process the biological fact of one's birth is formalised, transformed into an Ideal phenomenon. "The middle Ages", Marx states, "is the animal history of mankind, its zoology."(ibid.148) If, Marx argues, one's recognition and status is provided by one's birth, then the basis of man's personality becomes "biological". Marx's cynicism towards the traditional doctrine of "Royal blood", "nobility" etc.is evident:

If it is true that a man can owe his position directly to his birth, as distinct from other determinations, then it must be by virtue of his body that he can fulfil this particular social function. His body is his social prerogative. According to this syst the physical dignity of man or the dignity of the According to this system human body (or we might go further and say: the dignity of the natural physical element of the state) is made manifest in such a way that definite social positions, indeed the highest ones, are in fact the dignity of specific bodies predestined by birth - Hence, the nobility takes a natural pride in its blood, its extraction, in short the whole life-history of its body: this is its natural zoological way of thinking and heraldry is the science appropriate to it. Thus zoology is the secret of the nobility. (ibid. 174-175)

This is not merely a parody of social prejudice and age-long illusions about hereditary titles. It is also both a rejection of epiphenomenalism and a reiteration of his insight into the crude materialism and "physicalism" latent within a doctrine which, implicitly or explicitly, contains racist ideas and prejudice. What Marx says here reminds one of an animal show where thoroughbreds are exhibited and appraised. Incidentally, economism and technologism are in the same logical position. Here a socio-economic situation (possession of capital or labour) replaces a biological phenomenon, birth.

In both cases a <u>physical</u> condition is regarded as the <u>im-mediate</u> cause of one's "essence" or formality. From the vantage point of Marx's system this is sheer fetishism.

3:7 The Economic Totality

Earlier we saw that Marx characterised social relations prevailing within the Political and Socio-Biological
Totalities as "relations of personal dependence". This emphasises the fact that during these eras the individual was dominated by Ideal Totalities which had a socio-political character. They represented Ideal hypostatizations or formalisations of more or less "natural" conditions of existence, such as race, birth, geography etc. Till this stage in the human developmental process, the Community consisted of "merely local connections resting on Blood ties, or on primeval, natural or master - servant relations" (Grund.161) By contrast, the Economic Totality is characterised by the fact that the individual, as far as his Particular Essence is concerned, is dominated by the formalisation of economic factors:

Personal independence founded on <u>objective</u> dependence is the second great form, in which a system of general social metabolism, of universal relations, of all-round needs and universal capacities is formed for the first time.(ibid.158)

This situation represents the direct reverse of what prevailed when the Totality had a socio-political character. Previously, the "nexus rerum" had a unifying effect on the different individuals. Now the "nexus rerum" ironically presupposes and emphasises the separation and atomization of individuals. Marx claims that:

It has been said and may be said that this is precisely the beauty and greatness of it: this spontaneous interconnection, this material and mental metabolism which is independent of the knowing and willing of individuals, and which presupposes their reciprocal independence and indifference. (ibid.161)

In Marx's perspective, every historical Totality so far, involved a degree of mystification. Although a

creation of real people in their spatio-temporal existence, each Totality became a <u>separate</u> entity, a "being-for-itself". Man's Ideal duplicate and Formal objectification became man's <u>rival</u>, a fetish lording it over him, regardless of its historical character. When analysed correctly, each historical Totality betrays its circumscribed, external and oppressive character. This situation applies, to a degree unprecedented in history, in the case of the Economic Totality which represents the Capitalist Era.

According to Marx, what is considered a vital means for life, comes to be regarded as "Essential" to life, in a formal sense -- part of the human Essence. 15 When the human productive process is developed to a certain degree, money and wealth attain this status. "Money", Marx claims, "... directly and simultaneously becomes the real community since it is the general substance of survival of all, and at the same time the social product of all."(Grund.225-226) Money as "capital" becomes the "One" or "Whole"(ibid.590) -- a "moment" in human existence acting as a Middle term for the other two in their syllogistic relationship. As the "Universal" it unites the "many" although its interests, as a "being-for-itself", are directly opposed to the interests of the "many". One clear proof of this is found in the fact, (evident till this day), that "capital undertakes only advantageous undertakings, advantageous in its sense."(ibid.531) "Individual labour" Marx says, is reduced "to the level of helplessness in the face of the communality represented by and concentrated in capital."(ibid.700)

In order to understand and appreciate Marx's analysis of the "logic" of the capitalist system, one has to recognise three major ideas implicit in his doctrine. First of all, the capitalist system represents for him the suspension of the political and social character of the infrastructure sustaining earlier communities. Marx is emphatic that money, wealth and exchange-value were not the dominating

factors within these societies. Indeed, wealth was regarded as anti-thetical to these communities. He points out that:

All previous forms of society -- or; what is the same, of the forces of social production -- foundered on the development of wealth. Those thinkers of antiquity who were possessed of consciousness therefore directly denounced wealth as the dissolution of the community. (Grund.540) 16

Money as a Totality, Marx claims, accepts no equal: "Where money is not itself the community, it must dissolve the community."(ibid.224)17

Secondly, capitalism represents the imposition of a new type of social ligament, viz. money. The character of the infrastructure changes from socio-political to economic. Instead of political status or social standing, one's economic position becomes the basis for one's Particular Essence. In his early comments on J. Mill, Marx had pointed out that political economists themselves conceive of man as "homo oeconomicus" and human society as an economic society.

Now economics conceives of the community of man, or the self-activating essence of man, man's attainment of a species-life, a truly human existence through the mutuality of men, in terms of exchange and trade. Society, according to Destutt de Tracy, is a series of reciprocal exchanges. It is just this process of reciprocal integration. Society, according to Adam Smith, is a commercial society. Each of its members is a merchant. (Early W.266)

The third vital point is that, according to Marx, "capital" represents the rule of an alien power over man as such. Capital, which is now installed as the "Nexus rerum", Principle or "Universal" of society is inimical to the welfare of mankind. It represents the rule of wealth for its own sake. Marx contends that:

Capital comes more and more to the fore as a social power...It becomes an alienated, independent, social power, which stands opposed to society as an object, and as an object that is the capitalist's source of power.(Cap.111.246)

The "logic" of the capitalist system is to seek wealth, pro-

fit and augmentation of itself as an end in itself. It is not concerned with what is wholesome and uplifting for man. The Totality, therefore, which capitalism sustains is, in principle concerned with physical existence in a narrow sense. It regards man as a mere natural being. Since the Totality, within Marx's system, is the Universal Human Essence, we now have a situation where the Essence, the Ideal duplication and abstract objectification of man, is the complete negation of the Nature of man. This applies both to the capitalist and to the worker. The "rule of capital" and the "rule of the capitalist" as man, are not the same. The capitalist, Marx argues, "as the conscious representative of this movement" -- the movement of "money as money" -- "the possessor of money becomes a capitalist ... and functions as a capitalist, that is as capital personified and endowed with consciousness and a will. "(Cap.1.152) Marx argues further:

It is not because he is a leader of industry that a man is a capitalist; on the contrary, he is a leader of industry because he is a capitalist. The leader—ship of industry is an attribute of capital, just as in feudal times the functions of general and judge, were attributes of landed property. (ibid. 332)

This is reminiscent of the case of the slave-dealer. The "title" presupposed here is not the institution of slavery but that of "capital" as a social relation. But just as the "dealer" could not traffic in human life without the institution of slavery, so too the capitalist cannot function as a capitalist or "bourgeois" without the institution of the capitalist system which exists independently of him.

The important point in all this is that, on Marx's own terms, the rule of capital is the rule of a social imperative, an Ideal hypostatization expressing itself in money and its increase. It is not the rule of the capitalist as a free and self-assertive person. What is involved, therefore, is not strictly speaking a matter of possessions, a question of who owns money or capital but a matter concerning the "logic" and rationale which are imputed to money and its

role and status in society. Money becomes the <u>Ideal Totality</u> in and through which the individual and all his dimensions are appraised. This constitutes its rule regardless of who owns it. "The capitalist", Marx contends, "is merely capital personified and functions in the process of production solely as the agent of capital."(Cap.lll.819) This being the case, the capitalist is not really in charge; he represents and personifies an alien power and an alien Totality and it is to that extent that he rules over society. As in the case of each of the other Totalities, capital exists and rules independently of each individual, even though it is a product of man's social activity.

Meanwhile, in the case of the worker, the rule of "an alienated abstract power" over man becomes evident. Marx writes:

In bourgeois society, the worker e.g. stands there purely without objectivity, subjectively; but the thing which stands oppostite him has now become the true community which he tries to make a meal of, and which makes a meal of him. (Grund. 496)

This idea is reiterated in <u>Capital</u>. "It is now no longer the labourer that employs the means of production, but the means of production that employ the labourer."(Cap.1.310) "In machinery" — the technological basis of the Economic Totality — Marx argues further, "objectified labour confronts living labour with the labour process itself as the power which rules it; a power which, as the appropriation of living labour, is the form of capital."(Grund.693) The vital idea, often missed due to Marx's emphasis on <u>Right</u>, is that this rule of capital is not to be taken in a personalistic or voluntaristic sense, as the rule of one man who owns, over the other who labours; it is the rule of an alien power over both, even if one (the proprietor) executes its commands and softens its effects on himself in the process.

The "rule of capital", the offensive and hostile

character of the Economic Totality is manifested in a number of ways. Due to progress in machinery, human labour loses the element of skill and art which traditionally characterised it. This, in itself, is not to be lamented but within a system which regards "all living time as labour time" it has a devastating effect. Marx states:

The special skill of each individual insignificant factory operative vanishes as an infinitesimal quantity before the science, the gigantic physical forces, and the mass of labour that are embodied in the factory mechanism and, together with that mechanism, constitute the power of the "master". (Cap.1.423)

The determination of the length of a working day, is for Marx, another indication of this despotic rule over man. In determining what makes "a working day", what is taken into account is the interest of capital and its augmentation. In the perspective of the Economic Totality,

The working-day contains the full 24 hours, with the deduction of the few hours of repose without which labour-power absolutely refuses its services again. Hence it is self-evident that the labourer is nothing else, his whole life through, than labour-power, that therefore all his disposable time is by nature and law labour-time, to be devoted to the self-expansion of capital. Time for education, for intellectual development, for the fulfilling of social functions and for social intercourse, for the free-play of bodily and mental activity, even the rest time of Sunday (and that in a country of Sabbatarians!) -- moonshine! (ibid.264)18

The pervasive influence of the Economic Totality is naturally felt also in agriculture, the "specific kind of production" which predominated during the two previous Totalities, i.e., "in antiquity and in the feudal order." (Grund.107) The devastation makes itself felt on the producer himself:

In agriculture as in manufacture, the transformation of production under the sway of capital, means, at the same time, the martydom of the producer; the instrument of labour becomes the means of enslaving, exploiting, and impoverishing the labourer; the social combination and organisation of labour-processes is turned into an organised mode of crushing out the workingman's individual vitality, freedom and independence. (Cap.1.506)

The natural environment, man's "inorganic body" does not escape the exploitative influence and devastation of the capitalist system. Again, proof of this is found in "capitalistic agriculture"

All progress in capitalistic agriculture is a progress in the art, not only of robbing the labourer, but of robbing the soil; all progress in increasing the fertility of the soil for a given time, is a progress towards ruining the lasting sources of that fertility. The more a country starts its development on the foundation of modern industry, like the United States, for example, the more rapid is this process of destruction. Capitalist production, therefore, develops technology, and the combining together of various processes into a social whole, only by sapping the original sources of all wealth — the soil and the labourer. (Cap.1.506-507)19

An important characteristic of the Economic Totality, distinguishing it from other Totalities is the phenomenon of "social atomization". We have already seen that Marx ridiculed the Social Contract theorists who presupposed psychological and conscious individuality, on a universal scale, as the point of departure of human history. only in the capitalist era, he claims, that a widespread individualism is experienced. "In the form of society now under consideration, the behaviour of men in the social process of production is purely atomic. "(ibid.92) "Being independent of each other", Marx states further, "the labourers are isolated persons, who enter into relations with the capitalist, but not with one another."(ibid.333) This "isolation", as is evident, is not a physical but an intentional an "isolation" of purpose stemming from the Economic character of the capitalist Totality whose interests and imperatives are foreign to the interests and welfare of the worker and of the human race itself. In Marx's system, this atomization or "isolation" reduces itself to the loss of the previous type of "objective individuality". He claims, as we have seen, that in bourgeois society, "the worker e.g., stands...purely without objectivity, subjectively." cording to him, only in this era can the individual "appear... in the dot-like isolation in which he appears as mere free worker."(Grund.485)

The "subjective existence" of the worker is basically negative. It represents the suspension of the "Gregarious", "Political" and "Socio-Biological" Totalities and must be assessed in this historical perspective rather than in an absolutist one. In other words, the wide-spreads social atomization marks the suspension or abolition of former restrictions, trappings, privileges and biases previously constituting the individual's Essence or Formality. It should not be regarded as a positive assertion of true "subjective existence and Personality". This implies a very important idea which bears directly on Marx's views on human freedom in its social and political dimension. the idea of "positing" through "negating"; of "being" through "non-being"; of growth through elimination; of freedom through suspending non-freedom -- an idea implied in Marx's whole system and presupposing a state of undevelopment as the point of departure in human history. allegedly starts from a state of "bondage", (i.e. a pseudo formality) and gains "freedom", (an authentic formality), by consecutively negating a series of states of bondage. These states/bondage represent man's relationship to his environment and betray his state of undevelopment. The process of human freedom, Marx claims:

Is in truth the process of his release from the earth; dissolution of the landed property relations, which constituted him as a yeoman, as a free, working small landowner or tenant (colonus), a free peasant; dissolution of the guild relations which presuppose his ownership of the instrument of labour, and which presuppose labour itself as a craftsmanlike, specific skill, as property (not merely as the source of property); likewise dissolution of the client-relations in the various forms in which not-proprietors appear in the retinue of their lord as co-consumers of the surplus product and wear the livery of their master as an equivalent, participate in his feuds, perform personal services, imaginary or real etc.(Grund.502)

We have here an indication of the philosophical dimension which Marx gives to social labour or "praxis". The Human Essence, in Marx's system, is an objectification and duplication of man in his conscious existence. Its "form" and "character" are accordingly heavily dependent on the kind of spatio-temporal existence man has. In the worker - capitalist relationship there is "legally" a relationship of "equality and freedom". "Both sides confront each other as persons." In reality, Marx considers this form of freedom "a mere semblance, and a deceptive semblance" because the two parties have legal but not actual equality of bargaining power. However, he agrees that, with regards to the situation of the slave and serf, an element of "formal freedom" is registered by this transection.

Nevertheless, in this way everything touching on the individual, real person leaves him a wide field of choice, of arbitrary will, and hence of formal free-In the slave relation, he belongs to the individual, particular owner, and is his labouring machine. As a totality of force-expenditure, as labour capacity, he is a thing belonging to another, and hence does not relate as subject to his particular expenditure of force, nor to the act of living labour. In the serf relation he appears as a moment of property in land itself, is an appendage of the soil, exactly like draught-cattle. In the slave relation the worker is nothing but a living labourmachine, which therefore has a value for others, or rather is a value. The totality of the free worker's capacity appears to him as his property, as one of his moments, over which he, as subject, exercises domination, and which he maintains by expending it. (Grund.465)

Marx's concept of genuine freedom, in its social dimension, (as freedom to develop fully, to express oneself and exploit one's potentialities), has to be analysed and appraised in the context of his doctrine of man as a "being for himself". We have seen that man enjoys a measure of freedom from the "physis". This enables him to assert himself in a subjective way via a duplication of himself in the form of an abstract objectification. At the same time, how-

ever, his duplication, what he identifies with, could represent something different from himself and his species; when and to the extent that this happens, man remains in bondage — held captive by the Pseudo-Essences he himself creates and identifies with. Man will be free when his Essence represents man as man; when his duplicate is not historically conditioned man, or the idealisation of some object or other, but another person. If this is correct, one must say that an individual finds himself when he identifies with the human species but not in a historically conditioned form as, nation, race etc. In the Manuscripts Marx suggests this idea when he says:

The <u>rich</u> human being is simultaneously the human being in need of a totality of human manifestations of life — the man in whom his own realization exists as an inner necessity, as <u>need</u>. Not only <u>wealth</u>, but likewise the <u>poverty</u> of man — under the assumption of socialism — receives in equal measure a <u>human</u> and therefore social significance. Poverty is the passive bond which causes the human being to experience the need of the greatest wealth — the other human being. (Manus.144)

Marx's point, put briefly, is that the adequate object of man, that which satisfies and fulfils his needs, drives, desires and aspirations, that which fills his heart and gives him real contentment, is another human being.

Although each historical Totality was always a fetter and, in the best of circumstances, provided man with only limited and circumscribed fulfilment, Marx finds a certain insidiousness, unprecedented in history, in the way the Ecomonic Totality dominates and pervades every facet of the individual — his social, political, moral, ideological etc., dimensions. The crude materialism of this Totality, is one of Marx's reiterated contentions. The "human dependence" of former times changes into a "material dependence" which is more ruthless and degrading because it involves an appraisal of man in terms of one's property or one's material productivity. 20

For the worker, this era expresses the "complete denudation, purely subjective existence of labour stripped of all objectivity."(Grund.296) This makes labour "a matter of indifference to the worker."(Ger.Id.71) Besides, this "Labour as absolute poverty: poverty not as shortage, but as total exclusion of objective wealth" is itself, the "objectivity" of the worker, "an objectivity not separated from the person...an objectivity coinciding with his immediate bodily existence."(Grund.296) The point that Marx labours here is that in the case of the worker. "objective individuality", which represents man's Particular Essence. is now identified without remainder with this dehumanised labour or labour which has been deprived of all its selfexpression and human dimension. In fact, he also savs that "labour posited as not-capital...is...labour separated from all means and objects of labour, from its entire objectivity." (ibid.295)²¹

It is important to remark that, in Marx's system, the whole mischief is created not by the high productivity itself or by the presence of wealth and abundance, a view held by ancient thinkers since material progress as such was a threat to their form of social existence. The mischief is due to the type of imperative that sustains and dominates human existence at this stage in history: it is due to a type of Totality which is indifferent, if not antagonistic to, the interest and welfare of mankind. This again leads us back to Marx's basic characterisation of capitalism and its Totality as crudely materialistic. Within the Economic Totality, man's "life-activity" is reduced without remainder to his "material life". "Material life", Marx claims, "appears as the end, and what produces this material life, labour (which is now the only possible but, as we see, negative form of self-activity), as the means."(Ger.Id.92) Since money plays such an "essential" role within this era.

Not having is not a mere category; it is a most dismal reality; today the man who has nothing is nothing for he is cut off from existence in general, and still more from a human existence, for the condition of not having is the condition of the complete separation of man from his objectivity. (Coll.W.Vo.lV.42)

Again this shows that the problem is not one of mere distribution of material wealth. We have a form of ostracism from the social and even, the "human totality" because money and wealth have become the Universal Essence, the formal substance of man's worthiness and status as a human being. What is, therefore, involved here is not a mere matter of material poverty but of man's formal objectification and realisation as a human being. This situation, Marx says, is summed up in the bourgeois motto: "'You are worth as much as the money you possess." This has to be interpreted in the perspective of the syllogistic formula where "money" becomes the middle term.

That Marx distinguished between the material wealth and the progress in the productive system which are, per se, neutral, and the capitalistic Ideal Totality, in the perspective of which this material wealth and progress are utilised, is evident when he stats that:

Here as everywhere else, we must distinguish between the increased productiveness due to the development of the social process of production, and that due to the capitalist exploitation of that process.(Cap.1.422)

"It took both time and experience", Marx says, "before the work-people learnt to distinguish between machinery and its employment by capital, and to direct their attacks, not against the material instrument of production, but against the mode in which they are used."(ibid.429) A vital distinction is here clearly implied between a totality of physical, natural and technological relations which constitute the material or physical conditions of existence and a Totality of species-relations which constitutes the "mode of production" or infrastructure -- the main object of Marx's interest.

We have mentioned that human labour within the capi-

talist system is stripped of all its artistic and skilful character. The material and technological basis of this "denudation of labour" is found in the phenomenon of machinery. A machine is defined by Marx as

A mechanism that, after being set in motion, performs with its tools the same operations that were formerly done by the workman with similar tools. (Cap.1.374)

Marx distinguishes within the machine "three essentially different parts, the motor mechanism, the transmitting mechanism and finally the tool or working machine. The motor mechanism is that which puts the whole in motion ... The transmitting mechanism...regulates the motion, changes its form where necessary...and divides and distributes it. among the working machines." The "tool or working machine" is that part which mainly replaces and reproduces the worker's skill and dexterity. It is with the "motor mechanism" and with the "tool or working machine" that we are concerned. We can refer to them as the motus and the operatio of the machine. Prior to the manufacturing period we find, Marx says, the worker using tools and instruments which he "animates" and makes into his organ with his skill and strength, and whose handling therefore depends on his virtuosity." (Grund. 693 At this stage both the motus and the operatio were, in the main, provided by the worker. With the advent of manufacture, some of the motus was taken over by the machine but the operation was still basically provided by the worker. was only when the machine took over the worker's operatio that a new epoch appeared in history.

It is this last part of the handicraftsman's implement that is first seized upon by the industrial
revolution, leaving to the workman, in addition to
his new labour of watching the machine with his eyes,
and correcting its mistakes with his hand, the merely
mechanical part of being the moving power. (Cap.1.374)

Once this important stage in the productive process is reached, the worker's direct contribution is decisively curtailed. As soon as the worker's operatio is usurped by

the machine, it is the latter "which possesses skill and strength in place of the worker, is itself the virtuose, with a soul of its own in the mechanical laws acting through it." At this stage:

The production process has ceased to be a labour process in the sense of a process dominated by labour as its governing unity. Labour appears, rather, merely as a conscious organ, scattered among the individual living workers at numerous points of the mechanical system; subsumed under the total process of the machinery itself, as itself only a link of the system, whose unity exists not in the living workers, but rather in the living (active) machinery, which confronts his individual, insignificant doings as a mighty organism. (Grund. 693)

On the other hand, the productive process cannot, according to Marx, improve and increase its efficiency as long as it still rests predominantly on skilled labour:

Modern Industry was crippled in its complete development, so long as its characteristic instrument of production, the machine, owed its existence to personal strength and personal skill, and depended on the muscular development, the keenness of sight, and the cunning of hand, with which the detail workmen in manufactures, and the manual labourers in handicrafts, wielded their dwarfish impliments. (Cap.1.382)

This means that, according to Marx, it was only by depriving human labour of its self-expressive and artistic element that high productivity became possible. This suggests two important ideas: (a) one is led to the conclusion that the former type of self-expression which the worker experienced was a restricted one as found in "every medieval craftsman" who "was completely absorbed in his work, to which he had a contented, slavish relationship."(Ger.Id.71) Basically, the reason for this was that, for the majority of the people, self-expression was sought within the "realm of necessity" -- "the production of material life was considered as a subordinate mode of self-activity."(ibid.92) (b) the necessary de-nudation of labour by the machine leads one to argue that mankind can and needs to seek self-expression and self-fulfilment outside the "realm of necessity", outside the

productive process proper. This agrees with Marx's contention seen earlier, namely, that "man must step to the side of the productive process instead of being its chief actor."

3:8 The Periodization of the Ideal Totalities

It is helpful to discuss briefly the nature of Marx's periodization and the one-sided and mimited character each. of the four historical Totalities is considered to have within Marx's theoretical framework.

The periodization of the various Totalities within Marx's system is a complex matter involving more than just a chronological sequence of historical phenomena. Marx's periodization, in fact, presupposes two vital factors. the first place, the historical Totalities are presupposed to be genetically descended and tendentially organised. The "lower" forms create the conditions for its own dissolution and for the appearance of a "higher" one and all of them point to a future Totality which is expected to crown the developmental process of the human species. In this perspective, Marx's periodization is not a mere convenience but has a predictive and evaluative dimension although the "epochs in the history of society are no more separated from each other by hard and fast lines of demarcation, than are geological exochs."(Cap.1.371) Moreover the different historical Potalities are regarded as being causally inter-related. The Economic Totality is allegedly the highest one within man's "pre-history". This Totality, Marx contends, paves the way and in turn.

creates those material conditions, which alone can form the real basis of a higher form of society, a society in which the full and free development of every individual forms the ruling principle. (ibid. 592)

Marx argues further that within history, there is a "coherent series of forms of intercourse." A "form of intercourse" can be justly equated with a Totality. In fact,

"the definite conditions under which [people] produce",
Marx claims, "...corresponds...to the reality of their conditioned nature, their one-sided existence." He adds:

These various conditions, which appear first as conditions of self-activity, later as fetters upon it, form in the whole evolution of history a coherent series of forms of intercourse...Since these conditions correspond at every stage to the simultaneous development of the productive forces, their history is at the same time the history of the evolving productive forces taken over by each generation, and is, therefore, the history of the development of the forces of the individuals themselves.(Ger.Id.87)

Secondly, as H. Marcuse points out, in a dialectical theory of society, "generalization and classification of facts [are] at best an irrelevant undertaking." (Marcuse, 377) Marx himself was emphatic that the organisation and evaluation of the economic categories should be undertaken in the perspective of the capitalist mode of production and not according to their mere historical appearance. This means that, in Marx's system, not every historical phenomenon is equally significant. Some phenomena have a philosophical dimension because they are symptomatic of the human developmental process, while other phenomena are not. In other words, between the "development of the human species" and "historical phenomena" there isn't a one-to-one relationship. Marx explicitly distinguishes a stage of cmpirical development from one of social or human maturation. He points out in the Grundrisse:

It may be said on the other hand that there are very developed but nevertheless historically less mature forms of society, in which the highest forms of economy, e.g. cooperation, a developed division of labour, etc., are found, even though there is no kind of money, e.g. Peru.(Grund.102)

As far as Marx's analysis is concerned, this implies a theoretical framework which transcends a mere historical and empirical sequence of phenomena and to this extent is "speculative". This perspective sustains the evaluative, coherent and finalistic character of Marx's periodization.

Marx's periodization and systematization emerges as

"the intellectual act 'of looking for explanations...in terms of sequences of antecedent actions and circumstances'". is fundamentally interpretative, suggesting and implying an insight that goes beyond "the delusive appearance of things." But as L. Krader points out, "this is the opposite of historicism conceived as the determination of that which is objectively real, and which is the usual target of critics of historical determinism in particular and of historicist organicism in general" (Ethno. Notes, 51) As earlier pointed out, Marx is less concerned with establishing "the determination of a phenomenon by an earlier invention or discovery" than with analysing "that same invention or discovery" and trying to interpret it "as a mark or register of the degree of development of a society "(ibid.51) After all Marx himself characterised the "Asiatic, ancient, feudal and modern bourgeois modes of production" as "epochs marking progress in the economic development of society." (Pol.Econ.21)

As was pointed out in the previous chapter Marx did not look back or advocate a return to some lost paradise of social existence. His vision was definitely pro- and not retro-spective in character. The reason for this is each of the historical Totalities, from the "Gregarious" to the "Economic" has been intrinsically inadequate. Although he agrees that the pre-capitalist conditions of existence did not foment the type of social conflict and contradictions found in the capitalist system, this was due to "a system of production, and a society, moving within narrow and more or less primitive bounds." Therefore, he argues, "to perpetuate it would be, as Pecqueur rightly says, todecree universal mediocrity.'"(Cap.1.762) The limitations of each of these different historical Totalities is presupposed even when, (due to the undeveloped state of affairs), it remains hidden and does not yet develop into a contradiction.

One can speak of a "limitation" either in a purely functionalist perspective or in a noetic one where the limi-

tation is recognised as limitation and not, as it were, through mere trial and error. In a noetic perspective, the limitation emerges as a polar concept presupposing knowledge of "completeness". So, one cannot consistently speak of a limited Totality within a noetic perspective, without entailing a knowledge claim of what constitutes a full or completed Totality. Marx's works make it sufficiently evident that his claim, regarding the limited character of the historical Totalities, has a noetic nature. This is confirmed when he states that with the appearance of the , Economic Totality, it becomes clear that "all previous intercourse was only intercourse of individuals under particular conditions, not of individuals as individuals."(Ger.Id.91) Here is not only an explicit evaluation of the historical Totalities but also an indication of the criterion and perspective Marx had in mind when he appraised each of them. According to him, a Totality is limited and one-sided if it does not represent or sustain the "individual as individual" but instead encourages and sustains historically conditioned individuals. Marx criticises Proudhon whose envisaged "Promethean society" reduces itself to a "society, social relations based on class antagonism. These relations are not relations between individual and individual, but between worker and capitalist, between farmer and landlord, etc.."(Poverty, 100) The character of the Totality is of the utmost importance because men, real individuals have been defined, assessed and allowed an existence in virtue of it. As an illustration of different conceptions of "man" throughout the different historical epochs Marx points out that Aristotle's characterisation of man as "by nature a town-citizen...is quite as characteristic of ancient classical society as Franklin's definition of man, as a tool-making animal, is characteristic of Yandeedom."(Cap.1.326)

3:9 Division of Labour as a Technological and a Social Phenomenon

According to Marx, the empirical basis for the oppressive objectification of the historical Totalities, in their limited form, lies in "division of labour". It is claimed that:

Individuals always proceeded, and always proceed, from themselves. Their relations are the relations of the real life-process. How does it happen that their relations assume an independent existence over against them? and that the forces of their own life become superior to them?

In short: division of labour, the level of which depends on the development of the productive power at any particular time. (Coll.W.Vol.V.93)

In many places, Marx equates "division of labour" with "alienated labour". He states that "all...contradictions are implicit[in]..division of labour."(Ger.Id.52)

He also claims that "division of labour and private property are, moreover identical expressions: in the one the same thing is affirmed with reference to activity as is affirmed in the other with reference to the product of the activity."

(ibid.53) Again he writes that "the division of labour is the economic expression of the social character of labour within estrangement."(Manus.159)

Division of labour is an ambiguous and misleadingly simple concept within Marx's system. First of all, it is important to note that division of labour within the productive process and division of labour within society are two distinct phenomena and should be appraised differently. Marx himself draws attention to the "division of labour within society as a whole as distinct from division of labour within individual workshops." (Cap.111.635) Even more specifically he argues that:

"inspite of the numerous analogies and links connecting them, division of labour in the interior of society, and that in the interior of a workshop, differ not only in degree, but also in kind.(Cap.1.354) In the perspective of what we have discussed so far, especially in view of the doctrine on the different types of relations, we must draw the following conclusion. Division of labour within the productive system is a technological and physical relation. "Technological division of labour" is, per se, a positive factor within the productive process and, as such, "produces no commodities" — which are the ultimate source of mischief within the capitalist system. Division of labour in society denotes a species—relation mediated by a concrete universal, viz. "exchange—value". "Social division of labour" is an alienating factor. "Social division of labour" sustains the Economic Totality of the capitalist system. Each type of division of labour entails certain presuppositions:

Division of labour within the workshop implies the undisputed authority of the capitalist over men, that are but parts of a mechanism that belongs to him. The division of labour within the society brings into contact independent commodity-producers, who acknowledge no other authority but that of competition, of the coercion exerted by the pressure of their mutual interests; just as in the animal kingdom, the bellum omnium contra omnes more or less preserves the conditions of existence of every species. (Cap.1.356)

This implies that "anarchy in the social division of labour and despotism in that of the workshop are mutual conditions the one of the other." Marx points to the double standards of the "bourgeois" in this respect. He writes:

The same bourgeois mind which praises division of labour in the workshop, life-long annexation of the labourer to a partial operation, and his complete subjection to capital as being an organisation of labour that increases its productiveness — that same bourgeois mind denounces with equal vigour every conscious attempt to socially control and regulate the process of production, as an inroad upon such sacred things as the right of property, freedom and unrestricted play for the bent of the individual capitalist. It is very characteristic that the enthusiastic apologists of the factory system have nothing more damning to urge against a general organisation of the labour of society, than that it

would turn all society into one immense factory. (Cap.1.356)

Marx further points out that the progress and development in "technological division of labour" revolutionises "social division of labour" in such a way that the skills and secrets of the old trades as well as their character and identity gradually disappear. (Cap.1.486) without division of labour the productive process of the human race would not have developed and Marx himself is emphatic about this. Yet he claims that "division of labour implies the possibility, may the fact that intellectual and material activity -- enjoyment and labour, production and consumption -- devolve on different individuals."(Ger.Id.52) He denounced the situation in which "each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape. "(ibid.53) This is the phenomenon of "social division of labour" and, we suggest, it is precisely this type of division of labour that Marx wanted to see abolished. The latter is the basis of the historical Totalities and the reason why they reify and absolutise themselves in an oppressive way. This idea is implied in the contention that:

This fixation of social activity, this consolidation of what we ourselves produce into an objective power above us, growing out of our control, thwarting our expectations, bringing to naught our calculations, is one of the chief factors in historical development up till now. (ibid.53)

It is evident that Marx believed that we are able to have and retain a high degree of "Technological division of labour" and at the same time abolish "Social division of labour". This state of affairs, of course, according to him, can only be sustained by a highly productive system which is socially planned and controlled. The "realm of necessity" which, Marx admits, will persist, will be reduced to a minimum and consume a fraction of man's life activity instead of occupying the major and best part of it as happens under

the "rule of capital".

