Ivar Jonsson

Marx's Metascience
A Dialogical Approach to his Thought
Ivar Jonsson

Marx's Metascience

A Dialogical Approach to his Thought
# Contents

## I Introduction

### II. The story of Marx

- The Marx family
- Moving to Bonn
- Stepping into politics
- Political refugee
- Stepping out of political activity
- Concentrating on economic studies
- Stepping into politics again
- Marx’s last decade

### III. From early texts to the *German Ideology*

- The very early articles: 'Wood' and 'Mosel'
- Marx's dialectics: his conception of contradictions
- Marx's materialist analysis of the political sphere
- Marx's early social determinism
- Marx's epistemology; knowledge and political practice
- The *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*
- Marx's concept of 'labour'
- Marx's critique of political economy in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*
- Marx's determinism
- Marx's view of science in general; science and alienation
- Marx's ideal science; human science
- Marx's epistemology; the social construction of man's senses and knowledge
- Knowledge and praxis
- The ontology of the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*
- Marx's relational ontology and his concept of the 'real'
- Marx's anthropological-philosophical ontology: Man and Nature
- Marx's concept of the individual in civil society
- The fatalism of Marx's social ontology of civil society

---

### Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I Introduction</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. The story of Marx</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Marx family</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving to Bonn</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stepping into politics</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political refugee</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stepping out of political activity</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentrating on economic studies</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stepping into politics again</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx’s last decade</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. From early texts to the <em>German Ideology</em></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The very early articles: 'Wood' and 'Mosel'</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx's dialectics: his conception of contradictions</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx's materialist analysis of the political sphere</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx's early social determinism</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx's epistemology; knowledge and political practice</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The <em>Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts</em></td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx's concept of 'labour'</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx's critique of political economy in the <em>Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts</em></td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx's determinism</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx's view of science in general; science and alienation</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx's ideal science; human science</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx's epistemology; the social construction of man's senses and knowledge</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and praxis</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ontology of the <em>Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts</em></td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx's relational ontology and his concept of the 'real'</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx's anthropological-philosophical ontology: Man and Nature</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx's concept of the individual in civil society</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The fatalism of Marx's social ontology of civil society</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The concept of 'labour' as the supersession of the paradox of Marx's anthropological and social ontology

Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach*

1) The strain between the anthropological-philosophical ontology and the determinist social ontology
2) Epistemological postulates

### IV German Ideology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The political irrelevance of the Young-Hegelian Critique</th>
<th>76</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marx’s and Engels’s materialist historiography and economic determinism</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx’s and Engels’s epistemology</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx’s and Engels on the existing science of their day</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx’s and Engels on the relations of man and nature</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx’s and Engels and alienation</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx’s and Engels’s concept of ideology and consciousness</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The social function of ideology</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### V From the German Ideology to the Grundrisse/Capital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marx's anthropological ontology</th>
<th>90</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marx's social ontology</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx's reading of Hegel's <em>Logic</em> in 1858</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx's epistemology - Marx’s method</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx's critique of political economy</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx’s ‘dialectical objectivism’</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marx’s concept of capital and Newton's concept of the law of inertia</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital and the alienation and alienating function of the natural sciences</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI. Conclusion 120
   a) The static view 120
   b) The dynamic view 120
       1) In terms of continuity 120
       2) In terms of difference 122

Bibliography 126
I. Introduction.

The works of Karl Marx are among the most influential works in the history of social sciences. Despite the fact that they were written in the 19th century and ailing communist regimes in the 20th century claimed that their political systems and ideology were based on his theories, Marx’s works are still today widely read and quoted by social scientists and philosophers. Following the increased polarisation of Western societies since the 1980s, particularly in the last decade, interest in Marx is rising and the number of university courses that deal with his thought is increasing.

The works of Marx are wide ranging in scope. He wrote poems, studied mathematics, published philosophical and political articles and books that dealt with political economy. In this book, we will concentrate on those aspects of Marx’s texts that relate to what we prefer to call theories of science or ‘metascience’, i.e. the epistemics (ontology and epistemology) of the texts in question and the historiography of science which we will find in the texts.

Concerning epistemics we will highlight problems such as:
a) the dialectical world view of Marx and his inversion of Hegel’s philosophy (the relationship between humanity and nature, human essence, determinism and process-ontology);
b) Marx’s ‘project’ or disciplinary aims, referring to the motives of his theoretical practice and its relation to political activity;
c) Marx’s critique of the dominant philosophy (i.e. in Germany Hegelianism) and political economy;
d) Marx’s view of the existing sciences, referring to their philosophical premises as well as the relationship between science and society;
e) Marx’s criteria of science and his view of ‘ideal’ science.

We will approach these five main topics by looking at some of his main works as they appear chronologically and we will do it in two main steps. In the following second chapter we will highlight Marx’s early writings and at the end of it we will
concentrate on his and F. Engels's work *German Ideology*. The works that we concentrate on in that chapter are to be characterized as a metacritique of the political philosophy of Hegel, the Young Hegelians and political economy.

The third chapter covers, with reference to *German Ideology*, the works which Marx wrote in 1857/58 and after.

Interpretation of Marx's writings is a hermeneutical and practical problem. Objectivist (R.J. Bernstein 1983, pp. 8-16) interpretations tend to claim to understand what Marx "really meant". Two approaches of this kind are quite usual. On the one side, we have internalist approaches which either attempt to find the origin of Marx's theories within the sphere of theoretical practice (i.e. his work is seen as a transformation or synthesis of some other theoretical systems, c.f. the philosophy of Aristotle, Hegel, Young Hegelians and political economy) - or we have internalist approaches in the form of teleological interpretations that see Marx's academic career and works inevitably ending and aiming at particular works (c.f. Althusser's and Balibar's (1998) 'reading' of Marx's works through *Capital*). On the other side, we have externalist interpretations that reduce his work to external factors such as political practice or the 'world view' of certain social group or classes (c.f. G. Lukács) that Marx came into contact with or worked with.

We do not adhere to these methodological canons. Our point of departure is that Marx's work must be seen as a result of his practical context in which his political 'project' (in the wider existential sense) is most interesting. His political 'project' (i.e. his act of relating himself to interests of social groups and contexts etc.), must however be understood as nothing more than our abstraction and does not imply any theory of its inner structure of necessity. Marx's 'project' and theoretical problematique at particular time in his development is an 'open' project and an open problematique that has the potential of being formed differently according to his active interiorization of his practical situation and shifting contexts. The practical situation consists both of theoretical and philosophical traditions that he in an active way bases his thought on - and social
interests and forces which he attempts to join. Accordingly, we would like to approach the development of his thought as a process of ‘structuration’ in which he actively structures his thought (see A. Giddens (1993) for a discussion of the concept of structuration and J. Cooley et.al. (2001) and R. Bhaskar (1978 and 1979) for arguments for critical realist methodology).

Furthermore, as Marx’s work is a result of an open project our own understanding is only a ‘fusion’ of our horizons and interests on the one side and Marx’s horizons on the other side, as they appear to us. This does not mean that we claim to impute meaning in Marx’s work. We are only sticking to our hermenutical position which is dialogical (see H.-G. Gadamer 1977). Knowledge and understanding is a matter of praxis.
II. The story of Karl Marx

Karl Marx lived difficult, but adventures life and his social background was in many ways unusual. He was born in 1818 in Trier in Prussia. His father, Heinrich Marx, was at Karl’s birth, a successful lawyer who was counsellor-at-law to the High Court of Appeal in Trier. The boy grew up in a comfortable middle class family in Trier, a town that had 15000 inhabitants near the border of Luxembourg. Karl grew up in a small house with ten rooms and with a cottage in the grounds. The family had two maids and owned a vineyard near the town.

Trier is situated in the beautiful Mosel Valley and was surrounded by vineyards and lovely landscape. The town was the oldest town in Germany and was originally built by the Romans. The inhabitants were mainly officials, traders and artisans while few lived on industry.

The Marx family

Heinrich Marx’s grandfather, Meier Halevi Marx was a rabbi of Trier, but Heinrich’s parents were poor. He studied law, but as he was Jewish, his opportunities were limited. According to Prussian law from 1812, a Jew had to have a royal dispensation to hold a position in the service of the state. Heinrich was not granted such a dispensation when he applied for it in 1816. As a consequence, he became a protestant in 1817\(^1\) (D. McLellan 1981, p. 4). Poverty was a persistent problem in Trier and Heinrich Marx had great sympathy with the poor classes. He became one of the leaders of liberals in the

---

\(^1\) His original name was Hirschel, but he took the name Heinrich when he adopted Christianity (F. Mehring 1918/2004: Chapter one, section 1).
town and liberals held frequently meetings in his home in Simeonstrasse 8.

Karl Marx’s mother, Henrietta, was Dutch born into a great rabbi family that had fled from Hungary due to persecution. Henrietta has been described as a simple, uneducated, hard working woman. Her horizons were limited to her family and home and she was given to laments and humourless moralising. She spoke broken German while Yiddish was her main language (ibid, p. 5).

Karl Marx appears to have been much more attached to his father than his mother. However, he appears to have been even more attached to a family friend who had great influence on Karl’s intellectual progress. This was an aristocrat, baron Ludwig von Westphalen, who lived in the neighborhood of the Marx’s. Ludwig von Westphalen was a member of the small protestant community of approximately 200 persons in Trier. He is said to have been extremely cultural man, spoke English as well as German and read Latin and Greek. He became particularly fond of the young Karl Marx and read him Homer and Shakespeare and went frequently on intellectual walks with him through the picturesque hills and woods of the neighborhood. Ludwig was a liberal and had progressive political ideas and interested Karl in the personality and works of the French utopian socialist Saint-Simon. Karl was grateful to his intellectual friend and their closeness can be seen in that Karl dedicated his doctoral thesis to Ludwig von Westphalen (ibid, pp.15-16). Karl Marx engaged Jenny von Westphalen in 1836. She was his childhood friend and daughter of Ludwig von Westphalen. Marx married her in 1840 (ibid, p. 18).

Marx’s early social consciousness was probably also influenced by other things than the liberalist ideology of his family and the intellectual influences of Ludwig von
Westphalen. In 1814 Rhineland had been incorporated into Prussia. The incorporation followed the Napoleonic wars during which Rhineland had been annexed and governed by France. The liberalist ideas of free speech and constitutional liberty gained grounds in these years in Rhineland and by the time Marx was a teenager, people were struggling for these ideas against the totalitarian Prussian government (ibid, p. 2). In 1934, Hugo Wytenbach, the headmaster of Marx’s high school, Frederick William High School, was threatened with dismissal. He had been put under police observation and the school was searched following demonstrations in Hambach in 1832 in favour of freedom of the press. The mathematics teacher was accused by the authorities of materialism and atheism and the Hebrew teacher was accused of having joined in revolutionary songs. Copies of the Hambach speeches and anti-government satire was found in possession of pupils. The headmaster was active in the liberal movement in Trier and friend of the Marx family (ibid, p. 9-10).

The political situation in Trier was tense at the time Marx was a teenager and it must have had great impact on him. So must the social situation have had as well. Due to the declining wine production in Rhineland, the level of unemployment was high in Trier. A quarter of the population subsisted entirely on public charity. Poverty caused increases in beggary, prostitution and emigration (ibid, p. 2).

**Moving to Bonn**

Marx moved to Bonn in 1835 and started to study law at the university. He was 17 years old at that time. He started his studies enthusiastically in the first term, but in the second term his interests turned increasingly into writing poetry. At that time, clashes broke out between students from Trier and young Prussian aristocrats in the Borussia-Korps. In a fight in August 1836, Marx was wounded above the left eye in a duel. He was also denounced to the university authorities for possessing forbidden weapons (ibid, p. 17).
Karl spent more money than his parents provided him with so that after the first university year he was in debt. His father became worried and decided that he should be transferred to Berlin to continue his studies. Marx left Trier for Berlin in October 1836. Berlin was the second biggest German city with 300,000 inhabitants. Vienna was the only German city that was bigger.

Political activity was quite lively among the students at the University of Berlin and Marx found himself soon in some of the many political and philosophical clubs in Berlin. He studied law intensely, but he became increasingly preoccupied with the philosophical grounds of law and jurisprudence and studied philosophy enthusiastically. His intense studies ended in severe illness, as Marx seems to have suffered from tendency to tuberculosis. By 1841 his military obligations were cancelled for good due to the state of his lungs (ibid, pp. 27-8). Marx had studied the philosophy of Kant and Fichte in order to find a base for his approach to law and the state, but in the end, he turned against them as their rationalist philosophies missed the roots of law in actual social reality. In the end, having acquainted himself with natural science, history and the works of the F. W. J. von Schelling, Marx conversed to Hegelianism (ibid, p. 29).

By his doctor’s advice Marx moved for health reasons to a small village, Stralow, near Berlin. There he joined a graduate club among whose members were many lectures at the University of Berlin. The club met regularly in a café in Französische Strasse and subsequently in the houses of its members. This club formed the focal point of the Young Hegelian movement. Politics was a dangerous subject in Prussia, so rather than risking direct confrontation with the government, the Young Hegelians focused their critique on religion. However, there was a close relationship between religion and politics, church and the state, and soon the Young Hegelians criticised the dominant Hegelian ideas of religion and the state that legitimised the sovereignty of the king. The Doctors Club in Berlin was the centre of the movement of the Young Hegelians and it is here that Marx first started working
out his ideas of philosophy and society (ibid, p. 32). Bruno Bauer and Karl Köpper were among the most important philosophers of the club.

Marx started working on his doctoral thesis in 1838 and finished it in 1841. However, he did not graduate from Berlin, but from the University of Jena. His thesis, The Difference between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature, concentrated on the post Aristotellean philosophy of Epicure. The point of departure was a theme that was popular among the Young Hegelians. It observed the similarities between the situation of post Aristotelian philosophy in the history of Greek philosophy and the situation of Young Hegelian philosophy vis-à-vis Hegels philosophy. In the Epicurean philosophy, Marx found a train of thought that opened for the role of self-consciousness and practice based human sensuous activity that is capable of utilizing the laws and changing the forms of the material world (F. Mehring 1918/2004: Chapter 2, section 4 and D. McLellan 1981: 35 and 38). This train of thought characterised Marx’s thought until late in his life when he like so many of his contemporaries became attracted to positivism.

Stepping into politics

After graduation, Marx moved to Bonn and planned to obtain university lectureship. In order to do that he needed to extend his doctoral thesis and publish a dissertation. His plans were cut short when his fellow Young Hegelian, Bruno Bauer, who had been lecturing in theology at the University of Berlin since 1834, lost his teaching post in 1842 due to his unorthodox doctrines. The same goes for Arnold Ruge who was also an exile from university teaching. He started publishing the Hallische Jahrbücher in 1838 that were the leading periodical of the Young Hegelians. While focusing on critique of religion at the start, by 1840 its articles were directly political. As a consequence it was banned in 1841 in Prussia. Ruge moved to Dresden and continued the publications under the title Deutsche Jahrbücher.
Marx had sent an article to Ruge in February 1842 to be published in the Deutsche Jahrbücher. The vividly written article exposed the inconsistencies of the new censorship instructions issued by Frederick William IV in December 1841. The instructions banned critique of the Christian religion and penalised offences against discipline, morals and outward loyalty. Against these authoritarian regulations Marx argued for a liberalist state that reflects the views of its members even if they oppose its organs or the government itself. Marx had become an overt liberal democrat (D. McLellan 1981: 44).