3:10 Marx's Totality -- The Millennium

We have seen that throughout history human existence has been mediated by a series of inadequate Totalities. As a result of the limited and pseudo character, there persisted "a cleavage...between the particular and the common interest."(Ger.Id.53) The Ideal Totality was "some" thing" other than "man" and became a totem-pole to which real individuals were subordinated and to which they had to measure up. It is now time to come to grips with Marx's own envisaged Totality. We propose to do this by means of a detour, namely, by first analysing the phenomenon and conception of "social labour" in its developmental process, as Marx himself describes it. This procedure, we argue, is justified because in Marx's perspective, human social labour or "praxis" is man's life activity. Social labour is the living and practical expression of man's very being. Accordingly, the historical saga of the human species is recorded in the development of the labour process. "Forces of production and social relations " are, Marx says, "two different sides of the development of the social individual." (Grund. 706) Moreover, according to him, human labour constitutes the "major force of production." (ibid. 422)

For a long time, Marx argues, the true nature of human labour as the "subjective essence" of wealth was not recognised. For long millennia, wealth was regarded as something external to man, something having its own raison d'etre. To avoid possibile misunderstanding we must clarify what Marx understands by "wealth" and by "subjective essence.

In Marx's system wealth has three distinct meanings:

(a) It is taken in the sense of material wealth, namely, those useful things which satisfy man's needs. "Regarded materially, wealth consists only in the manifold variety of needs."(ibid.527)

"Wealth is", Marx says, "on one side a thing, realised in things, material products, which a human being confronts as subject." (Ibid. 487)

(b) It also means:

The absolute workingout of man's creative potentialities, with no presupposition other than the previous historic development, which makes this totality of development, i.e., the development of all human powers as such an end in itself, not as measured on a <u>predetermined</u> yardstick...Where he does not reproduce himself in one specificity, but produces his totality...Strives not to remain something he has become, but is in the absolute movement of becoming. (ibid.488)

We can call this the philosophical dimension and conception of wealth. According to Marx this interpretation of wealth is not recognised by Political Economy and the capitalist system.

(c) In the perspective of human labour as its "subjective essence", wealth has another distinct meaning, namely, the value of something useful in relation to something else, or simply, its "exchange-value". Wealth, here, is taken as a . Species-relation. This is a "hominised" and Ideal existence of wealth and complements the aspect.of "wealth...realised in things" or of material wealth. "On the other side." Marx says, "as value, wealth is merely command@over alien labour" whether "with the aim of ruling or with the aim of private consumption. "(ibid. 487) Wealth as value is that social or Ideal element or "residue" which makes the most different things commensurate in a way analogous to the element of weight which makes a "sugar-loaf" and a "piece of iron" commensurate. The analogy, however, as Marx points out is seriously deficient. "The iron, in the expression of the weight of the sugar-loaf, represents a natural property common to both bodies, namely their weight." This makes the relationship between them a physical or natural one, whose basis is a quality or power intrinsic to them. Value, by contrast, "represents a non-natural property...something purely

social."(Cap.1.57) "The value of commodities has a purely social reality." (ibid.47) Wealth as value is, therefore, "that equal something, that common substance, which admits of the value of the beds being expressed by a house" to use the example of Aristotle.(ibid.59) It is clear that, as value, wealth has an Ideal existence; it is a social phenomenon, a product of human conscious existence. This "definite social relation between men," Marx says, assumed in the eyes of many people, "the fantastic form of a relation between things." (ibid.72) This leads to the fetishism of commodities. In other words, Marx claims that wealth as value has been, for long centuries, regarded as a natural property of things independent of the social and conscious environment which produces it.

Our concern we reiterate, is not with an appraisal of Marx's economic theory but with clarifying his terms so that we may be able to understand the philosophical implications of his system. His conception of wealth as value which underlies both his doctrine on the "commodity" and his labour theory, is extremely important because it confirms further the Ideal dimension of his system. We must obtain a clear grasp of the philosophical or "metaphysical" nature of wealth as value. Marx says that it is a reality, but not a natural or physical one; it is a "social relation". we have seen a social relation is an Ideal phenomenon. means that in Marx's system "value" has the same "ontic" status as other social or "species" relations, such as, "nobility", "citizenship", "slavery" etc. All these are Ideal phenomena and can be regarded as hypostatised Formalities. all products or emanations of human conscious existence, as distinct from physical existence.

The concept of "subjective essence", on the other hand, is not to be interpreted in a "subjectivistic" sense. It is meant to bring out and further confirm the social and Ideal character of wealth as value, as against the view that

value is a natural property of a thing. By calling human labour the "subjective essence" of wealth as value, Marx is both claiming to give the "substance", origin and "constitutive nature" of value and at the same time rejecting the the view that value is a #thing" or a natural property of a thing. It is the same type of argument Marx uses to show that "nobility", "slavery", etc., are not natural or a-priori qualities but human creations; they do not originate from birth itself, but from the human, social and conscious milieu, that is, the type of "community" of Totality in which one's birth takes place. Human conscious existence creates the noble, the slave, the citizen etc. as species relations. Marx, therefore, rejects the conception of "value" as "something outside man and independent of him, and therefore as something to be maintained and asserted only in an external fashion."(Manus.128)

We can clarify the situation somewhat if we give the example of nobility. Within Marx's system, birth is to "nobility" what human labour is to value. Marx argues against Hegel that birth itself does not create the noble or his antithesis, the commoner. Birth, per se, produces potentially conscious bipeds just as with the different species it produces mice, monkeys and elephants. It is the social and conscious environment, a concomitant phenomenon of human exis-'tence and human "praxis", that turns human birth from a natural to a species relation and creates "nobles", "commoners", "slaves" etc.. It is birth mediated by a Political or Social Totality acting as a Universal within a syllogistic pattern. The middle term, the real cause of "nobility" etc. is the Ideal or social context which is an abstract duplication of human conscious existence. In like manner, human labour as such and by itself, does not create value. The economic cause of value is the Ideal or social context in which human labour takes place. The situation, in Marx's perspective, can be summed up as follows. In order for one to become and be

treated as a "noble" one must first be born in a physical or biological sense. Likewise, an object cannot have "value" unless human labour has been expanded on it. However, the cause or basis, in the case of both "nobility" and "value" is not birth or labour as such but the Ideal or social context in which these two phenomena materialise.

The theory that labour is the source of value, as is well known, is not an original discovery of Marx. It is found in A.Smith, the Physiocrats and, in particular, in D.Ricardo. Marx considers it a majoristep towards understanding the historical process of production. The "early" Marx had written:

- To this enlightened political economy, which has discovered within private property the <u>subjective essence</u> of wealth, the adherents of the money and mercantile system, who look upon private property <u>only as an objective</u> substance confronting men, seem therefore to be fetishists...(Manus.128)

The same idea appears fifteen years later when Marx says:

The Monetary System, for example, still regards wealth quite objectively as a thing existing independently in the shape of money. Compared with this standpoint, it was a substantial advance when the Manufacturing or Mercantile System transferred the source of wealth from the object to the subjective activity—mercantile or industrial labour—but it still considered that only this circumscribed activity it—self produced money. (Pol.Econ.209)

We have here a hint at a crucial distinction which Marx draws and on which he capitalises fully, between "qualified" or "concrete labour" and "unqualified labour" or "labour sans phrase" to use his own expression. Prior to the developed capitalist system, Marx says,

Various kinds of concrete labour, such as agriculture, manufacture, shipping and commerce, had each in turn been claimed to constitute the real source of wealth, before Adam Smith declared that the sole source of material wealth or of use-values is labour in general. (ibid.59)

Marx also points out that as late as the 18th century, a question of considerable interest and controversy was,



"What particular kind of concrete labour is the source of bourgeois wealth." (ibid.57) In this respect, Marx claims,

It was an immense advance when Adam Smith rejected all restrictions with regard to the activity that produces wealth — for him it was labour as such, neither manufacturing, nor commercial, nor agricultural labour, but all types of labour. (ibid. 209)

There is, therefore, according to Marx, an important difference between, (1) the recognition of the "fact" and "truth" that social labour is the source or "subjective essence" of value or wealth; (2) the further recognition or realisation that social labour as such, or "labour sans phrase" is the source of value.

Marx claims that Aristotle, "the greatest thinker of antiquity" couldn't recognise (1) and a fortiqui, not even (2).(Cap.1.59;Pol.Econ.68) The Physiocrats and the Mercantilists, on the other hand, recognised (1) but not (2). The same applies, Marx claims, to W. Petty and B. Franklin. (Pol.Econ.54,56) The latter, Marx says, makes use of the difference between "concrete labour" and "labour as such" without, however, realising its full significance and import. (Cap.51;Pol.Econ.56) The case of the Physiocrats and Mercantilists, "is a striking proof that recognition of labour as the source of material wealth by no means precludes misapprehension of the specific social form in which labour constitutes the source of exchange-value." (Rol.Econ.54)

In <u>Capital</u> Marx claims that he "was the first to point out and to examine critically this two-fold nature of labour contained in commodities" -- namely, as "concrete" and as "general" or "social". (Cap.1.41)

To appraise correctly Marx's claim one has to recognise the existential dimension and practical significance
involved in Marx's analysis. In other words, the point at
issue, is not merely an academic question regarding an economic theory of what constitutes wealth. It is rather a
question regarding an existential status quo, à situation in

time and space, that makes it factually and practically possible for "labour sans phrase". abstract human labour, in contrast to labour in a circumscribed form, to function as a vital economic phenomenon and as value-creating. This is a situation which, Marx claims, did not obtin in precapitalist times. By saying that "labour as such" is the source of value, Marx says, "it might seem that in this way . merely an abstract expression was found for the simplest and most ancient relation in which human beings act as producers -- irrespective of the type of society they live in. This is true in one respect, but not in another."(Pol.Econ.209) What we interpret Marx as saying is that both the social recognition that human labour as such, is the source of value and the actual reality or realisation of this "fact" are a result of history, of development in the productive system. In other words, "labour as such", "is not a mere abstract universal, in the traditional sense, but a "concrete" universal, a vital conception and phenomenon that describes and sustains a particular stage in human spatio-temporal existençé. This view is supported by Marx's contention that:

> The fact that the specific kind of labour is irrelevant presupposes a highly developed complex of actually existing kinds of labour, none of which is any more the all-important one. The most general abstractions arise on the whole only when concrete development is most profuse, so that a specific quali- . twis seen to be common to many phenomena, or common to\all. Then it is no longer perceived solely in a particular form. This abstraction of labour is, on the other hand, by no means simply the conceptual resultant of a variety of concrete types of labour. The fact that the particular kind of labour employed is immaterial is appropriate to a form of society in which individuals easily pass from one type of labour to another, the particular type of labour being accidental to them and therefore irrelevant. Labour, not only as a category but in reality, has become a means to create wealth in general, and has ceased to be tied as an attribute to a particular individual. This state of affairs is most pronounced in the United States, the most modern form of bourgeois society. The abstract category "labour", "labour as such",

labour sans phrase, the point of departure of modern economics, thus becomes a practical fact only there. The simplest abstraction, which plays a decisive role in modern political economy, an abstraction which expresses an ancient relation existing in all social formations, nevertheless appears to be actually true in this abstract form only as a category of the modern society. (Pol.Econ.209-210)

.A little later Marx adds:

The example of labour striking demonstrates how even the most abstract categories, despite their validity in all epochs — precisely because they are abstractions — are equally a product of historical conditions even in the specific form of abstractions, and they retain their full validity only for and within the framework of these conditions. (ibid. 210)

On the basis of the above, one can argue that in their economic and existential dimension "concrete useful labour" as circumscribed or qualified labour is regarded as being different in kind and historically prior to "labour sans This, as we hope will become clearer later on, indicates that spatio-temporal existence has, in Marx's system, an epistemological and essential or formal dimension. Each kind of labour is "relational" in character, obtaining its significance in, and is symptomatic of, a historical and existential state of affairs, a particular mode of production. Marx's view is that labour or human activity as social activity passed through Wifferent stages of "circumscription" or "qualification" to a stage where it developed into an "uncircumscribed" or "unqualified" form as "labour sans phrase" and was acknowledged as such by political economists. Although "labour sans phrase" seems a very simple and absract concept, it is a phenomenon whose significance and vitality as a basic economic phenomenon appears and makes itself felt only in the most modern form of production, viz. the capitalist one.

Marx's contention that social labour developed from a "circumscribed" form to an "uncircumscribed" one has to be interpreted within another claim that:

In all forms of society there is one specific kind of production which predominates over the rest, whose relations thus assign rank and influence to the others. It is a general illumination which bathes all the other colours and modifies their particularity. It is a particular ether which determines the specific gravity of every being which has materialized within it. (Grund.106-107)

The predominating "specific kind of production" is equivalent to and plays the role of a Totality, Universal—an Ideal perspective and medium in which and through which the different kinds of labour were subsumed and evaluated. Marx speaks of "pastoral, agricultural, manufacturing and industrial labour" as examples of specific kinds of production, or what we can refer to as "Labour Totalities". In summary, from what has been said so far, it follows that:

(1) Marx claims that human labour regardless of its historical and spatio-temporal expression and form of realisation is the "subjective essence", the "substance and immanent measure of value" (Cap.1.537)

- (2) He claims further that in every epoch there is what can be called a "Labour Totality" or Universal: "In all forms of society there is one specific kind of production which predominates over the rest, where relations thus assign rank and influence to the others."
- (3) He states that as long as labour is still circumscribed, as long as its economic existence is in the form of "concrete useful labour", it is one-sided, limited and accordingly betrays an undeveloped mode of production. Labour sheds its limitations when its economic existence as a species relation becomes "labour as such", "labour sans phrase" as happens in the capitalist system.

We have, in the above, a very important conception, a structural and logical pattern which applies also to his theory on human nature. Three major facts are involved in Marx's analysis of labour.

There is firstly the particular form of labour in its

manifold expression and manifestation within society. For example, the work of the particular farmer, the spinner, the tanner etc., each of which constitutes the <u>material</u> for value.

Secondly, there is the "Labour Totality", in the form of "a specific kind of production" which Marx regards as "a particular ether which determins the specific gravity" of the particular kinds of labour. In this sense the recognition and evaluation of each particular kind of labour are evaluated in virtue of it, just as, in the syllogism, the individual is formally established in virtue of the universal or middle term. For example, Marx says that, "In antiquity, urban occupation and trade little esteemed, agriculture, however, highly; in the Middle Ages the contrary appraisal... Antiquity unanimously esteemed agriculture as the proper occupation of the free man, the soldier's school."(Grund.477) The Monetary, the Physiocratic and Mercantilist systems, each had their respective "Labour Totalities".

Finally, there is the phenomenon of "labour sans phrase", "labour as such", which becomes an economic reality and is recognised as such in a developed stage of the human productive process. This is, according to Marx, not just another "Labour Totality" representing the industrial stage; it is rather the "Labour Totality" in the perspective of which all the other "Labour Totalities" are to be assessed. implies the view that "labour sans phrase", "labour as such" as it exists in the capitalist system or the system of exchange-value, constitutes the "logos", the conceptual framework within which the various "Labour Totalities" are to be organised and evaluated. The peculiarity and, one might add, the intriguing feature of Marx's position regarding his "Labour Totality" is that it is not another circumscribed or qualified form of labour but the rejection of all circumscription and qualification -- "labour as such", "labour as labour", "labour sans phrase", "labour in general". As was

pointed out earlier, in Marx's system, although "labour as such" or "labour sans phrase" sounds like a mere abstract and empty expression, it is in reality a very meaningful and economically significant concept and also a phenomenon rooted in space and time. It indicates human labour free from all historical conditioning. In this sense it is qualitatively different from the traditional abstract universal.

In the perspective of the above, we can now proceed towards an analysis of Marx's own envisaged Totality. we apply the above to the concept and phenomenon of man we shall understand better Marx's position. More specifically, one can say that as in the case of labour, Marx's Totality regarding human existence is "man as man", "man as such", "man sans phrase" or to use his own expression, "the indi- . vidual as individual". The significance of these seemingly empty or tautologous expressions comes out in the perspective of Marx's view that throughout history, it was not "man as man" or the "individual as individual" that existed and was acknowledged but "circumscribed" man, historically conditioned man qualified as "citizen", "noble", "commoner", "slave", "proprietor", "labourer" etc.. Marx's Ideal Totality representing and sustaining "man as man" obtains its significance and vitality precisely in contrast to the alleged limitations of the former Ideal Totalities.

In Marx's envisaged millennium, therefore, the Totality becomes qualitatively identical with the individual. His expression, the "individual as individual" forcefully brings out and stresses this equivalence. Political, racial, religious, national, economic and social prejudice are thereby rejected and man finally is accepted and recognised for what he is, namely, as a human being. What has traditionally been taken for granted, viz. the nature of the human being in his naked existence, becomes the "logic", the principle of society or the Community. The homogeneity of the human

species is thereby asserted as a social fact.

The relationship between the Particular Essence, the Totality and the real Individual holds the secret to the correct understanding of Marx's interpretation of history. The Human Essence, in both its Universal and Particular dimensions is a creation or emanation of real individuals in their social and conscious existence and not an a-priori hypostatization. Marx claims that:

Theoretical communists, the only ones who have time to devote to the study of history, are distinguished precisely because they alone have <u>discovered</u> that throughout history the "general interest" is created by individuals who are defined as "private persons". They know that this contradiction is only a seeming one because one side of it, the so-called "general", is constantly being produced by the other side, private interest, and by no means opposes the latter as an independent force with an independent history —so that this contradiction is in practice always being destroyed and reproduced. (Ger.Id.105)

Human "praxis" creates the Ideal Totalities which throughout history have been hypostatised and absolutised, thus becoming alien and dominating factors -- citizenship, social status, etc.. The point is, however, that the Totality, being a creation of the human social activity shows at the same time the type of existence and the degree of development and maturation of the beople at a particular epoch. A tree is known by its fruit. The Totality is alien and dominating because the individuals that give birth to and sustain it live in an undeveloped and one-sided manner. The Totality is the individuals composing it, an emanation of the state of their existence.

Marx's millennium is best understood and appreciated in contrast to the Economic Totality. After all, he himself characterised his envisaged Totality as the "negation of the negation". In the Economic Totality the introduction and use of machinery resulted in the de-humanisation of labour and in the degradation of the labourer, reduced to a mere "productive animal". Robbed of its self-expressive character,

labour, the only activity in which the main producing class expressed its personality throughout the second and third Totalities, becomes a humdrum motus and since it employs the major and best part of man's daily existence, the latter itself turns into a barren and stale life. As pointed out earlier, the problem is not with the machine or the technology but their utilization in virtue of the Ideal Totality of the capitalist system. The productivity of mechanised labour and the "technological division of labour" will be preserved in Marx's envisaged state but with the welfare of the people in mind. He claims that "in a communistic society there would be a very different scope for the employment of machinery than there can be in a bourgeois society."(Cap.1.393) Marx indicates that within his Totality, the increased efficiency in the productive system will not be directed to the mere increase of production of material wealth beyond all limits. The efficiency will be converted into free time, time for the "realm of freedom". The emphasis which Marx makes on rational planning, concerns not only the labour time of the worker but also the quality or type of production. Since the aim of the productive process is human welfare and not what is economically viable and lucrative, the economic and productive system and, enterprise itself, will become humanised. This is how Marx envisaged the situation:

· If we conceive society as being not capitalistic but communistic, there will be no money-capital at all in the first place, nor the disguises cloaking the transactions arising on account of it. The question then comes down to the need of society to calculate beforehand how much labour, means of production, and means of subsistence it can invest; without detriment. in such lines of business as for instance the building of railways, which do not furnish any means of production or subsistence, nor produce any useful effect for a long time, a year or more, while they extract labour, means of production and means of subsistence from the total annual production. In capitalist society however where social reason always asserts itself only post festum great disturbances may and must constantly occur. (Cap.11.318-319)27

It can be said that one of Marx's major criticisms of the capitalist system was that the latter is basically an irrational system. As he himself puts it "social reason always asserts itself only post festum" -- on the basis of trial and error, one could add. He points out that:

All thought of a common, all-embracing and farsighted control of the production of raw materials gives way once more to the faith that demand and supply will mutually regulate one another. And it must be admitted that such control is on the whole irreconcilable with the laws of capitalist production, and remains forever a pius wish, or is limited to exceptional co-operation in times of great stress and confusion. (Cap.111.120)

The same idea emphasising the "irrationality" of this capitalist system, is reiterated a little later on, this time in relation to agriculture:

The moral of history, also to be deduced from other obsevations concerning agriculture, is that the capitalist system works against a rational agriculture, or that a rational agriculture is incompatible with the capitalist system (although the latter promotes technical improvements in agriculture), and needs either the hand of the small farmer living by his own labour or the control of associated producers. (ibid.121)

Here Marx brings out a basic Platonic conception, namely, that true freedom and the "Good" thrive where Reason, intelligent planning and "law" prevail. Chance, blind fate, and the "faith that demand and supply will mutually regulate one another", which is the "gospel" of free enterprise, constitute for Marx, the abortion of man's rational power within a vital dimension of his life — the productive sector. The emphasis on rational and intelligent planning entails a perspective which is both "speculative" and "normative". It is a perspective that goes well beyond the confines of economics in the accepted sense where profit is the ruling principle. As Marx himself points out in the case of Ricardo, in a purely economic perspective, it is not irrational to turn man into an adjunct to a machine and pay him a necessity

wage. It is only if we introduce "extra-economic" considerations, as Marx does, that we are entitled to regard this situation as irrational and degrading.

As pointed out earlier, Marx contended that the Economic Totality expands and thrives to the detriment of the natural environment. This devastation, according to him, does not take place within the second and third Totalities. There nature is still treated with respect and restraint because the motive factor and principle of the productive system is utility and not material wealth. Marx envisages the reappearance of man's respect and care for the environment as also his original ties to nature — this time, however, on a higher basis. In his early works he had written:

Association also reestablishes, now on a rational basis, no longer mediated by serfdom, overlordship and the silly mysticism of property, the intimate ties of man with the earth, since the earth ceases to be an object of huckstering, and through free labor and free enjoyment becomes once more a true personal property of man. (Manus. 103)

The same idea, more developed and clarified appears in Capital:

As soon as [the production relations] have reached a point where they must shed their skin, the material source of the title, justified economically and historically and arising from the process which creates social life, falls by the wayside along with all transactions based upon it. From the standpoint of a higher economic form of society private ownership of the globe by single individuals will appear quite as absurd as private ownership of one man by another. Even a whole society, a nation or even all simultaneously existing societies taken together, are not the owners of the globe. They are only its possessors, its usufructuries, and, like boni patres familias, they must hand it down to succeeding generations in an improved condition. (Cap.111.776)

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The above shows that there is no doctrinal basis for a common view that Marx implied the hegemony of "man" to the detriment of the natural environment or that he showed indifference to the "rest of nature". On the contrary, he insists that it is the institution of private property that rawages nature and the environment. In words that echo a

widespread concern by contemporary environmentalists, he says:

Private property has made us so stupid and one-sided that an object is only <u>ours</u> when we have it -- when it exists for us as capital, or when it is directly possessed, eaten, drunk, worn, inhabited, etc., -- in short when it is used by us. (Manus.139)

Social planning, control and mastery over the forces of nature, Marx's great desideratum, does not necessarily imply human disrespect for, and violation of, the natural environment. Man is regarded as the "sovereign of nature" but nature remains his "inorganic body". In this perspective, it is suicidal for man to abuse and ravage nature. The characterisation of nature as man's "inorganic body" and not just an object for his whims and caprices, speaks for itself.

One of the controversial factors regarding Marx's envisaged millennium and, perhaps, the weakest point in his system concerns the way or means by which this "Human" Totality is to be realised. Besides the "technical" and "theoretical" aspects of this problem #there is also the historical fact that those states which both themseves claim and are regarded by many to be, the true embodiments of Marx's system and to put into effect his doctrine and postulates. have come up with systems which are by no means enviable Edens of social/existence. The added fact that the two major  $\circ$ "Marxist" states, containing nearly half the world's population, namely, Russia and China, are at each other's throat has contributed further to a wide-spread cynicism about Marx's system and doctrine. The oddity about this state of belligerency lies in the fact that Marx's doctrine claims to provide both a scientifico-philosophical account of classconflict and to predict a state of social harmony on an international level. The case of Russia and China, as well as of other communist countries suggest the view that class conflict, or at least something analogous, has simply been elevated to an international level rather than done away with. Besides, it is common knowledge that force and violence, secret police, prison camps, "rehabilitation programs and centres" and a stultifying indoctrination have been and still are an essential part of the social fabra of these so-called "people's republics". The material conditions of the people of these countries may have improved in relation to those in which they were prior to the communist take-over. too, and probably more, have the conditions of the worker in may capitalist countries, especially within the North American continent and Northern Europe. Whatever the state of material prosperity, one could still argue that those who allegedly followed his path have produced Ideal Totalities or Communities which are a far cry from the one envisaged by Marx -- in which peace, freedom to and human dignity prevail and flourish. The "Hammer and Sickle" fetish on the banner of one of the communit giants, is, in our view, an eloquent expression of the nature of the Totality upheld and sustained. The "realm of necessity" and the productive process which Marx regarded as the basis but never the aim and principle of society has been raised into the main imperative of the community.

#### NOTES: CHAPTER THREE

- 1. E. Fromm, Beyond the Chains of Illusion. Credo Perspectives, Simon and Shuster, N.Y., 1962.
- 2. See also Grundrisse, p.496; Capital, Vol.1.326.
- 4. Cf. Marx's Ethnological Note Books. We shall be seeing more about this soon.
- 5. We realise how different Marx's position is from Hobbes's which posits "Right" before "Law" within an individualistic perspective. Hobbes, Marx observes in The German Ideology, remains oblivious to the real basis of "Right" itself, due mainly to his social theory. Cf.Ger.Id.106.
- 6. For instance, the "citizen", the "freeman" and the "slave" represent, in the perspective of Marx's analysis, three types of particular Essences. However, in spite of this hetereogeneity, each of them was rooted in and was sustained by the same Ideal Totality, a Political one.
- 7. In this sense, human life and human energy are possessed of a "logos" as a concomitant dimension distinct from the "physis".
- 8. We have already commented on the nature of these "material relations".
- 9. Marx's account of slave consciousness in The German Ideology is reminiscent of what happened in the case of Kintu
  Kinte. Marx implies the same defiance and subjective
  consciousness, on the part of the slave with respect to
  the "official" consciousness. He writes: "The slave
  who takes the decision to free himself must already be
  superior to the idea that slavery is his 'peculiarity'.
  He must be 'free' from his 'peculiarity'." Coll.W.Vol.V.
  309.
- 10. This idea runs throughout The German Ideology and the Grundrisse.
- ll. We are not talking, of course, of physical or neurophysiological individuality or even of subjective con-

consciousness. We are talking of "formal" individuality which is mediated by an Ideal hypostatization. As a sensitive living being, man has his own emotions, fears, likes and dislikes independently of the social milieu; though even here one has to take into account the social environment which is a conditioning factor.

- 12. From Marx's point of view, a group of head hunters or "savages" deep in equatorial Africa or in the Amazon jungle, is composed of species-beings who enter into Ideal and mediated relations. The hunting and shrinking of heads, however bizaare, is a ritual involving the idealisation and formalisation of man's empirical existence. It shows that the head-hunters, like Plato's "philosopher kings", are capable of entering into species-relations and not into mere patural or physical ones. This in turn shows that they enjoy a measure of freedom from the "physis" which enables them to live a formal existence conception of the physical and empirical one.
- 13. See also Grundrisse, p.472
- 14. Cf. Grundrisse, 499; Capital, Vol.1.761-763.
- Marx claims that "The difference between the individual 15. as a person and what is accidental to him, is not a conceptual difference but a historical fact. "(Ger.Id.86) In another instance he points out that man's "essence" often found its embodiment in a distinct object or item that was considered an important "means to life" at a certain point in history. Thus, for instance, "In the Middle Ages a social class is emancipated as soon as it is allowed to carry the sword. Among nomadic peoples it is the horse which makes me a free man and a participant in the life of the communtiy." (Manus.115) The point that Marx tries to make is that throughout history, that object which, given the prevailing conditions of existence, is regarded as vital to life, becomes part of the abstract objectification which makes up the "Nexus rerum" and thus turns into a constitutive factor of man's Essence. In this respect, it becomes a fetish in virtue of which the real individual is appraised. Marx points out that "in general that means which gives me essence, which gives me possession of alien objective essence, is an end in itself." (Manus.155) The same applies to the right of private property within the capitalist system ...
  - 16. The whole section is interesting and revealing. Cf.p222.
  - 17. This interpretation of money or wealth as the Totality which subdues all other considerations is strikingly similar to the analysis of wealth within the Gospel and

which was denounced by Christ. Both in the Gospel and within Marx's system, what is involved is not the mere ownership, the physical presence of wealth or money, but the rule, in an intensional and evaluative sense, of money over man.

- 18. The whole section is valuable in bringing out the conflict of interest between "capital" and "man".Cf.233,310.
- 19. The "early" Marx had written that the utter disrespect to the natural environment, which he discovers within the capitalist system, does not appear within the older forms of production -- even though man's violation of nature exists in latent form within landed property, the "root of private property". Cf. Manuscripts, pp.100-102
- 20. This is the basis of the controversial polarization of of society into capitalists and wage-workers. We shall discuss this problem in the next chapter.
- 21. We shall see later on that this description and account of living labour as distinct from capital will lead Marx into a delicate and, we argue, untenable position where he identifies the "productive" worker with the "proletariat".
- 22. The Holy Family, Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, Collected Works, Vol. IV. Inter. Pub. N.Y. 1975.
- 23: Krader's remark refers directly to H. Morgan's type of historicism. We feel, however, that it applies also to Marx. Cf. our discussion on this matter in Ch.One, pp.41 to 44.
- 24. It is interesting to note and very suggestive that Marx refers to this economic Totality as a condition in which "man remains in natural society" and where, he adds, human "activity is not voluntarily, but naturally, divided, man's own deed becomes an alien power opposed to him, which enslaves him instead of being controlled by him." (Ger.Id.53.) This recalls the discussion, in the previous chapter, regarding the two dimensions of man as a natural and as a human being. The emphasis on "control" by man brings out the conception of man as a "being for himself", whose activity "is not a determination with which he directly merges." Human society remains "natural" as long as Reason does not rule -- this "reason" being interpreted as human rationality and intelligence.

It has been pointed out to us by Dr.C. Levitt that in the German text the word "naturwuchsig" means spontaneous rather than natural. We have no quarrel with this translation. It confirms our analysis.

- 25. Our concern is not with an evaluation of Marx's labour theory of value. Our point is to show how the logical pattern within Marx's labour theory applies to his general theory on human nature. In chapter five we shall provide our definition of productive forces and relations of production -- two of the major working concepts of Marx's mature age. What we are discussing provides the perspective for a correct interpretation of Marx's working concepts.
- 26. For an interesting discussion on the epistemological dimension of "existence" in relation to Marx's system. see Lukacs's Marxism and Human Liberation. A Delta Book, Dell Pub. co. N.Y. 1973, pp.255-256.
- 27. K. Marx, Capital, Vol.11. Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1970.

#### CHAPTER FOUR

### THE PROLETARIAT

In a letter to J. Weydemer, Marx takes credit for three original ideas regarding social conflict. Two of them concern the proletariat. He writes:

And now as to myself, no credit is due to me for discovering the existence of classes in modern society or the struggle between them. Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this class struggle and bourgeois economists the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to prove: 1) that the existence of classes is only bound up with particular historical phases in the development of production, 2) that the class struggle: necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat, 3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society. (Sel.Corr.69)

It is evident that the proletariat figures prominently within Marx's system. However, its envisaged role in history, though decisive and crucial, is by no means clear. The concept itself of the proletariat is vague and its ambiguity gives rise to different and conflicting doctrines. For example, on the one hand, Marx goes well out of his way to show the moral and physical deterioration and intellectual stultification of the proletarian class perpetrated by the "laws of capitalist production." In <u>Capital</u> he states that:

The advance of capitalist production develops a workclass, which by education, tradition, habit, looks upon the conditions of that mode of production as self-evident laws of Nature.(Cap.1.737)

This suggests the view of the proletariat reduced to a state of mental and psychological decay, a view of the labouring masses as "a crowd of scrofulous, overworked and consumptive starvelings," (Ger.Id.64) fatalistically resigned to the regimen of the capitalist system. On the other hand, Marx.

claims that only the proletariat is fit for, and capable of, taking over the productive forces, employing them in a rational and healthy way. He even goes so far as to make the "universal character and the energy of the proletariat" a necessary condition "without which the revolution cannot be accomplished." (Ger.Id.93) In a speech to the British working classes he once said:

We know that to work well the new-fangled forces of society, they only want to be mastered by new-fangled men -- and such are the working men. They are as much the invention of modern time as machinery. (Surveys, 300)

Moreover, in <u>Capital</u> Marx states that, although with the capitalist system, there grows,

the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation...with this grows the revolt of the working-class, a class always increasing in numbers, and disciplined, united, organised by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself. (Cap.1.763)

The point at issue boils down to the problem of whether the proletariat, in its state of existence as the vast majority of the people, is psychologically and consciously developed prior to or subsequent to the revolution. This is not a trivial matter because on it depend the nature of the role of the proletariat in the envisaged revolution and the origin and nature of the revolution itself. proletariat to act as a mere instrument of war or as the prime causal agency of the revolution? In the perspective of Marx's doctrine on the "laws" and "movement" of human . nature as distinct from those of "external nature", one would expect, (1) that the revolution would not take place with any physical or psychological necessity; (2) that it would involve an intelligent, universal and free upheaval. The revolution then as envisaged and implied by Marx takes/place in an insightful and evaluative perspective shared by the majority of the people. By Marx's own account, the revolution should manifest its true character both in the nature of its

goals and in that of its perpetrators. The character of both the revolution and of the revolutionaries is implied when it is stated:

In all revolutions up till now the mode of activity always remained unscathed and it was a question of a different distribution of this activity, a new distribution of labour to other persons, whilst the communist revolution is directed against the preceding mode of activity, does away with <a href="Labour">Labour</a>, and abolishes the rule of all classes with the classes themselves, because it is carried through by the class which no longer counts as a class in society, is not recognised as a class, and is in itself the expression of the dissolution of all classes, nationalities, etc. within present society. (Ger.Id.94)

In the Communist Manifesto it is stated:

All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interests of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air. (Manifesto, 36)1

The "self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority" deserves noting. If the proletariat must achieve a high degree of critical social consciousness and human maturity proper to "new-fangled men", prior to, and as a necessary condition for, the revolution, the latter, even if radical, can reasonably emerge as a truly democratic one. fundamentally humanistic, free and universal in character. If, on the contrary, this social consciousness and development is subsequent to the revolution, the latter of necessity, assumes a subversive, sectarian and forceful character. reason is simple. Within Marx's perspective, the revolution is,(1)the work of the proletarian class itself; "The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves."(Sel.Corr.327) (2) It is a conscious and not a blind one. From the proletarian class "which forms the majority of members of society" there should allegedly emanate "the consciousness of the necessity of a

fundamental revolution, the communist consciousness."(Ger.Id. 94) However, if the masses are in a state of mental decay, this critical consciousness cannot possibly be wide-spread. In this case the "need" arises for a militant and "enlightened" minority which makes it its avowed mission or vocation to act as liberator for the "suffering masses". Where enlightenment and conviction are missing, force or guile has of necessity to be resorted to -- also against the "ignorant" and "misguided" masses who will have to be saved in spite of themselves, even if it decimates them in the process. Given Marx's claims, the question of the quantitative factor of the actual revolutionaries is, therefore, an important matter and cannot be dismissed lightly.

The problem of the role of the proletariat, we suggest, is to be discussed in the perspective of the Essence, Character and Identification of this "class". The latter, in turn, should be analysed in the perspective of Marx's whole theory on Human Nature. This may not solve all the problems but it will help to clarify the matter and uncover any inconsistencies which could possibly exist regarding this matter.

In examining the Essence of the proletariat, we have to keep in mind what we discussed in the previous chapter. The Human Essence, according to Marx, consists of the particular "formality" the individual subjectively identifies with via the mediation of the prevailing Totality. The particular "formality" remains, therefore, a)holistic, obtaining its meaning and significance in the perspective of the prevailing Totality; b)subjectively conscious. It is not an immediate phenomenon but has to be regarded both from the point of view of the Totality and of the individual. This last point, in particular, raises a host of problems. In our immediate discussion, therefore, we are not interested with the "ontic" status of the Proletarian Essence but with its historical and empirical basis. We have to find out

how and in what sense the proletariat is "an invention of modern time as machinery." This gives us the empirical origin of this Essence while at the same time presupposing its Ideal nature.

By the Character of the proletariat we mean both the psychological make-up, the attitudes, prejudices, imperatives and "personality" of this "Totality-type", and the state of consciousness, its vitality and critical insight or lack of same.

By Identification we understand those who represent, embody or personify the proletarian "formality". This, as we shall see, is by no means an easy task.

Our immediate concern is, therefore, to establish what the proletariat is; how the proletariat is and who the proletariat is. Once this has been achieved we can proceed to sort our certain difficulties and ambiguities and, hopefully, solve some of them.

In analysing the meaning of the proletariat one cannot leave out an analysis of the bourgeoisie. The reason is
simple but fundamental. The proletariat, on Marx's own account, is the negation and anti-thesis of the bourgeois
"formality" or Totality-type. The bourgeois, according to
Marx, finds his recognition and realisation by identifying
himself with the prevailing Totality, the Economic one. What
the proletariat is can be recognised only in the perspective
of the bourgeois. One could say that the proletarian and
the bourgeois are polar concepts within Marx's system.

# 4:1 The Essence of the Proletariat

One of the first intimations on the proletariat, if not the first, is found in the <u>Critique of Hegel's Doctrine</u> of the State. Though not mentioned by name, the essential ingredients that constitute the proletariat are clearly identified as well as the "distinctness" of this "class" from official society. Marx contends that with the dis-

solution of the medieval political structure, "the principle underlying civil society is neither need, a natural moment, nor politics. It is a fluid division of masses whose various formations are arbitrary and without organization", in which, "the chief criteria are those of money and education."

We have here in germinal form both a reference to the Economic Totality of the post medieval era whose "principle" -- the "nexus rerum or social bond"-- "is neither need, a natural moment", as in the first Totality, "nor politics", as in the second and third Totalities, and a foreshadowing of the polarization of society into two major categories based on the criteria of "money and education." Marx continues saying:

The only noteworthy feature is that the <u>absence of property</u> and the <u>class of immediate labour</u>, of concrete labour, do not so much constitute a class of civil society as provide the ground on which the circles of civil society move and have their being. (Early W.146-147)

In Marx's system, the most fundamental and historically significant factor constitutive of the proletariat lies in the double nature of his freedom. Both in <u>Capital</u> and in the <u>Grundrisse</u>, Marx draws attention to this phenomenon. In contrast to the state of affairs within the Political and Socio-biological Totalities, the vast majority of the people within the Economic Totality is made up of:

free labourers, the sellers of their own labourpower, and therefore the sellers of labour. Free
labourers, in the double sense that neither they
themselves form part and parcel of the means of production, as in the case of slaves, bondsmen, etc.,
nor do the means of production belong to them, as
in the case of peasant proprietors; they are therefore, free from, unencumbered by, any means of production of their own. (Cap.1.714)

This important idea is elaborated on a little further.

The immediate producer, the labourer, could only dispose of his own person after he had ceased to be attached to the soil and ceased to be the slave,

serf, or bondman of another. To become a free seller of labour-power, who carries his commodity when ever he finds a market, he must further have escaped from the regime of the guilds, their rules for apprentices and journey-men, and the impediments of their labour regulations. Hence, the historical movement which changes the producers into wage-workers, appears, on the one hand, as their emancipation from serfdom and/from the fetters of the guilds, and this side alone exists for our. bourgeois historians. But, on the other hand, these new freedmen became sellers of themselves only after they had been robbed of all their own means of production, and of all the guarantees of existence afforded by the old feudal arrangements. And the history of this, their expropriation, is written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire. (Cap.1.715)

In the <u>Grundrisse</u>, Marx draws attention to this phonomonon in history, which started with the manufacturing period.

A mass of living labour powers was thereby thrown onto the labour market, a mass which was free in a
double sense, free from the old relations of clientship, bondage and servitude, and secondly free of
all belongings and possessions and of every objective,
material form of being, free of all property; dependent on the sale of its labour capacity or on
begging, vagabondage and robbery as its only source
of income. (Grund. 507)3

Free labour or wage-labour, therefore, represents, within Marx's system,/double freedom, which we can refer to as "socio-juridical" and "economic" respectively. Pro-letarians are free in this double sense: free to dispose of themselves and free from-both the material wealth and the means of production.

One could say, therefore, that the basis of the proletarian Essence consists in this double freedom. The situation, however, is not as clear and simple as it sounds. Is the double freedom reducible without remainder to a socioeconomic status, viz. wage-labour or are there other factors involved which reject this simple and facile analysis?

The problem arises especially in relation to the ambiguity of the expression "economic freedom". In Marx's

system, possession is a natural relation whose basis is in the correlate in the form of physical appropriation.

Property, by contrast, is a production or species relation whose basis is extrinsic to the correlates and exists as an abstract objectification. To be "free" of possessions simply means—to be impoverished; to be "free" of property means to renounce wealth as a "vital ideal". Since these two phenomena are not identical, it remains possible for the wage—worker to be without possessions but embrace private property as a species—relation. Clearly, Marx regarded the proletariat as being free both from possessions and from property.

In keeping with the analysis we have given so far of Marx's system, we have to take into account three factors with regards to the proletarian and bourgeois Essence or Formality.

There is first of all the Ideal Totality itself of the capitalist system. This represents the basic infrastructure, the "nexus rerum" or Community. As we have seen, Marx claims that this Totality is characterised by two major factors, namely, its crude materialism and its irrationality. The capitalist system represents, for Marx, a syndicate of anti-human, irrational and despotic forces. The over-bearing principle of this Totality is material wealth and its augmentation, as an end in itself. In this situation, a conflict of interests is inevitable between "human nature in general" and its formal and historical existence expressed by the Totality. This perspective, which sustains the "logic" and the "laws" of capitalist production, remains the invariable factor of Marx's analysis.

Secondly we must regard the Particular Formality or Essence from the point of view of the Totality. Here we find, according to Marx, two major Totality-types: bourgeois and proletarian. (Ger.Id.91) The bourgeois "formality" is the embodiment of the materialism and irrationality of the

capitalist system. This Essence epitomises "free enterprise", which in effect means uncivilised, unbridled and
irresponsible enterprise. The bourgeoisie, therefore, is
the embodiment of capital in its "being-for-itself". The
proletarian Formality is the direct anti-thesis. It is
the embodiment of labour in its "being-for-itself". Since
labour, for Marx, represents human life-activity, the proletariat is regarded as being representative of the welfare
of the human race. In this perspective, the proletariat
is the epitome of humanism.

Finally, given the <u>Ideal</u> and <u>mediated</u> character of the Particular Formality and the <u>subjective consciousness</u> of the individual, we have to regard the Essence from the point of view of the individual — as we did in the case of Kintu Kinte. The Human Essence or Formality, in Marx's perspective, we have to bear in mind, is neither an immediate reflex of the empirical conditions nor an a-priori "form" or "quality". It is a "moment" in human existence consisting of an ensemble of species relations mediated by an Ideal Totality. (This is a basic presupposition rooted in Marx's own system and applies equally to the proletarian and bourgeois Essences).

We realise, therefore, that it is not enough to be a wage-worker to enjoy a proletarian Essence; one's actual socio-economic status is not the sole factor involved. It is rather the empirical situation subsumed under the Economic Totality in such a way as to induce the individual to develop a specific Formality with which he subjectively identifies. This situation, according to Marx, obtains under the absolute rule of capital where the latter develops into an "intolerable power". "Big industry", Marx says, "must be highly developed to produce this contradiction." (Ger.Id.91) A variable factor is here implied because, as we shall see soon, the wage-labourer can easily become "bourgeoisified", thus forfeiting much of his "critical insight" and vitality. When this happens he succumbs to "juridical blindness".

If the above is correct we realise that the bourgeois and the proletariat are types of people who identify subjectively with an abstract objectification representing material wealth and human welfare respectively. This means that both the proletariat and the bourgeoisie cannot be institutionalised or reduced to mere socio-economic classes, in an unqualified manner, without extensive distortion to Marx's system.

## 4:2 The Character of the Proletariat

The "early" Marx had referred to the working class of his country as the "German Cinderella" and this, we suggest, is how he fundamentally regarded the proletariat in general -- an impoverished and emasciated "class" but with a vigorous and glorious future. The ambiguity, referred to carlier, regarding the character of the proletariat can be removed somewhat if we distinguish between cultural and scientific development and "formal" or "essential" maturity. This distinction is not spurious because it is both implied by Marx himself and sustained by his whole theory on human nature and its maturation process. We have already seen that Marx himself draws a vital distinction between "development" in an empirical sense and "maturity" in an essential sense. - < (Grund.102) Culturally, Marx's proletariat is, in the main, undeveloped and this is to be expected if the proletarian life is sacrificed to the productive process and "physical existence." The proletarian life is an "empty" one because proletarians "robbed...of all real life-content have become abstract individuals." (Ger.Id.92) In respect to human maturity, however, the proletariat registers an advanced stage and this, allegedly, shows itself both in the psychology and in the consciousness of this "class".

Marx describes the proletariat as "poverty conscious of its spiritual and physical poverty, dehumanisation conscious of its dehumanisation and thus transcending itself."

The self-consciousness of the proletarian class, the consciousness it allegedly has of its own poverty and suffering, which will eventually provide it with the strength and insight for the envisaged revolution, deserves stress. It is this consciousness of its actual degradation and dehumanisation that provides with,

that revolutionary boldness which flings into the face of its adversary the defiant words: I am nothing and I should be everything. (Early W.254)

In order to appreciate and appraise this contention and to realise the enduring value of the proletarian consciousness and psychology, within Marx's system, one has to analyse the latter within the frame-work of the double freedom of the proletariat and its subsumption under the Economic Totality.

As a consequence of their "socio-juridical freedom", proletarians become economically valueless. In other words, since the worker legally owns himself, he is no longer considered part of another's material wealth. His physical existence is now his own responsibility and liability. Accordingly, Marx claims:

As a slave, the worker has exchange value, a value; as a free wage-worker he has no value; it is rather his power of disposing of his labour, effected by exchange with him, which has value. It is not he who stands towards the capitalist as exchange value, but the capitalist towards him. His valuelessness and devaluation is the presupposition of capital and the precondition of free labour in general. (Grund.289) 7

This is not something to be regretted, Marx argues, against Simon Linguet. • The latter,

forgets that the worker is thereby formally posited as a person who is something for himself apart from his labour, and who alienates his life-expression only as a means towards his own life. (ibid. 289)

Marx, therefore, regards the socio-juridical freedom of the worker as a step towards his self-identity and self-possession as a "being for himself", in contrast to the situation of the slave or serf who was considered and who often considered himself as belonging to his owner or as being an extension of the land itself.

In the slave relation, he belongs to the individual particular owner, and is his labouring machine. As a totality of force-expenditure, as labour capacity, he is a thing, belonging to another, and hence does not relate as subject to his particular expenditure of force, nor to the act of living labour. In the serf relation he appears as a moment of property in land itself, is an appendage of the soil, exactly like draught-cattle. In the slave relation the worker is nothing but a living labour-machine, which therefore has a value for others, or rather is a value. (ibid. 464-465)

We have here a reiteration of a vital idea mentioned earlier and which underlies Marx's whole system, namely, that the human developmental process moves from "non-being" to "being". "Being" and "reality" are posited by suspending "non-being" and "non-reality"; "subjectivity" is posited by suspending "objectivity"; "self-possession" by suspending one's loss of self; "individuality" by suspending "communality. With the advent of wage-labour, Marx claims:

the relation of slavery or serfdom has been suspended. Living labour capacity belongs to itself, and has disposition over the expenditure of its forces, through exchange. (ibid.464)

As a result of their economic freedom, on the other hand, the proletarians are deprived of the means of production (land, tools, craft and capital), that is,of the objective means for their physical existence and which was the basis of the worker's former social status and personal identity. This means that the proletariat, after being deprived of the former type of recognition and "objective individuality" is further deprived of that essential factor which, allegedly, alone gives man a semblance of respectibility and recognition within the Economic Totality, viz. capital and wealth. The increasingly technological character of the Economic Totality makes complete the "economic freedom" of the worker by turning the skill, trade, profession — the "mystere"— of the

medieval and manufacturing periods futile. (Cap.1.423, 286)
In this sense, concomitantly with his "physical" deprivation and penury, the worker in the Economic Totality loses the basis for objective realisation, recognition and self-actualisation.

In Marx's system, the individual finds his identity and self-fulfilment through the mediation of a Universal or Totality. For the proletariat, this Totality is "labour" undifferentiated, unqualified labour. This type of identification deprives the worker of even that restricted self-fulfilment and objective individuality which the worker of the medieval and manufacturing periods had, due to the "semi-artistic" character of his labour. Since now labour lacks name and character, the one who identifies with it is similarly name-less and face-less. He is simply a "labourer". This, according to Marx, gives the proletariat a purely "subjective existence".

One's "formal" individuality and personal identity and the corresponding consciousness and psychology depend on the basis of one's relations. In the case of the bourgeoisie, the basis is private property as an abstract objectification which is identical with the Economic Totality Marx is emphatic that within the system of exchangevalue, "capital is the community". In the case of the proletariat, by contrast; the basis of his relations is "labour" which, for Marx, is the direct negation of capital. In other words, the basis of the proletarian Essence and its corresponding character is the absence of property epitomised by "labour in its being-for-itself", and existing as an abstract objectification. The negation of "property", which labour in its "being-for-itself" represents, entails the megation to those values, ideals imperatives and individuality which emanate from private property. 8 This point is crucial because it shows that the Economic Totality is not the Ideal Totality of the proletariat. In other words, although the

proletariat is a creation of the Economic Totality, the former is not one of its Totality-types, but, rather, its negation and anti-thesis. By implication, the Economic Totality has, per se, only one Totality-type, the bourgeois embodying its "intellect and will". We must remember that the "rule of capital" is the rule of a social imperative, a concrete universal, and not the rule of the capitalist as a person. This imperative or Totality is a "moment" distinct from the "moment" of one's "subjective historical existence". Capital as a/"species-relation" dominates the capitalist himself. Marx points out on this matter:

The contrast between the power, based on the personal relations of dominion and servitude, that is conferred by landed property, and the impersonal power that is given by money, is well expressed by the two French proverbs, "Nulle terre sans seigneur," and "L'argent n'a pas de maitre".(Cap.1.146,n.1)

The capitalist has a semblance of individuality in so far as he is recognised as a property owner and as long as he is actually a property owner. The proletariat, by contrast, is factually and by definition property-less and, consequently, lacks even the indirect and simulated individuality of the bourgeois. (This, as we shall see, is an important asset in favour of the worker). Since the proletarian allegedly lacks both the "objective individuality" of the pre-capitalist eras and the crudely materialistic one of the bourgeois, he is in this sense a historical and social novelty, a "new breed", that exists in society but is not of society. In the perspective of Marx's system, the character of the proletariat is essentially negative. It expresses the freedom of human consciousness and psychology from traditional values, imperatives and prejuduces stemming from private property and its rule over the will and consciousness of men. Marx writes on this point:

Big industry croated a class, which in all nations has the same interest and with which nationality is already dead; a class which is really rid of all the old world and at the same time stands pitted

against it. (Ger.Id.78)

So, the freedom from the "objective individuality" of the pre-capitalist and capitalist eras, on the part of the proletariat, is a necessary condition for development of true individuality. We have seen that Marx claimed that the proletariat who is "robbed...of all real life-content, have become abstract individuals." Marx adds, however, that they are "only by this fact put into a position to enter into relation with one another as individuals." (ibid.92) Against Destutt de Tracy, who held that the majority of people, the proletarians, must have lost all individuality long ago, "Marx argues that, on the contrary, "nowadays it looks as if it was precisely among them that individuality is most developed."

Marx implies that the situation in which the proletariat finds itself enables the worker to be himself, to recognise and experience directly his humanity and individuality, through the mediation of a genuinely human Community and not through the mediation of an alien Totality which until now provided man with a one-sided and circumscribed individuality or formality.

The same type of freedom is implied in Marx's description of the proletarian consciousness. This consciousness is critical because it is free from traditional illusions, false views, prejudices and criteria based on property relations in their manifold expression throughout history. The worker, within the Political and Sociobiological Totalities could not, according to Marx, enjoy this "free" consciousness because he was neither juridically nor economically free. More specifically, the pre-capitalist worker was the proprietor of the means of production, at least, of the tools and skill, and this reflected itself in his division of labour which had a personal character. Since the pre-capitalist worker identified with the fundamental social relation of private property, even in its

limited form, he developed and enjoyed a corresponding superstructural idealogy and consciousness. The proletariat, by contrast, is the first type of worker whose labour is free in a double sense. He embodies living labour purified of every trace of private property and this manifests itself in a corresponding consciousness.

Within Marx's perspective, therefore, a development in the conditions of existence entails a development in human consciousness. This may not sound very inspiring or novel except for the fact that, according to Marx, (1) this conscious development consists primarily in a state of disillusionment and enlightenment, presupposing a former state of illusions and "darkness"; and it is precisely an enlightened consciousness because it suspends the former misguided consciousness; (2)this conscious development is not an immediate effect of the changing material conditions but arises through the mediation of an Ideal Totality.

Both the a-prioriness of the "speculative" tradition and the immediacy of a narrow economic and technological determinism are rejected.

## 4:3 Identification -- the Problem

Who is the proletariat? Since the proletariat figures so prominantly within Marx's system, much of the plausibility of the latter depends on the answer we give to this simple question. The identification of Marx's proletariat is one of the most delicate issues within his system. It is, perhaps, also the weakest point because of the ambiguity it sustains and the confusion it breeds. The identification can be made within two distinct perspectives:

- 1) Within the "logic" of Marx's system which encourages a systematic analysis of the Essence and Character of the proletariat transcending the "deceptive appearance of things".
  - 2) Within a narrow economic perspective dominated

by Marx's Labour Theory of Value and by the distinction between the "productive" and the "unproductive" worker.

The difference between the two perspectives is emphasised by the fact that, in the first case, we obtain an enriched, philosophical conception of the proletariat and the latter emerges primarily and essentially as a type of person or a state-of-being to which an individual is personally and consciously committed. The proletariat, in this sense, is not a "thing" or an ontological type; neither is it an institution or a sociological type, nor a sum of "physical" relations. It is a Totality-type, a Particular Essence consisting of an "ensemble of social relations", with corresponding characteristics and registering a degree of maturity in the human developmental process. Every worker subsumed under the Economic Totality and possessing the corresponding "Essence" and "Character" is eligible to this status.

In the second case, only the "productive labourer". is entitled to be called a proletariat. This narrows down the concept of the proletariat to a distinct socio-economic class, namely, the class which is employed by capital as capital and in this way is "productive" because it alone allegedly creates surplus value. In this perspective, "productivity" becomes the criterion of identification; in the former perspective, by contrast, the criterion was one's personal and conscious commitment to an Ideal Totality which negates the Economic one, regardless of the kind of work one does — even transcending one's actual economic status.

One realises, therefore, that on the basis of the "logic" of Marx's system, and especially within his analysis of the Economic Totality, we obtain, what can be called, a "philosophical-humanistic" conception of the proletariat. Here the latter emerges as the negation of the basic species-relation of "property" and the Ideological superstructure and consciousness stemming from it. This is an enriched con-

ception of the proletariat. On the basis of Marx's Labour Theory, we obtain essentially a narrow socio-economic conception; a conception of the proletariat as the sole productive worker. The identification of the proletariat in each case is different.

The distinction between the two conceptions of the proletariat is sustained by the fact that the rationale behind each analysis is different. Marx's Labour Theory. whatever its validity, labours the point that the "productive worker" has a "Right" to appropriate the productive forces and the wealth he creates. According to this theory, not only is the worker, employed by capital as capital, the sole "productive" labourer but his very existence is increasingly threatened by the capitalist mode of production ' itself. Accordingly, not only has he the "Right" but also the "need" to appropriate the means of production in order to save himself from starvation. Within the capitalist system, the situation arises, according to Marx, where "the individuals must appropriate the existing totality of productive forces, not only to achieve self-activity, but also. merely to safeguard their very existence." (Ger.Id.92) Per se, however, the Labour Theory says nothing about the ability and suitability of the "productive" class to take over the control of the social productive forces. Neither does it show in any way that the crude materialism and irrationality of the capitalist system will be transcended by a humanistic and rational state of affairs. In this respect the Labour Theory has no philosophical or humanistic perspective. most one can draw from it is the abolition of personal or . individual private property but not the suspension of private property itself, as an imperative, which is the main "species-relation" of the capitalist system and its superstructure. 10 In other words, it is possible for the Economic Totality, that subordinates man to material wealth and its increase, to continue to exist with communal property replacing

personal property. It bears repeating that, in Marx's conception, the capitalist who is the proprietor and owner is not spared the inhumanity of the Economic Totality and the rule of money. It remains conceivable, (and historical communism seems to confirm it), that the economic character will persist in a "new" Totality where the majority of the people will own the forces of production. The "rule of money" and wealth, a crudely materialistic imperative, in other words, is not effected by a mere quantitative change of owners. In any case, it is a fallacy to hold that communal appropriation, by itself, creates Marx's millennium. 11 For this to happen, the appropriation has to be made by "new-fangled men", by the labouring masses who allegedly enjoy a maturity marking a developed stage in human ex-This maturity manifests itself in the class consciousness of the proletariat and in a corresponding psychological state. The communal appropriation is, therefore,

determined by the persons appropriating. Only the proletarians of the present day, who are completely shut off from all self-activity, are in a position to achieve a complete and no longer restricted self-activity, which consists in the appropriation of a totality of productive forces in the thus postulated development of a totality of capacities. (Ger.Id.92-93)

All this, however, does not emerge from the analysis of the mere productive and narrowly economic dimension of the industrial worker. The most one could say, in this regard, is that the productive worker never had the opportunity to indulge in the same greed and materialism which the capitalist has epitomised, but given the opportunity he will certainly not fail to do so. As Marx himself was well aware, "the rage of princes and the fury of the people are alike enervated by the breath of prosperity." (Surveys, 332)

By contrast, the rationale behind the analysis of the Economic Totality and of its relation to the individual is precisely to expose the phenomenon of the human developmental process and to provide the correct perspective for emerges from this analysis as the highest stage in the process of human maturation making possible a new mode of existence to come into being, transcending the capitalistic one. The productivity factor enters only indirectly — as a necessary condition for the appearance and realisation of the "economic" character of the system of exchange-value which can be transcended only after it "flowers". (More about this in the following chapter). From this analysis, the conscious and active reaction of the working classes and other individuals against the Economic Totality and its imperatives emerges in a forceful way, while the economic classification of people into "productive" and "unproductive" remains, at best, an irrelevant undertaking.

There are strong indications that Marx himself held both a "philosophical-humanistic" and an "economic-materialistic" view of the proletariat. His position, however, remains, in our view, unreasonable, inconsistent and misleading. First of all, Marx subscribed to, and drives to its logical conclusion, the physiocratic distinction between the "productive worker" who leaves a surplus and the "un-productive" one, in particular, the one who works for revenue. Within the capitalist system, Marx contends:

Only labour which is directly transformed into capital is productive...labour which produces surplusvalue or serves capital as agency for the creation of surplus-value, hence for manifesting itself as capital, as self-expanding value.(Surplus Val.1.393)

The distinction between the "productive" and the "unproductive" labourer follows logically from the character of the capitalist mode of production which is a "system of exchange-value" and not one of "simple exchange" or "barter". Only that type of labour which increases capital is regarded as productive. Marx, however, draws much more from this distinction and this is where the confusion and problem start. In fact he equates the proletariat with the "productive labourer" and by the latter he generally has in mind the

industrial labourer. He even betrays a certain disdain and disrespect for the "unproductive classes" while almost indulging in undue obcisance for the "productive" and "industrial class". Though he emphasises that the distinction between "productive" and "unproductive" work has nothing moral or personal about it, yet, in practice, Marx gives it a personal and moralistic twist. The "early" Marx distinguished between the "lumpenproletariat which in all towns forms a mass quite distinct from the industrial proletariat." (Surveys, 52) He associated the former with

vagabonds, discharged soldiers, discharged criminals, escaped galley slaves, swindlers, confidence trick-sters, lazzaroni, pickpockets, sleight-of-hand experts, gamblers, maquercaux, brothel-keepers, porters, pen-pushers, organ-grinders, rag-and-bone merchants, knife-grinders, tinkers and beggars. (ibid.197)

In the <u>Grundrisse</u>, however, the "lumpenproletariat" is expanded to include all those who live by consuming revenue in exchange for their useful service — these are labelled as "honest or 'working' lumpenproletariat". Those who give "service", even if employed by a capitalist, are not regarded as "productive labourers" in an economic sense. They share a certain "stigma" and do not qualify for the status of "proletariat". The overtones of the Labour Theory and the corresponding classification and characterisation of the labouring class are evident. He writes:

Labour as mere performance of services for the satisfaction of immediate needs has nothing whatever to do with capital, since that is not capital's concern. If a capitalist hires a woodcutter to chop wood to roast his mutton over, then not only does the wood cutter relate to the capitalist, but also the capitalist to the woodcutter, in the relation of simple exchange. The wood cutter gives him his service, a use value, which does not increase capital; rather, capital consumes itself in it; and the capitalist gives him another commodity for it in the form of money. The same relation holds for all services which workers exchange directly for the money of other persons, and which are consumed by these persons. This is consumption of revenue, which, as such, always falls within simple circulation; it is not

consumption of capital. Since one of the contracting parties does not confront the other as a capitalist, this performance of a service cannot fall under the category or productive labour. From whore
to pope, there is a mass of such rabble. But the
honest and "working" lumpenproletariat belongs here
as well; e.g. the great mob of porters etc. who render service in sea port cities etc. (Grund.272)

Marx again refers to the "cssential difference" between the "servant class and the working class" when he says:

the creation of surplus labour on the one side corresponds to the creation of minus-labour, relative idleness (or not-productive labour at best), on the other. This goes without saying as regards capital itself; but holds then also for the classes with which it shares; hence of the paupers, flunkeys, lickspittles etc. living from the surplus product, in short, the whole train of retainers; the part of the servant class which lives not from capital but from revenue. Essential difference between this servant class and the working class. (ibid.401,note)

It is clear that, in the above, the "productivity" factor, in a narrow economic sense, becomes the criterion for identifying the proletariat from the rest of the population and this again serves as the basis for his polarization of society. Marx's position can be given, at least, three distinct interpretations.