When Marx moved to Cologne in April 1842 he gradually became involved in the liberal movement of the city and during the summer 1842, Marx became more and more drawn into the organisation of the newspaper Reinische Zeitung. The paper was founded in Cologne on January 1st, 1842. Originally it was not an oppositional paper at all, but rather pro-governmental. It was financed by industrialists. Moses Hess, the son of a wealthy industrialist had the leading role in funding the journal and hoped to become its editor. However, he published the first German communist book and the shareholders were more interested in a paper that would support further expansion of industry and market liberalisation in Germany than a paper propagating social revolution. However, Young Hegelians took over the journal and Rutenberg, the brother in law of Bruno Bauer became the editor. Hess became sub-editor with special reference to France. Georg Jung and Dagobert Oppenheim, both Young Hegelians, became directors. Both of them had been turned to Young Hegeliansism by Moses Hess (pp., 46-7 and F. Mehring 1918/2004: Chapter 2, section 5).

Due to Marx’s organisational contributions and writings for the Reinische Zeitung, he became its editor in chief in October 1842. Marx had started intensive studies of economics and it was clear that a break with the mainstream Young Hegelians in Berlin was imminent. He started working on the problem of poverty and the poor in Rhineland, in particular the relationship between the situation of the poor and the institution of private property (see the following chapter).
Following radical articles with direct critique of the Prussian state and articles on socialism and communism, the subscriptions doubled and became 3500 at the end of December and in the last months of 1842 began to acquire a national reputation (ibid, p. 53 and 61).

The success of Marx and Reinische Zeitung were short lived. In January 1843, the government decided to suppress the paper. Marx resigned and in the final issue of Reinische Zeitung in March, Marx explained that this was due to the present state of the censorship, but later he referred to the desire of the shareholders to compromise with the government (ibid, p. 61).

In March 1843 Marx visited his fiancé Jenny von Westphalen in Kreuznach near Trier were she lived with her mother. During the visit they planned their marriage that finally took place on 19th of June in the Protestant Church in Kreuznach. He stayed there and spent his time on deepening his critique of Hegel’s political philosophy that he had started working on the year before. Meanwhile Ruge and Hess were busy organising a new a new journal Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher and moved to Paris in August to publish it there in order to escape Prussian censorship. Marx and Jenny followed them at the end of October (ibid, p. 79).

It turned out to be difficult for Ruge and Hess to attract contributors to the journal. Liberal writers refused and of the Berlin Young Hegelians only Bruno Bauer agreed to contribute. The group of contributors were in the end few, i.e. Bakunin, Engels, Frobel, Herwegh, Hess, Marx and Ruge. Marx published two articles in the journal in 1844, i.e. ‘Introduction to a Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Law’ and ‘The Jewish Question’. The conclusion Marx came to in these articles was very radical. He argued that if Man was to be emancipated from religion and authoritarian state, Humanity has to emancipate itself from the social relations that beget the need for these institutions (for detailed discussion, see the following chapter). Having spent much time during the summer 1843 on studying the history of the French revolution 1789, Marx presumed that class struggle played essential role in this
development (ibid, p. 95) and the proletariat had a particular role. As Marx puts it at the end of ‘Introduction to a Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Law’:

“The emancipation of the German is the emancipation of man. The head of this emancipation is philosophy, its heart the proletariat. Philosophy cannot realize itself without the transcendence [Aufhebung] of the proletariat, and the proletariat cannot transcend itself without the realization [Verwirklichung] of philosophy.”

Political refugee
The German authorities responded quickly to the publication of the Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher and the journal was banned in Prussia and warrants were issued for the arrest of Marx, Heinrich Heine and Ruge. Marx had become a political refugee for the first time in his life (D. McLellan 1981: 98). It turned out that there was not enough demand for the journal in France to continue its publication. Marx, like the others who had contributed to the journal started now to write articles in a journal called Vorwärts that was published in Paris. The articles were outspoken on socialist issues and revolts and even consciously insulting to the King of Prussia. Due to pressure from the Prussian government, Marx and many contributors to the Vorwärts were expelled from France. Marx moved to Brussels on the 2nd of February 1845, where he lived for three years and his wife Jenny left few days later with their daughter Jenny (ibid, p. 136).

In 1848, a wave of revolutions shook European societies. On 12th of January, the people of Palermo in Sicily rebelled against the misrule of King Ferdinand II of Naples. Nearly all of the large cities in Italy saw similar riots in the next few weeks. King Ferdinand was overthrown and republics were proclaimed in Naples, Turin and Florence. In late February the people of Paris came out into the streets in demonstrations against the conservative government of Guizot. Barricades were
raised in the working class streets. These rebellions in Italy and France sent a message through Europe and revolutions shattered the continent. In countries like Germany, Austria and Hungary most of the revolutions were similar to those in Italy, i.e. they were nationalist and popular insurrections against foreign rule and against the repressive policy of Metternich the chancellor of Austria and his allies who preserved Habsburg dominion in Europe. The revolution in Switzerland and uprisings in Belgium and Britain were similar to the French case, i.e. they were generated by demand for social and democratic reforms (D. Thomson 1975: 204 and D. McLellan 1981: 189).

There were demonstrations in Brussels following news of the uprisings in Paris and a mild demonstration on 28th of February was broken up. Some demonstrators were arrested and a list of foreigners to be deported was drawn up. After both Marx and his wife Jenny had been arrested they had to move to Paris in hurry. The new provisional government of France had at that time permitted Marx to move back to France.

On the 10th and 20th of March news reached Paris that brought hopes for German socialists in exile. Metternich had been driven out of Vienna on the 13th of March and the Emperor was forced to grant the demands of the insurgents. A revolution had taken place in Berlin with clashes between troops and mob similar to what had happened in Paris and barricades were thrown up in working class areas of the city. The king formed a liberal government and a constituent assembly was elected (D. Thomson 1975: 209).

Marx had joined the Communist League in 1847 and worked now with its approximately 400 German members in Paris. Most of the members were tailors and bootmakers. Following the news of revolts in Germany most of the members of the Communist League left for various towns in Germany to try to build a national network. They took with them around 1000 copies of the Communist Manifesto written by Marx and Frederich Engels and a flysheet written by them entitled ‘The Demands of the Communist Party in Germany’. Marx moved in April to Cologne the third biggest city in Germany with 100.000

Marx, in collaboration with Engels, established a newspaper called Neue Reinische Zeitung that was supposed to be a national, radical paper of the democratic movement in Germany. The paper began to appear on the 12th of October. However, conditions for widespread social revolution in Germany did not exist. Violent revolt took only place in Berlin and the worker’s movement was weak and the bourgeoisie was not willing to fight for a constitutional democracy, let alone republic. The industrialisation of Germany lagged behind that of France and Britain so both the proletariat and the bourgeoisie was underdeveloped. Marx came to the conclusion that a social revolution in Germany was only possible if external forces would take part in it. It would have to be an extension of a revolution in France and Britain (ibid, pp. 212-213). Marx left for Paris on the 2nd of June 1849 accompanied by a fellow socialist Ferdinand Wolff.

On the 19th of July the police informed the Marx family that they had to leave Paris within 24 hours. They left at the end of August, this time for London where they lived in exile for the rest of their life.

In England Marx continued his political activities although he was preoccupied with research activities in long periods until he died in 1883. He had joined the Communist League in 1847 and continued as an active member until it was dissolved in 1852. The period from 1847 to 1852 marked the first period in which Marx was actively preoccupied with politics. He believed that the scattered revolts in Europe from 1848 would lead to international permanent revolution and spread from country to country. He did not only participate in publicising the journals and newspapers mentioned above, but gave numerous lectures in Germany to workers and refugees on economics and social and economic matters. He continued to give such lectures in London to refugees and workers.
Stepping out of political activity

The first active political period of Marx ended in 1852 following a split in the Communist League in London. Since 1848 he had been active in an association of German refugees in London, the German Workers Educational Association (the Association). He was also active as a member of the London Central Committee of the Communist League. The Association established the Committee for the Assistance of German Political Refugees in September 1849 to organise collection of money for the refugees. Marx was a chosen member of the committee. The name of the committee was soon changed to the Social-Democratic Committee for the Assistance of German Refugees and Marx became its President and Engels its Secretary. August Willich was also a member of the committee. He was an ex-Prussian officer who was descended from an old and distinguished German aristocratic family, the Hohenzollerns. In August 1850, Marx opposed Willich’s suggestion to the Central Committee of the Communist League that they should join forces with other democratic refugee organisations. Willich took his suggestion also to the Association where he got the support of the majority. Quarrels between them were fuming and Willich challenged Marx to a duel. Marx declined, he had given up such school-day practices. However, Conrad Schramm challenged Willich instead and they travelled to Ostend for a duel. In the duel Schramm was slightly injured with a glanced shot. Both of them travelled back to England, although not together (D. McLellan 1981: 247-8).

The bulk of the members of the Communist League were in Germany, while some fifteen-twenty were in London. Marx had the upper hand in London while probably had the support of the members in Germany (ibid, p. 250). In a meeting of the London members of the League on 15th of September 1850, Marx’s proposal, that the Central Committee of the League should be moved to Cologne, was accepted. Marx now devoted himself more to economic studies and seems to have lacked the enthusiasm for the League. In May the following year widespread arrests took place in Germany and the activities of
the League in Cologne were practically terminated. Marx organised a committee for the support of League members facing trials in Germany and wrote a book about the trials and methods of the Prussian police. In 1852, the League dissolved itself on Marx’s suggestion (ibid, p. 250 and 252).

**Concentrating on economic studies**

Marx concentrated on scientific work in the following years. Already in 1851 he had become isolated from the refugees in London. He spent much time studying at the British Museum. His friend, W. Pieper, complained to Engels that Marx’s only friends were John Stuart Mill and Lloyd. He stated that “when you visit him, you are met with economic categories instead of with complements” (quoted in D. McLellan 1981: 253).

It was not until 1864 that Marx became politically active again. In the meantime he wrote extensive critique of political economy in voluminous manuscripts. However, most of the manuscripts he worked on in the 1850s and early 1860s were not published in that period and many not until after his death. In 1857-61 he wrote *Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie*. The *Grundrisse* was not published until 1939-41. In this period, i.e. in 1859 he wrote *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, that was published that same year. His *The Production Process of Capital; A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy; Third Chapter, Capital in General* were written between August 1861 - March 1862 and January - July 1863. He wrote the voluminous manuscripts *Theories of Surplus Value* in 1863, but it was edited for publication by Engels after his death. The same goes for *Results of the Direct Production Process* that he wrote during the summer 1864.

Some of this work is undoubtedly among the most important texts of the history of political economy and social sciences. This extensive scientific work of Marx was done under great social and psychological strain. The family income was low and at times there was no money for food and medicine. His one
year old daughter Franziska died in 1852 and his eight year old son Edgar died in 1855. In 1850, his 10 months old son Guido had died. Only three of Jenny von Westphalen and Marx’s children did not die in childhood, i.e. Jenny (1844-83), Laura (1845-1911) and Eleanor (1855-98). Besides these children, Marx had a son with the family maid Helena Demuth. This was Frederick Demuth (1851-1929) who was fathered by Engels. Frederick was immediately sent to foster parents and had no contact with the Marx household at all. It was not until after Marx’s death that he resumed contact with his mother (D. McLellan 1981: 271-2). This side of the story of the Marx family was not unusual. It was common until the first decades of the 20th century in Europe that families saw many of their children die out of different kinds of illness.

Marx was forced to write news paper articles to earn some income. He wrote mostly for the New York Herald Tribune and Die Priessse. However, Marx’s mother in law often sent the family money and so did Frederick Engels, who was a son of a rich industrialist. Most of Marx articles focused on social and political development in Europe as well as on China and India.

**Stepping into politics again**

In the early 1860s important changes took place that improved the economic status of the Marx’s. Thanks to a legacy he got in 1862, Marx did not have to secure anymore income for his family by writing articles for newspapers. Although he had not published any work on economics between 1861 and 1863, his studies had produced the most important parts of his economic writings that later became the bulk of his book *Das Kapital* that was published in 1867. In this period he had frequently been ill and was very isolated (D. Fernbach 1974: 12).

However, circumstances at this time in his life led him to engage in active politics again. In 1864 the First International of Working Men Association was founded.
Among the reasons for this was that by the early 1860s it appeared that working class movements and democratic movements had gained considerable strength in Europe. In England, building workers struggled successfully for a nine-hour day, new trade unions were born and the London Trade Union Council was established in 1860. Industrialisation had made substantial headway in Western Europe and the working class was increasing rapidly in numbers. Working-class movements were also on the move in France and Germany. Napoleon III relaxed anti-trade union laws in France and working class movements in Germany were gaining strength inspired by Lassallean socialism (D. Fernbach 1974: 9). The international political scene stimulated working class activity and consciousness. The struggle of Garibaldi and his guerrilla Redshirts for the unification of Italy arose great sympathy among the lower middle class in England. When he arrived as an exile in England and the British government forced him to leave the country, workers' demonstration in London led to clashes with the police. The civil war in America also activated the British working class to support President Lincoln's abolition of slavery and mass meetings in England helped deter the British government from supporting the Southern side. Furthermore, the Polish insurrection by Russia in 1863 led to demonstrations by workers in England and trade union deputation called on Prime Minister Palmerston to press for British intervention against Russia (ibid, pp. 10-11). Campaigns for solidarity with Poland in France and England were instrumental in bringing about links between English and French workers that led to the founding of the International in 1864.

Marx was not among those who founded the International, but he joined in and attended its first meeting. He was elected Secretary of the General Committee (that soon was called General Council). He played a very important role in giving theoretical and ideological leadership as well as keeping together the various and often antagonist groups under one umbrella. Much of Marx's time during the following seven years was spent on formulating policies of the International,
writing drafts to its Addresses or manifestos, finding ways to solve conflicts between the rival groups of the International, at the same time as he attempted to get support for his own political emphasis and analysis.

The main groups of the International were the French Proudhonists, Spanish and Italian supporters of Bakunin, Marx and mainly his German supporters and finally English trade unions. The ideological difference between these groups was considerable. The Proudhonists, who were mainly shopkeepers, peasants and artisans, emphasised such institutions as co-operatives, credit facilities, protective tariffs and were extremely suspicious of strike action (D. McLellan 1981: 374). Bakunin was opposed to any centralisation of power and advocated total destruction of the state and indeed destruction of every facet of contemporary society. He opposed any co-operation with bourgeois political parties and indeed opposed centralisation within the International as he claimed it to be ‘authoritarian communism’ (ibid, p. 383). The International did not succeed in establishing grounds in Germany until 1866 as the ADAV (General Union of German Workers) was dominated by followers of Lassalle who opposed Marx’s revolutionary emphasis. However, in late 1866 the veteran socialist Johann Philipp Becker managed to found active sections of the International in at least dozen cities in Germany (ibid, pp. 373). The success of the International in terms of membership affiliation was greatest in England. Important unions such as the London Amalgamated Tailors joined in and the Sheffield Conference of Trades Delegates recommended that its members join the International. In late 1866, 17 unions had joined and thirteen were negotiating affiliation as well as the chartist organisation the National Reform League (ibid, pp.368-9). After 1867 the progress of International in England lost momentum and there were very few new trade union affiliations (ibid., p. 379).

The membership of the International was both in the form of individual membership and affiliation of trade unions. It has been estimated that by 1870, the number of individual members
was no more than 254 in England and 385 in Germany by the end of 1871. France had 36 local sections and the number of members in Italy may have exceeded few thousand. The Spanish delegates at the congress of the International in Basel in 1869 claimed 20,000 members, while there were said to be 30 sections in America with 500 members (ibid, p.386). As for trade union affiliation, it is estimated that the total affiliated membership of trade unions was around 50,000 – out of a potential membership of around 800,000. The ADAV and the Verband Deutscher Arbeitervereine (Association of German Workers Union) in Germany eventually joined the International despite laws that prohibited affiliation. In USA the National Labour Union with its almost a million workers declared its adherence to the principles of the International (ibid, p.386).

The International was important in supporting strikes by negotiating loans from trade unions in one country to unions in other countries, but its General Council was itself continually harassed for small debts. Although its impact may have been marginal on influencing policies in the different countries of its sections, it had great ideological impact on trade union leaders, particularly in Britain (ibid, p. 386). It was in particular Marx’s scientific work and intellectual qualities that impressed British trade union leaders and their support was of fundamental importance for the activities of the International on the continent of Europe.

Despite Marx’s time consuming work as Secretary of the International, giving lectures and writing its Addresses, he was not generally known in Britain until his writings and activities in relation to the days of the Commune of Paris in 1871. Following France's defeat in the Franco-German War and the collapse of Napoleon III’s Second Empire (1852–70) a republic was proclaimed in Paris on the 4th of September 1870. In March the following year people feared that the royalist dominated and conservative National Assembly would restore monarchy and resistance broke out in Paris on the 18th of March 1871. Municipal elections took place on the 26th of March and the revolutionaries won. However, communes that arose at Lyon,
Saint-Étienne, Marseille, and Toulouse, were quickly suppressed while the Commune of Paris alone faced the opposition of the Versailles government. The Commune of Paris lasted though only until the following May 28th. About 20,000 insurrectionists were killed, along with about 750 government troops. Furthermore, the government arrested around 38,000 insurrectionists.

Marx's writings on the Franco-German War and the Commune of Paris are among his most important political analysis in terms of analysis of political movements and forms of the state. These writings were Addresses of the International drafted by Marx. The war broke out on the 19th of July and four days later the General Council of the International endorsed the first of its Addresses drafted by Marx. The Address argued for the inevitable collapse of the Second Empire (D. McLellan 1981: 389-90). The third Address drafted by Marx, titled The Civil War in France, was not presented to the General Council until 30th of May, three days after the collapse of the Commune. The General Council had remained absolutely silent during the two months of the Commune (ibid, pp.394-5). The Address emphasised the organisational principles of the Commune as an ideal for social and political organisation of society ruled by the working classes. It emphasised the principles of decentralisation of collective decision making on national and commune level, universal suffrage of the people and the replacement of standing army with national militia with very short term of service (K. Marx 1974b, Part III). It soon became known that Marx was the author of The Civil War in France and now he finally became famous in Britain. Now he was interviewed by such papers as London’s Daily Telegraph and the New York’s World and New York Herald.

After the collapse of the Commune of Paris, the International was a spent force. Although it still assisted strike activities of workers in different countries, its internal and external political conditions had changed. The conflicts between factions of the International. Clashes between Marx, the Prouhonists and Bakunin were unsolvable and by the congress
of the International that took place in Hague in 1872, the final count down had started. It was the only congress of the International that Marx attended. Following Friedrich Engels’s recommendation, the congress decided to move the General Council of the International to New York. The votes fell 29 for, 23 against and there were 9 abstentions. Furthermore, the congress expelled the Alliance of Social Democrats that Bakunin had established in 1868, from the International. A special five man-commission of the International had found out that the Alliance had tried to establish a secret society within the International and was also guilty of fraud (D. McLellan 1981: 410).

The International did not die immediately after the Hague congress, despite the impracticality of having it’s General Council located in New York. It was not until 1876 that the International was finally dissolved. The winds of working class struggle had changed after the Paris Commune. On the international scene, trade unions and working class movements had become ever more national in their struggle. In Britain the trade unions became increasingly critical of revolutionary struggle and emphasised ever more reforms through parliamentary measures. Even Marx stepped on the band-wagon and claimed in a speech to the 1871 London conference of the International that:

> “the governments are opposed to us: we must answer them with all the means that are at our disposal. To get workers into parliament is equivalent to a victory over the governments, but one must choose the right man.”  (K. Marx 1871b)

Marx’s view was that different social and political conditions in European countries and America required different paths in the social revolution of the working classes. And he emphasised that the working class movements in the different countries should decide themselves which way to go (K. Marx 1871c). However, as he emphasized in his La Liberté Speech that he gave in
Amsterdam following the Hague congress, his general view was that:

“You know that the institutions, mores, and traditions of various countries must be taken into consideration, and we do not deny that there are countries -- such as America, England, and if I were more familiar with your institutions, I would perhaps also add Holland -- where the workers can attain their goal by peaceful means. This being the case, we must also recognize the fact that in most countries on the Continent the lever of our revolution must be force; it is force to which we must some day appeal in order to erect the rule of labor.” (K. Marx 1872)

Marx’s last decade

Marx appears to have been increasingly frustrated about how much his political engagement was disturbing his research work. By 1871 he had seriously considered retiring from the International. In May 1872 he had definitely made the decision (D. McLellan 1981: 410). In the 1870s Marx continued his work on political economy and gathered enormous material on Russian and American agriculture as volume three of Capital was to observe ground rent. However, he did not finish these studies and it took Engels 11 years to prepare them for publication.

Marx’s intellectual interests were quite wide in these years. He studied mathematics and attempted to combine it with dialectical thought. In the 1840s and 1850s he studied mathematics mainly in order to improve his economic research. In the 1960s he did differential and integral calculus mainly in his free time while in the 1870s the mathematical studies became systematic (S:A. Yanovskaya 1968: viii-ix). He spent as well much time on studying mechanics and natural sciences such as physiology and geology and was enthusiastic about the beginnings of anthropology and the work of Lewis Morgan. This interest in natural sciences grew as Marx, along with
Engels, moved nearer to positivism in these years. The changing philosophical view of Marx was probably influenced by the development of intellectual circles at that time as positivism was fashionable in these circles. The core of Marx’s changing philosophical standpoint was his emphasis on the independence of laws rather than human practice as the fundamental force in the development of nature and society. Furthermore, this train of thought presumed that essentially the dialectical laws of nature and society were similar. As a consequence, there is a methodological similarity of the science of nature and the science of society. This trend in his thought began in his contribution to Engels’s work Anti-Dühring. The leaning of Marx towards positivism is in striking opposition to his epistemic position in his Theses on Feuerbach, in which human practice plays central role (D. McLellan 1981: 423-4).

Marx’s contribution to social sciences is enormous. His concept of historical materialism has for 150 years provided a fruitful framework for various materialist approaches to history and society. This conception has the status of a paradigm that sets the framework for materialist analysis of the relationship between the different spheres of society, i.e. the economy, social and political relations. Its background in Hegelian dialectics sets the scene for radical conflict orientated social theories. Although Marx did not finish his studies of the interrelations between these spheres of society, his studies has inspired different approaches that have dealt with everything from the Frankfurtian social-psychology of alienation, Post-Keynesian theories of imperfect markets to Leninist economic determinant theories of imperialism and monopoly capitalism. One may wonder why Marx’s work still exerts great fascination after more than a century. The reason is probably that, as R.L. Heilbroner points out:

---

2 See L. Kolakowski (1972) Positivism for a historical overview of positivism.
“Marx had the good fortune, combined, of course, with the necessary genius, to create a method of inquiry that imposed his stamp indelibly on the world. We turn to Marx, therefore, not because he is infallible, but because he is inescapable”.


Marx suffered from lung problems most of his life. In the last decade of his life, illness increasingly limited his physical abilities to do his work. Besides his lung problems he suffered increasingly from insomnia as he got older. A stroke was feared and in 1873 Gumpert, Engel’s doctor, detected a swollen liver. He advised Marx to take the famous Carlsbad cure in Bohemia as there had been little use of the three-week water cure he had in Harrogate. Marx went to Ramsgate for three weeks for health reasons in 1873 and visited Isle of Wight. Finally in July next year he decided to follow Gumpert’s advice and stayed in Carlsbad on the steeply sloping banks of the river Egen in Bohemia (now in the Check Republic). Marx went also to Carlsbad in 1875 and 1876. The following year he stayed in a minor spa in Neurath in the Rhineland, but due to Bismarck’s anti-socialist laws in 1878, he could not go to Germany in that year. Instead he stayed in Malvern and the following year he stayed in Jersey (D. McLellan 1981: 425-30). Despite the cures he may have got from the spas and the fresh air on Jersey, the life of Max was soon to end. He died on the 13th of March 1883 in his home in London. He passed away quietly and painlessly in his bed. He died both intestate and stateless and was buried in Highgate Cemetery, London, four days later (ibid, p.451).
III. From early texts to the *German Ideology*.

Marx began his studies in law seventeen years old in October 1835 at the University of Bonn. A year later he was to move to Berlin and continue his law studies there, where he was to stay until 1841. There he finished his doctoral theses which turned out to be on Epicurean philosophy. Besides his law studies Marx had studied and attended lectures on philosophy, philology, theology, anthropology and geography. By 1837 he had become acquainted with the "Doctor's Club" which members were Hegelian academicians and authors. These where some of the Young Hegelians with one of whom he kept permanent correspondence in the period when he was working on his doctoral thesis, i.e. Bruno Bauer. The subject of his thesis was chosen by Marx to throw light on the contemporary, post-Hegelian context in philosophy, by examination of a comparable period of his own in the history of Greek philosophy (D. MacLellan 1981, 35). In these years and until he started his collaboration with the journal *Reinische Zeitung* in 1842, Marx was preoccupied with metacritique of theology and studies of Hegel's view of the constitutional monarchy.

In 1840 Marx planned to publish a theological-philosophical journal with Bruno Bauer and Feuerbach. The journal was supposed to be atheistic and more radical than Ruge's *Deutsche Jahrböcher* and in March 1842 he worked on a critical revision of Hegel's political philosophy.

Marx's theme is from the start a political one. By nature, jurisprudence is a political subject and so is Hegel's view of the state. Furthermore, critique of theology and religion was essentially a political act in a country like Germany, where religious institutions had at that time in history important role as ideological apparatuses and in legitimating the monarchical system. As early as 1843, Marx is conscious of the political

---

3 Note that all direct references to Marx's works that are referred to in the following discussion, can be found on the Internet, i.e. on the path [http://marxists.org/archive/marx/works/cw/index.htm](http://marxists.org/archive/marx/works/cw/index.htm).
importance of his theological and political metacritique. In a letter to Ruge, written in September 1843 he writes:

"And the whole principle of socialism is again only one side which concerns the true reality of human essence. We must also concern us with the other side, the theoretical existence of human kind, we must make religion, science etc. the object of our criticism. Furthermore we wish to influence our contemporaries, our German contemporaries above all. The problem is how best to achieve this. In this context there are two incontestable facts. Both religion and politics are matters of the very first importance in contemporary Germany." (K. Marx 1975, 207).

The object of Marx's criticism is chosen with reference to an assessment of the political situation of the day. It is not simply a contemplative criticism as Marx was to accuse Feuerbach for in his Theses on Feuerbach. At the end of 1843 Marx concentrated on socio-economic studies, and that is what he means by the relevance of criticizing science, i.e. criticizing political economy. The eleventh thesis on Feuerbach which he wrote few years later, is already there in the practical state in 1843. Before we discuss Marx's economic criticism we should have a look at his metacritique of religion and Hegel's political philosophy.

The very early articles: 'Wood' and 'Mosel'.

The main concern of the articles in the Reinische Zeitung in 1842-3 where the most important political issues of the day, i.e. the problem of poverty and struggle for freedom of the press (H. Lubasz 1976, 25). It was in his work, first as contributor and later as editor-in-chief of the Reinische Zeitung, that Marx came to discuss to great extent the economic problems of the day; i.e. the problems of a project which is quite different from that of a metacritique of philosophy and religion. As H. Lubasz
has highlighted, Marx's initial project begins with perplexities that confronted him at this period. In the articles *Proceedings of the Sixth Renish Diet, Debates on the Law of Thefts of Wood* (‘Wood’) and *Vindication of Correspondent writing from the Mosel* (‘Mosel’), Lubasz claims that in these articles

"Like the liberals (and unlike the Young Hegelians) Marx inquired in detail into actual social conditions, - like the Young Hegelians (and unlike the liberals) he took a radically critical and theoretically systematic view of what he saw. But the incisive originality of his approach stemmed from his categorical rejection of any historical or political a priori. He rejected speculative historical schematisms in favour of empirical inquiry into the institutional past as clue to existing conditions ... (in Mosel) by the same token he rejected doctrinaire appeals to attacks on the state in favour of empirical inquiry into the actual functioning of the state as a clue to its very capacity to deal with the problem of poverty (in Mosel)."

(Ibid., 28).

Fundamentally Marx is dealing with problems of jurisprudence in a critical way. In Wood it is the state and economic distress that he is observing. Although Marx gives an empirical account of these problems he mixes it with a pre-given philosophical framework of analysis. These two levels of his analysis do not coincide completely. The strain between these two levels consists of problems which Marx tries to find solutions to in his *Kreutznach Notebooks* (Ibid., 26) and tries to summarize when he has opportunity to at the end of 1843 and the beginning of 1844, i.e. in *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. Introduction*.

In the *Kreuznach Notebooks* Marx deals with the relationship between particular interests and the universality of the state. As Lubasz claims:
"He seems to see 'the universal interest of an original - sovereign, tribal,'people's' - state 'usurped', first by the particular interest of the several estates which make up the medieval state, then by the particular interest of a modern state detached even from these estates. Neither the estates nor the state of today (1843) embodies the universal interest of the original 'people's state'. History has 'abstracted' estates from people, state from estates."

(Ibid., 38).

According to Lubasz these notebooks consist almost entirely of historical and political studies, that is, of empirical material complemented by careful scrutiny of Machiavelli, Montesquieu, and Rousseau (Ibid., 26).

**Marx's dialectics: his conception of contradictions.**

But Marx uses Hegelian terminology or dialectics to reconstruct his empirical material and his empirical findings of the present (Wood and Mosel) and the tracing of the emergence of political forms (the state) in empirical history. But Marx differs from Hegel both in his categorization of contradictions and his attitude towards the possibility and desirability of the mediation of these contradictions. We find this in his *Critique of Hegel's Doctrine of the State* (K. Marx 1975). Marx's critique of Hegel's dialectics is threefold: 1) He makes a distinction between contradictions or extremes with reference to complementarities and non-complementarities. Real extremes are of two essences, i.e. on the one side they have different natures and do not complement each other. On the other hand differentiations are extremes of the same essence and complement each other (e.g. the male and female sexes belong to one species). According to Marx, Hegel is wrong in not seeing the relation of governed and government and administration and the relation of administration and administered population as real extremes, i.e. of different nature. The interests of these extremes are so different that they cannot be bridged; 2)
secondly, Marx mentions contradictions in abstraction (which we could call 'conceptual contradictions') and he criticizes Hegel on the ontological level for deducing reality from these instead of seeing extremes as autonomous in reality or in other words he criticizes concepts are viewed abstractly⁴; 3) thirdly, Marx criticizes Hegel on the ideological level as he rejects the view that real extremes (such as the contradiction between government and governed) should be mediated (by the estates) (K. Marx 1975 155-6). The same goes for the relation between the poor and civil society. Here we have the differentiation of the property-less (the poor) and those who have property and they have the common origin in the differentiation of feudal property and this differentiation is seen by Marx as a self-differentiation, i.e. the properties made the property-less what they are (H. Lubasz 1976, 40-1).