The Proletariat, as a new type of person who rejects, heart and soul, the capitalist system and what it stands for, (the philosophical-humanistic conception), is to be identified exclusively with the productive labourer. In an exclusive perspective, this would mean that only the productive labourer is capable of developing the "Essence" and the "Character" of the proletariat and manifest the critical consciousness and subjective individuality peculiar to this "class". This view is evidently false on Marx's own account. It violates his analysis of the Economic Totality and the conclusions he draws from it on its pervasive character on the whole of society. If this interpretation were correct, the objectivity and validity of his own theory would be in question because Marx himself was not a "productive labourer", neither con-

sequently, a proletarian. In different instances, Marx states that the consciousness and psychology which characterise the proletariat can be shared by other groups.

Alternatively, it could be argued that the proletariat is merely a distinct socio-economic class. In other words, the proletariat can be reduced, without remainder, to the "productive" and industrial worker regardless of his relationship to the Totality and his "Essence" and "Character". This view ignores or rejects the philosophical and humanistic dimension of the proletariat. It remains completely oblivious to the historical and developmental context Marx painstakingly took a life time to create. When this happens, the special circumstances and conditions in the absence of which the proletariat ceases to be truly "proletarian" are forgotten or missed completely and the proletariat becomes a sterile and rigid "institution". This breeds a purely economistic and technologistic conception of this "class", whether in the broad sense of the "working masses as such" or in the narrow sense of the "industrial worker" as such. It is a degenerate and impoverished conception of the proletariat which, in our view, has no legitimate place in Marx's system. In spite of the ambiguity of his doctrine on this subject, Marx never reduced without remainder the proletariat to a mere socio-economic class, in the accepted sense; he never lost sight of the humanistic dimension -- the specific "Formality" -- which the proletariat was to embody and the corresponding ideology and consciousness it was supposed to manifest. This is confirmed by his appraisal of the British industrial worker in his "Letter to the Labour Parliament" written in 1854. There Marx, on the one hand, identifies the proletariat with the industrial class; on the other hand, emphasises the special character of this class which entitle it to take the lead. He writes among other things:

There exist here no longer, as in continental countries

large classes of peasants and artisans almost equally dependent on their own property and their own labour. A complete divorce of property from labour has been effected in Great Britain. In no other country, therefore, the war between the two classes that constitute modern society has assumed so colossal dimensions and features so distinct and palatable.

But it is precisely from these facts that the working classes of Great Britain, before all others, are competent and called for to act as leaders in the great movement that must finally result in the absolute emancipation of labour. Such they are from the conscious clearness of their position, the vast superiority of their numbers, the disastrous struggles of their past, and the moral strength of their present. It is the working millions of Great Britain who first have laid down the real basis of a new society -modern industry, which transformed the destructive agencies of nature into the productive power of man. The English working classes, with invincible energies, by the sweat of their brows and brains, have called into life the material means of ennobling labour itself, and of multiplying its fruits to such a degree as to make general abundance possible. (Surveys, 277-278)

In <u>Capital</u>, Marx characterises the English factory worker as "champions...of the working class generally."(Cap. 1.299) Marx's view will change drastically following his diagnosis of a "bourgeois infection" within this working class.(Sel.Corr.140) <sup>14</sup>Thus, some years later, Marx gives a different appraisal of the British Industrial class. It is clear from what he states that it is not enough to be an industrial or productive worker; one must also experience and possess the proletarian spirit and this comes about through the relationship of this class to the Economic Totality. The sterility and rigidity which are entitled by a mere socio-conomic class are rejected.

Every industrial and commercial centre in England now possesses a working class divided into two hostile camps, English proletarians and Irish proletarians. The ordinary English worker hates the Irish worker as a competitor who lowers his standard of life. In relation to the Irish worker he feels himself a member of the ruling nation and so turns

himself into a tool of the aristocrats and capitalists of his country against Treland, thus strengthening their domination over himself. He cherishes religious, social, and national prejudices against the Irish worker. His attitude towards him is much the same as that of the "poor whites" to the "niggers" in the former slave states of the U.S.A. The Irish pays him back with interest in his own money. He sees in the English worker at once the accomplice and the stupid tool of the English rule in Ireland.

This antagonism is artificially kept alive and intensified by the press, the pulpit, the comic papers, in short, by all the means at the disposal of the ruling classes. This antagonism is the secret of the impotence of the English working class, despite its organisation. It is the secret by which the capitalist class maintains its power. And that class is fully aware of it. (Sel.Corr.236-237)

A few years later, Mark again points to the decadent state of the British working class. He writes to Liebkneicht:

The English working class had been gradually becoming more and more deeply demoralised by the period of corruption since 1848 and had at last got to the point when it was nothing more than the tail of the Great Liberal Party, i.e., of its oppressors, the capitalists. Its direction had passed completely into the hands of the venal trade union leaders and professional agitators. (ibid.314)

There is here no trace of the "universal character and energy" of the proletariat as "new fangled men" who want no part whatsoever of the bourgeois Totality. The industrial worker, by Marx's own account, has degenerated into a class in and of society. Marx, therefore, realised that "something more" was required to have a genuine proletariat, besides having a "productive class" or people crowding factories. A worker does not automatically become proletarian by simply working in a factory. This is a facile view of the matter. To have a genuine proletariat, something else is needed, something which cannot be measured mathematically but without which the working population becomes "bourgeoisified" and lose their pristine character and vitality.

According to a third interpretation it could be said

that the genuine proletarian is to be identified with the productive labourer who at the same time possesses the "Essence" and "Character" demanded of him, following his relationship to the Economic Totality. It is, therefore, not only the productive factor that is involved but also a stage in the human developmental process, following certain conditions of existence. This, we suggest, was Marx's view. His position avoids the fallacy of identifying the proletariat with a mere socio-economic class. It rejects also the mistake of identifying the working masses as such with the proletariat. Without the Economic Totality there can be. no double freedom and hence no objective basis for the proletariat. As Marx stated explicitly in his "letter" and as is implied in his analysis of the different Totalities, neither the proprietor peasant, to whom the land is "the talisman by which capital held him hitherto under its spell", nor the artisan of the guild and the manufacturing period qualifies to the status of proletariat. The reason is that . in all these cases the workers depend "on their own property and their own labour"; they own to some extent the "objective conditions of labour" -- the land, the tools, the craft, etc. This situation implies both that the worker is not "economically ree" and that the means of production and subsistence are not yet ruled by "an alien will and an alien intellect." This latter factor is vital to the creation of the proletariat. The "economic freedom" of the worker has to take place within the context of the "rule of capital"; the poverty and deprivation of the worker have to be complemented by the employment and appropriation of the means of production by capital, that is, by material wealth for its own sake. This is nothing but the imposition of an Economic Imperative over society and man himself. tablishment of a Totality that enforces this imperative, namely, the Economic Totality, is essential for the emergence of the genuine proletariat which asserts itself as its direct anti-thesis.

In our view Marx's position on this matter is unacceptable. Both the <u>identification</u> between the "productive worker" and the "proletariat" and the <u>exclusion</u> of the
"service worker" from proletarian status are inconsistent
with his system and remain anachronistic.

In the case of the "exclusion" Marx implies a measure of "juridical blindness" which gives rise to a form of economism and technologism. In other words, Marx puts undue emphasis on the actual socio-economic situation of the individual, i.e., on his physical relations and tends to forget that, by his own account, it is the Economic Totality and its universal and pervasive rule that frees the worker both "juridically" and "economically", regardless of his type of work. He equally seems to forget that service work within the pre-capitalist Totalities, where the relation of "dominance and servitude" obtains, is different from service work within an Economic Totality where everything is "commercialised" and de-personified. The servant or maid within the pre-capitalist eras was part of the family and this reflected itself in one's consciousness and psychology. 15 The situation is radically different with a servant or maid whose only link, to the family it serves, is money. To argue differently would imply that the work itself, per se et virtute sua, creates the "Essence" and "Character" of the proletariat. This position identifies a physical relation, (e.g. working in a factory, lack of possessions etc), with a social relation which, in Marx's sense, entails subjective commitment. This confusion breeds a "crude materialism" and fetishistic idealism.

There are, we suggest, two major trends in Marx's system; one loud and aggressive and allegedly "scientific" in character, emphasising <u>Right</u>; the other equally eloquent but, though philosophically fertile, "out-shouted" by the former trend, emphasising <u>Reason</u>. Marx's Labour Theory

stresses the Right of the worker to take over the control of the productive forces because he is allegedly the sole creator. of surplus value and social wealth. Marx's philosophical anthropology, containing the "logic" and "generative idea" of his whole system exposes the crude materialism and antihumanism of the capitalist system, besides emphasising Reason and Rationality. To Marx, capitalism and its Economic Totality reduces man to a "mere natural being" and attempts to press down to a minimum, the bare necessaries of life. This is implied in the definition of productive labour as labour that augments capital. If, for example, prostitution, gambling and narcotics bring profit, they qualify as productive investment and from a purely economic point of view, capital should be invested in them instead of in, e.g. agriculture, education, hospitals etc., if the latter cannot guarantee the same degree of profit. 16 This shows clearly, for Marx and for others, the conflict of interest between capitalism and Humanism. Similarly, Art, Poetry, Music. Philosophy etc., when not commercialised, consume revenue and hence are unproductive. Marx points out, as we have seen, that "capitalist production is hostile to certain branches of spiritual production, for example, art and poetry." Marx's analysis of capitalism, therefore, uncovers the crude materialism , even "physicalism", of this system and calls for an intelligent and conscious reaction by the people. Here Reason and Rationality take the podium. People, the vast majority, Marx suggests, should realise the decadent and irrational character of the Economic Totality and react accordingly.

A clear reference to a desired situation when Reason, prevails is made in <u>Capital</u>. Marx tries to show the difference between rational and irrational employment of people. His argument is that unemployment is due, in part, to a fundamental irrationality sustained by the employment principle and policy which do not take into account the age.

sex, duration etc. of the labour force. If one analyses the situation carefully, Marx claims, one finds that, thanks to "free enterprise", while some people are over-worked, others are job-less. By contrast,

If to-morrow morning labour generally were reduced to a rational amount and proportioned to the different sections of the working-class according to age and sex, the working population to hand would be absolutely insufficient for the carrying on of national production on its present scale. The great majority of labourers now "unproductive" would have to be turned into "productive" ones.(Cap.1.637)17

Another instance of Marx's resort to Reason is found when he refers to his envisaged millennium where "there would be a very different scope for the employment of machinery than there can be in a bourgeois society." (ibid.393) Earlier, Marx had pointed out that:

The shortening of the working-day is...by no means what is aimed at, in capitalist production, when labour is economised by increasing its productiveness.(ibid.320)

Marx also argues that the purpose of the machine, in the capitalist system, is to cheapen the commodity and increase productivity but not to lighten the load of the worker. (ibid.371)

# 4:4 Identification -- the Solution

The problem of identifying the genuine proletariat, we suggest, is analogous to the one of identifying the genuine Christian. In both cases, the matter can be trivialised by resorting to a set of empirical relations and roles which the individual observes. In the latter case, the one whose name is found in a baptismal register, observes a set of rituals and loudly proclaims his allegiance to Christ can be considered a Christian. The Ku Klux Klan, military despots in different parts of the world and many "God-fathers" heading crime syndicates would qualify as Christians. In the former case, the one who works for wages and is in the employ of capital is a proletarian. The

bourgeoisified worker who, for all intents and purposes, emulates the "will and intellect" of capital and every social misfit, with a tendency to waste human life recklessly but who happens to work in a factory, becomes a genuine proletarian. There is, however, "something" in both Christ's and Marx's doctrine that protests against this simple minded and distortive identification. If we regard the matter seriously, we realise that it takes more than a set of rituals to make a genuine Christian; it takes more than mere wage-labour and a set of empty slogans to turn one into a proletarian.

Indeed, the method of immediate empirical identification in both cases is intrinsically inadequate because, when analysed in their proper perspective, both the Christian and the Proletarian turn out to be fundamentally states-of-This fact stems from the "nature" of the relations which are involved in being a Christian and a Proletarian respectively. What is involved in each characterisation is less what one does or makes than what one is. These two characterisations involve, in each case, a type of person who identifies with an abstract objectification -- Christ, as a supernatural totality, namely, "the Way, the Truth, and the Life", for the Christian; "labour in its being-foritself", that is, humanism, for the Proletarian -- and a personal and conscious commitment to a corresponding ideology. This shows itself in a set of values, principles and imperatives stemming from each respective abstract objectification. The totality of the relations between the individual and the abstract objectification constitute the "Essence" of the Christian and the Proletarian respectively and this should show itself in one's "doing" and one's "making". This vital sequence, however, should be kept. One must be a genuine Christian and a genuine Proletarian and then prove and manifest one's Essence by what one does and makes. One's activity, both practical and intellectual, must have a perspective and basis: these are provided by the "abstract objectification"

with which the individual identifies. It is true that you can know the tree by its fruit but the fruit does not immediately determine or constitute the tree. It simply helps us identify the tree but in many cases it remains possible to have good fruit from a rotten tree. In other words, it is possible to do or make what is Christian or Proletarian without being Christian or Proletarian. Legacies, foundations, endowments, scholarships etc., in one way or other all for the benefit of humanity, have been set up by certain individuals who, in their life time, identified themselves with an abstract objectification which is crudely materialistic, namely, money. Their philanthropy, highly suspect, coming often in their declining years, does not make them humanists nor spare them Christ's stern condemnation.

If we examine the "Essence" of the proletariat in the perspective of Marx's "metaphysical" framework we shall see better why an empirical identification is impossible and also why an immediate equivalence between the wage-worker and the proletariat is distortive and anachronistic.

Within Marx's system, the "proletariat", like the "citizen" of antiquity and the "noble" of the Feudal period, stands for an ensemble or totality of "relations" and not for a "thing" -- an Aristotelian substance. On this, there can be no genuine doubt. The problem starts when we try to establish the nature of these "constitutive relations". On the basis of what has been discussed earlier, we are entitled to speak of two main types of relations within Marx's system, namely, "physical relations" and "species relations". We use the term "physical" in the broad sense to include natural, psychosomatic, technological, spatial -- in other words, all relations involving "physical" contact between the correlates. "Physical relations" are immediate ones and obtain independently of social existence. These relations and their bases, together with their immediate effects, constitute the empirical conditions of existence in which the capitalist and

worker find themselves. For example, the physical possession of wealth, living in comfort, eating good food, having servants etc., and the corresponding psychosomatic and emotional effects on the individual, constitute the "physical relations" of the capitalist. Working in a factory, contact with the machinery and technology, selling one's labour for wages and living in material poverty make up the "physical relations" of the labourer. The totality of each of these type of relations constitutes the capitalist and the wageworker as distinct, empirical, socio-economic or socio-logical classes.

"social" relations, in Marx' sense, are different from "physical" ones. The difference stems from the fact that while the <u>basis</u> of the latter relations is <u>intrinsic</u> to the correlates and has a physical or natural character, the basis of species relations is <u>extrinsic</u> to both correlates and exists <u>independently</u> of them, in the form of an abstract objectification, a hypostatized generalisation or concrete universal.

For instance, the relation between the factory worker and technology has, as its basis, the physical contact of the worker with the machine and his use of it in his labour activity, independently of the "mode of production" as feudal, bourgeois, etc.. This is a technological relation and can be described as an immediate and direct relation between things. The basis of this relation can be said to be intrinsic to and not distinct from the correlates. This type of relation produces a psychosomatic effect on the worker, in any form of society, and this effect can be analysed scientifically and measured mathematically -- e.g., occupational diseases, dexterity, stultification, boredom etc.. The one who enters into this relation at the same time embodies it. He or she becomes a factory or machine worker. By contrast, the relation of exchange between "capitalist" and "free labourer" or be-

tween two commodities has as its basis the system of exchangevalue, a social context which is extrinsic to the correlates. A species or production relation can be described as a mediated relation between persons .-- the mediation obtaining through a concrete universal. It is evident that within Marx's system, species relations constitute the "Essence" of man as "Proletarian" or "bourgeois". Equally evident is the fact that it is this type of relations which "in their totality constitute...society, and specifically, a society at a definite stage of historical development, a society with a peculiar, distinctive character. Ancient society, feudal society, bourgeois society are such totalities of production relations, each of which at the same time denotes a special stage of development in the history of mankind." (Wage Lab.and From these species relations stem the ideological superstructure and social forms of consciousness. Marx claims:

The same men who establish their social relations in conformity with their material productivity, produce also principles, ideas and categories, in confirmity with their social relations. (Poverty, 109)

Within the capitalist system the species-relations reduce themselves to two main ones, namely, "private property" and "labour" (Ger.Id.91), each sustaining an ideology and corresponding social consciousness. The objective but abstract bases of these relations with which the individual identifies, in a subjective way, consist of the "being-for-itself" of capital and the "being-for-itself" of labour. (Grund. 303-304; 317) Marx often identifies the actual capitalist and the actual wage-labourer with each of these phenomena respective-This implies that the capitalist, in an empirical or ) sociological sense, as the private proprietor of capital, is simultaneously the "bourgeois" in an essential sense; that is, as the embodiment of private property in its "being-foritself". Similarly, the wage-worker, as the owner and seller of labour is often regarded as being simultaneously the "proletarian in an essential sense, that is, as the embodiment

of labour in its "being-for-itself." Herein precisely lies the fatal mis-step of Marx in his analysis. He thereby creates a pitfall in which legions of his ardent but unwary supporters hopelessly stumble. If one is to remain consistent with Marx's own doctrine on species relations and the involvement of people with them, one has to draw two vital conclusions.

There is, first of all, a real distinction between an individual and the totality of species relations he or she enters into or represents. On the basis of Marx's own doctrine, species relations are never co-extensive with the correlates, unlike the case of physical relations. An immediate identity between the "relatum" and the "fundamentum relationis", viz., the abstract objectification, is thereby ruled out. As we have seen, Marx himself distinguished between the basis of any relation and the relation itself. In the case of species relations, we have to distinguish further between the power, the basis and the relation. The power is identical with the correlate but neither is the basis nor the relation. Failure to grasp this fundamental but elusive doctrine on the nature and structure of species relations; precludes the correct understanding of the whole "logic" of Marx's system.

If the <u>basis</u> is not identical with or intrinsic to the correlates, a fortiori, neither is the relation or a totality of these relations. There is <u>nothing</u> in a physical, sensational or mere natural sense which has the "power" to make one a "bourgeois" or "proletarian" in an "essential" sense. Therefore, neither possession of money or capital, nor the selling of labour is, per se, the <u>basis</u> of these two "Essences". We can say, of course, that the one who owns and invests capital is a capitalist; the one who sells his labour is a wage-worker. But these are trite tautologies. By contrast, the one who, irrespective of his socio-economic status, subjectively identifies with "exchange-value" be-

comes a "bourgeois", the one who subjectively identifies with "labour" is a "proletarian". These are <u>essential</u> and significant characterisations, each having as its basis its own abststract objectification, distinct from the mere <u>possession</u> of capital and the mere <u>selling</u> of labour:

Secondly, an abstract objectification is a real, objective, but Ideal phenomenon and, therefore, identification, on the part of the correlate can take place only in a conscious, free and intensional way. What is involved, therefore, in one's characterisation as "bourgeois" or "proletarian", is not a mere physical or technological contact but a personal commitment. This again shows that a totality or ensemble of "physical relations", in the sense discussed earlier, is different in kind from a totality of species relations. The worst distortion of Marx's doctrine is perpetrated when these two fundamental types of relations are confused or identified. If they are distinct we can have one set of relations without the other. The direct and necessary equivalence between socio-economic types and totalities of species-relations must therefore be ruled out on the basis of Marx's own doctrine.

there was some basis for an equivalence between "physical relations" and species relations due to the politico-social character of the Totality or Community. Consequently, it was common and easy for an individual to identify himself with his species relations. This situation, Marx suggests, often concealed the real distinction between the two types of relations. By contrast, in the capitalist system, this equivalence breaks down completely due to the Economic character of the Totality. The unity within an individual's life, between his "physical" and his species relations becomes increasingly contingent and subjective.

In the perspective of Marx's own analysis, the <u>charactor</u> ter of the species relations and their totalities throughout

history changed from "socio-political", within the precapitalist eras, to an "economic" one within the capitalist stage. He states that "relations of personal dependence (entirely spontaneous at the outset) are the first social forms, in which human productive capacity develops only to a slight extent and at isolated points."(Grund.158) Precapitalist societies consisted of "fixed personal (historic) relations of dependence in production as well as the allsided dependence of the producers on one another. "(ibid. 157) Mark speaks of the great "power of the community which binds the individuals together, the patriarchal relation, the community of antiquity, feudalism and the guild system."(ibid. 157) This means, that the basis of these relations, the abstract objectification which acts as the "Nexus rerum", "principle" or "social bond" of pre-capitalist societies was not "exchange-value", (ibid.223) and that "wealth does not appear as the aim of production. "(ibid. 487,502) It is clear, therefore, that at this stage "a real community...is ...itself directly present as a presupposition of production." (ibid.509) We have here a reiteration of an idea vital to a correct understanding of Marx's whole system and which appears both in his early and later works. In "The Jewish Question" Marx had written:

The old civil society had a <u>directly political</u> character, i.e., the elements of civil life such as property, family and the mode and manner of work were elevated in the form of seignory, estate and guild to the level of elements of political life. In this form they defined the relationship of the single individual to the <u>state as a whole</u>. (Early W.232)19

The same idea appears in <u>Capital</u>. In the Middle Ages, we find everyone dependent, serfs and lords, vassals and suzerains, laymen and clergy. Personal dependence here characterises the social relations of production just as much as it does the other spheres of life organised on the bases of that production. (Cap.1.77)

Since the species relations and their basis were of a socio-political character, the ideological superstructure

stemming from them naturally showed the same characteristics.

The socio-political character of the species relations and their totalities means that a distinction between "life-activity", representing the species-life and "material" life" was acknowledged within human existence. Man's species existence was regarded as having a transcendental and apriori character. It was also regarded as being superior to physical existence. Marx claims that "in the earlier periods self-activity and the production of material life were separated, in that they devolved on different persons and...on account of the narrowness of the individuals themselves the production of material life was considered as a . subordinate mode of self-activity..."(Ger.Id.92) is implifed also in Marx's later contention that "Aristotle and Cackar would have regarded even the title 'labourers' as an i/nsult."(Surplus Val.1.287) · It could be said that the abstract objectification which dominated pre-capitalist Totalities and acted as the "nexus rerum" did not negate the human species as a distinct "ontic" totality but acknowledged man as a higher being vis-a-vis the rest of nature. In this respect, it was more noble and "humanistic" than the capitalistic one. (Grund. 487-488) The Community, sustained by this type of basis was a well-spring for human self-realisation in the limited and undeveloped way possible at the time. more one was united and close to it, the better for one. dividual fulfilment, self-actualisation and self-expression were in direct proportion to the degree in which the individual identified himself with the Totality. A citizen was more subsumed under this type of Community than was the freethe freeman more than the slave. This subsumption, notwithstanding its limitation, was wholesome, humanising and avidly sought after. Marx points out that:

All earlier forms of property condemn the greater part of humanity, the slaves, to be pure instruments of labour. Historical development, political development, art, science etc., take place in higher

circles over their heads. (Grund. 589-590)

The socio-political character of the abstract objectification and the superiority of "life-activity" over "material-life" made possible an equivalence between the empirical conditions of existence (physical relations) and the species relations among people. In short, there was a wide-spread equivalence. Marx suggests, between "sociological types" and "Totality types". Citizenship, nobility, slavery, serfdom, as sociological relations were regarded at the same time as embodiments of corresponding species relations. This meant a more unified and secure life as far as the individual was concerned. What he identified with had lity -- a stability backed up by an abstract objectification shrouded in superstition and mysticism -- the tribe, the Race, the State, "Birth" etc.. One's empirical conditions and relations could even be lost yet one's formal identity on both a social and an individual basis, retained. For instance. a "zoon politikon" retained his formal and Ideal existence even if enslaved. A noble remained a noble even if turned pauper or, as was often the case, led a dissolute life. 20 The same applies to the runaway slave or a commoner who managed to enrich himself. Marx argues that the distinction between the "personal" and the "class" individual "in the estate and even more in the tribe... is as yet concealed: instance, a nobleman always remains a nobleman, a commoner always a commoner, apart from his other relationships, a quality inseparable from his individuality."(Ger.Id.84) If this is correct one could say that in pre-capitalist eras, one's species relations were regarded as having an ontological dimension and were, therefore, treated as a type of "qualities" which could not be lost easily. They were considered as being an extension of one's being. within the individual manifested itself in a corresponding psychology and consciousness which could be easily identified; e.g., the superiority complex, bride and breeding of the

"upper classes" -- (we have only to read Cervantes"s classic Don Quixote); the servility and self-debasement of the "lower classes" -- still visible today in Southern Europe. A noble lived, behaved and thought like a noble; a commoner likewise betrayed his status.

In the capitalist era, the character of the species relations and their totality becomes economic, crudely materialistic. "Money" or capital becomes the "nexus rerum or social pledge, "(Cap.1.131) and the rule of capital is inaugurated. The "relations of personal dependence" of the former eras change into a situation where "personal independence on objective dependence" prevail. (Grund.158) The early Marx had described the advent of the capitalist era thus:

The political revolution which overthrew this rule and turned the affairs of the state into the affairs' of the people, which constituted the political state as a concern of the whole people, i.e., as a real state, inevitably destroyed all the estates, corporations, guilds and privileges which expressed the separation of the people from its community. The political revolution thereby abolished the political character of civil society. It shattered civil society into its simple components -- on the one hand individuals and on the other the material and spiritual elements which constitute the vital content and civil situation of these individuals. It unleashed the political spirit which had, as it were, been dissolved, dissected and dispersed in the various cul-de-sacs of feudal society; it gathered together this spirit from its state of dispersion, liberated it from the adulteration of civil life and constituted it as the sphere of the community, the universal concern of the people ideally independent of those particular elements of civil life. A person's particular activity and situation in life sank to the level of a purely individual significance. They no longer constituted the relationship of the individual to the state as a whole. (Early W.232-233)

Since the "nexus rerum" of the capitalist system is money, it means, according to Marx, that, incontrast to the previous ages, "material life", physical existence in a narrow sense is idealised, established as the abstract ob-

jectification and principle of Society: "material life appears as the end and what produces this material life, labour...as the means."(Ger.Id.92) As far as the species relations and their totality are concerned, this situation amounts to a negation of the former distinction between "material life" and "life activity". "Material life" and material wealth turn into the "golden calf" before which humanity bows in idolatrous homage. While "the ancient excused the slavery of one on the ground that it was a means to the full development of another" (Cap.1.408-409), capitalism, Marx contends, "has subjugated historical progress to the service of wealth." (Grund.589-590) Marx further contrasts the aspirations and values of ancient societies with those prevailing within the bourgeois era. He points out that the ancients did not "preach slavery of the masses" for a dwarfed and one-sided development represented by the capitalist, a "crude and half educated parvenu" whose selffulfilment consists in turning into "eminent spinners", "extensive sausage makers" and "influential shoe-black dealers."-(Cap.1.408-409) There is, here, involved a moral and evaluative judgment regarding the quality of self-fulfilment and self-respect within the capitalist era. Albert Schweitzer is credited with having said that "the significance of A man lies not in what he achieves but rather in what he longs to achieve." The "ideals" and ambitions of the bourgeoisie, Marx implies, betray the spiritual and humanistic vacuity of their perpetrators.

It cannot be sufficiently emphasised that, in Marx's perspective, the "rule of capital" is not the rule of the capitalist as a person. It is the rule of a type of categorical imperative, distinct from and inimical to man himself, whether capitalist or worker, and lording it over society. "Capital", Marx claims, "is the all-dominating economic power of bourgeois society." (Crund.107) The capitalist rules in so far as he represents and embodies this "im-

personal power". The capitalist's expenditure in so far as his necessaries and enjoyment are concerned is a "robbery perpetrated on accumulation." (Cap.1.592) The capitalist, Marx claims, "is always enjoying wealth with a guilty conscience, with frugality and thrift at the back of his mind." (Surplus Val.1.282)

Since the basis of the species relations is wealth, money, and no longer a socio-political status of mysterious origin and nature, it becomes clear that both the equivalence between the sociological classes and the species relations, on the one hand, and the unity within the individual, on the other hand, no longer persist. In the Grundrisse Marx describes the situation clearly:

Money...directly and simultaneously becomes the real community, since it is the general substance of survival for all, and at the same time the social product of all. But as we have seen, in money the community is at the same time a mere abstraction, a mere external, accidental thing for the individual, and at the same time merely a means for his satisfaction as an isolated individual. The community of antiquity presupposes a quite different relation to, and on the part of, the individual. The development of money in its third rule therefore smashes this community. All production is an objectification of the individual. In money (exchange-value) however, the individual is not objectified in his natural quality, but in a social quality (relation) which is, at the same time, external to him. (Grund.225-226)

In pre-capitalist times, one's empirical conditions were subsumed under one's socio-political conditions which constituted his species relations. This allowed an individual to identify himself with his empirical conditions, a situation which, Marx admits, cannot obtain under the capitalist system. He states:

Before it is replaced by exchange value, every form of natural wealth presupposes an essential relation between the individual and the objects, in which the individual in one of his aspects objectifies himself in the thing, so that his possession of the thing appears at the same time as a certain development of his individuality: wealth in sheep, the development

of the individual as shepherd, wealth in grain his development as agriculturist, etc. Money, however, as the individual wealth, as something emerging from circulation and representing a general quality, as a merely social result, does not at all presuppose an individual relation to its owner; possession of it is not the development of any particular essential aspect of his individuality; but rather possession of what lacks individuality, since this social (relation) exists at the same time as a sensuous, external object which can be mechanically seized, and lost in the same manner. Its relation to the individual thus appears as a purely accidental one; while this relation to a thing having no connection with his individuality gives him, at the same time, by virtue of the thing's character, a general power over society, over the whole world of gratifications, labours, etc. It is exactly as if, for example, the chance discovery of a stone gave me mastery over all the sciences, regardless of my individuality. (ibid. 221-222)

The above is a reiteration of the view found in <a href="The-decoration-where-it-is-stated">The-decoration-it-is-decorated</a> that "The division be—tween the personal and the class individual, the accidental nature of the conditions of life for the individual, appears only with the emergence of the class, which is itself a product of the bourgeoisie." (Ger.Id.84)

The situation, therefore, within the capitalist system destroys the unity in man's life between his physical existence and his "ideal" or formal existence. Money is now the basis of one's species-essence and as such it is something which can be acquired and lost easily. It is not a dimension of one's being as was the case with the pre-capitalist formality or "essence". The basis is now in the order of having. "As absolutely secure wealth, entirely independent of my individuality, it is at the same time, because it is something completely external to me, the absolutely insecure, which can be separated from me by an accident."(Grund.234) In this perspective, it becomes anachronistic and inconsistent to classify people exclusively according to their empirical situation and socio-economic status. The possession

or absence of money does not automatically make one a bourgeois or a proletarian respectively, at least, if these two
characterisations are taken in the meaningful way as found
in Marx's system. Only those who identify themselves, in a
subjective and intensional way, with money in its "beingfor-itself" or with its negation, can be so characterised.
The embodiments of these two anti-thetical abstract objectifications can be found among different socio-economic classes.
The identification, in each case, is mediated by a concrete Universal following the syllogistic formula P - U - I.
Schematically we can present the situation in the following
way:

| PARTICULAR  |     | UNIVERSAL                              |   | INDIVIDUAL ·-              |
|-------------|-----|----------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Proletariat | = . | Labour in its "be-<br>ing-for-itself"  | = | Individual wage-<br>worker |
|             |     | ,                                      |   |                            |
| Bourgeois   | = . | Capital in its "be-<br>ing-for-itself" | = | Individual<br>capitalist . |

The equivalence between the individual worker or capitalist is mediated by "labour" and "capital" respectively. An individual is a proletarian or bourgeois to the degree in which he identifies himself with one or other of the two "concrete universals". Personal identity, in each case, determins the equivalence or discrepancy between one's empirical conditions of existence and one's species or ideal existence as "proletarian" or "bourgeois". This identity is not something that follows with any psychological or physical necessity.