It is important for us to highlight here that Marx is rejecting abstract deductionism. Social institutions should not be deduced from abstract concepts (such as Hegel's Idea) but seen as a result of a empirical history. As Lubasz puts it:

‘What interests Marx is not a Hegelian system of mediation at all, but the unmediated, self-differentiating self-realization of a single essence, namely human society.’ (Ibid., 41.

Human society has here similar meaning as Hegel's Idea, i.e. it is a ‘Subject’ or cause on history.

**Marx's materialist analysis of the political sphere**

The distinction between the political sphere and civil society and the distinction of the individual into a private and

---

⁴ This refers to Hegel’s method of deducing social institutions from Idea which differentiates Being and divides it into contradictions and transcends them.
public person, into a bourgeois and citizen is to be explained by
the development of society itself. As Marx puts it:
"The separation of civil and political society appears necessarily as the separation of the political citizen, the citizen of the state, from civil society and from his own real empirical reality; for as an ideal political entity [Staatsideal] he is a quite different being, wholly distinct from and opposed to his actual reality. Civil society thus manufactures within itself the same relation between state and civil society that we have already formed in the bureaucracy ... If the citizen is to acquire political significance and efficacy, he must discard his class, civil society, the class of private citizens." (K. Marx 1975, 143-4).

In the article *On the Jewish Question* Marx wrote:

"Only when real individual man resumes the abstract citizen into himself and as an individual man has become a species-being in his empirical life, his individual work and his individual relationship, only when humanity has recognized and organized its forces proper as social forces so that social force is no longer separated from it in the form of political force, only then will human emancipation be completed." (K. Marx 1975 234).

It is the structure of the empirical life of individuals and their work that causes the separation of the political (public) life from the civil (private) life. Here we have the roots of the basis-superstructure distinction and 'the materialist approach to history'. As Marx writes:

"...the perfection of the idealism of the state was at the same time the perfection of the materialism of civil society. The shaking-off of the political yoke was at the

---

5 It was written in September 1843 while the Critique was written in March to August.
same time the shaking-off of the bonds which had held in check the egoistic spirit of civil society." (Ibid., 233).

According to Marx the development of political institutions and their nature (in capitalism the dualism of civil and political life) must be explained by the development of the material life of individuals. If we call this the diachronical aspect of his historiography, we see from the quotations above that this is not a monist view of history; the development of political and civil life goes hand in hand. But Marx has a synchronic view of political life or concrete history as well and here he seems to have a more determinist view.

**Marx's early social determinism.**

In the article Mosel from early 1843 he writes:

"In the investigation of political conditions one is too easily tempted to overlook the objective nature of the relationships and to explain everything from the will of the persons acting. There are relationships, however, which determine the actions of private persons as well as those of individual authorities, and which are as independent as are movements in breathing ... As soon as it is demonstrated that something was necessitated by conditions, it will not be difficult to figure out under which external circumstances this thing actually had to come into being, and under which other conditions it could not have come about, although a need for it was present. One can determine this with almost the same certainty as a chemist determines under which external circumstances some substances will form a compound."(K. Marx 1967, 144-5).

As we saw above, Marx stresses on the point that social reality is autonomous and is not to be deduced from abstract philosophical concepts as their origin or subject and in the last
quotation this autonomous reality is even of the same nature as the objects of chemistry and results of processes can be predicted with great certainty. But these views can’t be taken for a pure empiricist trend in Marx. As we can see in his *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. Introduction* (written 1843-4), he emphasizes the importance of philosophy in social conflicts. As he writes:

"Clearly the weapon of criticism cannot replace the criticism of weapons and material force must be overthrown by material force once it has gripped the masses. Theory is capable of gripping the masses when it demonstrates ad hominem, and it demonstrates ad hominem as soon as it becomes radical. To be radical is to grasp things by the root. But for man the root is man himself." (K. Marx 1975, 251).

From these quotations we must conclude that Marx is rather obscure in terms of the necessity of political and social development. On the one side is the determinist view in Mosel and on the other the 'historicist' in the 'Introduction'. It seems to us to be an unresolved problem in Marx’s writings and activities in all his life taken together.

In the 'Introduction' we can read a postulate concerning the relation of social structures and religion or illusory views of reality. Marx Writes:

"The foundation of irreligious criticism is: Man makes religion, religion does not make man. Religion is indeed the self-consciousness and self-esteem of man who has either not yet won through to himself or has already lost himself again. But man is no abstract being squatting outside the world. Man is the world of man, state,

---

6 Keep in mind few pages before this quotation Marx defined man as state and society.
society. This state and this society produce religion, which is an inverted consciousness of the world, because they are an inverted world ... It is the fantastic realization of the human essence since the human essence has not acquired any true reality. The struggle against religion is therefore indirectly the struggle against that world whose spiritual aroma is religion ... The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is the demand for their real happiness. To call on them to give up their illusions about their condition is to call on them to give up a condition that requires illusions”.

And Marx adds:

"It is therefore the task of history, once the other-world of truth has vanished, to establish the truth of this world. It is the immediate task of philosophy, which is in the service of history, to unmask self-estrangement in its unholy forms once the holy form of human self-estrangement has been unmasked. Thus the criticism of heaven turns into the criticism of earth, the criticism of religion into the criticism of law and the criticism of theology into the criticism of politics." (Ibid., 244-5).

To sum up: According to Marx the separation of civil and political life and the need for religion is caused by the material conditions of people. These conditions are inverted and self-estranged relations of man, i.e. the social conditions are not under the conscious control of man, but determined by the egoism of private individuals.

Marx’s epistemology; knowledge and political practice.

Having discussed Marx’s social ontology above, we should now turn to the epistemological level and highlight his distinction between illusory (religion) and non-illusory or true knowledge. Marx does not directly analyse non-illusory
knowledge at this stage. He deals more directly with epistemological problems in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* which he wrote few months later in 1844. We will analyse his epistemology in that text as we turn to it below.

The motive behind Marx’s critique in the 'Introduction' is, as before, his assessment of what is politically relevant to criticize. As he sees his activities as part of German politics he criticizes the dominant ideology of the state, i.e. Hegel's philosophy of right. The reason is twofold: On the one side he believes that bourgeois revolution is not on the arena of politics as no particular class can play hegemonic role in such a revolution in Germany at that time in history (Ibid., 254-5) and on the other side the only class which can claim universal emancipation in Germany is only beginning to appear, namely, the proletariat. According to Marx, the proletariat, i.e. the revolutionary actor is

"...a result of the emergent industrial movement. For the proletariat is not formed by natural, but by artificially produced poverty: It is formed not from the mass of people mechanically oppressed by the weight of society but from the mass of people issuing from society's acute disintegration and in particular from the dissolution of the middle class.” (Ibid., 256).

As a consequence Marx rejects both pure philosophical criticism of speculative philosophy and crude negation of philosophy as the 'practical party' does (i.e. socialists of the day) (Ibid., 260). Marx transcends both these elements in criticism that goes to the roots, cf. above. The concept of the proletariat is the clearest result of this transcendence ('Aufhebung' if you like).

At the end of 1843, Marx began his social and economic studies in a systematic way. He and his wife had emigrated to Paris where he became acquainted with underground socialist and communist societies and some unions of skilled German workers (the proletariat). The fruit of these studies can be seen
in Excerpts from James Mill's Elements of Political Economy. In the Excerpts, Marx criticizes a particular branch of science, i.e. political economy and he proceeds to a critique of the economic side of civil society. His critique is twofold:

1) On the one side, he criticizes the epistemological status of economic laws and stresses on the importance of seeing abstract economic laws as historical. Marx highlights that Mill as the entire Ricardo school

"succumbs to the error ... of defining an abstract law without mentioning the fluctuations or the continual suspension through which it comes into being." (Ibid., 260).

According to Marx, economic laws are only chance;

2) On the other side, he proceeds to a critique of Mill's Theories of money and extends his definition of money which only takes it as mediator in exchange. Marx grasps its social characteristics in terms of property relations, moral criticism, estrangement and human community and human essence.

Exchange by money is not simply exchange of mutually complementary products of 'man', but generates a system of human relations which work independent and above man. As Marx writes:

"The nature of money is ... that the mediating function or movement, human, social activity, by means of which the products of man mutually complement each other, is estranged and becomes the property of a material thing external to man, i.e. money. If man himself alienates this mediating function he remains active only as a lost, dehumanized creature. The relation between things, human dealings with them, become the operations of a being beyond and above man." (Ibid., 260).

And Marx adds that money has its origin in private property as money originally represents the value of objects. But this
relationship has changed as in modern society objects lose their worth separated from this mediator i.e. money.

"Thus they have value only in so far as they represent him [the mediator], whereas it appeared at first that he had value only to the extent to which he represented them ... Hence this mediator is the last estranged essence of private property alienated and external to itself; it is the alienated mediation of human production with human production, the alienated species-activity of man ... Thus man separated from this mediator becomes poorer as man in proportion as the mediator becomes richer.” (Ibid., 260-1).

We can see from these quotations that Marx is dealing with, in a philosophical and critical way, a fundamental concept of jurisprudence, i.e. private property and this problematic gains its political meaning in the overall political context in which Marx is working. But there is as well a historiographical problematic as Marx traces money, through private property, back to its origin. As for the philosophical aspect, Marx deals with the inversion of subject and object; private property is the historical origin or subject of money, but not vice versa as it is in modern society that it emerges with its full grown function as an autonomous mediator. And in this society there are two subjects; we have man on the one side that generates human relations among which we find property relations and value relations. On the other side, there is a subject that originates in human relations, but has come to dominate man and dehumanized him, i.e. money as mediator of the products of man. And Marx criticizes this mediator morally as he stresses that the cult of money becomes an end in itself (Ibid., 260), and furthermore, according to Marx, there are ideological grounds for this appearance of the system of the two subjects (man and money), i.e. the dualism of the private and public (or abstract) in man:
"For the mediating movement of man engaged in exchange is not a social, human movement, it is no human relationship; it is the abstract relation of private property to private property, and this abstract relation is the value which acquires a real existence as value only in the form of money. Since in the process of exchange men do not relate to each other as men, things lose the meaning of personal, human property ... Hence, money, the existence-for-itself of this relationship, represents the alienation of private property, an abstraction from its specific personal nature." (Ibid., 261).

And Marx highlights the immorality of the credit system:

"...the credit relationship - both from the point of view of the man who needs credit and of him who gives it - becomes an object of commerce, an object of mutual deception and exploitation. This brilliantly illustrates the fact that the basis of trust in economics is mistrust: the mistrustful reflection about whether to extend credit or not; the spying-out of the secrets in the private life of the borrower; the revelation of temporary difficulties so as to embarrass a competitor by undermining his credit, etc." (Ibid., 264-5).

Having analysed the credit system and exchange in general in ethical and economic terms, Marx proceeds to analyse the specific forms which different social activities take in this nexus of exchange relations. We can call it dialectical concretization of social institutions; Private property becomes alienated private property (Ibid., 267), labour becomes alienated wage-labour. We have already seen the alienation or estrangement and inversion of private property and money. In the situation of exchange, wage-labour or estranged labour, is brought about by two crucial factors:
(1) Wage-labour and the product of the worker does not stand in any direct relation to his/her wants and to his vocation, but in both respects is determined by social configurations alien to the worker. (2) The man who purchases the product does not himself produce but only exchanges the produce of others.

And:

"Wage-labour consists of the following elements: (1) the estrangement of labour from its subject, the labourer, and its arbitrariness from his point of view; (2) the estrangement of labour from its object, its arbitrariness vis-à-vis the object; (3) the determination of the labourer by social needs alien to him and which act upon him with compulsive force. He must submit to this force from egoistic need, from necessity; for him the needs of society mean only the satisfaction of his personal wants while for society - he is only the slave that satisfies its needs; (4) the labourer regards the maintenance of his individual existence as the aim of his activity; his actual labours serve only as a means to this end. He thus activates his life to acquire the means of life"

And Marx adds:

"Just as the reciprocal exchange of the produce of human activity appears as barter, horse-trading, so the reciprocal complementing and exchange of human activity itself appears in the form of the division of labour. This makes man, as far as is possible, an abstract being, a lathe, etc., and transforms him into a spiritual and physical abortion ... The very unity of human labour is regarded only in terms of division because man's social nature is realized only as its antithesis, as estrangement. With civilization the division of labour is intensified.” (Ibid., 268-9).
Marx’s aim is not just to argue for the view that economic forms analysed by political economy are historical. The reduction of society into economic categories is just a reflection of estranged forms. As he says:

"We see then how economics establishes the estrange form of social commerce as the essential and fundamental form appropriate to the vocation of man."

(Ibid., 266).

Antagonist to this rationalist view of man as essentially egoist, Marx claims the human essence and human community to be totally different. So, although he accepts the analysis of political economy of civil society as estranged social forms, he does not accept its ontology of man. As he even highlights the fundamental principles of human community. As he puts it:

"Let us suppose that we had produced as human beings. In that event each of us would have doubly affirmed himself and his neighbour in his production. (1) In my production I would have objectified the specific character of my individuality and for that reason I would both have enjoyed the expression of my own individual life during my activity and also, in contemplating the object, I would experience an individual pleasure, I would experience my personality as an objective sensously perceptible power beyond all shadow of doubt. (2) In your use or employment of my product I would have the immediate satisfaction and knowledge that in my labour I had gratified a human need, i.e. that I had objectified human nature and hence had produced an object corresponding to the needs of another human being. (3) I would have acted for you as the mediator between you and the species, thus I would be acknowledged by you as the complement of your own being, as an essential part of yourself. I would thus know thoughts and your love. (4) In the individual expression
of my life I would have brought about the immediate expression of your life, and so in my individual activity I would have directly confirmed and realized my authentic nature, human communal nature."

And he adds:

"My labour would be the free expression and hence the enjoyment of life. In the framework of private property it is the alienation of life since I work in order to live, in order to produce for myself the means of life. My labour is not life." (Ibid., 277-8).

To realize these ideas, abolition of the market as such is not the only thing needed. A community which is small and self-sufficient is needed as well. Obviously Marx is here under strong influences of Rousseau's philosophy and these ideas seem only reasonable in terms of Marx's concept of the proletariat (i.e. "the mass of people issuing from society's acute disintegration and in particular from the dissolution of the middle class" (K. Marx 1975, 256). in fact Marx did after all read Rousseau some months before his 'Excerpts' (D. MacLellan 1981, 73).

The same kind of ethical, historical and philosophical critique as we find in the 'Excerpts' is to be found in Marx's Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts. But, in the latter writings Marx states their theme more explicitly:

"In the Deutsch-Französische Jahrböcher"\(^7\) I announced a critique of jurisprudence and political science in the form of a critique of the Hegelian philosophy of right. While preparing this for publication I found that to combine criticism directed only against speculation with criticism of the various subjects themselves was quite

\(^7\) i.e. "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, Introduction"

46
unsuitable ... I shall therefore publish the critique of law, morals, politics, etc., in a series of separate, independent pamphlets and finally attempt, in a special work, to present them once again as a connected whole, to show the relationship between the parts and to try to provide a critique of the speculative treatment of the material. That is why the present work only touches on the interconnection of political economy and the state, law, morals, civil life, etc., in so far as political economy itself particularly touches on these subjects." (K. Marx 1975, 230-1).
The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts.

Although the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts are very dispersed in content we can briefly summarize them as follows:

1) The first manuscript.
In the first manuscript Marx starts on the "surface" of empirical reality by quoting empirical data from political economy that reflect the misery of the poor and how immoral the capitalist economy is\(^8\) and by quoting the laws of the economic system. Furthermore, he highlights power relations between landowners, capitalists and labourers within the nexus of this system and the inevitability of the polarisation of society into property owners and propertyless workers. At the end of the first manuscript he summarizes what we can call the 'essence' of the system with the concept of 'estranged labour' as abstract labour in which man has become mere commodity, dehumanised to the level of machines and determined by alien forces of the market. But this form of labour, estranged labour, is but a historical form of labour in general.

Marx's concept of 'labour'.

For Marx, labour is the general relation between man and nature in which man works on nature according to his/her needs and desires or will; it is a practical activity. Estranged labour is a form of labour in which the worker works in the form of forced labour and not voluntary labour and does not belong to himself but to another.\(^9\) Marx shows how estranged labour is historically fundamental or the cause of private property.

---

\(^8\) This is the same theme as we find in Engels' "Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy" (1844).
\(^9\) By defining estranged labour in that way Marx has a concept that covers exploitation in slave as well as feudal and capitalist societies.
although at present day, estranged labour and private property are in a reciprocal relation of determination. As Marx puts it:

"But it is clear from an analysis of this concept [i.e. alienated, estranged labour - I.J.] that although private property appears as the basis and cause of alienated labour, it is in fact its consequence ... 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 alienation" (K. Marx 1975, 332).

As Marx has transformed the problematic of political economy by his philosophical and anthropological conceptual analysis he sets out to reconstruct the conceptual framework of political economy. As he says at the end of the first manuscript:

"Just as we have arrived at the concept of private property through an analysis of the concept of estranged, alienated labour, so with the help of these two factors it is possible to evolve all economic categories, and in each of these categories, e.g. trade, competition, capital, money, we shall identify only a particular and developed expression of these basic constituents." (Ibid., 333).

2) The second manuscript.

In the second manuscript Marx deals with what he calls the relationship of private property. As the point of departure of his analysis is his 'present day' reality, he analyses private property in terms of its extremes, i.e. labour and capital. In a determinist way he sketches historical property relations as a necessary development towards the pure forms of capital (stored up labour, interest and profit). In Marx’s words:
"The real course of development ... leads necessarily to the victory of the capitalist, i.e. of developed private property, over undeveloped, immature private property, the landowner ... Landed property, as distinct from capital, is private property, capital which is still afflicted with local and political prejudices ... it is capital which is not yet fully developed. In the course of its formation on a world scale it must attain its abstract, i.e. pure, expression." (Ibid., 340-1).

3) The third manuscript

In the third manuscript Marx is primarily occupied with epistemological and ontological problems and the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts end with the chapter "Critique of Hegel's Dialectic and General Philosophy" in which he assesses Hegel's and Feuerbach's philosophy. This manuscript is more interesting for the present paper than the first two. Within the general framework of our problematic, i.e. Marx's epistemics and historiography of science, we will concentrate on: 1) his view of political economy and his determinism; 2) his view of science; 3) his epistemology and ontology.

Marx's critique of political economy in the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts.

We have already mentioned Marx's anthropological and philosophical critique of political economy. He criticizes its limited field as it regards the proletarian (the one who lives without capital or ground rent and on labour alone) as nothing more than a worker and not as a human being.

"It leaves this to criminal law, doctors, religion, statistical tables, politics and the beadle." (Ibid., 288)

But it is not only the case that its field is limited; it implicitly advocates a moral theory:
It is therefore ... a truly moral science, the most moral science of all. Self-denial, the denial of life and all human needs, is its principal doctrine. The less you eat, drink, buy book, go to the theatre, go dancing, go drinking, think, love, theorize, sing, paint, fence, etc., the more you save and the greater will become that treasure which neither moths nor maggots can consume - your capital.’ (Ibid., 361).

Furthermore, Marx criticizes political economy for its unconscious expression of the contradiction between the social nature of its object and the unsocial, particular interests that generate division of labour and exchange (Ibid., 374). And it does not reflect on the origin of these particular interests and private property:

"Political economy proceeds from the fact of private property. It does not explain it. It grasps the material process of private property ... in general and abstract formulae which it then takes as laws. It does not show how they arise from the nature of private property."

As an example he mentions that

"...competition is frequently brought into the argument and explained in terms of external circumstances. Political economy teaches us nothing about the extent to which these external and apparently accidental circumstances are only the expression of a necessary development. We have seen how exchange itself appears to political economy as an accidental fact. The only wheels which political economy sets in motion are greed and the war of the avaricious" (Ibid., 322-3).

This critique of political economy implies a determinist view in terms of the diachronical basis of economic laws. But the nature of this 'necessity' of historical development, or its
causality is obscure in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*; it is referred to as the process of estrangement of labour which generates the 'present day' (of Marx's day) dualism of estranged labour and private property. Marx criticizes political economy for reverting this process:

"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..." (Ibid., 332).

Private property is no more the subject of history than Hegel's Idea. According to Marx it is labour as the relationship between man and nature (we will analyse this aspect below).

**Marx's determinism.**

But Marx has a clearer determinist view in terms of synchrony: The capitalist system has implicit in it necessary irrationality which becomes explicit in overproduction and polarization in society; overproduction is not accidental as some political economists would have it (Ibid., 306). It is made by the necessity of economic laws and it leads to its fall. Obviously Marx has gone beyond the level of 'economic facts' of his 'present day' and is drawing non-empirical conclusions which are not hypotheses but necessity according to him. Marx quotes Prequeur (Ibid., 306) to show how the irrationality of the market leads to a situation where supply is ignorant of demand, and vice versa, so that

"The inevitable consequences are continual and spreading bankruptcies miscalculations sudden collapses and unexpected fortunes; trade crisis, unemployment, periodic surfeits and shortages..."
Competition among capitalists leads to concentration of capital in few hands (Ibid., 300) which makes possible better ways of organizing labour and increased productivity and division of labour. According to Marx this leads to overproduction:

"The quantity of industry, therefore, not only increases in every country with the increase of the stock which employs it, but, in consequence of that increase, the same quantity of work. Hence overproduction." (Ibid., 308. Marx quotes A. Smith here).

And Marx concludes:

"From political economy itself, using its own words, we have shown that the misery of the worker is in inverse proportion to the power and volume of his production; that the necessary consequence of competition is the accumulation of capital in a few hands ... and finally the distinction between capitalist and landlord, between agricultural worker and industrial worker, disappears and the work of society must split into the two classes of property owners and propertyless workers." (Ibid., 322).

Furthermore, according to Marx, social revolution is inevitable; it is inevitable that landed property should develop into a community or be "drawn entirely into the orbit of private property" (Ibid., 319). As landed property assumes industrial character, national and international competition on agricultural markets reduces to minimum the number of agricultural workers and their wages. Concentration of landed property in fewer hands and international competition has the consequences that

"Eventually wages, which have already been reduced to minimum, must be reduced even further in order to meet the new competition. This then leads necessarily to revolution." (Ibid., 322).
We are not interested in highlighting the fallacies of Marx's prediction of such a revolution, e.g. in terms of colonialism etc., but simply highlighting the fact that Marx sees revolution as necessity in terms of the laws of capital accumulation and concentration. This point again leads us to Marx's motive for his critique of political economy, i.e. its political relevance: Marx analyses of estranged labour is not simply a critique of political economy as such, it is a critique of 'reformist' socialist theories as well. As Marx puts it:

"Let us now rise above the level of political economy and examine the ideas developed above, taken almost word for word from the political economists, for the answers to these two questions: (1) What is the meaning, in the development of mankind, of this reduction of the greater part of mankind to abstract labour? (2) What mistakes are made by the piecemeal reformers, who either want to raise wages and thereby improve the situation of the working class, or like Proudhon - see equality of wages as the goal of social revolution? In political economy labour appears only in the form of wage-earning activity" (Ibid., 288-9).

Marx's contribution to or transcendence of socialist and economic discourse is his theory of abstract dehumanized labour and his economic determinist theory of social development. By developing these theories, he is transcending the critique of speculative philosophy and ontology (more about that later on) as well as political economy be means of a theory of human labour. The relevance of Marx's work goes beyond Germany where he presumes that critique of philosophy is most relevant.

10 Marx improved later his theoretical grounds for his prediction, i.e. in chapter XIV of volume III of Capital in which he analysed counteracting influences against the law of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall. Similar train of thought is to be found in John Stuart Mill's (1848) The Principles of Political Economy, Book 4, Chapter 4, 'Of the Tendency of Profits to a Minimum'.
His critique becomes relevant to more advanced conditions of capitalism such as in France (where he stayed from October 1843 to February 1845). Now his critique becomes relevant to a new political context in which he finds himself as he comes into a contact with the real life of the modern working class and the situation of the proletariat for the first time in his life (E. Mandel 1977, 14-15).

However, at the moment we are not dealing with the social construction of Marx's thought as we are only concentrating on his view of science among which he counts political economy. But, Marx does indeed make some general remarks about science in general as well.

**Marx's view of science in general; science and alienation.**

He sketches very rudimentary ideas of the social construction of science and the division of intellectual and manual labour. As he writes:

"But even if I am active in the field of science, etc. - an activity which I am seldom able to perform in direct association with other man - I am still socially active because I am active as a man ... It is not only the material of my activity - including even the language in which the thinker is active - which I receive as a social product. My own existence is social activity." (K. Marx 1975, 350).

In more familiar words Marx is saying that the problematic of science and its alienation in society is socially determined. And he adds that instead of being alienated it should be a conscious activity or human activity:

"Therefore [as science is social activity -I.J.] what I create from myself I create for society, conscious of myself. My universal consciousness is only the theoretical form of that whose living form is the real
community, society, whereas at present universal consciousness is an abstraction from real life and as such in hostile opposition to it. Hence the activity of my universal consciousness - as activity - is my theoretical existence as a social being." (Ibid., 350).

Marx seems to be saying that his universal consciousness is not only 'dialectical' (referring to 'real life' society) but relevant as well for political practice and in that sense we have the same kind of supersession of philosophical criticism as in his eleventh thesis on Feuerbach. This can be seen from his view that

"It is easy to see how necessary it is for the whole revolutionary movement to find both its empirical and its theoretical basis in the movement of private property or, to be more exact, of the economy." (Ibid., 348).

**Marx's ideal science; human science.**

Besides these remarks Marx has some ideas about the relations between natural science and society and human sciences and what would stand for Marx's ideal science:

"The natural sciences have been prolifically active and have gathered together an ever growing mass of material. But philosophy has remained just as alien to them as they have remained alien to philosophy ... Even historiography only incidentally takes account of natural science, which it sees as contributing to enlightenment, utility and a few great discoveries. But natural science has intervened in and transformed human life all the more practically through industry and has prepared the conditions for human emancipation, however much its immediate effect was to complete the process of dehumanization. Industry is the real historical relationship of nature, and hence of natural science, to man. If it is then conceived as the exotic revelation of
man's essential powers, the human essence of nature or the natural essence of man can also be understood. Hence natural science will lose its abstractly material, or rather idealist, orientation and become the basis of a human science, just as it has already become - though in an estranged form - the basis of actual human life.” (Ibid., 355).

But this does not mean that Marx's ideal science is a positivist science in the narrow sense (i.e. strict mathematical and experimental science); he wants natural science to be transcended:

"History itself is a real part of natural history and of nature's becoming man. Natural science will in time subsume the science of man just as the science of man will subsume natural science: there will be one science.” (Ibid., 355).

We can see here that Marx's theme is the abuses of science in terms of its function in the process of dehumanization of man or estranged labour, but he believes it has a positive side as well as they produce the basis for material wealth. As a consequence Marx's fundamental critique refers to industry and technology but not natural science as such. Time and again in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* Marx criticizes his present day technology which makes workers to mere machines (especially quoting A. Smith’s analysis of the division of labour in his *Wealth of Nations*).

As we saw above, Marx believes that his consciousness is universal, referring to communist aims, but unlike the 'abstract communism' -based on atheism (c.f. Owen, see K. Marx 1975, 349) or that which "seeks in isolated historical forms opposed to private property a historical proof for itself" (Ibid., 348) - it is based on real life. Marx’s communism or universal consciousness is based on the idea that
"The entire movement of history is ... both actual act of creation of communism - the birth of its empirical existence - and, for its thinking consciousness, the comprehended and known movement of its becoming."

What are then the epistemological premises for this knowledge of this becoming of communism and Marx's universal consciousness? Let's have a look.

**Marx's epistemology; the social construction of man's senses and knowledge.**

Marx rejects naive empiricism and sensationalism. But, his theoretical conclusions are nevertheless based on "entirely empirical analysis based on an exhaustive critical study of political economy" (Ibid., 281). This 'critical' study is Marx's conceptual critique based on the concept of 'estranged' labour and human essence. Furthermore as this conceptual stage is arrived at man reaches knowledge that corresponds to reality, according to Marx. As he puts it:

"As species-consciousness man confirms his real social life and merely repeats in thought his actual existence; conversely, species-being confirms itself in species-consciousness and exists for itself in its universality, as a thinking being." (Ibid., 350-1).

To arrive at such a stage of knowledge, the senses of man have to develop and this is what happens in history and man's practice:

"...not only the five senses, but also the so-called spiritual senses, the practical senses (will, love, etc.), in a word, the human sense, the humanity of the senses - all these come into being only through the existence of their objects, through humanized nature. The cultivation of the
five senses is the work of all previous history." (Ibid., 353).

And few pages later he says:

"Only through developed industry, i.e. through the mediation of private property, does the ontological essence of human passion come into being, both in its totality and in its humanity; the science of man is therefore itself a product of the self-formation of man through practical activity." (Ibid., 375).

Marx does not develop any detailed theory of the social construction of the senses. His discussion is on an abstract level as he is dealing with the relations between the object and subject of knowledge. He comes to the conclusion that man cultivates his senses and that they develop in history in man's practical activity. Marx merely mentions that:

"The diversity of human talents is more the effect than the cause of the division of labour; i.e. of exchange."

And according to him, private property is fundamental to exchange which is historically fundamental to the division of labour and not vice versa: Human passion, i.e. conscious passion in practical activity, comes into being only

"...through developed industry, i.e. through the mediation of private property."

And this self-formation of man through practical activity or developed industry gives birth to the science of man (Ibid., 375), i.e. man as a conscious, social and practically acting being. For Marx, man's senses are modes of affirmation of man's ontological essence in sensuous objects. Marx's view of the human senses is not strictly anthropological (in the sense that man unlike animals is conscious of his activities and has five
His idea is that man's sense(s) is sensuous activity (activity referring to sensuous goal attaining activity). And this activity is a mode of affirmation of feelings, passions etc., in the objects of activity or practice. As he puts it:

"If man's feelings, passions etc., are not merely anthropological characteristics in the narrower sense, but are truly ontological affirmations of his essence (nature), and if they only really affirm themselves in so far as their object exists sensuously for them, then it is clear: (1) that their mode of affirmation is by no means one and the same, but rather that the different modes of affirmation constitute the particular character of their existence, of their life. The mode in which the object exists for them is the characteristic mode of their gratification ... (3) In so far as man, and hence also his feelings, etc., are human, the affirmation of the object by another is also his own gratification ... (5) The meaning of private property, freed from its estrangement, is the existence of essential objects for man, both as objects of enjoyment and of activity." (Ibid., 375).

But although Marx sees the objects as individual and social affirmation of man's feelings, passions etc., it does not mean that he adheres to idealism; his view is realist and it is only sensuous objects that affirmation refers to, but not objects in themselves:

"...it is only when objective reality universally becomes for man in society the reality of man's essential powers, becomes human reality, and thus the reality of his own essential powers, that all objects become for him the objectification of himself, objects that confirm and realize his individuality, his objects, i.e. he himself becomes the object. The manner in which they become his depends on the nature of the object and the nature of the essential power that corresponds to it; for it is just
the determinateness of this relation that constitutes the particular, real mode of affirmation."