It is, we suggest, in the perspective of the above that one should interpret that famous passage regarding the nature and role of the proletarian class in relation to German "emancipation". On this occasion Marx writes:

So where is the positive possibility of German emancipation? This is our answer. In the formation of a class with radial chains, a class of civil society which is not a class of civil society, a class

which is the dissolution of all classes, a sphere which has a universal character because of its universal suffering and which lays claim to no particular right because the wrong it suffers is not a particular wrong but wrong in general; a sphere of society which can no longer lay claim to a historical title, but merely to a human one, which does not stand in one-sided opposition to the consequences but in all-sided opposition to the premises of the German political system; and finally a sphere which cannot emancipate itself without emancipating itself from -- and thereby emancipating -- all the other spheres of society, which is, in a word, the total loss of humanity and which can therefore redeem itself only through the total redemption of humanity. This dis-solution of society as a particular class is the proletariat. (Early W.256)

The above can be analysed within a narrow historical context obtaining within Marx's life-time. It could however, and more approriately, be analysed in the perspective of the "cataphysics" of Marx's system which transcends historical and national boundaries and which deals with the developmental process of the human race, through a dialectic of negativity. Within this latter, Marx would not be referring to a particular group of people which is to take it upon itself to liberate the world. The emphasis should be put on the description of the proletariat as a "sphere of society which can no longer lay claim to a historical title, but merely to a human one. This suggests a conflict between types of people, one representing historically conditioned man with his different "pseudo Essences": the other epitomising "man as man" in his genuine existence. Also, something extremely important, Marx's description refers to the majority of the people. In this sense, the proletariat stands for mankind, de-humanised, within the Economic Totality. The use of the word "class" in the passage is misleading because this term is generally associated with a group with sectarian interests, even if the members regard them as "universal interests". It can, therefore, be interpreted, falsely, as implying that a group or sect is entitled to assume leadership and act in the name of the rest without need for any explicit mandate from the people. Marx does, occasionally encourage this interpretation. However, within the perspective of the "logic" of his system, "the class of civil society which is not of civil society" emerges as synonymous with all those people themselves who, and in so far as, they are negated by and negate the Economic Totality. This equivalence should manifest itself both in quantitative and in qualitative factors. Not only does this "class" allegedly form the vast majority of the people but, as we have seen earlier, it has no historical identity or "objective individuality". It is a type without a Totality and must manifest its true character by imposing a new Totality which negates the negation of man as such perpetrated by the Economic Totality. The new Totality or Community should be unmistakably humanistic in character. Marx argues further:

No class of civil society can play this role without awakening a moment of enthusiasm in itself and in the masses; a moment in which this class fraternizes and fuses with society in general, becomes identified with it and is experienced and acknowledged as its universal representative; a moment in which its claims and rights are truly the rights and claims of society itself and in which it is in reality the heart and head of society. Only in the name of the universal rights of society can a particular class lay claim to universal domination. Revolutionary energy and spiritual self-condifence are not enough to storm this position of liberator and to ensure thereby the political exploitation of all the other spheres of society in the interests of one's own sphere. (Early W. 254)

Marx then goes on to emphasise the equivalence between the "proletariat" and "humanity" and to give the social and historical conditions in which this can become practically possible. He states:

If the revolution of a people and the emancipation of a particular class of civil society are to coincide, if one class is to stand for the whole of society, then all the deficiences of society must be concentrated in another class, one particular class

must be the class which gives universal offence, the embodiment of a general limitation; one particular sphere of society must appear as the notorious crime of the whole of society, so that the liberation of this sphere appears as universal self-liberation. If one class is to be the class of liberation par excellance, then another class must be the class of overt oppression. The negative general significance of the French nobility and the French clergy determined the positive general significance of the class which stood nearest to and opposed to them -- the bourgeoisie. (ibid.254)

The above remains ambiguous and admits conflicting interpretations. It could be said that Marx is here simply regarding a distinct socio-economic class, viz., the capitalist, as the epitome of evil while treating another class as its anti-thesis. However, within the context of his system the interpretation would have to be different. 22 In this case, the passage suggests a more complex situation, obtaining under the absolute rule of capital as a "being-for-itself", where a small number of people identify themselves with its "logic" and imperatives and the vast majority identify with its negation. This presupposes the full maturity of the capitalist system along its own "laws" where it becomes an "intolerable power". The capitalist, in this perspective, would embody the bourgeois Essence and in so far would represent "one particular sphere of society" which appears "as the notorious crime of the whole of society." But in this perspective. Marx's attack would not be directly at the capitalist as a person, as a human being, but at the capitalist as bourgeois: an indictment of what he stand for, of "money" and its rule over man. The distinction between the capitalist as an individual and as a bourgeois is implied in many places in Marx's works. 23 Of course, if the capitalist identifies himself with his economic existence; if "he believes himself to be an individual only insofar as he is a bourgeois" (Ger. Id. 101) and regards this historical formality as his human one, then he has no one to blame but himself for the annihilation which he will suffer at the

hands of the proletariat. If "by individual", Marx writes, in the Manifesto, "you mean no other person than the bourgeois, than the middle-class owner of property," then this "person must, indeed, be swept out of the way and made impossible." (Manifesto, 45) Harsh words, it is true, but then, so are Christ's with regards to the rich and their prospects of entering heaven.

However much one tries to analyse some of Marx's contentions, especially regarding the "bourgeois" and the "proletariat", in their proper perspective, a certain ambiguity and tension persist. Due, mainly, to his economic and political involvement, Marx, in many instances, failed to draw the full implications of his own analysis. To the extent that this happened, he drove himself into a number of inconsistencies. Marx recognised the Particular - Totality -Individual relationship governing human existence and related phenomena; he unmasked, in a forceful and insightful way, the distinctive features that single out the Economic Totality, namely, its crude materialism, irrationality and anti-humanism; he even pointed out the distinction between the individual and his "formality" and the instability of this relationship within the capitalist system -- yet he anachronistically made certain claims and demands which could in no way be substantiated. The equivalence between a Totalitytype or "Formality" and a sociological type, within the · Economic Totality, is the most damaging of all.

#### NOTES: CHAPTER FOUR

- K. Marx, <u>Communist Manifesto</u>, A Gateway Edition, Chicago, 1965.
- 2. As was pointed out earlier and as applies in the case of every other major thinker, one should distinguish between a person's theoretical system as a body of organised thoughts and a person's "independent" and even "irresponsible" ideas, likes and dislikes, prejudices etc., which can conceivably contradict one's own system. In the case of Marx, we suggest, this is imperative. Marx's system should be distinguished and, to some extent, saved from Marx himself. For example, the methodological atheism of his system can and should be distinguished from his degmatic atheism; from his personal views on God and Religion and from his categorical rejection of the Supernatural. These personal views and ideas have no rational or scientific basis. They remain, in essence, fideistic.
- 3. See also Grundrisse p.502
- 4. The irrationality of the capitalist system is emphasised in a letter to L.Kugelmann. Marx writes: "The essence of bourgeois society consists precisely in this, that a-priori there is no conscious social regulation of production. The rational and naturally necessary asserts itself only as a blindly working average." (Sel.Corr.209)
- Reform'" Marx comments on the level of education "or capacity of it" of the German worker. He says: "As for the German worker's level of education or the capacity for it, I would point to Weitling's brilliant writings which surpass Proudhon's from a theoretical point of view, however defective they may be in exection." A little later he refers to the "brilliant talents of the German proletariat for socialism." (Early W.415-416)
- 6. Quoted by C.J. Arthur. Cf. Ger.Id.p.20
- 7. Cf. Surplus Val.11.224-225.
- 8. As we hope will become clearer soon this is where the major weakness of Marx's system lies. There is implied an unwarranted step from a logical to a factual analysis.

- 9. In the Communist Manifesto it is contended that at a certain point, "it becomes evident that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society, and to impose its conditions of existence upon society as an over-riding law. It is unfit to rule, because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state that it has to feed him, instead of being fed by him. Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society. (ibid.37-38)
- 10. "Crude Communism", as Marx himself points out in the Manuscripts suspends the personal or individual dimension of "private property" without suspending "private property" itself. cf.Manus.ppl32-135.
- II. This widespread fallacy can be traced back to a misconception regarding the origin and nature of alienation. We shall discuss the problem in chapter five.
- 12. With regards to the distinction between "productive" and "unproductive" labour, Marx says, "there is no question of moral or other standpoints in the case of either the one or the other kind of labour."(Surplus Val.1.171)
- 13. It is a case analogous to Aristotle's conception of man as a "rational being" and as a "Zoon politikon". The moment "town-dwelling" becomes a deciding factor for humanhood, it effectively turns into the criterion for "rationality".
- 14. Engels too, at one time, complains to Marx that "the English proletariat is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the posssession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat alongside the bourgeoisie." (Sel.Corr.110)
- 15. This is clearly brought out by the "livery" of the servants which provided them with a distinct identity. The social conditions in which the servant class worked gave them a sense of belongingness to the family they served. Loyalty flowed as spontaneously as the loyalty of the "faithful" subjects to their monarch. All this can be found in Marx's works.
- 16. Mark points out in various places that the distinction between productive and unproductive labour within the physiocratic framework is radically different from that within the capitalist system.

- 17. The "scientific" value of Marx's contention especially in relation to contemporary capitalism is irrelevant.

  Marx's point is that the employment principle within the Economic Totality does not take into consideration certain factors.
- 18. The point we wish to make is that in his doctrine on the proletariat Marx diverged from his own analysis and became both incoherent and inconsistent. Any "correction" that is suggested amounts to a stricter adherence to his own doctrine.
- 19. See also Early Works, p.90.
- 20. Read, for example, A.Manzoni, Dostoievsky and others to get an idea of the "nobility" of the actual nobles.
- D.Mclellan uses the word "material" instead of "objective" and this, we believe, is more accurate because the former "personal relations" too had an "objective" basis. Cf. Marx's Grundrisse Extracts, trans., by D.Mclellan, Macmillan, London, 1972, p.67. Marx uses the word "sachlicher". The contrast he wants to bring out is between the socio-political(i.e. personal) character of the "nexus rerum" of previous eras and the narrowly economic one of bourgeois society. The "nexus rerum" or "social bond" of this society has a materialistic character in the sense that it is exclusively concerned with "material life" and physical existence in a narrow sense. It does not transcend the "realm of necessity". The former "nexus rerum" or principle of society was concerned with life-activity, a dimension distinct from and superior to "material life".
- 22. Of course, it remains possible even in this perspective to read in Marx more than there really is. There is, we suggest, no immunity from inconsistency within the works of any thinker, Marx included.
- 23. In The Theories of Surplus Value, Vol.1. Marx argues that "what distinguishes this form i.e. capitalist one from all previous forms is that the capitalist does not rule over the labourer through any personal qualities he may have, but only in so far as he is 'capital'" Cf. p390.

### CHAPTER FIVE

## MAN'S CAUSAL RELATIONSHIP TO NATURE

As in the case of other philosophical problems which have been the subject of much controversy, one does not find, in Marx's works, a systematic or a comprehensive account of causality and causal relations. One could say that in Marx's system there is, per se, no "problem of causality" in the sense in which this problem exists after Hume. This, we suggest, should be well born in mind. In a philosophical milieu, in which "causes" and "conditions" are categorially and conceptually indistinguishable, and in which there thrives a wide-spread skepticism regarding "necessary connections" much of what Marx says remains, in essence, incomprehensible.

That there <u>are</u> causes, directly and effectively involved in the "logos" of the human species and responsible
for its slow, painful but steady process of self-fulfilment,
Marx never doubted. Proof of this is found in his polemic
against Hegelian Idealism and the Hegemony of the Spirit, and
his attack on "all hitherto existing materialism, that of
Feuerbach included." Both systems, he suggests, undermine
a genuine and active causal agency on the part of the human
species in its own development. The problem, for Marx, was
to discover the <u>real</u> causes and explain their influence throughout human history, and not to question their existence.

### 5:1 The Main Causal Factors

A distinctive characteristic of Marx's system is its emphasis on activity, on man's practical action. As L. Dupre points out, Marxism is in essence a theory of action. (Dupre, 144) In the perspective of the three "moments" in human

existence, their empirical origin and the presupposed discrepancy between the Nature and the Essence of man, this is not surprising. The basic presupposition that the human race is in a state of undevelopment, that Human Nature is not fully developed because its Essence is either circumscribed or "external", is complemented by the conviction that mankind will be redeemed by its own productive and creative activity. However, from what we have seen so far, and as we shall continue to discuss, one must argue further that, though Marx's doctrine is a theory of action, it is also a theory of "being". The "action" and "development" take place within a metaphysical perspective, transcending historical and empirical phenomena.

The human developmental process, within Marx's system, takes place at two distinct but inter-related levels. On the one hand, it involves a mutual and causal relationship between the Nature and the Essence of man -- a development transcending the narrow confines of one's empirical conditions of existence. On the other hand, it involves the mutual and causal relationship between "man" and the "rest of nature". The first level of development, sustaining the "logic" of Marx's system, provides the perspective for a correct and adequate analysis of the second one.

As we have seen, one of Marx's basic presuppositions which serves, at the same time, as the framework of his analysis of past and present history and of his projections into the future, is that the Human Essence, in both its Universal and its Particular dimensions, is not yet fully developed. Moreover, in his perspective, Human Nature cannot be considered a "principium operationis" in the traditional sense. It is a distinct "moment" and co-principle of movement, sharing its efficacy with, and to some extent getting it from, the Human Essence. The causal agency, therefore, is not purely transcunt but also immanent, transforming the "causes" themselves, viz., the Nature and the Essence. There is a

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feed back between the two and this shows itself in the individual person at a particular stage in human existence. The Nature of man unfolds as a result of a change in the conditions of existence which sustain his Essence. Man's modified Nature will, in turn, cause a change in the environment, (both social and physical) and in the corresponding Essence. This view is implied when Marx says that "By thus acting on the external world and changing it, [man] at the same time changes his own nature." (Cap.1.177) In the Grundrisse, the same idea is found in a more elaborate form. Marx argues that:

Not only do the objective conditions change in the act of reproduction, e.g. the village becomes a town, the wilderness a cleared field etc., but the producers change, too, in that they bring out new qualities in themselves, develop themselves in production, transform themselves, develop new powers and ideas, new modes of intercourse, new needs and new language.(Grund.494)

This is a reiteration of Marx's early view in the Manuscripts. There he had written:

the history of industry and the established objective existence of industry are the open book of man's essential powers, the exposure to the senses of human psychology. Hitherto this was not conceived in its inseparable connection with man's essential being, but only in an external relation of utility. (Manus.142)

It is in the perspective of the above that Marx insists that the resolution of the problem between theory and practice, between what is and what ought to be "is...by no means merely a problem of understanding, but a real problem of life, which philosophy could not solve precisely because it conceived this problem as merely a theoretical one.

(Manus, 141-142) This conclusion reappears in Thesis Xl on Feuerbach where Marx writes:

The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it.

The human developmental process, in the way Marx describes it by means of the Ideal Totalities, cannot be

possible without presupposing the integrity and continuity of "Human Nature in general", as a distinct form of life. It is equally impossible if the Nature of the human species were identical with its Essence. In this case, except perhaps in the sphere of morals, history remains philosophically sterile. Since, in this perspective, substance is a "complete actuality", being and consciousness are, one could say, at a stand-still; they remain, per se, untouched by the Juggernaut of time and space. Marx was against the "habit of dismissing history with a few categories proper to ecclesiastical history." (Coll.W.Vol.5,29) The point that he wants to make is that history should be interpreted "subspecie hominis" and not "subspecie aeterni".

The distinction and causal relationship between the Nature and the Essence of man, within Mark's system, when recognised, is treated by many commentators as a piece of metaphysical self-indulgence found only in his early works. It is widely contended that in his later and mature works, Marx broke away with his past and took a more "scientific" and empirical out-look. In this phase, his major working concepts are "productive forces" and "relations of production". This raises the well known controversy between the "dichotomists" and the "continuationists". This problem deserves a separate study. 1 However, given the nature of our work, we cannot ignore it completely. We must, therefore, examine the main causal agencies as they appear within Marx's later works and see whether there is indeed a dichotomy on this important matter within the evolution of his thought process.

One of the best known and often quoted passages, supporting and encouraging the "scientific" approach, is found in the Preface to A Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy. There it is claimed that:

In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite 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. (Pol.Econ. 20)

This passage is a good specimen of Marx's style. looks simple and lucid to the casual reader. When sifted carefully it raises more questions than it can answer. can justly say that, with all its apparent clarity and simplicity, we really do not know what Marx is talking about. The problem is that the major concepts involved in Marx's condensed statement remain ruinously vague and ambiguous. There are involved four major factors: 1)productive forces; 2)relations of production; 3) a legal and political superstructure and 4) forms of social consciousness. What does each of these conceptions denote? Strong controversy exists on this matter. Besides, no amount of scrutiny of Marx's famous "Preface" will divulge their correct meaning. Yet it is vital to understand correctly these terms because together they constitute the "material conditions of existence", the basis of Marx's whole system. Our own analysis leads us to the following conclusions:

The productive forces denote the state of social productive activity at a particular epoch. This productive activity is always dominated by a "Labour Totality", in the sense discussed in chapter three. Marx claims; as we have seen that:

In all forms of society there is one specific kind of production which predominates over the rest, whose relations thus assign rank and influence to the others. It is a general illumination which bathes all the other colours and modifies their particularity. It is a particular ether which determines the specific gravity of every being which has materialized within it. (Grund.106-107)

We have also seen that Marx speaks of "pastoral, agricultural, manufacturing and industrial labour" as historical stages of social productive activity. In its general form. this activity includes "social labour", (as distinct from labour in isolation); "technological division of labour", (as distinct from "social division of labour", which is a production relation), and the means and instruments of production, viz. the raw material, machinery, technology and expertise, subsumed under human "praxis". The "analogatum princeps", to use a scholastic expression, of all the "productive forces" is <a href="human social labour">human social labour</a>, in its historical form. All other "forces" become "productive", in Marx's sense, in so far as, and to the extent that, they are subsumed under it.

One should point out that Marx uses the term "productivity" primarily in relation to "exchange-value" and not to "use-value"; in relation to a "social magnitude" and not to a physical magnitude. "Use-values" are regarded by Marx as being, strictly speaking, outside the sphere of political economy proper. (Pol. Econ. 28) Marx also distinguishes between a "mere productive force" and a "productive force" in an economic sense. This can be translated into a vital distinction between "technology" and "the mode of production". He points out that:

Machinery is no more an economic category than the bullock that drags the plough. Machinery is merely a productive force. The modern workshop, which depends on the application of machinery, is a social production relation, an economic category. (Poverty 133)

It is clear that although "productive forces" are real phenomena, their productive dimension, according to Marx, does not stem from any physical or natural power or quality intrinsic to them, as fetishists contend, but from their social context. As an illustration, a stick is merely a piece of wood. In the hands of a savage it becomes an instrument, a "mere productive force", a means for creating "use-values" -- for instance, knocking down an animal. In a social context, subsumed under human social labour which acts as a "particular ether which determines the specific

gravity of every being which has materialized within it", it becomes a "productive force in an economic sense", calling for appropriate production or property relations, namely, private ownership of the instrument by the worker. Marx argues:

Machinery is no more an economic category than the ox which draws the plough. The application of machinery in the present day is one of the relations of our present economic system, but the way in which machinery is utilized is totally distinct from the machinery itself. Powder remains the same whether it is used to wound a man or to dress his wounds. (Poverty, 185)

It is precisely "the way in which machinery is utilized" that turns it into a productive force in the strict sense as Marx would have it. Moreover, this "way" denotes an intensional and not a technological perspective. It refers to a social milieu which constitutes man's Ideal or formal existence, objectified in the Totality or Community. Nearly thirty years later, Marx reiterates the same vital idea. . He claims: "A savage -- and man was a savage after he had ceased to be an ape -- who kills an animal with a stone, who collects fruits, etc., performs 'useful' labour." (Gotha, 12)4 However, Marx argues that "although isolated labour (its material conditions presupposed) can create use values; it can create neither wealth nor culture. "(ibid.13) It is clear from this, that not only the instrument but also human labour itself requires a social or Formal context, an objective but ideal setting, emanating from human social existence, in order to become productive in Marx's sense. By itself, or in isolation, that is, as far as its physical and natural dimensions are concerned, human labour is "itself...only the manifestation of a force of nature human labour power."(ibid.ll) The real distinction between particular "useful-labour" which creates "things", "use-values" and "general social labour", which exists as an abstract objectification and which creates exchange-values and all

culture, is one of the fundamental ideas sustaining Marx's whole economic theory.

To reiterate this crucial point, within Marx's system, what makes something, including human labour itself, productive is not anything physical or natural within it but its mediated character, its subsumption under a Social This is again implied in the contention that "originally, life in the community and, through its mediation, the relationship to the earth as property, are basic presuppositions of the reproduction both of the individual and of the community."(Grund.740) The "community", as we have seen, stands for an abstract objectification, an Ideal hypostatization distinct from a mere physical association or collectivity. This advocates caution in interpreting Marx's contention that "the hand mill gives you society with the feudal lord: the steam-mill, society with the industrial capitalist" -- suggesting a narrow technologism and epiphenomenalism. 6 "Productive forces" are, within Marx's system, already hominised phenomena and they influence people to the extent that they are hominised.

That "productive forces" refer primarily to human social labour is implied when Marx states that "the main force of production is the human being himself." (ibid.422) The same idea is also implied in Marx's reiterated contention that human labour is the sole source, substance and "immanent measure of value." It comes out also in his contention that nature in its pure state, the animals and the instruments and machines do not create surplus value. In Capital, Marx breaks down the "elementary factors of the labour process" into three: "1. the personal activity of man, i.e. work itself; 2. the subject of that work and 3. its instruments." (Cap.1.178) This classification presupposes a philosophical distinction, (implied by Marx throughout his whole system), between a cause which truly produces an effect, (in our case, value), and its conditions. It is

evident, by what Marx says, that he regards human labour as the sole cause or creative principle and the material and instruments as "mere productive forces", mere conditions. This is confirmed when he says:

If we examine the whole process from the point of view of its result, the product, it is plain that both the instruments and the subject of labour, are means of production, and that the labour itself is productive labour. (Cap.1.181)

Relations of production, as should be clear by now, are not "physical", "natural" or technological ones. All of these relations obtain immediately between, and have their basis intrinsic to, the correlates. "Production relations" or "property relations", are species relations whose basis is extrinsic to and independent of the correlates. They are mediated relations, whose totality constitutes, what Marx misleadingly calls, the "economic structure of society." This appellation, in our view, is misleading for two main reasons:

1) It conceals the true <u>nature</u> of the Totality, "nexus rerum", or "social bond" as an <u>abstract objectification</u> transcending the physical existence of people. It thus encourages a view of the infrastructure as a totality of physical and technological relations. This breeds economism and technologism.

2) It obliterates the important fact emphasised by Marx himself, that the <u>character</u> of the infra-structure changes from a "Socio-political" or "personal" one in the pre-capitalist eras, to an "economic" or "materialistic" one in the capitalist epoch.

The Legal and Political Superstructure consists of the ideological and theoretical expression of the relations of production. In Marx's own words, it includes the "legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophic -- in short, ideological forms" stemming, ultimately, from the infrastructure. The superstructure, therefore, represents the official consciousness and Ideology of the epoch, reflecting

the prevailing conditions of existence. Those who formally represent, support or defend this superstructure, "such as government officials, priests, lawyers, soldiers," are called by Marx, the "'ideological classes'".(Cap.1.446)

The definite forms of social consciousness represent "class consciousness". This has to be interpreted in the perspective of the four major Totalities discussed in chapter three, and of the "class consciousness" of the different Totality-types. Marx himself insists that "To regard society as one single subject is...to look at it wrongly, speculatively."(Grund.94) In the capitalist system, according to Marx, there are two basic forms of class consciousness -proletarian and bourgeois. One represents and epitomises labour in its "being-for-itself", a critical and radical consciousness which allegedly has a thorough grasp of the true nature of things and recognises man as "the supreme being". This consciousness which is expected to grip the masses "demonstrates ad hominem, and it demonstrates ad hominem as soon as it becomes radical." Marx adds that "To be . radical is to grasp things by the root. But for man the root is man himself." (Early W.251) The other form of consciousness represents capital in its "being-for-itself". It posits "private property", money or exchange-value, as the "principle" of society. Proletarian class consciousness is its anti-thesis and posits "man" as the principle of society. This, in Marx's view, is the fundamental difference between the crude materialism of the capitalist and other systems emulating its "logic" and the naturalistic humanism of his own system.

Having identified these four major factors, the crucial question now is whether we can integrate them within the "metaphysical" perspective consisting of the three "moments" in human existence and their mutual relationship, without doing violence to Marx's system and the evolution of thought. This, we argue, is not only possible but is both

demanded by the analysis of the four major factors themselves and explicitly suggested by Marx's own words.

If what we discussed above is correct, we realise that the four factors are all qualified as human; they are all human phenomena, different dimensions of human existence not found within the rest of "external nature".

More specifically, we can equate the "productive forces", in Marx's sense, with "human praxis" at a particular stage in its historical development — that is, human labour as subsumed under the prevailing social context. This equivalence is explicitly made by Marx himself when he contends that, if correctly understood, "production for its own sake means nothing but the development of human productive forces, in other words, the development of the richness of human nature as an end in itself." (Surplus Val.11.117-118) In The German Ideology, it is stated that:

the mode of production must not be considered simply as being the production of the physical existence of the individuals. Rather, it is a definite form of activity of these individuals, a definite form of expressing their life, a definite mode of life on their part. As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with what they produce and with how they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production. (Ger. Id.42)

Moreover, we have to remember that, according to Marx, man "makes his life activity itself the object of his will and of his consciousness. He has conscious life activity. It is not a determination with which he directly merges." The "productive forces", as "human praxis", must, therefore, be regarded as a "moment" in human existence, distinct from the subjective existence of the individuals themselves.

The "relations of production", as we have seen, are "species-relations" and together with other social relations provide the "material" or "substance" of the infrastructure or Totality. In our view, one is justified

in including, within the compass of the Totality, the Ideological Superstructure. The intimate connection between these two phenomena, which can be characterised respectively as the "objective" and the "inter-subjective" dimension of the <u>same</u> "moment", is suggested by Marx himself. He writes, as we have seen, that:

Relations can be expressed, of course, only in ideas, and thus philosophers have determined the reign of ideas to be the peculiarity of the new age, and have identified the creation of free individuality with the overthrow of this reign.

In The German Ideology it is argued that

In consciousness -- in jurisprudence, politics, etc -relations become concepts; since they the "ideological classes", do not go beyond these relations,
the concepts of these relations also become fixed
concepts, in their mind. The Judge, for example,
applies the code, he therefore regards legislation
as the real, active driving force. (Coll. Works, 5. 92)

The "forms of social consciousness", by contrast, are distinct from both the "productive forces" and the "production relations". They represent the "moment" of the individual's subjective existence. An individual or class of individuals can identify with any "form of social consciousness regardless of his or their socio-economic situation. The "progressive" form of social consciousness is epitomised by the "revolutionary class" within each epoch. The conflict, maturing into a contradiction, between the "forces of production" and the "relations of production", is acknowledged as such by the social consciousness of the people and reacted to in a revolutionary or reactionary manner -- according to the way in which individuals or groups of individuals identify with one or other of the conflicting phenomena. An element of appraisal, in both a moral and an intellectual sense, is involved because the conflict between the "kernel" and the "integument" is not one of a mere physical or natural character as found in biological development or chemical action. This is especially the case with the

proletarian revolution because, here, allegedly, a conflict breaks out between crude materialism and humanism.

The identification of these three distinct "moments" within human existence can be found in <u>The German Ideology</u> where it is claimed that "these three moments, the forces of production, the state of society and consciousness, can and must come into contradiction with one another." (Ger.Id.52)

These three "moments", in their expanded and enriched form, constitute both the main causal agencies within
Marx's system and the perspective for their causal interaction. They sustain a delicate and complex balance of
forces which can easily be upset by manipulation from "outside". The delicacy of the problem stems from the nature of
the subject matter itself which deals with species-relations
and not "physical relations". The role of consciousness,
in appraising and reacting to a situation cannot be sufficiently emphasised. According to Marx:

At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or -- this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms -- with the property relations within the framework of which they have operated hitherto. 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. (Pol.Econ.21)

It is evident from what Marx claims that he sought revolution and change in accordance with the state of realisation of the three "moments". This is why he is able to claim that "mankind...inevitably sets itself only such tasks as it is able to solve, since closer examination will always show that the problem itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution are already present or at least in the course of formation."(ibid.21)

It would be violence to Marx's system to interpret this contention within a narrow evolutionistic or deterministic perspective. What is involved here is not an interplay of physical or mere natural laws or forces but of "moments" within human social existence; an inter-play mediated by a free, spontaneous and intelligient consciousness and not by a blind or compulsive psychologism or brute force sustained by opportunism. Since the <u>laws</u> of Human Nature are distinct from the <u>laws</u> of External Nature, they operate differently.

## 5:2 The Dialectic of Negativity

Traditional metaphysical system, dominated often by a mystical or supernatural Totality, have something architectonic about them. They stand out like monuments, aloof and majestic, resisting the erosion of contingency and the trammels of time and space. Marx's system, by contrast, is rooted in history. It is organic and involves an element of both immolation and regeneration. We have a "withering after the flowering" and, as in the case of the mythical phocnix, a new form of life, a new Ideal Totality emerges triumphant from the funeral pyre of the old one. This should become clear as we now analyse Marx's dialectic of negativity.

As in the case of the causal agencies, Marx's dialectic has often been analysed in a narrow "factual and pragmatic" perspective dominated by a conflict or crisis within the economic sector. This, we argue, does violence to Marx's system. Within a strictly empirical perspective, the dialectic remains hanging in the air without a beginning and an end, and L. Dupre's question that "If man is a self-creating, historical being, what factors determine his historical evolution?" remains unanswerable. Besides, within a narrow empirical perspective, the role of consciousness remains minimal and its "status" clouded and so too remains man's active role in his own destiny. In this respect, as L.Dupre points out, the dialectical principle can easily degenerate into a "mere generalisation of empirical observations."