And Marx rejects the foundations of idealist and rationalist epistemology as he claims that:

"An object is different for the eye from what it is for the ear, and the eye's object is different from the ear's. The peculiarity of each essential power is precisely its peculiar essence, and thus also the peculiar mode of its objectification, of its objectively real, living being. Man is therefore affirmed in the objective world not only in thought but with all the senses." (Ibid., 352-3)

Marx considers thought and being to be in unity although they are distinct (Ibid., 351). What unites them is sensuous activity or practice. This sensuous activity is not simply a sum of the essential powers of the objects on the one side and the essential powers of man's senses on the other; this activity and its product, knowledge, is social and cultivated appropriation of the objects:

"Man appropriates his integral essence in an integrated way, as a total man. All his human relations to the world - seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling, thinking, contemplating, sensing, wanting, acting, loving - in short all the organs of his individuality, like the organs which are directly communal in form, are in their objective approach or in their approach to the object the appropriation of their object." (Ibid., 351).

As a consequence, Marx's epistemology is not naive empiricism as it problematizes sensing and it is not rationalist as the form of knowledge is practical activity but not reduced to pure forms of thinking.

Although Marx approaches these epistemological problems on abstract philosophical level in terms of subject-
object relations, he hints at methodological canons to deal with them in a more direct way as he writes:

‘Religion, the family, the state, law, morality, science, art, etc., are only particular modes of production and therefore come under its general law.’

But this refers only to estranged life in the context of private property (ibid., 348-9). In the context of estranged labour, man's appropriation of his objects in arts, science, politics, etc., should be treated as modes of production. Unfortunately Marx does not define his concept of mode of production at this stage of his theoretical development (i.e. in the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts).

Knowledge and praxis.

Marx's praxis-epistemology does not only refer to the primary premises of theoretical discourses, it refers as well to the way in which resolutions to theoretical antithesis are established. And this is done by acting on the objects of discourses but not by contemplation or establishing solutions purely in thought. In that sense the eleventh thesis on Feuerbach is already explicit in the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts. As Marx puts it:

"it can be seen how the resolution of the theoretical antitheses themselves is possible only in a practical way, only through the practical energy of man and how their resolution is for that reason by no means only a problem of knowledge, but a real problem of life, a problem which philosophy was unable to solve precisely because it treated it as a purely theoretical problem." (Ibid., 354).
We can see how Marx's world view is not a contemplative view, but practical\textsuperscript{11}. We will now analyse his ontology as we find it in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*.

**The ontology of the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*.**

Implicit in Marx's 'praxis-realist-epistemology' is a relational or praxis ontology. His fundamental ontological view is that reality is a whole constituted by interacting elements. These elements are Nature, Man, Society and Individuals. The whole of these elements and the elements themselves are situated in a developing process. Briefly, it seems that there are two opposite trends in Marx's view: On the one side is a anthropological-philosophical ontology which represents man as a free being, working on the potentialities of nature, on the other side is a social ontology which is determinist and represents the determination of individuals by social relations. As a consequence, two 'Subjects' are to be found in Marx's ontology, i.e. man and social relations. According to this, we saw that his discussion is based on two quite different levels of abstraction, i.e. a philosophical level and an empirical level. To bridge these two levels Marx works with the concept of Labour, especially estranged labour, i.e. man's socially determined mode of appropriation of nature in capitalist society dominated by private property.

**Marx's relational ontology and his concept of the 'real'.**

Before we describe the basic concepts of the elements of his ontology, we should analyse his notion of what we can call 'relational ontology' and his view of the relations between nature and mind and his concept of the 'real'. As for the relational ontology, Marx rejects any ontology which has as its point of

\textsuperscript{11} See G. Lightheim 1973: 30, on different world views.
departure in abstract concepts. We can see that in his discussion of the problem of the creation of nature and man. Marx writes:

"Who begot the first man, and nature in general? I can only answer: Your question is itself a product of abstraction. Ask yourself how you arrive at that question ... If you ask about the creation of nature and man, then you are abstracting from nature and from man. You assume them as non-existent and want me to prove to you that they exist ... since for socialist man the whole of what is called world history is nothing more than the creation of man through human labour and the development of nature for man, he therefore has palpable and incontrovertible proof of his self-mediated birth of his process of emergence. Since the essentiality [Wesenhaftigkeit] of man and of nature, man as the existence of nature for man and nature as the existence of man for man, has become practically and sensuously perceptible, the question of an alien being, a being above nature and man ... has become impossible in practice." And he adds that the starting-point of socialism "... is the theoretically and practically sensuous consciousness of man and of nature as essential beings. It is the positive self-consciousness of man..."(K. Marx 1975, 357-8).

What is real is what is sensuous. As he writes:

"A non-objective being is a non-being. Imagine a being which is neither an object itself nor has an object. In the first place, such a being would be the only being; no other being would exist outside it, it would exist in a condition of solitude. For as soon as there are objects outside me, as soon as I am not alone, I am another, a reality other than the object outside me. For this third object I am therefore a reality other than it, i.e. its object. A being which is not the object of another being therefore presupposes that no objective being exists. As
soon as I have an object, this object has me for its object. But a non-objective being is an unreal, non-sensuous, merely thought; i.e. merely concerned being, a being of abstraction. To be sensuous, i.e. to be real, is to be an object of sense, a sensuous object, and thus to have sensuous objects outside oneself, objects of one's sense perception.” (Ibid., 390).

But, as we have highlighted above these postulates do not lead Marx to any naive empiricist view, as he emphasises the act of sensing as historical and as practice. This view is based on Marx's view of humankind as being in development and conscious:

"...man is not only a natural being; he is a human natural being; i.e. he is a being for himself and hence a species-being, as which he must confirm and realize himself both in his being and in his knowing. Consequently, human objects are not natural objects as they immediately present themselves, nor is human sense, in its immediate and objective existence, human sensibility and human objectivity. Neither objective nor subjective nature is immediately present in a form adequate to the human being.” (Ibid., 391).

If we summarize: What is real for Marx is sensuous objects and what is sensuous objects for man develops as man's senses develop through practice. According to this, man is in internal relations to reality as man does not merely contemplate it, but works on it

**Marx's anthropological-philosophical ontology: Man and Nature.**

This leads us to his anthropological-philosophical ontology, i.e. his conception of Man (i.e. Humanity) and Nature. He works with more than one concept of nature. He divides
nature into organic and inorganic nature. One form of inorganic nature is spiritual nature. Inorganic nature refers to the means both material and spiritual that humanity uses for its subsistence, it is both physical and spiritual (Ibid., 327-8). As Marx puts it:

"The universality of man manifests itself in practice in that universality which makes the whole of nature his inorganic body, (1) as a direct means of life and (2) as the matter, the object and the tool of his life activity. Nature is man's inorganic body, that is to say nature in so far as it is not the human body. Man lives from nature, i.e. nature is his body and he must maintain a continuing dialogue with it if he is not to die. To say that man's physical and mental life is linked to nature simply means that nature is linked to itself, for man is a part of nature." (Ibid., 328).

But humanity is not only a part of nature in the physical sense; it is a part of nature also in the social sense. As Marx writes:

"The social reality of nature and human natural science or the natural science of man are identical expressions." (Ibid., 356).

Man is part of nature and as he develops, nature develops. The relationship of man and nature is different from that of animals in that:

"The animal is immediately one with its life activity. It is not distinct from that activity; it is that activity. Man makes his life activity itself an object of his will and consciousness. He has conscious life activity. It is not a determination with which he directly merges. Conscious life activity directly distinguishes man from animal life activity. Only because of that is he a species-being. Or rather, he is a conscious being, i.e. his own life is an
object for him only because he is species-being ... the practical creation of an objective world, the fashioning of inorganic nature, is proof that man is a conscious species-being, i.e. a being which treats the species as its own essential being or itself as a species-being." Unlike man's species self-consciousness and self-creation or species-being animals "...produce only themselves, while man reproduces the whole of nature; their products belong immediately to their physical bodies, while man freely confronts his own product." (Ibid., 328-9).

Man becomes human in history and as he is part of nature, nature becomes human in history. To become human does not only refer to man as species-being, but a social being as well. As Marx writes:

"The positive supersession of private property [i.e. by establishing communism - I.J.] as the appropriation of human life, is therefore the positive supersession of all estrangement, and the return of man from religion, the family, the state, etc., to his human, i.e. social existence." (Ibid., 349). And again: "...man is not only a natural being; he is a human natural being; i.e. he is a being for himself and hence a species-being, as which he must confirm and realize himself both in his being and in his knowing. Consequently, human objects are not natural objects as they immediately present themselves, not is human sense, in its immediate and objective existence, human sensibility and human objectivity. Neither objective nor subjective nature is immediately present in a form adequate to the human being. And as everything natural must come into being, so man also has his process of origin in history. But, for him history is a conscious process, and hence one which consciously supersedes itself. History is the true natural history of man." (Ibid., 391).
Marx’s concept of the individual in civil society.

Man is a conscious, free being in history and in respect of his life activity according to Marx’s anthropological-philosophical ontology. But, the same does not go for the individual in civil society. He or she is totally determined by social relations dominated by private property. The bulk of the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* is a description of the internal laws of capital accumulation. Man, the individual as a worker has become a commodity. As Marx puts it:

"The demand for men necessarily regulates the production of men, as every other commodity. If the supply greatly exceeds the demand then one section of the workers sinks into beggary or starvation. The existence of the worker is therefore reduced to the same condition as the existence of every other commodity. The worker has become a commodity, and he is lucky if he can find a buyer." (Ibid., 283. Emphasis in the last sentence by I.J.).

But the dehumanization does not only take place in the form of commodity, the relation between man and his means of production changes as well. Marx highlights this by quoting W. Schulz:

"No attention has been paid to the essential distinction between how far men work through machines and how far they work as machines." (Ibid., 291).

And the machines even confront the worker as competitors (Ibid., 286). For Marx, private property and capital rule over the individuals and their intellectual life, even over the capitalists themselves. Marx writes:

"To be sure, the industrial capitalist also seeks enjoyment. He does not by any means regress to an
immaterial simplicity of need, but his enjoyment is only incidental, a means of relaxation; it is subordinated to production, it is calculated and even an economical form of pleasure, for it is charged as an expense of capita; the sum dissipated may therefore not be in excess of what can be replaced by the reproduction of capital with profit. Enjoyment is therefore subsumed under capital, and the pleasure-seeking individual under the capitalizing individual..."(Ibid., 368).

It is capital that determines the personal life of the capitalist as well as the labourer and it determines the relations between these two:

"Capital is ... the power to command labour and its products. The capitalist possesses this power not on account of his personal or human properties, but in so far as he is an owner of capital. His power is the purchasing power of his capital, which nothing can withstand." (Ibid., 295).

Marx sees the history of civil society as an autonomous development of property relations and competition; capital becomes dominant in the relations between people. But still, which at first sight, seems to be a paradox, he rejects firmly the idea that 'society' is a separate being. As he writes:

"It is above all necessary to avoid once more establishing 'society' as an abstraction over against the individual. The individual is the social being. His vital expression - even when it does not appear in the direct form of a communal expression, conceived in association with other men - is therefore an expression and confirmation of social life. Man's individual and species-life are not two distinct things, however much - and this is necessarily so - the mode of existence of individual life is a more particular or a more general mode of the species'
life or more particular or more general individual life."
(Ibid., 350).

Marx does not work with abstract concept which can be fetishized, such as 'society'. Social relations, the relations between men, have to have empirical grounds, if they are to be analysed. Marx starts on the basis of economic facts when he analysis social relations as empirical relations.

But, he does not develop any consistent theory of the relationship between the two levels of social reality, i.e. that of the individual and that of social relations. In the case of the labourer he analyses the social determination of the individual only in terms of wage-labour and the inversion of reality as it appears to be caused by money (Ibid., 358 and 378). But the mechanisms that generate the alienated consciousness of civil society, i.e. 'ideology' are not analysed. As a consequence the core of the relationship between the micro and macro levels of social reality is not analysed. Marx merely hints at how to deal with the problem as we can see from a quotation we highlighted above, i.e.:

"Religion, the family, the state, law, morality, science, art, etc., are only particular modes of production and therefore come under its general law." (Ibid., 349).

But he does not give us any idea of the internal relations between these 'modes of production' of intellectual and cultural life. But from his emphasis on the domination of private property and its inevitable development, we should presume the determination of these modes by the laws of private property. Marx's problematic has this potential at least.

**The fatalism of Marx's social ontology of civil society.**

Finally, in so far as Marx’s analysis of the emergence of capitalism, in terms of the history of private property, is determinist, his view of the future development of capitalism
seems even to be teleological necessity: The goal of (capitalist) society is communism, according to him:

"...since even the most prosperous state of society leads to suffering for the majority and since the economic system [Nationalökonomie], which is a society based on private property, it brings about such a state of prosperity, it follows that society's distress is the goal of the economic system." (Ibid., 268). And he adds: "Communism is the necessary form and the dynamic principle of the immediate future, but communism is not as such the goal of human development - the form of human society." (Ibid., 358).

Although communism can not be totally equated with the goal of human development and although it is unclear what Marx means by the term 'communism as such', it is clear that his prediction is based on fatalism. As a consequence his social ontology of civil society is fatalist.

**The concept of 'labour' as the supersession of the paradox of Marx's anthropological and social ontology.**

There is a gap between Marx's non-determinist anthropological ontology and his determinist social ontology. To bridge this gap he does not develop a solution based on social theory. Instead, he develops the concept of labour. this concept synthesises as a whole the fundamental elements of his ontology, nature, man, the individual and society. Labour is the life-relationship of man and nature. Forms of labour are historical forms. As long as humanity is not aware of its practical relationship with/in nature, as being part of her and being her subject and object at the same time, and being able to transform its relationship with nature, and not being aware of its species-being - humanity is self-estranged. As a consequence, labour, as the relationship between man and nature is estranged as long as humanity is self-estranged. For Marx the relationship of man
and nature is fundamental to the relationship of man to man or social relations. Accordingly:

"...the relationship of man to himself becomes objective and real for him only through his relationship to other men ... If he relates to his own activity as unfree activity, then he relates to it as activity in the service, under the rule, coercion and yoke of another man ... Every self-estrangement of man from himself and nature is manifested in the relationship he sets up between other men and himself and nature ... In the practical, real world, self-estrangement can manifest itself only in the practical real relationship to other men. The medium through which estrangement progresses is itself a practical one. So through estranged labour man not only produces his relationship to the object and to the act of production as to alien and hostile powers; he also produces the relationship in which other men stand to his production and product, and the relationship in which he stands to from himself his own activity, so he confers upon the stranger an activity which does not belong to him." (Ibid., 331). And he adds: "Thus through estranged, alienated labour the worker creates the relationship of another man, who is alien to labour and stands outside it, to that labour. The relation of the capitalist - or whatever other word one chooses for the master of labour - to that labour. Private property is therefore the product, result and necessary consequence of alienated labour of the external relation of the worker to nature and to himself." (Ibid., 331-2).

The view that the anthropological ontology is more fundamental can also be seen from the fact that the essence of capital which dominates social reality is labour. In accordance with the Ricardian labour theory of value, Marx holds the view that capital is stored-up labour, it is the ownership of other peoples products which gives power to purchase and command over all
the labour or over all the produce of labour, it rules over its owner as well insofar as it necessarily must be used to accumulate profit ((Ibid., 295).

**Marx's Theses on Feuerbach**

In his Theses on Feuerbach which he wrote in 1845, Marx summarizes his ontological and epistemological postulates and his social ontology or dialectical method which was already implicit in the earlier works. Of all the eleven theses we find his ontological postulates in the first and sixth theses.

1) The strain between the anthropological-philosophical ontology and the determinist social ontology.

He criticizes Feuerbach as the latter does not see the thing, reality and sensuousness subjectively as sensuous human activity, practice. Reality is activity, but not objects conceived of in a contemplative way as Feuerbach would have it, and as a consequence, Feuerbach does not grasp the significance of revolutionary, practical-critical activity as he presumes sensuous objects to be really distinct from thought objects. Marx had already in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (Ibid., 389) tried to synthesize or supersede the dichotomy between materialism and idealism, calling his own view naturalist and humanist. In the *Theses on Feuerbach* the same train of thought is stated thus:

"It is true that thought and being are distinct, but at the same time they are in unity with one another." (Ibid., 351).

In his sixth thesis, Marx criticizes Feuerbach for his approach to human essence, i.e. in Feuerbach's philosophy it becomes a mere abstraction that is supposed to be inherent in each single individual. This critique of Feuerbach is implicitly also a critique of Marx's own writings on the 'species-being of
humanity' As a consequence, Marx is fundamentally taking important steps in rejecting his own anthropological ontology which now is subsumed under the determinist social ontology as human essence "in its reality" is the ensemble of the social relations and these are presumed to be a historical process in the Theses on Feuerbach.

2) Epistemological postulates.

In the second, third, fifth, and eighth theses we find some epistemological postulates. In the second and fifth one Marx writes about knowledge in general. He states that sensuousness is practical, human-sensuous activity. And the question of objective truth is for Marx a question of prove, not of theory but of practice. And it follows from the first thesis that 'prove' according to Marx is not a simple experimental activity. Besides these remarks about knowledge in general, there are statements about knowledge of society as well. In the third thesis he remarks that knowledge about "the changing of circumstances" or social development is gained in the revolutionary practice which aims to change society. As he puts it:

"the coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity or self-changing can be conceived and rationally understood only as revolutionary practice."

(Ibid., 422).

As a consequence Marx is saying that social knowledge must have relevance for and its basis in socialist revolution.

Finally, there are simultaneously some socio-ontological and methodological statements in the theses. Marx emphasises that all phenomena of social life must be understood in terms of their concrete practice relations (the eighth thesis) and he wants to explain phenomena as a result of a particular form of society. For example "...the abstract individual ... belongs to a particular form of society" (Ibid., 423). The methodological postulates are most clear in the fourth thesis:
"Feuerbach starts out from the fact of religious self-alienation, of the duplication of the world into a religious world and a secular one. His work consists in resolving the religious world into its secular basis. But that the secular basis detaches itself from itself and establishes itself as an independent realm in the clouds can only be explained by the cleavages and self-contradictions within this secular basis. The latter must, therefore, in itself be both understood in its contradiction and revolutionized in practice." (Ibid., 422).

This duplication problematique of society and abstract individual and society and the religious world and the claim that it should be explained by the form or structure of the secular basis was already in Marx's discussion of the duplication of political life and civil society in the Critical Notes on 'The King of Prussia and Social Reform' (Ibid., 401-20, especially 412) and in Critique of Hegel's Doctrine of the State you can read the same problematic:

"The separation of civil and political society appears necessarily as the separation of the political citizen, the citizen of the state, from civil society and from his own real empirical reality: for as an ideal political entity [Staatsideal] he is a quite different being, wholly distinct from and opposed to his actual reality. Civil society thus manufactures within itself the ... relation between state and civil society ..." (Ibid., 143-4).
IV. The *German Ideology*

In the *German Ideology*, written in 1845-6, Marx and Engels emphasise what we can call 'empirical naturalism', i.e. naturalism in the sense Marx gave the concept in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* and not in the sense of contemporary positivism. Their theoretical premises are explicit:

"The premises from which we begin are not arbitrary ones, not dogmas, but real premises from which abstraction can only be made in the imagination. They are the real individuals, their activity and the material conditions under which they live, both those which they find already existing and those produced by their activity. These premises can thus be verified in a purely empirical way." (K. Marx and F. Engels 1976, 42).

These are the premises of their alternative to the 'Young-Hegelians'. These result from Marx and Engel's critique of this movement. Their critique can be summarized as follows: 1) Marx and Engels confront the intellectual community of German philosophers, which means that their reference of practice is still the dominant philosophies in the ideological struggle in Germany; 2) They criticize the Young-Hegelians for their mystification as their critique is based on pure abstractions but not on real facts; 3) Marx and Engels criticize them because their critique is far too narrow and philosophical. It reduces the basis of social development to the development of consciousness and as such, analyse it in theological terms; 4) finally, their critique aims at wrong political solutions because the Young-Hegelian critique is
to narrow, i.e. it is preoccupied with combating consciousness as such instead of the real existing world.

The political irrelevance of the Young-Hegelian Critique.

Marx and Engels claim the following concerning the Young-Hegelians:

"Not only in their answers, but in their very questions there was a mystification ... not one of these modern critics has even attempted a comprehensive criticism of the Hegelian system ... Their polemics against Hegel and against one another are confined to this - each extracts one side of the Hegelian system and turns this against the whole system as well as against the sides extracted by the others. To begin with they extracted pure unfalsified Hegelian categories such as "substance" and "self-consciousness", later they desegregated these categories with more secular names such as "species", "the Unique", "Man", etc..." (Ibid., 46).

The main point of this critique of the Young-Hegelians is the political irrelevance as they do not deal with reality:

"The entire body of German philosophical criticism from Strauss to Stirner is confined to criticism of religious conceptions ... Their advance consisted in subsuming the allegedly dominant metaphysical, political, juridical, moral and other conceptions under the class of religious or theological and the political, juridical, moral man - "man" in the last resort - as religious. The dominance of religion was taken for granted. Gradually every dominant relationship was pronounced a religious relationship and transformed into a cult, a cult of law, a cult of the State etc. On all sides it was only a question of dogmas and belief in dogmas ... Since the Young Hegelians consider conception, thoughts, ideas, in fact all the products of
consciousness, to which they attribute an independent existence, as the real claims of men ... the Young Hegelians have to fight only against these illusions of consciousness for human, critical or egoistic consciousness, and thus of removing their limitations ...They forget that they are in no way combating the phrases of the world ... It has not occurred to any one of these philosophers to inquire into the connection of German philosophy with German reality, the relation of their criticism to their own material surroundings." (Ibid., 40-1).

Marx’s and Engels’s materialist historiography and economic determinism.

Marx’s and Engels’s view is based on the premises that individuals

"... operate, produce materially and ... work under definite material limits, presuppositions and conditions independent of their will." (Ibid., 46-7).

According to Marx and Engels, besides primary needs such as eating and drinking, habitation and clothing the premises of history are secondary needs such as producing instruments for satisfaction of the primary needs (what they call "the first historical act"). The third premise of historical development is the need to make other men, to propagate human kind and the satisfaction of this need generates social relations as the population grows (Ibid., 48-9). Finally the fourth premise of history mentioned is social relationships. As Marx and Engels write

"The production of life, both of one's own labour and of fresh life in procreation, now appears as a double relationship - on the one hand as a natural, on the other as a social relationship. By social we understand the co-
operation of several individuals, no matter under what condition, in what manner and to what end. It follows from this that a certain mode of production, or industrial stage is always combined with a certain mode of cooperation, or social stage, and this mode of co-operation is itself a "productive force". Further that the multitude of productive forces accessible to men determines the nature of society, hence, that the "history of humanity", must always be studied and treated in relation to the history of industry and exchange." (Ibid., 50).

We have already seen the first three premises in the earlier writings of Marx. What is new here is the formulation that the multitude of productive forces determine the nature of society. Although Marx had before worked on the duplication problematic as we highlighted above, now economic determinism is more explicit. Before, he spoke of property relations. The idea of the over-determination by the economic base of forms of consciousness is even made clearer in these words:

"This conception of history depends on our ability to expound the real process of production, starting out from the material production of life itself and to comprehend the form of intercourse connected with this and created by this mode of production (i.e. civil society in various stages), as the basis of all history; and to show it in its action as state, to explain all the different theoretical products and forms of consciousness, religion, philosophy, ethics, etc., etc., and trace their origins and growth from that basis; by which means, of course, the whole thing can be depicted in its totality (and therefore, too, the reciprocal action of these various sides on one

---

12 In a footnote Marx and Engels count among productive forces, machinery, natural forces, water supplies, gas-lighting, steam-heating.
another). It has not like the idealistic view of history, in every period to look for a category, but remains constantly on the real ground of history; it does not explain practice from the idea but explains the formation of ideas from material practice, and accordingly it comes to the conclusion that all forms and products of consciousness cannot be dissolved by mental critics, by resolution into "self-consciousness" or transformation into "apparitions", "spectres", "fancies", etc., but only by the practical overthrow of the actual social relations which gave rise to this idealistic humbug; that not criticism but revolution is the driving force of history, also of religion, of philosophy and all the other types of theory." (Ibid., 58).

In terms of dialectics it is here stated that the various sides of consciousness, religion, philosophy, etc., act reciprocally on one another determined by the basis and having their origin in it. But this 'basis' is a multitude of productive forces that again are both technological and forms of cooperation. In terms of the relationship between individuals and their society it is clear that they must be subsumed under production in Marx’s and Engels's theory. According to them what individuals are:

"coincides with ... what they produce and with how they produce it." (Ibid., 42).

As a consequence Marx's naturalism has become economic determinist naturalism, insofar as the economic refers to the 'productive forces'; i.e. his formulation has become clearer from what it was in the earlier writings.

**Marx’s and Engels’s epistemology.**

One of the keystones in Marx's epistemology is his rejection of contemplative world view. He and Engels highlight
their practice-epistemology in the *German Ideology* in their critique of Feuerbach. Their view is based on three main postulates: 1) the objects of knowledge in nature as well as in society are always historical forms, but not eternal; 2) man and individuals as historical objects, are not simply objects but live through sensuous activity; 3) the aim of knowledge is not only to produce correct consciousness about existing reality, but to overthrow the existing state of things.

Marx and Engels wrote about Feuerbach:

"He does not see how the sensuous world around him is, not a thing given direct from all eternity, remaining ever the same, but the product of industry and of the state of society ... Even the objects of the simplest "sensuous certainty" are only given him through social development, industry and commercial intercourse." (Ibid., K. Marx and F. Engels 1976, 62). And they add: "Certainly Feuerbach has a great advantage over the "pure" materialists in that he realises how man too is an "object of the senses". But apart from the fact that he only conceives him as an "object of the senses", not as "sensuous activity", because he still remains in the realm of theory and conceives of men not in their given social connection, not under their existing conditions of life ... but stops at the abstraction "man", and gets no further than recognizing "the true, individual, corporal man" emotionally ... Thus he never manages to conceive the sensuous world as the total living sensuous activity of the individuals composing it." (Ibid., 64).

And few pages before they remarked:

"Feuerbach’s whole deduction with regard to the relation of men to one another goes only as far as to prove that men need and always have needed each other. He wants to establish consciousness of this fact, that is to say, like the other theorists, merely to produce a correct
consciousness about existing fact; whereas for the real communist it is a question of overthrowing the existing state of things." (Ibid., 60).

**Marx and Engels on the existing science of their day.**

Marx and Engels do not comment much on the existing science of their day. But they reject the idea of ‘pure’ (natural) science. Big-business made natural science subservient to capital (Ibid., 78). And they ask:

"...where would natural science be without industry and commerce? Even this "pure" natural science is provided with an aim, as with its material, only through trade and industry, through the sensuous activity of men." (ibid., 63).

Marx rejects these existing sciences as they are ahistorical in their methodology. For Marx and Engels, there is only a single science, i.e.

"The science of history ...the history of nature and the history of men are dependent on each other as long as men exist." (K. Marx and F. Engels 1965, 65).

But they do not work further out the social function of science. Marx was to do that later as part of the problem of real subsumption of labour and capital's need of ever increasing the productivity of labour (See K. Marx 1976, *Results of the Immediate Labour Process*).

**Marx and Engels on the relations of man and nature.**

As we mentioned above, Marx's 'humanist naturalism' is still much emphasised in *The German Ideology*. But now Marx prefers to analyse the relationship between man and nature as
industrial rather than in terms of 'labour'. Marx and Engels write:

"For instance, the important question of the relation of man to nature Bruno [Bauer] goes so far as to speak of "the antithesis in nature and history" (p. 110), as though these were two separate "things" and man did not always have before him an historical nature and a natural history) out of which all the "unfathomably lofty works" on "substance" and "self-consciousness" were born, crumbles of itself when we understand that the celebrated "unity of man with nature" has always existed in industry and has existed in varying forms every epoch according to the lesser or greater development of industry, just like the "struggle" of man with nature, right up to the development of his productive powers on a corresponding basis.” K. Marx and F. Engels 1976, 62-3).

Once again Marx and Engels reject here idealist abstractions as a point of departure. Their point of departure is the empirically given. Man and nature are internally related in a dialectical whole. According to them, the identity of nature and man appears in such a way that the relation of men to nature determines their relation to one another, and their relations to one another determines men’s relations to nature (Ibid., 51).

For Marx and Engels the postulated priority of nature over man has no validity as there exists no pure nature, there exists only nature on which man has worked. This view corresponds to Marx’s and Engels’s emphasis on the empirical basis of their 'naturalism' (i.e. humanist naturalism).

Marx and Engels and alienation.
Finally we should link together Marx's view of science, ideology and alienation. Marx claims that historical science\textsuperscript{13} is an alternative to ideology and is the correct way to explain alienation. He presumes that the individual is alienated in terms of politics as well as in economic terms. And both forms of alienation are based on the division of labour:

"...the division of labour implies the contradiction between the interest of the separate individual or the individual family and the communal interest of all individuals who have intercourse with one another. And indeed, this communal interest does not exist merely in the imagination, as the "general interest", but first of all in reality, as the mutual interdependence of the individuals among whom labour is divided. And out of this very contradiction between the interest of the individual and that of the community takes the latter an independent form as the state, divorced from the real interests of individual and community and at the same time as an illusory communal life, always based, however, on the real ties existing in every family and tribal conglomeration ...and especially ... on the classes already determined by the division of labour ... It follows from this that all struggles within the State, the struggle between democracy, aristocracy and monarchy, the struggle for the franchise, etc., etc., are merely the illusory forms in which the real struggles of the different classes are fought out among one another ... Further, it follows that every class which is struggling for mastery, even its domination, as is the case with the proletariat, postulates the abolition of the old form of society in its entirety and of domination itself, must first conquer for itself political power in order to represent its interest in

\textsuperscript{13} The only science Marx claims he knows of, see J. Witt-Hansen 1973: 55.
As a consequence the political liberation (or abolition of political alienation) of the proletariat is only realised by the abolition of the old form of society and domination.

According to Marx and Engels the economic forms of alienation are of two kinds. One refers to the necessity of the individual to work in a particular form of division of labour over which he/she has no control:\footnote{14}{This is a similar alienation theme as Marx works on in his "Results of the Immediate Labour Process". K. Marx 1976.}

"The social power, i.e., the multiplied productive force which arises through the co-operation of different individuals as it is determined by the division of labour, appears to these individuals, since their co-operation is not voluntary but has come about naturally, not as their own united power, but as an alien force existing outside them, of the origin and goal of which they are ignorant, which they thus cannot control, which on the contrary passes through a peculiar series of phases and stages independent of the will and the action of man, ney even being the prime governor of these." (K. Marx and F. Engels 1976, 54).