When this happens, "one reduces one term of the dialectic, consciousness, to an epiphenomenon of the other term, nature. The dialectic then loses its antagonistic character and ceases to exist." (Dupre, 214) Dupre argues further and, we think, correctly that:

In Marx's view the dialectical principle is much more than an empirical description of the relations between man and his world. It has an essentially ideal character, but this ideal does not exist prior to or apart from reality. It is the ideal aspect of reality itself and is, therefore, accessible only through empirical analysis. It is precisely this ideal, rational character which gives the dialectical principle a quality of necessity which a purely empirical description always lacks. A mere empirical study of facts can provide a hypothesis, or at most a theory, but it can never predict with the absolute confidence which gives Marxism all its power and influence. Moreover, even a hypothetical interpretation of the dialectic would infer the existence of an intelligible principle in the development of history, and at that point it would cease to be purely empirical. (Dupré,215)

If Marx's dialectic is treated as a "scientific phenomenon", in the accepted sense, it would virtually reduce itself to a type of "movement" similar to the one suggested by A.Smith in his analogy of the "invisable hand" despotically ruling over the economic and productive system of a country. This imputes to Marx the mistake of fatalism in political economy -- an issue Marx refuted and attacked vehemently throughout his life's work. The dialectic is not scientific in a narrow and strict sense but "formal", involving "species relations" and not physical ones.

In order to answer L.Dupre's important/referred to earlier, one has to draw attention to a crucial distinction, strongly suggested by Marx's system, between the <u>state of undevelopment</u> of the human species, which transcends the various historical expressions of its social existence, and the <u>conflicts and contradictions</u> which appear in history and which give rise to the various class struggles. In other

words, one must acknowledge, on the one hand, a transcendental discrepancy between Human Nature with its potential for full development, and the Human Essence which both actualises and restricts it; one must, on the other hand, acknowledge the various empirical contradictions which come out in the open when the productive forces, at a given time, develop fully, in their limited form of existence, and come in conflict with the existing relations of production. Until and including the capitalist era, a discrepancy between these two "moments" in human existence presisted even when no contradictions made themselves manifest, in any clear and forceful way. Marx is emphatic on this point. He argues that:

The definite condition under which they produce... corresponds, as long as the contradiction has not yet appeared, to the reality of their conditioned nature, their one-sided existence, the one-sidedness of which only becomes evident when the contradiction enters on the scene and thus exists for the later individuals.

For Marx, the empirical contradictions are a sign or symptom of a more fundamental problem, namely, an undeveloped and inadequate state of human existence: To ignore this vital idea would merit the same criticism he directed against the English who, as we saw carlier, "have the tendencv to look upon the earliest form of appearance of a thing as the cause of its existence." The germs of a contradiction exist within the "Asiatic, ancient, feudal and modern societics" even when the relations of production are appropriate to the material forces of production of the epoch. be said that the empirical contradiction is nothing but the full development, maturity or incubation itself of the inherent inadequacy and circumscription of the various historical Totalities. Marx argues that bourgeois society, representing the highest form of production of its kind (Grund. 105) shows that "all previous intercourse was only intercourse of individuals under particular conditions, not of

individuals as individuals." (Ger.Id.91)

In Marx's perspective each of the historical Totalities or Communities can be regarded as a negation of man and the negation persisted regardless of whether the people were or were not conscious of it. Herein lies the secret of Marx's dialectic of negativity with regards to its origin, its movement, finality and eventual suspension. The process of human development, as earlier pointed out, is from "non-being to being"; from "non-man to man". The negation of man, expressed and established by the different Totalities or "integuments" is, for Marx, the point of departure of human existence. A succession of negations of negations, (i.e. of inadequate Totalities), will finally posit and establish a Totality which will represent and confirm the "individual as individual", "man as man". The norm here is fully developed man, man as man. The finality involved in Marx's dialectic/an intrinsic one rather than the reverse -- a finality of fulfilment and completion stemming from an existential state of unfilment and incompleteness.

Since each and every historical Totality is inherently limited, its very preservation and development breeds
its own dissolution. "The preservation of the old community",
Marx explains, "includes the destruction of the conditions
on which it rests, turns into its opposite."(Grund.494) It
is, he argues, in the nature of the dialectic of negativity,
to produce "precisely the opposite of what was to be expected."(ibid.295) This vital idea underlying the dialectical
process and sustaining the element of coherence and continuity within history is elaborated further when Marx says:

Considered ideally, the dissolution of a given form of consciousness sufficed to kill a whole epoch. In reality, this barrier to consciousness corresponds to a definite degree of development of the forces of material production and hence of wealth. True, there was not only a development on the old basis, but also a development of this basis itself. The highest development of this basis itself (the flower

into which it transforms itself; but it is always this basis, this plant as flower; hence wilting after the flowering and as consequence of the flowering) is the point at which it is itself worked out, developed, into the form in which it is compatible with the highest development of the forces of production, hence also the richest development of the individuals. As soon as this point is reached, the further development appears as decay, and the new development begins from a new basis. (Grund.540-541)

The main idea in the above, we suggest, is found in the phrase "wilting after the flowering and as consequence of the flowering" and in the concluding words that "the further development appears as decay, and the new development begins from a new basis." We have here the crucial conception regarding the genetic descent and coherence between the different Totalities. The human developmental process is analogous to a Drama where the climax of one act leads to the opening of another and the different acts held together by means of a plot which transcends each separate act.

Without the presupposed discrepancy between the Nature and the Essence there would be no "wilting after the flowering" and this is the basis of the whole dialectic of negativity. Without, however, the contradiction which appears as a result of the flowering, history would be at a standstill and all progress forgone.

Marx's dialectic is thus a means to an end. Both the "being" and the "form" or expression of the negativity is dependent on a state of negation in which the human race allegedly finds itself. It is not a question of negativity for its own sake, but for the sake of a positive state, which corresponds to Marx's millennium. The dialectic, accordingly, should not be reduced to a senseless and morbid tendency for destruction. It thrives on the negation of man perpetrated by the historical Totalities. At least as far as the various contradictions and class struggles are concerned, it is not expected to go on forever. It will end when the negation of

man is suspended by a wholesome and humanistic Totality or Essence. According to Marx:

it is not a question of the Hegelian "negative unity" of two sides of a contradiction, but of the materially determined destruction of the preceding materially determined mode of life of individuals, with the disappearance of which this contradiction together with its unity also disappears. (Ger.Id.105)

We have so far discussed the perspective which we consider necessary for a correct interpretation of Marx's dialectic. We must now examine more carefully the dynamics of the dialectic and relate it to the three causal agencies identified and discussed earlier.

In The Poverty of Philosophy, Marx writes that "what constitutes dialectical movement is the co-existence of two contradictory sides, their conflict and their fusion into a new category." (Poverty, 112) This is another good example of Marx's, style. We have here a statement loaded with meaning but terse and cryptic to the point of frustration. The problem again stems from a lack of sufficient or adequate clarification of terms. What constitutes a "contradictory side"? Is a "contradiction", in Marx's sense, a physical or natural phenomenon -- assuming that this is possible -- or an exclusively conscious one involving an ensemble of species Plations?

Marx's doctrine on contradictions is similar to the one found within the scholastic tradition. A contradiction is a negation of a substance's "essence". It has, therefore, both an epistemological and an "ontic" dimension. For two phenomena to be in contradiction to each other they must stand in an anti-thetical position with regards to each other's essence. They must mutually negate and exclude each other. Marx argues, for example, that the North and South poles do not stand in contradiction to each other; neither do man and woman. In both cases, the "essence" is not negated. The North and the South are both poles; male and female

are both <u>human</u>. The contradiction of a pole would be non-pole; the contradiction of a human would be non-human. He writes:

both the North and South Poles are poles; they are identical in essence. Similarly, both the male and female sex belong to one species and have one essence, the essence of man. North and South are the opposite determinations of a single essence; the distinct sides of one essence at the highest point of its development. They are the essence in a state of differentiation. They are what they are only as a distinct determination, and moreover as this distinct determination of an essence. The true, real extremes would be a pole as opposed to a non-pole, a human as opposed to a non-human sex. The differentiation in this case is one of existence, in the former situation it is one of essence, of two essences. (Early W.155-156)

A contradiction in Marx's sense, (as in the Scholastic one), has therefore an essential dimension. In this per spective, Marx's contention that a dialectic obtains only with the "co-existence of two contradictory sides" appears immediately as a paradox if not a logical absurdity. can contradictions co-exist? Within the traditional perspective of a stable ontology, where the nature of something is identical with its essence, a contradiction results in the complete annihilation of that which is contradicted. In this perspective, a negation of one's essence (through contradiction or change), leads at most to a new substance entailing the loss of the "ontic" integrity of the being undergoing the change. Clearly, therefore, either what Marx understands by a contradiction is not what is generally understood by this term, a position which is unacceptable on the basis of what we saw above, or he has in mind a radically different metaphysical perspective where co-existence of contradictions is possible. This latter alternative is clearly suggested by Marx's system. Marx de-ontologises the "essence", regarding it as an Ideal but not an ontological or selfsubsisting hypostatization; in the case of man, he distinguishes the "Essence" from the "Nature". The Human Essence

as "an ensemble of social relations" is distinct from . Human Nature as "an internal dumb generality which naturally unites the many individuals." This makes it possible for two contradictory "essences" or Ideal hypostatizations to co-exist vis-a-vis Human Nature. As we saw earlier, "the preservation of the old community" -- which can be regarded as the Human Essence -- "includes the destruction of the condition on which it rests, turns into its opposite." this perspective, a conflict is conceivable between an Essence and its anti-thesis, between the old concrete Universal which becomes inadequate and a new one, conjured up by the developed productive forces and demanding the dissolution of the former one. Here we have a genuine case of the "coexistence of two contradictory sides" and their resolving conflict. For example, in Marx's perspective, the Feudal Human Essence was negated by the non-Feudal one, viz. the Bourgeois which fundamentally consists of the dissolution of the politico-social relations of the medieval era; bourgeois Essence, fundamentally consisting of "exchangevalue" or money in its "being-for-itself", will allegedly be demolisted by its anti-thesis, viz. labour in its "being-The anti-thesis between these two Essences is for-itself". implied when Marx writes:

It, living labour posits itself objectively, but it posits this its objectivity as its own non-being or as the being of its not-being -- of capital. (Grund.454)

If the above is correct we can draw three major conclusions:

Since the dialectic works with contradictions and these involve the negation of a <u>distinct</u> Universal Essence or Community, the character of the new Essence is qualified by that of its predecessor. A contradiction is qualified by what is contradicted. Therefore not <u>any</u> alternative Community should appear but that which negates the old one. This is, according to Marx, what ultimately provides the

the element of coherence and continuity in human history.

This also rules out a premature revolution which shatters

the delicate balance of forces between the three "moments"

in human existence as suggested by Marx.

Marx's position does not entail a pre-determination of a historical process but a case of subsequential dissolution of a factual status quo which is intrinsically inadequate, following the maturation of its inadequacy. Marx does not claim that the capitalist system, for example, was preordained or pre-determined with the necessity of a natural or physical law. Bourgeois society is the logico-social development of its predecessor, Feudal society. was a logico-social development of the ancient classical. A different status quo would entail a different logico-social development because it would entail a different Community with its own inherent limitations and latent contradictions. Marx explicitly rejects the allegation that he endorsed an exclusive formula of human social development which has to be followed in every country regardless of its natural conditions of existence. He points out in reply to a certain Mikhailovsky that:

He feels he absolutely must metamorphose my historical sketch of the genesis of capitalism in Western Europe into an historico-philosophic theory of the general path every people is fated to tread, whatever the historical circumstances in which it finds itself, in order that it may ultimately arrive at the form of economy which ensures, together with the greatest expansion of the productive powers of social labour, the most complete development of man. But I beg his pardon. (He is both honouring and shaming me too much.) (Sel.Corr.313)

Marx's point is that the socio-economic development of any country depends on the state of existence in which it finds itself. We have here to resort again to the important distinction between the <u>transcendental</u> discrepancy between the Nature and the Essence of man, in it historical existence and the <u>empirical</u> contradictions which it breeds.

The fact of the discrepancy, the fact, namely, that each and every Community, (Human Essence), throughout history has been inadequate, sustains the dialectic of negativity; the way or mode in which this movement takes place depends on the particular character of the old Community itself. Marx gives the example of the plebeians of Ancient Rome who became dispossessed but did not turn into proletarians because capital was not as yet a concrete universal and the "nexus rerum".

They were originally free peasants, each cultivating his own piece of land on his own account. In the course of Roman history they were expropriated. The same movement which divorced them from their means of production and subsistence involved the formation not only of big landed property but also of big money capital. And so one fine morning there were to be found on the one hand free men, stripped of everything except their labour power, and on the other, in order to exploit this labour, those who rheld all the acquired wealth in their possession. What happened? The Roman proletarians became not wage labourers but a mob of do-nothings more abject than the former "poor whites" in the South of the United States, and alongside of them there developed a mode of production which was not capitalist but based on slavery. Thus events strikingly analogous but taking place in different historical surroundings led to totally different results. (Sel. Corr. 313)

The above confirms our contention that, in Marx's system, it is not expropriation (or poverty) as such that creates the proletariat but expropriation within a socioproductive system in which the productive process is dominated by an imperative for wealth as an end in itself. This happens when capital or money becomes the Community.

It is important, therefore, to distinguish the "law" which governs the development of the human species, namely, the dialectic of negativity and its movement from one negation to another until a positive state is reached, from the particular manifestation and realisation of this "law". Marx himself points out that: "no natural law can be done away with. What can change in historically different

circumstances is only the <u>form</u> in which these laws assert themselves."(ibid.209) This provides an element of stability and coherence within human history while retaining an element of contingency since the dialectic works on the available material.

Another major conclusion from our previous discussion concerns the applicability of Marx's dialectics Since a contradiction consists in the negation of one's essence, only a being which is able to create its own essence as an Ideal hypostatization, distinct from its subjective existence, is in aposition to re-create an anti-thetical essence while simultaneously retaining its subjective integrity. This is the nature of a "species-being" and therefore only this type of being is amenable to a dialectical process. In Marx's system, however, only the human being enjoys subjective consciousness and "species-life". The conclusion of this is crucial -- Engels's attempt to apply. the dialectic to the whole "rest of nature", to man's "inorganic body", is in serious conflict with Marx's doctrine. Only "man" is able to duplicate himself in a formal sense . and subsequently negate his duplication. The analogy of the core and the shell is, therefore, not to be taken too seriously. The relationship of a seed to its pod is not one of contradiction as found between Human Nature and the Human Essence, but one of mere biological growth in which one principle of movement is at work. The same applies in the case of a chemical change as when, for example, Hydrogen and Oxygen turn into water. In this case there is no conflict of contradictory essences but the transformation into a third, of two distinct ones.

One source of the mistake of applying Marx's dialectic of negativity to the "external nature" can be traced to a confusion between Hegel's law of quantitative change turning into a qualitative one -- a law to which Marx subscribed -- with the dialectic itself. Hegel's law applies

to man and to the "rest of nature" but remains distinct from the dialectic. Per se, this law does not imply a "coexistence of contradictory sides" but mere essential change. In those substances where the essence is identical with the nature -- according to Marx, all substances except human, beings -- this change amounts to a change of substance. Hegel's law, at most, rejects the autonomy and stability (and a-prioriness) of the Aristotelian substance and emphasises the role and vitality of the environment in relation to the former. It makes us "define" things in virtue of the environment rather than in spite of it and so a relational rather than an absolutist perspective of reality is encouraged. Hegel's law, we conjecture, can be exceptionally useful and fertile in the hands of the professional ontologist and cosmologist. However, even if this law is materialised in the dialectic of negativity, it should not be confused with it. Not every change of quantity into quality involves a contradiction. Briefly, we can say that change through a contradiction, in Marx's sense, is possible when 1) the nature of something is distinct from its essence; 2) a discrepancy between these two "moments" gives rise to a conflicting situation between two anti-thetical essences; 3) the change which follows does not destroy the "ontic" integrity of the original nature. The result of a resolved contradiction should not be a new substance but a "modified" form of the original one.

Finally, Marx's dialectic of negativity accentuates the vital role of social consciousness in human development. Social consciousness is necessary for the being itself of the Human Essence both in its universal and in its particular dimensions. It is necessary also for the creation of the anti-thesis in the form of a contradictory Essence. It is equally necessary for bringing about the solution of the conflict between the "two contradictory sides". The negation of something, both with regards to the method and the subject-

matter, is qualified by what is to be negated. In the case of Marx's dialectic, the object of the negation is an Ideal phenomenon, a formality. This negation cannot be effected except through conscious activity.

Marx suggests the view that, at a certain point in history, following the development of human "praxis", two anti-thetical Essences begin to make themselves felt -- one conservative, the other progressive. The former one, representing the establishment, endeavours to sustain and preserve the status quo and its ideology. The latter, still unofficial but menacing, clamours for change and adaptibility to new needs and imperatives. It is the time when the wind of change blows over the land, provoking excesses from both reactionaries and revolutionaries. The point is, however, that these two Essences or "contradictory sides" and their conflict are not physical phenomena but conscious ones -phenomena that require recognition and acknowledgment in an intelligent and evaluative way. This, however, isn't something that happens with the necessity of a positive law or a law of mere nature, unless we reduce consciousness to a psychological tendency or mere instinct -- a fallacy to which Marx never succumbed. It, therefore, remains possible for the productive forces to develop and a need for change to arise while social consciousness remains oblivious to, (or not sufficiently intrigued by), this need to effect the required transformation. This was already happening in Marx's own time in the case of the British working classes.

Marx's definition of man as a species-being, the "ontic" status and role of a "Species" or Totality as a concrete universal, the mediated character of species-relations, the characterisation of the main causal agencies as three "moments" in human existence and the emphasis Marx puts on "relations" rather than on "things" or distinct and auto-, nomous phenomena or "substances", again strongly encourage a trinitarian conception of human existence and related

phenomena, such as, capital, labour, exchange, property etc..

The syllogistic formula, in our view, holds the secret to

the whole logic of Marx's system and rules out a narrowly

scientific and economic perspective. Marx himself explicit
ly equates the economic formula, C - M - C, which is fun
damental to his whole economic theory, with the logical

formula P - U - I. He writes that,

The formula C - M - C can...be reduced to the abstract logical syllogism P - U - I, where particularity forms the first extreme, universality characterises the common middle term and individuality signifies the final extreme. (Pol.Econ.94)

Applying the formula to "productive forcds", (PF), "production relations", (PR), and "social consciousness", (SC), we will have PF = PR - SC. This pattern is implied in Marx's contention that:

Labour on the basis of exchange values presupposes, precisely, that neither the labour of the individual nor his product are directly general; that the product attains this form only by passing through an objective mediation, by means of a form of money distinct from itself. (Grund.172)

Marx acknowledges his indebtedness to Hegel for the basis of this insight into Human Nature and its "movement". The "Hegelian contradiction" remains for him the "source of all dialectic."(Cap.1.596,n.3) The problem with Hegel, according to him, was that in the latter's system, "As the universal is made autonomous, it is directly confounded with empirical existence and this limited existence is at once uncritically judged to be the expression of the Idea." (Early W. 102) Hegel, therefore, "doc's not develop his thought from the object, but instead the object is constructed according to a system of thought perfected in the abstract sphere of logic."(ibid.69) Marx, however, does not reject the reality and role of the concrete universal as implied by Hegel's system. What he rejects is the a-prioristic genesis of this universal. Mark considers Hegel superior to other philosophers because, in his view, despite his mysticism and Idealism, the latter provides a valuable insight into reality.
"Hegel's Phenomenologie", he argues, "in spite of its speculative original sin, gives in many instances the elements of
a true description of human relations."(Coll. Works, Vol. 1V.
193)8

within the syllogistic formula, the Universal as middle term, is regarded as the cause of the two other terms. In Marx's system, the Universal is not a-priori or autonomous but a product of human "praxis". The Universal is therefore both a cause and an effect. This is where Marx's system radically sets itself apart from Idealism. The logical formula itself is accepted but not its idealistic application. The content or "substance" of the formula is regarded as a human creation stemming from man's contact with his environment. The character of the concrete universal expresses the nature and character of human practical existence. Its empirical origin emphasises man's intimate connection with "external nature". This deserves closer examination.

Our study so far shows that Marx's system thrives on two basic presuppositions, namely, that human consciousness is <u>distinct</u> though not <u>separate</u> from the physis and that human conscious existence changes with the changing physical environment. We must analyse further these two presuppositions and discuss their implications.

## 5:3 The Nature and Genesis of Human Consciousness

The distinctness of the "realm of consciousness" from the physical and mere natural, within Marx's system, has been repeatedly referred to. The importance of this conception, however, justifies further corroboration and clarification.

According to Marx, human consciousness, whether in the form of the Abstract Objectification, (the concrete Univesal), or in the form of the Ideological Superstructure, or

in the form of <u>Social Consciousness</u> is not reducible to the physical, the measurable of quantifiable. Marx identifies human consciousness with social existence: "consciousness is...from the very beginning a social product, and remains so as long as men exist at all." (Ger.Id.51) However, "society" or the "community" within his system denotes an order of being distinct from mere physical co-existence or co-habitation of different individuals. It denotes a <u>third</u> factor which acts as the "nexus rerum" having an <u>ideal</u> and not a physical nature. The Community or Totality cannot, therefore, be reduced either to instinct or to some other physical factor.

Marx's views on human consciousness come out also in the perspective of his criticism of both traditional materialism at a German Idealism. He criticises traditional materialism because, in its perspective, man emerges as essentially passive, a mere part of the physis, a mere natural being. He points out that the active role and character of man were developed by Idealism which, however, did not know or recognise real men, but acknowledged only Spirit, Consciousness -- the "Ideal man". (Thesis 1,On Feuerbach) Marx's aim was to merge the insights of the Idealists with the spatiotemporal framework of the traditional materialists. The net result, he claims, is that his materialism is synonymous with humanism. He states:

After Hegel linked[speculative philosophy] in so masterly a fashion with all subsequent metaphysics and with German idealism and founded a metaphysical universal kingdom...It will be defeated for ever by materialism which has now been perfected by the work of speculation itself and coincides with humanism. (On Religion, 54)9

A little later, he adds:

There is no need of any great penetration to see from the teaching pf materialism on the original goodness and equal intellectual endowment of men, the omnipotence of experience, habit and education and influence of environment on man, the great significance of industry, the justification of enjoyment, etc., how necessarily materialism is connected with communism and socialism. (ibid. 60)

In the above, the "materialism" Marx speaks of refers to an experiential framework. Per se, this connotes no Marx is emphasising experience, something reductivism. equally emphasised within the Thomistic tradition which posits, as its point of departure, "sensitive rational experience". The point to stress is that Marx's disillusionment with traditional metaphysical and speculative philosqphy leads neither to agnostic positivism, nor to a reductive materialism or to a narrow sensationalism -- all of which would be inevitable if the element of the "ideal", of trans-physicality, of subjectivity and self-determination, claimed by the Idealistic tradition, were rejected. The work of speculation is interpreted as an achievement of human consciousness in its developmental and liberating process; it is neither aftributed to the unfolding of an Absolute Idea nor reduced to a mere epiphenomenon of "matter-inmotion", both of which rob man of his character, vitality and achievements. Marx's complaint against Hegel was not regarding the nature or the "ontic" status of the Ideal but regarding the genesis and autonomy of its reality. The problem with Hegel, he states, is that the latter:

makes man the man of self-consciousness instead of making self-consciousness the self-consciousness of man, of real man, i.e., of man living also in a real, objective world and determined by that world. He stands the world on its head and can therefore in his head also dissolve all limitations, which nevertheless remain in existence for bad consciousness, for real men. (Coll. Works, Vol. 1V, 192)

We can say that within Marx's criticism of "all hitherto existing materialism", there is implied a positive appreciation rather than a total rejection of the work of speculative thinkers. The <u>being</u> of speculative thought is not rejected; it is re-interpreted and accounted for in a different manner while, at the same time, preserving its

distinct nature and reality. Marx argues that, in the perspective of a materialistic monism, reality, including man himself, can be conceived only "in the form of the object or of contemplation but not as sensuous human activity, practice, not subjectively." Traditional materialism, therefore, does not distinguish, as Marx does, "human nature" and "external nature". Nature is regarded as one homogeneous type of substance. For Marx, by contrast, man is not simply part of one homogeneous reality, "matter"; he is regarded as a natural being but not as a "mere natural being." The distinctness, Marx has in mind, with relation to man, is the distinctness of a subject that is capable of establishing and asserting itself in relation to an object -- something which would be impossible if man and mere matter or the "physis" were identical and in the same order of being. The activity Marx imputes to man, in counterdistinction to that of traditional materialists, is a subjective activity analogous to the one presupposed and developed by the Ideal-The main difference between the two is that with Marx, man in his experiential existence, epitomises this subjective activity. 10

The above shows that in Marx's system, "thought" or "consciousness" is not a mere epiphenomenon or by-product of the "physis". If it were, man's subjective activity and his power for self-determination, repeatedly emphasised by Marx would be impossible; equally impossible would be the "perfection" of "matter" by thought. In the final analysis, as earlier pointed out, human consciousness is accepted and presupposed by Marx as a fact.

when discussing the primordial existence of the human species, Marx refers to consciousness as one of the <u>initial</u> moments of human existence. "We find," Marx says, "that man also possesses 'consciousness' but, even so, not inherent, not 'pure' consciousness. 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. (Ger. Id. 50-51) We should not dismiss this statement as a mere expression of ridicule at the expense of the Idealists. The irony is evident but also evident is the fact that it is directed at the hegemony of the Spirit and at the allegedly total autonomy of consciousness as held within the idealistic tradition. Marx does not ridicule the view that "Spirit" is distinct from "matter". In fact, later on he points out that in his primitive habitat, "man is only distinguished from sheep by the fact that with him.consciousness takes the place of instinct or that his instinct is a conscious one."(ibid.51) The distinction between consciousness and instinct, deserves attention. This recalls what we discussed earlier on the formalisation and idealisation of man's empirical existence. Moreover, the further distinction Marx draws between "consciousness" or "Spirit" and its "appearance" is significant and fits tidely with Marx's earlier contention that "reason has always existed but not always in a rational form."(Early W.208)

Though Marx was more concerned with the <u>form</u> of human consciousness, with its "affliction by matter" than with its <u>being</u>, the idea is clearly implied that in its primitive and instinctive form, consciousness is already qualified as <u>human</u>, as distinct and "free" from the physis, as far as its <u>being</u> is concerned. This is crucial because it means that, according to him, at no moment in its existence was the human species without some kind of human consciousness. As far as its <u>being</u>, its "ontic" status is concerned, human consciousness, like the Nature of man, has always been and will always remain the same.

Of course, to acknowledge the distinct reality of the "realm of consciousness" is not the same as to account for its genesis. Probably, one of the most difficult and controversial points in Marx's system, is his position

regarding the doctrine of the emergence of man as "thinking matter". Within the traditional perspective, once consciousness is recognised as a <u>distinct</u> phenomenon, it is associated with the non-natural as such, and, by implication, frequently with the eternal and mystical. Consciousness is, accordingly, either regarded as a-priori and time-less or else a resort is made to a direct intervention by the Divine. The idea of emergence, of an evolutionary novelty, of a spontaneous break with the past, as far as consciousness is concerned; is hard to accept. If consciousness is acknowledged as distinct from mere matter or the "physis", it. couldn't possibly have come from it. The problem, however, could be that traditional philosophy is generally not equipped to handle certain new ideas and theories -- evolution one of them. Causality continues to be interpreted, implicitly or explicitly, in the Greek perspective of "aitia", in a frame-work of accountability and responsibility, an anthropomorphic frame-work, where the effect can be intelligently and adequately accounted for. Hence every "effect" must have a rationale, a "logos". In this perspective, to say that consciousness emerges from "matter" amounts to the view that it is an epiphenomenon or byproduct of matter; alternatively, the claim amounts to a case of intellectual and philosophical irresponsibility. If consciousness is an "effect" of matter, then the latter is its cause. A cause is a "principium per se influencs" esse in aliud". It is also presupposed that there is more perfection in the cause than in the effect. The conclusion is inescapable: either consciousness is reduced to matter or it must have a different cause. Marx's conception of "generatio aequivoca", within the context of Hegel's law of a change of quantity into quality, presents, a departure from this perspective and suggests an expanded view of causality. Matter produces consciousness but in a different sense in which a cause traditionally produced an effect. It

is not a case of transmitting one s"perfection" latent or active, into another. It is rather a case of a "novelty" appearing when a certain degree of complexity and quantitative intensity is reached. This is also a Chardinian conception and implies that the effect will be totally different from the cause "hence the idea of "emergence", "novelty", a "break" with the past or the "rest". From this moment, the cause, i.e. "matter" and the effect, i.e., "thinking-matter", become two major phenomena in the universe, neither one reducible to the other. The causal relationship between "matter" and "thinking-matter" becomes something different from that obtained between cause and effect in a dualistic or manistic perspective. The relationship becomes dialectical, involving a reciprocal inter-action between cause and effect, with the effect often bringing the "destruction" or at least, the subordination of the cause. This is the case in the relationship between man and external nature. anything", Marx says, "can ultimately destroy its own cause is a logical absurdity only for the usurer enamoured of the high interest rate."(Cap.111.422) The "usurer", in Marx's perspective, epitomises the fetishist who attributes the augmentation of his wealth (through interest) to a natural quality in the money itself. Accordingly, the "usurer" has a unilateral view of causality - more money as cause, must a fortiori produce more interest and money. The idea of interest-creating-wealth destroying itself when fully developed as an economic system, is regarded as irrational. As an illustration of dialectical causality, in which the effect. destroys the cause, Marx gives the case of the Romans:

The greatness of the Romans was the cause of their conquests and their conquests destroyed their greatness. Wealth is the cause of luxury and luxury has a destructive effect on wealth. (ibid. 422)

The above should be interpreted in the perspective of Marx's doctrine that ancient classical Communities, in their role as "nexus rerum or social bonds" had a socio-

political character which disintegrated in direct proportion as wealth increased. It should also be interpreted in the perspective of the logic of his system and the dialectic of negativity in which a "wilting" appears "after the flowering and as consequence of the flowering". The case of the Romans, therefore, is a reiteration of Marx's view that the full maturity of a concrete Universal or "nexus rerum", within the human developmental process, produces its own antithesis and self-destruction.

## 5:4 The Causal Relationship between Human Nature and External Nature

We have seen that Marx regards certain phenomena as "organic". This characterisation, in Marx's system, applies to a social phenomenon, a phenomenon involving species relations. The major quality of an "organic" phenomenon is its mediated existence and intelligibility, a mediation effected by means of a concrete universal. This type of phenomenon has, therefore, a "logos" outside its physical compass. Only the human species, Marx claims, is strictly speaking "organic" in this sense. In the Grundrisse Marx speaks of the human species striving "not to remain something it has become but is in the absolute movement of becoming."(Grund.488) Other phenomena, such as "labour", "exchange", "capital", "property" etc. are regarded as "organic" in so far as they are human or social relations, caught up, so to speak, in the human developmental process and not as physical or natural phenomena. (Grund. 257-258) 12

By contrast, Marx refers to the whole "rest of nature" in its physical dimension as man's "inorganic body". This means that "external nature", in Marx's perspective, is passive, lacking that subjective vitality which the human species enjoys. "External nature" does not have a "logos" distinct from itself as in the case of man.

An intriguing reference to the relationship between

"man" and "external nature" is found in The German Ideology
There it is claimed that:

communists in practice treat the conditions created up to now by production and intercourse as inorganic conditions, without, however, imagining that it was the plan or the destiny of previous generations to give them material, and without believing that these conditions were inorganic for the individuals creating them. (Ger.Id.86)

The above contains three postulates which confirm the vital distinction between "organic" and "inorganic" phenomena. Specifically, Marx claims that:

1) The conditions of existence are "inorganic conditions". They do not enjoy, as natural phenomena, some mysterious inner dynamism of their own, giving them a power over man's life. They are human creations. For example, gold and silver are plain gold and silver. Men endow them with a social and formal dimension by turning them into money and in this way positing them as "powers" over society. Only in this sense can we regard gold and silver as "organic", developing from a form of mere medium of exchange to a state where it exists as capital or money as money. By insisting that the conditions of existence are, by themselves, "inorganic", Marx rejects both a materialistic and an Idealistic fatalism and also a narrow determinism.

- 2)"It was not the plan or destiny of previous generations to give them material." This contention rejects a conceptualistic framework with its speculative approach. History, according to Marx, is not the result of purely arbitrary action in the traditionally voluntaristic sense. 13
- 3) The conditions of existence are organic "for the individuals creating them". This means that the external environment is to be interpreted in the context of the existence of the human race in time and space.

The major problem with regards to the causal interaction between "man" and "external nature" stems from the fact that in Marx's system this relationship has to be dialectical. — a type of relationship involving a conflict of two "contradictory sides" or Essences. The correlates of this type of relationship must enjoy a subjective existence. Since "external nature" lacks this "quality", a way must be found in which it can be made to overcome its passivity and "inorganicity" and subsequently enter into a dialectical relationship with man. The solution to this problem, within the confines of Marx's system, lies in the nature itself of man as a "species-being". Man formalises his empirical and physical existence, objectifies in an ideal sense, his environment and, in this way, reacts to it. In The German Ideology it is stated that:

Consciousness is at first, of course, merely consciousness concerning the immediate sensuous environment and consciousness of the limited connection with other persons and things outside the individual who is growing self-conscious. At the same time it is consciousness of nature, which first appears to men as a completely alien, all-powerful and unassailable force, with which men's relations are purely animal and by which they are overawed like beasts; it is thus a purely animal consciousness of nature (natural religion) just because nature is as yet hardly modified historically. (We see here immediately: this natural religion or this particular relation of men to nature is determined by the form of sociey and vice versa. (Ger.Id.51)

If we take the case of the bolt of lightning which, we conjecture, burnt the inquisitive cave-man to a crisp and examine its "causality" within the perspective of the above, we would have to say that the lightning produced and "caused" a burning in the unfortunate cave-man and a state of shook in his unwary companions. But here it was not a matter of a causal relationship between the lightning and man as man; it was between the lightning and man as a physical and sensitive being. The lightning would have caused a similar effect on a tree or on the now extinct mammoth. On the other hand, it was the presupposed conscious existence of his awe-stricken companions that reacted to this "event" in a mystified and superstitious way, i.e. in a conscious way and credited this

event to some unknown "power", thus creating a chain reaction of myths and fancies. This means that human individuals react to an external stimulus in a way according to their conscious nature and their state of existence. "Thinkingmatter" accepts, appropriates and reacts to "matter" in a "thinking" way, just as a dog reacts in a canine way and a tree in a vegetative way. The consciousness of "thinkingmatter" is a dimension of this new matter and not of "mere matter" or the "rest of nature". It represents or reflects the state the state of existence of "thinkingmatter" which does not live in a vacuum or disembodied but needs "matter" for its existence and realisation. Marx points out, in this respect, that "a definite consciousness is appropriate to definite people and definite circumstances." (Coll.Works, V. 250)

To go back to the example of the bolt of lightning, one will have to say that the initial belief, fear, superstition etc., was man's conscious reaction to a situation following the primitive state of his social and empirical existence. This subjective and ideal reaction is later objectified and hypostatised. The lightning, thus, assumes a mystical or fantastic dimension which is regarded, in a formal way, either as a natural quality of the lightning itself — a fetishistic reaction, or as a "warning", a "punishment" or a display of power by some "diety" — a superstituous reaction. Marx writes:

The sensuous consciousness of the fetish-worshipper is different from that of the Greek, because his sensuous existence is still different. The abstract enmity between sense and spirit is necessary as long as the human feeling for nature, the human sense of nature, and therefore also the hatural sense of man, are not yet produced by man's own labor. (Manus. 154)

This shows, according to Marx, the role of "practice" to solve theoretical riddles, (e.g. fetishism and superstition) and, at the same time, for positing a ture theory as in the case of Benjamin Framklin and the bolt of light-

ning.

the solution of theoretical riddles is the task of practice and effected through practice, just as true practice is the condition of a real and positive theory. (ibid.153-154)

In the case of both fetishism and superstition, man vests a natural phenomenon with either an occult or a super-natural quality and the reason for this is that he is not aware of its true and scientific nature. This ignorance, in turn, is due to the fact that "nature is as yet hardly modified historically." Man, Marx implies, tends to create reasons, a "logos", either where there is none or where he sees none. More knowledge, following "praxis" will dispel this mistaken consciousness and will replace it with scientific theory.

All mythology overcomes and dominates and shapes the forces of nature in the imagination and by the imagination; it therefore vanishes with the advent of real mastery over them.(Grund.110)

Both the fetishistic or superstitious consciousness of the primitive man and the scientific knowledge of B. Franklin are alike as far as the being of consciousness is concerned. It is not the bolt of lightning or the nervous system itself, that directly creates mythology and superstition in primitive man. These are a product of a mode of existence which attributes a formal dimension to natural phenomena, thus . turning them into abstract objectifications. This mode of existence is the human one. A non-natural dimension given to the lightning bolt by man, in turn influences him and gives rise to all kinds of fantasies and superstition, endouraging a corresponding behavior. Man vests "matter" with and succumbs to a non-natural dimension. However, man himself, in his presupposed conscious existence, ultimately remains the causal agent. According to its state of development, human consciousness vested the bolt of lightning with different "formal" garbs -- a threat or whim of the Gods; a divine punishment etc. Ultimately, as a result of

scientific knowledge whose basis is man's own activity, the bolt of lightning is regarded as being a mere discharge of static electricity. This last position is a scientific account of a natural phenomenon. It manifests a <u>liberated</u> state of human consciousness which accepts natural phenomena for what they are and to this extent, provides an objective account and description. By implication, it shows that the previous interpretations, <u>from a purely scientific point of view</u> had no rational basis, being human creations and fantasies. Natural phenomena had been endowed with a power and significance they really never possessed. This view is implied in Marx's contention that:

If man attributes an independent existence, clothed in a religious form, to his relationship to his own nature, to external nature and to other men so that he is dominated by these notions, then he requires priests and their labour. With the disappearance of the religious form of consciousness of these relationships, the labour of priests will likewise cease to enter into the social process of production. The labour of priests will end with the existence of the priests themseves and, in the same way, the labour which the capitalist performs qua capitalist, or causes to be performed by someone else, will end together with the existence of the capitalists. (Surplus Val.111.496)

An important corollary to the above is that within Marx's system the problem of the "mind-body interaction" does not arise. One could even argue that to direct the problem of interaction against Marx's system amounts to begging the question. This problem presupposes a conception of man as a composite of two irreducible principles of being, "mind" and "body", a conception Marx does not accept. Man is "thinking-matter", a type of matter which has consciousness as a distinct but concomitant dimension of its existence. Since man's relationship to "external nature" is always mediated by consciousness, no matter how primitive, the mind - body bridge has never to be constructed; it is presupposed. One may reject this presupposition but one is not entitled.

in all fairness, to direct an objection which stems from a different presupposition.

If we take up again the case of the bolt of lightning. we shall have to argue, on the basis of what has been discussed above, that the lightning has an effect on man as man only when, and in so far as, it is objectified in an ideal sense; turned into a species-relation, as an evil omen, a threat, a punishment etc.. This means that "matter", in all its forms of existence, must first be "colonised" by human consciousness before it can influence man and will influence him to the extent that it is "colonised". The natural environment, therefore, has an effect on man as man only through the mediation of man's conscious activity. Man vests a natural thing or a phenomenon with a non-natural dimension and in this way succumbs to it. This means that man is, in reality, dominated and held captive by his own creations, by the garbs and sheets with which the drapes reality. The reason for this is both man's nature as & Species or Totality being, (a being that idealises its physical existence), and man's state of undevelopment. Man is forced by his own distinct nature to appropriate and relate to the "physis" through the mediation of an Ideal Totality, which is identical with his social existence. Meanwhile, the form of this mediation is qualified by his state of existence. This at once suggests the possibility of man's emancipation. If one's enslavement to a false Totality is rooted in one's state of undevelopment and ignorance, one's freedom is guaranteed provided development and enlightenment take place. As long as the travesty of the natural environment exists, the true nature of "things" and of man himself remains hidden. thereby, remains in the grips of his illusions.

The "physis", therefore, in all its forms effects
man through the mediation of man himself. The "inorganicity"
and "passivity" of matter is overcome by its being colonised,
vitalised, so to say, by its contact with man. Its influence

is relative to the character of this hominization. The bolt of lightning interpreted as a punishment or threat of the Gods, indicating a superstitious frame of mind, will influence man in one way. The same lightning interpreted scientifically, as a discharge of electricity, will influence man in a different way. In the former case man will try to appease the Gods by offering sacrifice and possibly turning himself into a lightning conductor; in the latter case, man will react by staying low and avoiding unnecessary exposure. 14 Hence, not only is the influence of "matter" on man mediated by human consciousness but also this mediation is qualified by man himself in his state of existence. This holds true, within Marx's perspective, in all cases. For example, it not not gold and silver as such, as natural ele ments, with atomic no.79 and 47 respectively, that influence man as man and "create" in him corresponding values, imperatives, virtues and vices, but gold and silver as wealth, as money -- that is, as species-relations, social phenomena or formalities. Moreover, the effect of money on man as man, varies with the further qualification money gets within the social milieu, as a "mere medium of exchange", as a "measure of value", and as a "means of payment".

An analysis of the causal relationship between man and matter or the "physis", shows the major role Marx gives to human activity both physical and intellectual in this causal interaction. The moment we admit that the "physis" must first be hominised before it can enter into a causal interaction with man, we implicitly establish the priority, both "tempore et virtute", of man or of his social and conscious existence as far as this causal interaction is concerned. If man has first to hominise "nature" before he can relate to it as man, a fortiori, the change from one state of existence to another must be effected by man himself. It follows, therefore, that the flowering and the "wilting" are caused by man through his activity on his "inorganic body."

Marx's causal account rejects a narrow economic and technological determinism. The impulse, norm and direction, within the human developmental process, are not provided by the economy and technology as such. The material conditions of existence, in a narrow sense, are regarded by Marx, as "inorgorganic" and, therefore, not a cause in the proper sense. They constitute a "conditio operandi" and this distinction is crucial for an appreciation of Marx's of Marx's whole system. As conditions, the economy and technology are part of man's "inorganic body"; man himself remains both the perspective for their intelligibility and the main cause for their transformation. Marx criticises the "pindars of capital who:

emphasise the <u>objective</u> elements of production and overestimate their importance as against the <u>subjective element</u>, living immediate labour.(Surplus Val.111.275)

He also points out that:

The economists ascribe a false importance to the material factors of labour compared with labour itself in order to have also a technological justification for the specific social form, i.e., the capitalist form, in which the relationship of labour to the conditions of labour is turned upside-down, so that it is not the worker who makes use of the conditions of labour, but the conditions of labour which make use of the worker. It is for this reason that Hodgkin asserts on the contrary that this physical factor; that is, the entire material wealth, is quite unimportant compared with the living process of production and that, in fact, this wealth has no value in itself, but only insofar as it is a factor in the living production process. In doing so, he underestimates somewhat the value which the labour of the past has for labour of the present, but in opposing economic fetishism this is quite all right. (ibid. 276)

## 5:5 Class Struggles and Exploitation

We have seen that the point of departure of human existence, the very first Communtiy is, according to Marx, a <u>negation</u> of man. The <u>positing</u> of the total man is brought about by a succession of negations realised and expressed

by means of contradictions which mature as each Community "flowers". This is important because it shows that before the contradiction appears, a period of development and progress, leading to a "flowering" stage must take place. The contradictions, therefore, are not, strictly speaking, the cause of progress. A fortiori, neither are the revolutions and class struggles, by means of which these contradictions are resolved. Marx argues that mankind has achieved its development at the expense of some, (the majority) of its members. This exclusion or separation of the many from the "Whole" or Totality, however useful to the developmental process of the human race, is the basis of class-struggles.

In Marx's perspective, social conflict cannot be reduced simply to a subjective phenomenon, a matter of sheer greed or perversity; it is symptomatic of an undeveloped stage of human existence. Conflict stems from the limitation itself of the prevailing Totality which breeds hostile and conflicting Particular Essences and excludes from its compass a certain section of the people. "Do not all rebellions". Marx says, "without exception have their roots in the disastrous isolation of man from the community? Does not every rebellion necessarily presuppose isolation? (Early W.418) Marx is saying here that as long as the Totality is not qualitatively identical with the individual, i.e., as long as the Totality does not express the welfare and in-. terests of the "individual as individual", irrespective of numbers, but remains sectarian in character, it keeps breeding classes and class conflict. According to this theory, conflict will continue until a Totality is established which is truly universal, which is not partial towards one class to the detriment of the other and in which the individual finds his self-fulfilment.

Exploitation, one may agree with Marx, is evident and speaks loudly in the annals of human history. It existed within a country and between countries; within a community

and between communities. It existed both before and after countries and nations were formed. As an "organic" factor, exploitation has been cosmopolitan and ageless. Before the white man embarked on a systematic destruction and expropriation of the conditions of existence of the different Indian tribes in the North American continent, these same tribes were busily engaged with a type of exploitation of their own. The same took place among the African tribes and Asiatic societies. Before the black races were enslaved by the white man they were happily shrinking each other's heads and eating their rivals. There is, in reality, little nobility in the "noble savage" -- unless we confuse grossness and instinct, mixed with fetishism, with nobility. exploitation is different from class-struggles. It is not co-extensive. It remains possible, as Marx himself suggests, to have long periods of exploitation without class-struggles. Marx states, for example, that "The usages of centuries stamped upon the minds of Grecian women a sense of their inferiority." (Ethnol.Notes, 121) This applies to all exploited peoples. The exploitation of all of children, of the harijan and the low caste in India, of slaves, plebeians, serfs, workers etc., dragged on for long millennia before class struggles broke out within a community. There is, therefore, something deeper than class-struggles, namely, exploitation, empirically expressed by the separation and exclusion of many individuals from the prevailing Totality and Marx knew this. However, due to his involvement in labour politics and economics, he emphasised the historical effect of this separation and exclusion; he stressed class-struggles more than exploitation.

One could say that, in Mark's system, exploitation has a noetic connotation. It emphasises Reason and implies a value judgment. It resps on an insight into the Species nature of man. It implies the homogeneity of the human species, its nature as a form of life that realises and fulfils itself through the mediation of ancideal Totality, and the

integrity of the human species transcending the historical and empirical conditionings. Marx's doctrine on exploitation sees through the superstructural consciousness and "juridical blindness" by means of which was historically justified the partial or total exclusion of millions of people from the Totality.

Yet class-struggles are, in the main, non intellectualistic. They emphasise Right and obtain in a framework of expediency and power. As was pointed out earlier, both Reason and Right are found in Marx's system, though not sufficiently and clearly distinguished. Marx often emphasised Right at the expense of Reason which has led to a certain amount of inconsistency and inconclusiveness on his part; serious distortion of the part of those who sought to follow his doctrine. The idea arose that class-struggles, constitute a prime causal agency in human history. Marx himself helped to create this view. He wrote in The Poverty of Philosophy:

The very moment civilization begins, production begins to be founded on the antagonism of orders, estates, classes, and finally on the antagonism of accumulated labour and actual labour. No antagonism, no progress. This is the law that civilization has followed up to our days. Till now the productive forces have been developed by virtue of this system of class antagonisms. (Poverty 61)

In this respect L. Dupre points out:

What can a theory of class struggle teach us about Rembrandt, Mozart, Virgil, or even Marx's own philosophy? Socio-economic conditions may be responsible for the rise and acceptance of certain ideas and art forms, but this gives us no information about the creative impulse itself. (Dupre, 211)

Within Marx's conceptual framework, however, not only is exploitation, (as separation and exclusion), explicitly regarded as the <u>basis</u> of class-struggles but the latter emerge essentially as a <u>lever</u> enabling one phase in human history to be replaced by another <u>after</u> the necessary development and "flowering" have been achieved without struggles

but with exploitation. In Marx's system, class struggle and force are, at best, a necessary condition for human development but not, properly speaking, a cause of progress. "Force", Marx contends, "is the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one. It is itself an economic power." (Cap.1.751) The analogy is clear: force is not the cause of social development but a means of its transition from . stage to stage. Its role is essentially maieutic not creative. Even here, this view has to be qualified further because the character of the struggle depends on the prevailing conditions of existence. If genuine universal suffrage were a social phenomenon in Marx's time, one is justified in arguing that the proletarian revolution would have been envisaged by Marx as a landslide victory by a workers' party at the polls. It cannot be sufficiently emphasised that Marx's views should be analysed in the perspective of his whole system. When this is done, one not only obtains a correct interpretation of these views but one can even discover a number of inconsistencies and inaccuracies in some of Marx's own statements and contentions. To some extent Marx's doctrine has to be rescued from Marx himself. This, we think, is a service which would be appreciated by every major, giant thinker.

There is a widespread view that Marx's millennium, the "Human Totality", is not to be a spontaneous and universal phenomenon. L.Althusser contends that:

the "spontaneous" ideology of the workers, if left to itself, could only produce utopian socialism, trade-unionism, anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism. (Althusser, 24)

Later on, in the same work, he claims that:

If, as Marx said, history is a perpetual transformation of man's conditions of existence, and if this is equally true of a socialist society, then men must be ceaselessly transformed so as to adapt them to these conditions; if this "adaptation" cannot be left to spontaneity but must be constantly assumed.

dominated and controlled, it is in ideology that this demand is expressed (ibid.235)

So, according to Althusser, society must be divided "into two parts, one of which is superior to society." This is precisely what Marx wanted to avoid. (Thesis Ill, On Feuerbach) Althusser cuts (because he cannot solve) the Gordian knot of the "bourgeoisiefied proletariat". He is "efficient" but not Marxist.

Lukacs also argues that "the recognition of Totality can never be spontaneous. It has to be introduced from outside", that is with the help of theory, into the consciousness of those who act."(Lukacs, 103) 16

In both these cases "theory" clearly stands for a doctrinaire ideology, a creed or dogma emanating from a Central Committee that dishes out ready-made "verities" to the uneducated masses. However convenient this doctrine may be to the self-styled Marxist revolutionary, it is, in our view, categorically rejected by Marx's system. The "theory" Marx regarded as a "material force once it has gripped the masses", was a "social theoria", emanating from the masses and fomented by the prevailing conditions of existence. isn't "something" imposed from "above" or "outside". It is social consciousness itself, finally seeing things "ad hominem". This is the whole idea of Marx's "praxis". Althusser's and Lukacs's views directly contradict Marx's explicit contention that the emancipation of the proletariat has to be the work of the proletariat itself. In the perspective of the three "moments" in human existence, this contention has a strong doctrinal basis. Only a distortion of Marx's theory allows the role of the proletariat to degenerate into that of a mere "instrument of war":

One can speak of the "clique theory" of the revolution VS the "mass theory" of the revolution. It does not require deep penetration to realise that an "ideology" and a "practical action" with the "masses" as their basis and

objective referent, have of necessity to be radically different from an "ideology" and a "practical action" with a "clique" as their basis. The view that Marx's millennium is to be manipulated by an "enlightened" few, supports the "clique theory". Those who subscribe to it have of necessity to resort to forced indoctrination and physical violence to sustain the alleged millennium. Disregarding the problem of whether these enlightened oracles really represent and enforce a genuinely "Human Totality", the fact remains that the spontaneity, universality, openness and freedom which are essential to Marx's Totality are missing. Marx's vision was of a Totality in which the individual finds his fulfilment and self-realisation, not a Totality that devours the individual.

It is helpful to distinguish between a <u>state of conflict</u> and the <u>actual type of conflict</u> that could arise or be triggered off for a variety of reasons. As long as a discrepancy, (a distinction of opposition), exists between Human Nature and the Human Essence, manifested by the degree and kind of "separation" of the people from the Totality, the possibility, indeed, the probability of social conflict of any kind will remain. This applies at both a national and an international level.

Revolutions were, for Marx, symptomatic of inequality and exploitation. He contends that:

The times of that superstition which attributed revolution to the ill-will of a few agitators have long passed away. Everyone knows nowadays that wherever there is a revolutionary convulsion, there must be some social want in the background which is prevented, by outworn institutions, from satisfying itself. (Revolution, 2)

The real problem is to determine the character of a particular revolution and its role, according to Marx's analysis of human history. The state of conflict is a necessary condition for any revolution but, by itself, it does not provide any insight into the nature of the actual resulting

revolution. This can be ascertained only by analysing the "material" and "subjective" conditions of existence. One thing seems certain. On the basis of Marx's doctrine, what can be termed "opportunistic voluntarism" will never lead to a proletarian revolution or serve as a foundation of Marx's envisaged "classless society". Opportunistic voluntarism thrives in the absence of a philosophical perspective transcending the empirical conditions of existence. It flourishes where social consciousness is not universally developed.

Marx's and Engels's reaction to the I.R.A.'s covert acts of terrorism is significant. Their views imply the distinction between a state of conflict and the actual type of conflict. They both acknowledge and deplore the state of conflict resulting from the exploitation of Ireland and its people but condemn the way or method by which the Fenians react against it. Referring to an attempt by the I.R.A. to liberate some of their comrades from London's Clerkenwell prison, in the process of which a number of homes were destroyed and innocent people killed, Marx wrote:

The last exploit of the Fenians in Clerkenwell was a very stupid thing. The London masses, who have shown great sympathy for Ireland, will be made wild by it and driven into the arms of the government party. One cannot expect the London proletarians to allow themselves to be blown up in honour of the Fenian emissaries. There is always a kind of fatality about such a secret, melodramatic sort of conspiracy.

Engels agrees:

The stupid affair in Clerkenwell was obviously the work of a few specialised fanatics; it is the misfortune of all conspiracies that they lead to such stupidities, because "after all something must happen, after all something must be done". In particular, there has been a lot of bluster in America about this blowing up and arson business, and then a few asses come and instigate such nansense. Moreover, these cannibals are generally the greatest cowards, like this Allen, who seems to have already turned Queen's evidence, and then the idea of libe-

rating Ireland by setting a London tailor's shop on fire! (Ireland, 149)17

The above, we suggest, is a good indication of Marx's view and attitude towards terrorism and "conspiracies", both modern and contemporary. The covert, sectarian and irresponsible character of terrorism, which shows an utter disregard for human life, is incompatible with Marx' doctrine on the dignity of man as the "sovereign of nature" and with the underlying humanism of his system.

A reference to the communist revolution and its social and philosophical dimension is found in <u>Capital</u>. Marx claims that the time will come when:

the capitalist integument... is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated. (Cap.1.763)

- About twenty three years earlier, Marx had written with a similar optimistic note:

The forces of nature and the social forces which industry brings into being (conjures up), stand in the same relation to it as the proletariat. Today they are still the slaves of the bourgeois, and in them he sees nothing but the instruments (the bearers) of his dirty (selfish) lust for profit; tomorrow they will break their chains and reveal themselves as the bearers of human development which will blow him sky-high, together with his industry, which assumes the dirty outer shell — which he regards as its essence — only until the human kernel has gained sufficient strength to burst the chains by which the bourgeois separates them from man and so distorts (transforms) them from a real social bond into fetters of society. (Coll.W.Vol.lV.282)18

Marx's perspective sustains two vital ideas with which, by now, we should be familiar. In the first place, the proletarian revolution and the millennium demand that all the necessary "conditions" be available -- namely, that the "productive forces", the "production relations" and the "social consciousness" representing the three "moments" in human existence, be developed fully and "flowering" to the point of "wilting". It is, therefore, for sound doctrinal reasons that Marx rejects the idea of having the "revolution"

and the ensuing "classless society" in an undeveloped country.

Marx thought it possible for an undeveloped country to produce the <u>initiative</u>; but this could only act as a "spark" which, in the absence of the material and objective conditions which provide and sustain "the <u>lever</u> for a serious economic revolution," would fizzle out and die prematurely.

In the second place, Marx's perspective implies the vital sequence, namely, developed "social consciousness" before the revolution and millennium. It is, therefore, not a case of communal appropriation creating a new-Ideal Totality and "classless society" but, on the contrary, a new consciousness, nurtured by the capitalist mode of production, establishing communal property and imposing a new Totality worthy of it. The vital sequence, has also to be applied with reference to the genuine objective referent, that is, to the correct denotation of "social consciousness", otherwise one can easily fall into the position of the "clique . theory". The "subjective conditions", within Marx's system, denote mankind at a particular stage in its conscious and psychological development. These "conditions" constitute the basic "organic" factor within the whole dialectical movement.

Outside the context of the "logic" of Marx's system, the situation can be seriously distorted, especially if undue emphasis is put on empirical conditions. Given the <u>ideal</u> nature of the "laws" of human development, it remains always possible to force a change within the empirical conditions and manipulate the situation in total disregard to the balance of "forces" prevailing at the time within one country. On the basis of Marx' doctrine, the result of this forced intrusion would, of necessity, turn out to be a socio-economic freak, a historical and degenerate monstrosity. Marx was concerned that the "Subjective conditions", among the masses in Western Europe were not yet developed and sought enlightenment rather than indoctrination.

If the above is correct, there is no short cut to Marx's millennium. It is essentially a matter of growth, material, conscious and psychological, and growth can be induced, encouraged or impeded but not forced -- unless we want to produce a monstrosity. Outside the context of Marx's metaphysical framework, and by means of "opportunistic voluntarism, which fishes well in troubled waters, a "paternalistic" state of affairs can be achieved. As long as the conditions of existence, in Marx's sense, are missing, force and violence, indoctrination and lack of freedom, have ofnecessity to be resorted to, not in a defensive manner but as essential factors within the very structure of this "ideal" society -- against the majority of the people. 20 How different this situation is from what Marx had in mind can be seen from the view he held regarding the role of force in a society. Writing in 1853, on the "Irish Tenant Right", Marx said:



under "proper conditions of society", we should want no more Parliamentary interference with the Irish land-tenant, as we should not want, under "proper conditions of society", the interference of the soldier, of the policeman, and of the hangman. Legis-Jature, magistracy and armed force, are all of them but the offspring of improper conditions of society, preventing those arrangements among men which would make useless the compulsory intervention of a third supreme power. (Ireland, 61)

There is, of course, the problem of the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" which entails force and violence and has been the resort of many a communist scoundrel to legitimize and enforce his excesses. This "purgatorial stage", we suggest, has to be analysed in the perspective of what Marx understands by the "proletariát". According to his own allegations, the proletariat constitutes the overwhelming majority. Hence it is envisaged as the dictatorship of the "many" over the "few", in countra-distinction to the capitalist state where, according to his analysis, it is a case of the dictatorship of the "few" over the "many". Moverover, and, we suggest, much more important, the "essence" and

"character" of the proletariat should determine and qualify the nature of the "dictatorship". If the proletariat is the negation of the Economic Totality and its crude materialism and irrationality, this should manifest itself in its rule. In this respect, we should have, at the worst, a "dictatorship" of Humanism and Rationality. The intimate relationship between the state of existence of the proletariat and the envisaged "dictatorship" is referred to by Marx when he writes:

As in the 18th century, the American war of independence sounded the toesin for the European middle-class, so in the 19th century, the American Civil War sounded it for the European working-class. In England the progress of social disintegration is palpable. When it has reached a certain point, it must re-act on the Continent. There it will take a form more brutal or more humane, according to the degree of development of the working-class itself. Apart from higher motives, therefore, their own most important interests dictate to the classes that are for the nonce the ruling ones; the removal of all legally removable hindrances to the free development of the working classes. (Cap.1.9)

The last few lines clearly indicate that the envisaged revolution need not be in a bloody way. The fact, however, remains that Marx's account of the "Dictatorship of the pro-letariat" is shabby, inadequate and very ambiguous, giving rise to a variety of conflicting opinions. It remains, in our view, one of the weakest points of his doctrime and, to a large extent, inconsistent with the metaphysical framework of the three "moments" of human existence.

# 5:6 Marx and Utilitarianism

Marx is emphatic that the millennium is pensible but that it has to come about by means of human "praxis". There is presupposed, in his vision, a moetic appraisal of what "man" is and of what a genuine Human Totality should be. It is not a mere question of dajority rule or of the "greatest happiness of the greatest number." Marx rejected

Utilitarianism together with its prophet Jeremy Bentham.
"that genius in the way of bourgeois stupidity."(Cap.1.610)
According to Marx, the theory of utility, though by no means restricted to capitalism, finds its full expression and implementation within this system. "Political economy," he claims, "is the real science of this theory of utility."
(Ger.Id.110) In the perspective of Marx's system, "utility", like "freedom", "society", "property", "needs" etc., remains an empty and insipid concept if used as an abstraction to account for a particular situation in time and space. When analysed carefully, one realises that the theory of utility reveals the consciousness and "vital ideals" of an epoch.
Marx contends that:

The apparent stupidity of merging all the manifold relationships of people in the one relation of use-fulness, this apparently metaphysical abstraction arises from the fact that, in modern bourgeois society, all relations are Subordinated in practice to the one abstract monetary-commercial relation. (ibid.109)

Somewhat in the same line of thought he claims that "the philosophy of enjoyment was never anything but the ingenious language of certain social circles who had the privilege of enjoyment."(ibid.114)

Marx's system rejects utilitarianism in so far as the latter lacks a genuine perspective and, in easence, remains blind and irrational. According to him, it thrives within a tradition which is incapable of distinguishing the form of appearance from the thing that appears. The "greatest happiness of the greatest number", he would argue, could be regarded as a useful means to establish the "truth" but can never serve as an objective and prescriptive norm or criterion. The good of the majority is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for a just social environment.

One finds, within Marx's system, a distinction between the communal and the general interest. The communal interest connotes a qualitative dimension and implies a con-

ception of man as a "Species", "Totality" or "Community" being. The general interest, by contrast, connotes for Marx, a mere guantitative dimension. It represents private interest in disguise -- egoism raised into a social principle. Marx writes:

the so-called "general", is constantly being produced by the other side, private interest, and by no means opposes the latter as an independent force with an independent history. (Ger.Id.105)

Utilitarianism is, thus, the Ideology of those who seek the "general" interest. We have indicated Marx's claim that if we are to make any sense of the theory of utility, we must first know what we are talking about. To reiterate his view:

To know what is useful for a dog, one must study dog nature. This nature itself is not to be deduced from the principle of utility. Applying this to man, he that would criticise all human acts, movements, relations, etc., by the principle of utility, must first deal with human nature in general, and then with human nature as modified in each historical epoch.

As a "purely English phenomenon", Bentham, according to Marx, was incapable of this:

Bentham makes short work of it. With the dryest naivete he takes the modern shopkeeper, especially the English shopkeeper, as the nomal man. Whatever is useful to this queer normal man, and to his world, is absolutely useful. This yard-measure, then, he applies to past, present and future. The Christian religion, e.g. is "useful", "because it forbids in the name of religion the same faults that the penal code condemns in the name of the law." Artistic criticism is "harmful", because it disturbs worthy people in their enjoyment of Martin Tupper, elc. (Cap.1. 609, n.2)

Marx's argument is that we can speak honsibly of what is useful to man only if we really understand the nature of man, if we know what man is. To behieve this, we have to overcome qur "juridical blindness" which absolutions historical phenomena. Marx constantly insists that we must recognise man as man, not as a cifinen, as a believer, as proprietor, as Englishman etc. The "number", per se, is ir-

relevant. One man or a million makes no difference. What hurts one man as a human being, is a violation of the human species. Utilitarianism, in its classical form, makes short work of this vital conception and thus entails the bankruptcy of human intelligence and human consciousness. The moment it is regarded as a norm or criterion, in a "prescriptive" sense, or as a sufficient condition for action, it turns into a respectable form of the "law of the jungle". Incidentally, Socrates was condemned on majority rule and so too was Christ.

In the final analysis, Marx, in agreement with the Greek-Scholastic tradition never doubted the ability of human consciousness to grasp the "truth" especially regarding the nature of man and his existence in time and space. The problem of error, the acid test of every epistemologist. though never fully discussed by him, emerges, within his. system, as an essentially practical problem. Error is neither simply a matter of ignorance as with Socrates: nor a matter of abuse on the part of the "will", as with Descartes, though, as we have seen, Marx suggests an analogous situation with his doctrine on "juridical blindness". difference between the two, however, remains. Ignorance and abuse of the will are, in Marx's perspective, contributing factors but not the cause of it. It was neither ignorance nor parversity nor abuse that led giant thinkers of . antiquity and the Middle Ages to identity "Justice" with their status quo and accept slavery as a preordained phenomenon -- they were reacting intelligently and honestly to a situation that provailed at the time; neither their consciourness nor their will, by themselves, could rescue them from their misconceptions rooted in their state of undevelopmon**t**⊾

### 5:7 Allenation

A study of human nature within Marx's system will

not be complete without an analysis of alienation. Of all the topics that have invited commentary and intrigued scholars, both sympathetic and hostile, few rival the popularity of this subject. In spite of all that has been written, some nagging questions remain. Moreover, there is not only widespread disagreement on the "true meaning of alienation", but also evident conflict between some established views and Marx's explicit assertions. For example, R. Garaudy claims that:

As Marx points out in many formulations, alienation is born out of private ownership of the means of production. It will disappear, therefore, when private ownership disappears. (Garaudy, 62)21

J. Struik, likewise argues that with regards to alienation and its genesis,

the whole tenor leads to Marx's conclusion of the priority of private property...Hence annulment of alienation means annulment of private property. (Manus. 45)

C.J. Arthur concurs:

Certainly the difficulty of imagining alienated labour in isolation from private property makes it impossible that Marx could mean that the former was historically prior to the latter. (Ger.Id.18)

The embarrassing fact is that Marx <u>explicitly</u> and repeatedly says the opposite:

Private property thus derives from an analysis of the concept of alienated labour, i.e. alienated man, estranged labour, estranged man.

It is true that we took the concept of alienated labour(alienated life) from political economy as a result of the movement of private property. But it is clear from an analysis of this concept that, although private property appears as the basis and cause of alienated labour, it is in fact its consequence, just as the gods were originally not the cause but the effect of the confusion in men's minds. Later, however, this relationship becomes reciprocal. It is only when the development of private property reaches its ultimate point of culmination that this its secret re-emerges: namely, that it is (a) the product of alienated labour and (b) the means through which labour is alienated, the realization of this

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## alienation (Early W.332)

Wages are an immediate consequence of estranged labour and estranged labour is the immediate cause of private property, If the one falls, then the other must fall too. (ibid. 333)

We have to determine the general <u>nature</u> of <u>private</u> <u>property</u>, as it has arisen out of estranged labour, in its relation to <u>truly human</u> and <u>social property</u>. (ibid.333)

We have already gone a long way towards solving this problem by transforming the question of the origin of private property into the question of the relationship of alienated labour to the course of human development: (ibid. 333)

of course one can conveniently dismiss the problem as either an inconsistency within Marx's system or as a sin of his immaturity. The first alternative can, in principle, be turned into a responsible attitude provided the inconsistency were shown to exist. The onus of proof is on the one who makes this claim. The other alternative is, in our view, irresponsible and does not deserve consideration.

The genesis of alienation remains an acid test of every Marxist scholar. Moreover, if its true origin is not discovered, neither can its nature be adequately inderstood.

In the <u>Manuscripts</u>, Marx formulates the problem but the discussion breaks off before we are provided with an answer. He writes:

We have taken the estrangement of labour, its alienation, as a fact and we have analysed that fact. How we now ask, does man come to alienate his labour, to estrange it? How is this estrangement founded in the nature of human development? We have already gone a long way towards solving this problem by transforming the question of the origin of private property into the question of the relationship of alienated labour to the course of human development. For in speaking of private property one imagines that one is dealing with something external to man. In speaking of labour one is dealing immediately with man himself. This new way of formulating the problem already contains its solution. (Early W. 333)

This passage is the closest Marx gets to accounting

for the genesis of alienation. Although he does not mention explicitly and clearly how man comes "to alienate his labour", his re-formulation of the question, as he himself points out, "contains the solution". More specifically, the moment we link alienation with human development the secret of its origin and nature is broken. Alienation is a state of existence of the human species not yet fully developed. It represents the discrepancy between man's Nature and his Essence or Formality. Alienation exists before it manifests itself experientially in the various contradictions within the different Totalities in human history. It origin is, therefore, simultaneous with the emergence of man as a Totality or Species being. On the basis of Marx's presuppositions, the birth of subjective consciousness is, at the same time, the birth of alienation because the moment "thinking-matter" emerges, the discrepancy appears between its mode of spatio-temporal existence, i.e., its Essence or Formality and its Nature. Alienation, thus, expresses the "affliction" of Spirit by matter, an affliction consisting of the domination of man by his own formalization of the natural milieu. Since man is a Species or Totality being he has to realise and establish himself through the mediation of an Ideal Totality. This is the nature of a Species being -- something about which the human race has no choice. However, a lot depends on the character of this Totality. We have seen that this changed from a "Gregarious" to a "Political" one; then to a "Socio-biological" and finally to an "Economic" one. As long as this Totality either limits or negates the human dimension, as it does throughout the "pre-history of human society", alienation persists. There need be no mystery or ambiguity about this. Alienation is, in Marx's system, the point of departure, a basic presupposition which entails the view that the privilege of enjoying subjectively conscious existence carries with it the burden and responsibility of creating an adequate and

wholesome social or formal environment.

Animals can never be alienated, in the proper sense of the word. They do not and cannot create an Ideal Totality, they do not formalise their empirical existence as people do and, therefore, as Feuerbach pointed out; they live one life. They form part of one homogeneous type of substance -- "external nature". Man is different and since he can and has to create an Ideal Totality, can and does create a limited and false one. The reason for this is not sheer ignorance or perversity but, as we have seen his state of physical and formal undevelopment. The "rest of nature" should be organised, modified and controlled in a rational and positive way. Since man himself is in a process of development and since his development depends on his work on "nature", the situation becomes a complex and painfully difficult one. Man has not only to organise and rationalise "nature": he has also and primarily to organise, mature and rationalise himself. Hence, both the "speculative approach" and the materialistic one are rejected. The latter "forgets that circumstances are changed by men and that it is essential to educate the educator himself." (Thesis 111,0n Feuerbach).

It is, therefore, false to state that, within Marx's system, alienation is a product of private property. Besides being contradicted by Marx's explicit contentions, this view is incompatible with the "logic" of his system. Alienation is not an empirical phenomenon, consisting of "physical relations"; it is a "state-of-being", a type of social or formal existence, consisting of species-relations. Alienation spans the Gregarious Totality of primeval times, when private property, both as a species-relation and as an ideological phenomenon, was non-existent with the Economic Totality of the capitalist system. Throughout his whole "pre-history", man has lived in alienation because he identified with, and sought realisation in, a

fake, pseudo and inadequate Totality. Those who turn alienation into a product of capitalistic property imply that, prior to the capitalist system, mankind was not living in alienation. From the point of view of Marx's system, this is absolutely unacceptable. For man who is a "being for himself", to be alienated amounts to living for something. qualitatively different from himself. This, in effect, means that man lives under the domination of a formality which restricts rather than fulfils his nature. Within the pre-capitalist Totalities, man was not living an authentically human life. He enjoyed "objective individuality" but this "formality" was "external", separate and different from him, a totem-pole with which he identified and which expressed itself in political, social and racial prejudice and bigotry. In the Grundrisse, Marx argues, as we have seen, that in precapitalist times no true personal relationships existed. Throughout these eras, the human race was dominated by the prevailing Totality or Community. Man had even less control over the "physis" and was therefore more captive to his illusions. It is true, Marx argues, that the individual was less subject to the "violence of things" and led a more unified life but this was a side-effect of an undeveloped state of existence within a paternalistic social structure. This paternalism was sustained by a superstitious or religious consciousness on the one hand; scientific ignorance. technological crudeness and low productivity, on the other. The vital idea that man lived in alienation prior to the capitalist system because he identified with, and sought fulfilment in, a mistaken Ideal Totality, runs throughout Marx's whole system. It is impossible to miss it if one understands the metaphysical framework of his doctrine.

Those who regard alienation as a product of the "rule of private property" often imply serious misconceptions about this very "rule". In the first place many do not realise that it is a "rule" of a "social imperative" dominating

human existence and not the "rule" of people in any volunistic and personalistic sense. The "ruling classes" are the executors of the over-riding "social imperative". As we have seen, this "imperative" can continue to assert its rule even if all the people own the forces of production.

In the second place, the "rule of private property" does not start with the capitalist system though it reaches its climax and becomes "absolute" at this stage -- hence the historical necessity of capitalism. This system, brings to its logical conclusion a phenomenon that originates thousands of years carlier. The history of the "rule of private property" is, for Marx, a chronicle of the history of the human species. In his ethnological notes, he remarks that:

It is impossible to overestimate the influence of property in the civilization of mankind. It was the power that brought the Aryan and Semitic nations out of barbarism into civilization...Governments and laws are instituted with primary reference to its creation, protection and enjoyment. It introduced human slavery as an instrument in its production. With the establishment of the inheritance of property in the children of its owner, came the first possibility of a strict monogamian family. (Ethnol. Notes, 126)

. Private property, as a "social imperative" initiates its rule in the appropriation of land. Marx argues that:

In feudal landownership we already find the domination of the earth as of an alien power over men. The serf is an appurtence of the land. Similarly the heir through primogeniture, the first-born son, belongs to the land. It inherits him. The rule of private property begins with property in land, which is its basis. (Early W.318)

The false view that alienation is a product or result of the institution of capitalistic private property is implied also by those who imagine that by abolishing private ownership of the productive forces and means of production, in a narrow sense, through the instrumentality of some revolutionary hot-heads, alienation will be eradicated. Nothing could be more mistaken. This illusion thrives on a complete

<sup>+</sup> Here Marx cites Morgan. We owe this information to Dr.C.Levitt.

ignorance of the vital distinction between "property" and "possession". In different instances, it is true, Marx gives the impression that the mere abolition of private possessions will entail the suspension of alienation. He says, for example, that:

The positive transcendence of private property, as the appropriation of human life, is therefore the positive transcendence of all estrangement - that is to say, the return of man from religion, family, state, etc., to his human, i.e., social existence. (Manus.136)

Even here, however, it is clear to the observant reader that I)Marx is speaking of private property which is a species relation, a social imperative and not of mere physical possession: 2)private property signifies exclusion from, and indifference to, the human species. In fact he contrasts the existence of man thriving on the institution of private property with "human, i.e., social existence."

One should not confuse the "being" of alienation with its historical "expression". Alienation expresses itself, in time and space, in different forms, the most intense of which, is the absolute rule of private property within the Economic Totality. "Frivate property" Marx says, "is only the perceptible expression of the fact that man becomes objective for himself and at the same time becomes to himself a strange and inhuman object:...it expresses the fact that the assertion of his life is the alienation of his life, that his realization is his loss of reality, is an alien reality." (Manus. 138)

Earlier it was pointed out that exploitation should be distinguished from class struggles. It should be further pointed out that exploitation is different from alienation. Alienation is often the cause of exploitation but there can still be alienation where no exploitation exists. Marx is explicit about this. He writes:

. The proportied class and the proletarian class express the same human alienation. But the former

feels comfortable and confirmed in it, recognises this self-alienation as its own power and thus has the semblance of a human existence. The latter feels itself crushed by this alienation, sees in it its own impotence and reality of an inhuman existence. It is, to use an expression of Hegel's, "in the midst of degradation the revolt against degradation", a revolt to which it is forced by the contradiction between its humanity and its situation, which is an open, clear, and absolute negation of its humanity. (Gor.Id.20)22

The distinction between exploitation and alienation is implied in the view, manned throughout our work, that the power or rule of "capital" is not to be confused with the power or rule of the "capitalist" as an individual. As Marx himself points out:

Capital is thus the <u>governing power</u> over labor and its products. The capitalist possesses this power, not on account of his personal or human qualities, but inasmuch as he is an <u>owner</u> of capital. His power is the <u>purchasing power</u> of his capital, which nothing can withstand.

Later we shall see first how the capitalist, by means of capital, exercises his governing power over labor, then, however, we shall see the governing power of capital over the capitalist himself. (Manus. 78)

If alienation were the effect of private property or of expropriation, (as so many contend), the capitalist should not be alienated. Within Marx's system, this is sheer nonsense. Alienation is a Totality factor and concerns both the relation of the individual to it and the character of the Totality itself. The bourgeois represents and embodies the interests, imperatives and values of the Economic Totality. He exploits, (in so far as he is a bourgeois), rather than is exploited. As bourgeois he identifies with a materialistic and inhuman Totality — hence his identification with it marks his total negation. He is recognised in and through a Totality which is the negation of man. He thereby negates negates himself as man in the very same act of positing himself as bourgeois. This is the epitome of alienation.

In the pre-capitalist eras, alienation meant, in

practice, exclsuion from the Totality. Since the Totality was one-sided and circumscribed, human realisation, in and through it, for the privileged classes was limited and circumscribed — the exclusion or separation was likewise limited. Now, in contrast, alienation results from identification and association with the Totality because the latter is anti-human. This is the direct opposite of the former situation. The former Totalities, despite their limitations and pseudo character sustained the human element; the Economic Totality negates and demolishes it completely. The worker who is rejected by and rejects this Totality, though exploited, is less in alienation. His exclusion, both forced on him and self-imposed, is from the "negation of man", from a materialistic personality. In this sense he is the "negation of the negation".

In the perspective of Marx's analysis, the bourgeois emerges as more alienated than the exploited proletarian. This, however strange it may sound, is consistent, nonetheless, with Marx's system. Alternatively, the proletariat is the most exploited but least alienated type of person -- at least as far as his Essence, his Ideal duplication or formality By Marx's standards, the Economic Totality is concerned. is the most degrading one in history, excluding and negating completely the human dimension of both capitalists and workers. The "exclusion" in the case of the worker, is not only in the Ideal order but also in the practical and physical one. In his physical existence, the worker under the rule of capital, (and not under controlled capitalism), is in a state of full exploitation, deprived even of the basic necessaries of life. As far as his individuality and consciousness are concerned, however, he allegedly has a better hold over himself than the bourgeois. He may be destitute of worldly possessions but he remains equipped with a rich and wholesome Essence. We has nothing but he is everything. He is, therefore best qualified to build a better future. This applies,

of course, to the genuine proletariat and not to the "bourgeoisified" one which was already in existence in Marx's time.

In the perspective of the above, we realise that alienation for Marx is neither a psychological phenomenon as R.Tucker contends nor a clinical or pathological one; nor an economic situation in a narrow sense as suggested by D.Bell. The latter claims:

Marx had repudiated the idea of alienation divorced from his specific economic analysis of property relations under capitalism, and, in so doing, had closed off 'a road which would have given us a broader and more useful analysis of society and personality than the Marxian dogmatics which did prevail. (Restuccia, 28) 23

If the analysis of Marx's doctrine undertaken throughout our work is correct, we will have to say that Bell's contention has little to back it up except, perhaps, psyological force and ignorance.

#### NOTES: CHAPTER FIVE

- 1. A good account of the controversy between the "Continuationists" and "Dichotomists" is given by J.Maguire in his Marx's Paris Writings: An Analysis. Gill and Macmillan. Dublin, 1972, pp. XIV -XVIII.
- 2. According to Marx, the Physiocrats confused use-values with exchange values. He writes: "Their error was that they confused the increase of material substance...with the increase of exchange-value." (Surplus Val.1.62-63)
- 3. "A cotton-spinning jenny", Marx explains, "is a machine for spinning cotton. It becomes <u>capital</u> only in certain relations. Torn from these relationships it is no more capital than gold in itself is money or sugar the price of sugar." (Wage Lab. and Cap. 28)
- K. Marx, <u>Critique of the Gotha Programme</u>. Progress Pub. Moscow, 1971
- 5. Cf. Pol. Econ.pp 30,32,34.
- Regarding this problem, C.J: Arthur writes that one should distinguish between "systematic and genetic analysis". He argues further that "It is one thing to say how the elements of a given structure condition one another: it is another thing to explain when the elements arose and combined. Neglect of this distinction in Marxist theory may load to technological determinism, extrapolating unwisely from such Marxian dicta as "the handmill gives you society with (the foudal lord, the steam-mill society with the industrial capitalist. In this example it should be understood that 'gives' is not an historical category but a structural one about the social relations appropriate to a given productive force. The analysis of the change from a feudal to a capitalist mode of production is another question altogether. To treat such historical developments as though they were nothing but the passive reflection of an autonomous technological development is to fall into the most simplified and vulgar kind of evolutionism." (Ger.Id.33)
  - This is in partial agreement with Dupre's view on the matter. Dupre's conception of "nature" emerges as too narrow.by Marx's standards. Accordingly, subjective consciousness is regarded by him as a non-natural and a-priori phenomenon. Lukacs too orgues that the dialec-

- tic applies only to man. He writes: "The misunderstanding which Engels' treatement of the matter have produced developed because Engels following Hegel understood the dialectic as applying to the understanding of nature. But the decisive determinations of the dialectic, the reciprocal action of object and subject, the unity of theory and 'praxis', the historic modifications of the substratum of categories as the foundations of modification in thought, etc., are not found in the natural sciences." (Lukacs, 25)
- 8. In direct opposition to what Althusser suggests, Marx retained a healthy respect for Hegel's doctrine as is evident in the "Afterword to the Second German Edition" to Capital. In Das Volk, written in 1859, he states: "It was the exceptional historical sense underlying . Hegel's manner of reasoning which distinguished it from that of all other philosophers. However abstract and idealist the form employed yet his evolution of ideas runs always parallel with the evolution of universal history, and the latter was indeed supposed to be only the proof of the former. Although this reversed the actual relation and stood it on its head, yet the realcontent was invariably incorporated in his philosophy, especially since Hegel -- unlike his followere -- did not rely on ignorance, but was one of the most crudite thinkers of all time. He was the first to try to demonstrate that there was an evolution, an intrinsic coherence in history, and however strange some things in his philosophy of history may seem to us now, the grandour of the basic conception is still admirable today, compared both with his predecessors and with those who, following him, ventured to advance general historical observations. This meanmental conception of history parvades the Phenomenologie, Asthotik and Geschichte der Philosophie, and the material is everywhere set forth historically, in a definite historical context, even if in an abstract distorted manner. "(Cf.Fol. Baon. 224) It is clear from the above that Marx distinguished be-Command the Idealistic form and presentation of Hegel's conception which he rejected and the positive content Which he endersed. Marx's contention that "With Hogel the dialectic is standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again, if you would discover the rational Rernel within the systical chell" cannot be dismissed as "me ely gestural, even metaphorical" -- as Althusser dogaatiros.(A)thursor.89-90)
- 9. Mark and Engols, On Rollinion. Progress Pub. Moscow, Alth printing, 19.2.
- 10. Subjectivity, of course, is not to be taken in the Kantian

and contemporary sense of the word. It is rather a subjectivity which obtains vis-a-vis an "object" gua object, and entails a degree of freedom from the "physis". It is found in Aquinas with his doctrine on "intellectual substances" and their ability for "reductio completa" and of course, in Hegel. It consists in the duplication of oneself in relation to the object through the formalization of the latter; an appropriation, in a formal sense, of the object by the subject without the total loss of the subject in the object.

- 11. See Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's The Phenomenon of Man
- 12. Consistent with his conceptual framework and activity, Marx makes use of the distinction, (found extensively within the Scholastic tradition), between the "material" and "formal" dimensions of a phenomenon. We have seen the distinction he draws between the "jenny" as a "machine that spins cotton" -- its "material" dimension -- and as "as capital" -- its "formal" dimension. Again he distinguishes the "material" of capital and its "formal character". Cf. Grund.257-258.
- 13. Cf. Poverty: 181: Ger. Id. 87.
- This is not a case of determinism but of rational be-14. havior following an intelligent appraisal of a situation. Man's behaviour can be forseen because of its rationality, not because of "brute necessity". To act rationally is often to act predictably. Preedem and unpredictability are not the same within Marx's (and Aquinos's) system. According to these two thinkers, Feedom implies acting intelligently, rationally, with control over one-self and over the environment; freedom means overcoming, as much as possible, "the tyranny of circumstances". (Galbraith) The predictability stamping from an "intelligent necessiby" is different, in kind, from that stemming from a "physical necessity". J.Rickaby points out that: "A person lies under an intelligent necessity when, adverting to a completency that fully satisfies his intellectual mature, he persoveres in that act of complaceny. He dannot do otherwise than persevere: he knows better than to do otherwise than persovere. An agent that is fain to act without advertence lies under a brute necessity. This agent does things because it knows no better."(Rickaby,48)
- 15. The priority of external nature as a necessary condition and the material substratum for the existence of man and, a fortiori, for my heminication is not questioned.
- 16. Lukacs agrees that Lenin broke"with the thesis of Marx

that proletarian revolutions can occur only in the most developed countries (and then successfully only on an international scale). Cf.Lukacs, 75. However, one has to be consistent and argue further that Lenin departed in an essential and radical way, to the extent that his revolution ceased to be Marxist. This is confirmed by the need, acknowledged by Lenin himself, for the use of force against the very same people he allegedly liberated: "Today", Lenin is credited with having said "one shouldn't caress anybody -- for people will only bite off your hand; strike, without pity, although theoretically we are against any kind of violence. Umph, it is, in fact, an infernally difficult task." ibid.98. The distinction between theory and practice is amusing. It reminds one of the Humanitarian and Philanthropic schools which Marx. ridiculed in The Poverty of Philosophy. What we find puzzling and even disturbing is the "intellectual servility" betrayed by a thinker of the calibre of Lukacs. in his attempt to rationalise and defend the political and opportunistic manoeuvres of the Russian leaders. Marx's dialectic of negativity outdoes itself in Lukacs's hands. First Lenin breaks away from Marx's thesis, "on the basis of Marxist method" and, therefore, remains Marxist, even if he rejected the substance of Marx's doctrine. Later, Khrushchev breaks away from Lenin's thesis. "on' the basis of Lenin's method" and remains Marxist-Leninist. What we have to bear in mind is that in these political and ideological gymnastics there is no trace of Marx's "praxis". Marx's dialectic, in this manner, becomes a convenient resort to admit the legitimacy of any move, doctrine or dogma sancioned by the Russian oracles. Anything is Marxist as long as it bears the "nihil obstat" and "imprimatur" of the Kremlin.

- 17. Marx and Engels: Ireland and the Irish Question Progress Pub., Moscow, 1971
- 18. We have here a vital conception spanning Marx's early and later works which goes to show, along with other reasons, that the "epistemological break" Althusser imputes Marx has little, if any, doctrinal basis.
- 19. In a communique written in 1870, Marx distinguishes between "revolutionary initiate" which can come form a country where the material and other conditions are still undeveloped and "the lever for a serious economic revolution", which he identifies with the proletarian one, but which must have the necessary conditions for its basis. Cf Treland, pp 160-161. The same idea appears when Marx distinguishes between the initial spark and the basis for a proletarian revolution. Cf. Surveys, 325-333.

- This is equally applicable to self-styled "Marxist" revolutions and to other upheavals with Ayatollas, Korans and Muslim republics on the agenda. From a state of conflict different forms of conflict are possible depending on the prevailing conditions and state of social consciousness. Contemporary Iran provides an interesting, (if outrageous) example of one tyranny replacing another. This shows that one form of conflict may remove the injustice stemming from a particular state of conflict but not necessarily from the injustice of the state of conflict itself.
- 21. R. Garaudy, <u>Karl Marx: The Evolution of His Thought</u>.

  Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1967.
- 22. Quoted by C.J.Arthur; Cf. Ger.Id.p.20
- 23. Quoted by P.P. Restuccia, Marx's Concept of Alienation.
  University Microfilms; Southern Illinois Univ. 1968.

#### CONCLUSION

The study we have undertaken explores the "spiritual" and humanistic dimension of Marx's system; an "ideal" realm which, we feel, has not been sufficiently understood and appreciated. In this respect, our work, we think, is a contribution to Marxist scholarship.

It is to Marx's credit that he recognised and acknowledged the "ideal" as a distinct feature of reality. In this, Marx follows a tradition initiated, in the West, by Greek thinkers, zealously preserved by the Scholastics and wastefully discarded by the Empiricists and Positivists. However, Marx's account of the "ideal" is radically different from the traditional one. For Marx, the "ideal" is sui generis, distinct but not separate from the physical, denoting a trans-physical but not a trans-natural-realm. The "ideal" is an emanation of human subjective consciousmess and consists in the formal objectification and hypostatization of human social life. It came into existence when "man" first emerged and will persist as long as human life persists.

both constitutes man's <u>formal</u> existence and represents a concrete universal or Totality, the "ideal" has a normative and defining role. According to Marx, property, labour, capital, exchange, as well as, the "essence" of man, population, freedom, justice, law and order -- briefly, the main objective issues that constitute human, social, (formal), existence -- should not be treated as discreet and isolated phenomena but as relational ones, obtaining within a holistic perspective.

They should be analysed in the context of the prevailing Community which provides the terms of reference for their intelligibility. This again reaffirms the basic continuity between Marx's doctrine and the Greek-Scholastic one which traditionally sought to account for reality within a comprehensive perspective. Marx reiterates the view that to be truly "scientific" one has to overcome the "delusive appearance of things" and grasp their "inter-connectedness". This is an invitation to "knowledge by the causes" -- a major postulate of the Greek-Scholastic tradition.

In so far as the "ideal" exists as a Particular Formality with which the individual identifies, it has a constitutive dimension. Man's Essence or Formal existence, according to Marx, consists of an "ensemble of social relations." These, in turn, constitute the formalization of man's empirical existence. Man gives a formal existence, a new dimension, to the surrounding natural milieu and to his own physical existence. This shows that for Marx, (as for Hegel), the Real is Rational, impregnated by human consciousness. As we hope our work has shown the power to formalise and idealise his existence is the source of both man's strength and his weakness. This "power" sets man apart from the "rest of nature".

We have seen the detaphysical frame-work of Marx's system; the three "momenta" in human existence and their syllogistic relationship. If man's formal existence as man is a mediated one, the character and state of realisation of his Essence will depend heavily, though not slavishly, on the character of the medium — the prevailing Totality. This dependence should show itself in the principles, values, ideals, beliefs and imperatives with which man identifies, which he regards as essential to his happiness and fulfilment and for which he is prepared to sacrifice everything even physical life itself.

Our discussion and conclusions will, no doubt, raise

strong objections and protests from different commentators, especially "Marxist" ones. To many, our work will emerge as a distortive idealisation of Marx's materialistic doctrine. From our point of view, the problem is that too many commentators and Marxist zealots have taken Marx's materialism for granted. The emphasis Marx puts on "relations" is evident to anyone who is acquainted with his works yet, to the best of our knowledge, these have not been analysed and examined with sufficient rigour. The confusion on this vital issue is widespread. We have seen that Marx speaks of different types of relations and that he was mainly concerned with one special type -- "species-relations". These are real, objective but ideal phenomena, though Marx calls them "material relations". This means that the subject matter of Marx's system is not something "physical" as is the subject matter of the natural sciences, but a phenomenon Many commentators, apparently, haven't of consciousness. yet become aware of this important fact. According to them "human nature" is to be treated and analysed as if it were a mere part of "external nature", and subject to the same type of "laws" and movement -- in direct contradiction to Marx's method and doctrine. They, therefore, insist on submitting Marx's doctrine to the rigour and austerity of a . strict science. Implicit in this misplaced "purism" is the conviction that, in this way, Marx's system becomes more "objective". This is an illusion stemming from the fallacy of scientism and its verifiability principle. It also seriously violates Marx's system. It is philosophically gratifying to note, as we have seen, that much of what Marx claims and presupposes is not amenable to strict scientific treatment, in the accepted sense. This is what enables Marx's doctrine to be so comprehensive, enriching and intriguing. Science in the accepted sense and its method of verification can never do full justice to the wealth of reality. Unlike

some of his admirers, Marx realised this fact as is evident in his judgment on Ricardo's doctrine. This being the case, the attempt to submit Marx's doctrine to the regimen of a scientific analysis remains abortive. Furthermore, too much emphasis on its allegedly scientific character is ruinous because many of Marx's presuppositions, claims and conclusions will not witstand strictly scientific scrutiny.

- Marx's system thrives on "freedom", freedom from the "physis", from "external nature", its laws and determined movement. This is what enables man to exercise and develop his "freedom to". Marx's system, therefore, resists, fortunately, the confining and funerial regimen of a strict science.

The "ideal" dimension of Marx's doctrine emphasises
the vital and crucial role which human subjective consciousness
plays in his system. In place of "brute necessity" which
rules "external nature", we have, in the case of man, a form
of "intelligent necessity". This, of course, creates problems,
both doctrinal and practical. We have discussed some of them
-- the major one concerning the two "formalities" in which
Marx was particularly involved, namely, the "proletariat" and
the "bourgeoisie". On this issue, Marx's analysis breaks
down and he leads himself into a false conclusion. In direct
contradiction to his own doctrine, Marx identifies an ensemble
of empirical (physical) relations with an ensemble of species
(ideal) relations. This violation subsequently became the
corner-stone of so-called "Scientific Socialism." Historicism,
Evolutionism, as well as Economism and Technologism equally

thrive on this fatal misconception.

Our analysis of Marx's doctrine raises a major problem. Marx reiterates the view that the laws of human nature
and its developmental process go on "behind the back" of
people, independently of their thoughts and volitions. We
have argued, by contrast, that, on Marx's own terms, human
existence and activity are mediated by an Ideal Totality —
hence the essential and crucial role of social consciousness
within the human developmental process. Further confirmation
of this is found in Marx's contention that:

With the slave's awareness that he cannot be the property of another, with his consciousness of himself as a person, the existence of slavery becomes a merely artificial, vegetative existence, and ceases to be able to prevail as the basis of production. (Grund. 463)

Is it possible to reconcile Marx's view that the laws of capitalism, and of human history in general, work "with iron necessity towards inevitable results" (Cap.1.8) and that human development "can be determined with the precision of natural science", (Pol.Econ.21) with the analysis of Marx's doctrine presented throughout this work? On page 59 we explained in what sense Marx is justified in arguing that the development of human history and its laws "can be determined with the precision of natural science". In the final analysis, however, the tension between positive science and philosophy, between determinism and freedom, remains within Marx's system, as we pointed out on page 73. We are convinced, on the basis of our studies, that there is no place for physical necessity, within Marx's system, but only for a type of intelligent

necessity which works within a noetic and evaluative perspective. Consequently, Marx's contention that the laws of capitalism work "with iron necessity towards inevitable results" is inconsistent with, and does violence to, the "Logic" of his own system.

We have identified the "infrastructure" with a Totality which is <a href="Ideal">Ideal</a> in nature, a phenomenon in the realm of consciousness. Yet Marx consistently orgues that this "infrastructure" is "hidden", "secret" -- it constitutes "the innermost secret, the hidden basis of the entire social structure." (Cap.111.791) How are we to reconcile our characterisation of the "infrastructure" with Marx's? In other words, how can something be Ideal in nature, that is, <a href="conscious">conscious</a> and yet <a href="unconscious">unconscious</a> at the same time?

The answer to this problem lies in a clarification of The "infrastructure", in itself, is Ideal in nature. terms. It consists of a Totality of "relations between people" which are mediated by, and have as their basis, the social context prevailing at the time. This basis, existing independently of individual consciousness is nothing but a formal objectification of the empirical conditions of existence -- like s social grammer. This fact has been and remains, according to Marx, unknown to the social members governed by it: unsanctioned by the state and unrecognized by the ideologists. whether economists, philosophers or the daily press. prevailing "grammer" of society corresponds an official "social \*We owe this expression to J.McMurtry. Cf The Structure of Marx's world view, Princeton University Press, 1968, p. 81, n. 15

language" which expresses itself in the Ideological superstructure. The "social language" corresponding to the "infrastructure" of the capitalist era is "political economy". This language sustains, according to Marx, a complex structure of political, philosophical and moral ideology compatible with it.

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