The other form of economic alienation of individuals is the rule of market laws, of supply and demand in trade, that:

"rules the whole world ... and with invisible hand allots fortune and misfortune to men, sets up empires and overthrows empires, causes nations to rise and to disappear." (Ibid., 55).
The precondition of the abolition of alienation is the abolition of division of labour realised in a communist revolution, according to Marx. This conclusion stems from Marx's and Engels's historical-scientific analysis of the Young-Hegelians. Unlike their own analysis that they presume to be empirically verifiable, people usually have illusions and metaphysical, ideological views of their existence. But, what do Marx and Engels mean by the concept of ideology? What generates ideology according to them? What is the social function of ideology? Let's have a look at their view.
Marx’s and Engels’s concept of ideology and consciousness.

For Marx ideology is a theory based on illusions, both in philosophy and political economy, and these illusions are based on abstract concepts that do not refer to reality and are not based on empirical premises.

Marx highlighted, already in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* that alienated labour "...produces intelligence, but it produces idiocy and cretinism for the worker." (K. Marx 1975, 326). And in the *Introduction* to *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (1843-4), he wrote that religion is the opium of the people and "The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is the demand for their real happiness. To call on them to give up their illusions about their condition is to call on them to give up a condition that requires illusions." (Ibid., 244).

The same train of thought is to be found in the *German Ideology*: Peoples illusions and fantasies about their conditions are produced by these very conditions. Marx and Engels wrote:

"Men are the producers of their conditions, ideas etc., - real, active men, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these ... If in all ideology men and their circumstances appear upside-down as in a camera obscura, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of

---

15 In the case of philosophy, it is the 'Idea', 'Absolut Spirit', 'Species', the 'Unique', 'Man', while in political economy it is the concept of utility, a abstract concept intercourse, which is supposed to control all behaviour of the individual, it is as abstract as the concept of the Idea and Absolut Spirit, see e.g. Ibid., 40 and 109-10.
objects on the retina does from their physical life-
process." (Ibid., 47).

And they summarize their concept of ideology by stating:

"...almost the whole of ideology can be reduced to either
distorted interpretation of history or its total absence."
(K.Marx and F. Engels 1932: 567-8).

For Marx’s and Engels's, concept of ideology refers to a-
historical views as well as distorted views or illusions.
On a more abstract level they claim that consciousness is
never "pure". From the very start the "spirit" is "burdened" with
matter, i.e. language:

"Language is as old as consciousness, language is
practical consciousness that exists also for other men,
and for that reason alone it really exists for me
personally as well; language like consciousness, only
arises from the need, the necessity, of intercourse with
other men."(Ibid., K. Marx and F. Engels 1976, 50-1).

According to Marx and Engels, man is a social animal and from
the very beginning consciousness is a social product. But, man's
herd-consciousness, which is an animal consciousness, develops
through the increased productivity of man. And this is different
from what happens to animals:

"...consciousness receives its further development and
extension through increased productivity, the increase of
needs, and what is fundamental to both of these, the
increase of population. With these there develops the
division of labour..."(Ibid., 51).

The division of labour leads to the division of material and
mental labour that creates the condition for the first form of
ideologists, i.e. priests. Given these preconditions:
"... consciousness is in a position to emancipate itself from the world and to proceed to the formation of pure theory, theology, philosophy, ethics etc., But even if this theory, theology, philosophy, ethics etc., comes into contradiction with the existing relations, this can only occur because existing social forces have come into contradiction with existing forces of production." (Ibid., 52).

Here we have a 'structural' explanation of the development of consciousness, but Marx and Engels develop the explanation further as they turn to the level of individuals.

"...the forces of production, the state of society, and consciousness, can and must come into contradiction with one another, because the division of labour implies ... the fact that intellectual and material activity ... devolve on different individuals, and that the only possibility of their not coming into contradiction lies in the negation in its turn of the division of labour." (Ibid., 52).

Although they emphasise the importance of the individual in the development of the contradiction between social relations and productive forces, their explanation must not be taken as a flirt with individualism; as we remember, they define the individual as a product of the division of labour in a determinist way.

To conclude, Marx and Engels develop a diachronic and synchronic theory of the development and origin of consciousness and ideology. But both levels are reduced to the division of labour. Their theory, they claim, is not ideological because it is based on empirical premises and is verifiable. But, they do not reason for or analyse their criteria of verifiability. Insofar as we have seen what ideology is and what generates it according to Marx and Engels, we should look at what they presume to be its social function.
The social function of ideology.

The ruling class, according to Marx and Engels, always represents its interests as the common interests of all members of society. The ruling ideas in society are the ideas of the ruling class; the ideologists of that class are held up by one part of that class (note that they do not reduce the concept of class down to pure economic terms). This part of the ruling class can depart from the practical part of this class (those who work materially), but it does so only as long as the collision between these parts does not endanger the class itself. Indeed, the ideas of the ruling class have not distinct power from the power of the ruling class.

But ideology is not only to be found in the form of the 'ruling ideas' of the ruling class. It is as well to be found in the form of illusions concerning the state of things; i.e. illusions that are not necessarily systematic mystifications but illusions that originate in the sphere of everyday life experience. It follows that ideology is not simply an instrument of the ruling class. As Marx and Engels write:

"If in all ideology men and their circumstances appear upside-down as in a camera obscura, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process..." (Ibid., 47).

This is the same 'materialist view' of consciousness and illusions as we find in the early texts (c.f. above).
V. From the German Ideology to the Grundrisse/Capital.

In the years to come, 1847-57, Marx was more preoccupied with immediate political practice and with writing about political events than philosophical and economic studies proper. But, there is a change in Marx's theoretical practice in the years 1857-8 which is interesting for our project. Marx starts to work on a critique of political economy (which he had also planned to do in 1851) and he reads Hegel's 'Logic' and starts serious mathematical studies. By that time there is a change in Marx's problematique or 'paradigm'. However, it is not a question of a change or continuation of terminology from the early writings (Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts), such as the hegelian concepts of alienation, objectification, appropriation, man's dialectical relation to nature and his/her social nature. As D. McLellan argues (1981: 295), there is a continuation of influence of Hegel in Marx's work in the Grundrisse. It is a question of a change in terms of ontology, i.e. a change in the concept of dialectics. This results in a qualitative change of a part of the theme of his problematique; a reconstruction of it.

Marx wrote in *German Ideology*

"We know only of a single science, science of history. One can look at history from two sides and divide it into the history of nature and the history of humanity. The history of nature, the so-called natural sciences are not of our concern here; we will deal with the history of humanity as almost the whole of ideology can be reduced either to distorted interpretation of history or its total absence. (K.Marx and F. Engels 1932: 567-8).

Accordingly, there is a possibility of a correct scientific view of history (of nature and humanity). We will now highlight what seems to be the fundamental premises of Marx's 'scientific' view or non-ideological view of history. We will concentrate on his ontological and epistemological premises.
Marx's anthropological ontology.

The same themes of Marx's anthropological and social ontology are still to be found in his works after 1857/8 as in the early texts. And the gap between the anthropological ontology where humanity is presumed to be consciously working on nature - and the social determinist ontology is still unabridged.

Marx emphasises in Capital the difference between human beings and animals as humans work consciously on nature in a practical way; i.e. human beings have a 'praxis' relation with nature which they transform. This transforming work is what Marx calls labour and it distinguishes human beings from animals:

"...what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is that the architect builds the cell in his mind before he constructs it in wax. At the end of every labour process, a result emerges which had already been conceived by the worker at the beginning, hence already existed ideally. Man not only effects a change of form in the materials of nature, he also realizes [verwirklicht] his own purpose in those materials."

And for Marx

"Labour is, first of all, a process between man and nature, a process by which man, through his own actions, mediates, regulates and controls the metabolism between himself and nature ... Through this movement he acts upon eternal nature and changes it, and in this way he simultaneously changes his own nature. he develops the potentialities slumbering within nature, and subjects the play of its forces to his own sovereign power." (K. Marx 1976, 284).
Furthermore, Marx emphasises purposeful activity as one of the main elements of the labour process (ibid., 284). But, besides these characteristics of humans Marx defines human beings as social beings:

"... man, if not as Aristotle thought a political animal, is at all events a social animal." (Ibid., 444).

As in the early texts, man, society and nature constitute an interrelated totality; there exists no such thing as Natural Individual or isolated individuals as Rousseau and political economy presumes; the production of individuals is always socially determined (K. Marx 1974a, 83):

"All production is appropriation of nature on the part of an individual within and through a specific form of society." (Ibid., 87).

Man is a part of nature and nature is a part of man. nature is not only object of man's labour, but man's instrument. So is his/her body, which in labour is turned into an instrument. In labour man

"...sets in motion the natural forces which belong to his own body, his arms, legs, head and hands, in order to appropriate the materials of nature in a form adapted to his own needs. Through this movement he acts upon external nature and changes it, and in this way he simultaneously changes his own nature. He develops the potentialities slumbering within nature, and subjects the play of its forces to his own sovereign power." (K. Marx 1976, 283).

Marx's ontology is Aristotelian according to this quotation\(^\text{16}\); man forms the potentialities implicit in nature, but not only in

\(^{16}\) See A. Næss 1972: 153 on the ontology of Aristotle.
nature, in himself/herself as well. This train of thought appears in Marx's conception of materia:

"When man engaged in production, he can only proceed as nature does her-self, i.e. he can only change the form of materials." (K. Marx 1976, 133). And in a letter to Kugelman Marx writes: "Natural laws cannot be abolished at all. The only thing that can change, under historically differing conditions, is the form in which those laws assert themselves." (K. Marx letter to L. Kugelmann 11th of July 1868).

For Marx nature has independent laws and potentialities from man, what he/she does is to form these potentialities in a way determined by different stages of the development of society, in which man performs 'labour. The history of society is for Marx a "process of natural history" (K. Marx 1976, 92).

If nature is independent of man in its laws and man only changes her forms in purposeful activity, then we can ask whether the concept of dialectics refers to the act of man of superseding the forms of nature or else whether this concept refers to the independent processes of nature as well. In other words, is the concept of dialectics limited to man in her/his social contexts or does it explain processes of nature as well. In Capital Marx claims that in history

"...as in natural science is shown the correctness of the law discovered by Hegel, in his Logic, that at a certain point merely quantitative differences pass over by a dialectical inversion into qualitative distinctions." (Ibid., 423).

But the laws of dialectics are not only valid for history and nature. Marx finds solutions to mathematical problems as well by using dialectics. As J. Witt-Hansen has highlighted, Marx criticized Leibnitz's and Newton's differential- and integral calculus for being mystical as it is based on the
paradoxical notion of infinitely small quantities. What is called
today limit-transformation from \( x_1 \) to \( x \) in mathematics is the
solution to this problem. Marx called this "supersession" of the
difference between \( x_1 \) and \( x \) "dialectical" and he spent many
years on the problem unaware that L. Cauchy had found the
solution forty years before (J. Witt-Hansen, 1973, 89-93). We
will now leave Marx's anthropological ontology and analyse his
social ontology.

Marx's social ontology.

As in Marx's early texts we find determinist views of society in his works after 1857/8. In Capital Marx writes:

"The capitalist mode of appropriation, which springs from the capitalist mode of production, produces capitalist private property. This is the first negation of individual private property, as founded on the labour of its proprietor. But capitalist production begets, with the inexorability of a natural process, its own negation. This is the negation of the negation. It does not re-establish private property, but it does indeed establish individual property on the basis of the achievements of the capitalist era: namely co-operation and the possession in common of the land and the means of production produced by labour itself"..."The centralization of the means of production and the socialization of labour reach a point at which they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated." (K. Marx 1976: 929).

These statements are not presented as 'historical tendency' but as laws of necessity. In the preface to the first edition of Capital Marx writes:
"Intrinsicly it is not a question of the higher or lower degree of development of the social antagonisms that spring from the natural laws of capitalist production. It is a question of these laws themselves, of these tendencies winning their way through and working themselves out with iron necessity. The country that is more developed industrially only shows to the less developed the image of its future." (Ibid., 90-1).

For Marx these laws are fundamental in the development of the economic formation of society which he views "as a process of natural history". The individual is seen as a creature of social relations; he/she has the status of being a "personification of economic categories. The bearers [Träger] of particular class relations and interests." (Ibid., 92). Accordingly, causality in Marx's work is structural and the motives of individuals are effects of social relations. The capitalist for an example is necessarily a bearer [Träger] of capital's interests, of maximizing profits.

"...competition subordinates every individual capitalist to the immanent laws of capitalist production, as external and coercive laws. It compels him to keep extending his capital, so as to preserve it, and he can only extend it by means of progressive accumulation." (Ibid., 739).

In her/his relation to the workers the capitalist is ruled by these laws whether her/his will is good or bad (ibid., 381).

"As a capitalist he/she is only capital personified. His soul is the soul of capital. But capital has one soul driving force, the drive to valorize itself, to create surplus-value..."(Ibid., 342).

Implicit in this problematique of personification is the notion of alienation or estranged labour as we saw in the early texts. The self-valorization of capital is an alienating force. In capitalism
labour power is stripped of all material wealth as money and commodities, as capital, the means of production and the means of subsistence confront labour power as autonomous powers personified in their owners:

"The objective conditions essential to the realization of labour are alienated from the worker and become manifest as fetishes endowed with a will and a soul of their own. Commodities in short, appear as the purchasers of persons ... It is not the worker who buys the means of production and subsistence, but the means of production that buy the worker to incorporate him into the means of production." (Results of the Immediate Labour Process in K. Marx 1976, 1003-4).

In the later works of Marx the concept of self-valorization of capital is fundamental to his problematique of alienation. Capital is seen as autonomous process which transforms the relations between capital and labour so as to increase the relative surplus-value of production in the form of increased productivity.

**Marx's reading of Hegel's Logic in 1858.**

It is here that we find the importance of Marx's reading of Hegel's *Logic* in 1858; i.e. a new formulation of the problem of alienation and Marx's determinism. It is the conception of capital as self-realizing being, that determines and alienates 'Man'. As Hegel's 'Idea' or 'Absolut Spirit' realizes itself in history, capital realizes itself in history. Marx's reading of Hegel has two consequence: ontological and methodological. We will highlight the methodological canons later on as we discuss epistemological problems.

---

17 For a detailed discussion of Marx's Hegel-reading, see H. Reichelt 1973.
Meanwhile, as for the ontological question, Marx reduces causality to the causality of capital as the process of valorization which is autonomous. Capital is value in the process of valorization. As such it constantly changes the forms of money and commodity:

"...without becoming lost in this movement, it thus becomes transformed into an automatic subject. If we pin down the specific forms of appearance assumed in turn by self-valorizing value in the course of its life, we reach the following elucidation: capital is money, capital is commodities. In truth however value is here the subject (i.e. the independently acting agent) of a process in which, while constantly assuming the form in turn of money and commodities, it changes its own magnitude, throws off surplus-value from itself considered as original value, and thus valorizes itself independently." (K. Marx 1976, 255).

Marx takes it that capital makes its own conditions of reproduction once it has been established as real capital (as value in the process of self-valorization). And these conditions must not be confused with the conditions of real capital's history of 'becoming'.

‘The conditions and presuppositions of the becoming, of the arising, of capital presuppose precisely that it is not yet in being but merely in becoming; they therefore disappear as real capital arises, capital which itself, on the basis of its own reality posits the conditions for its realization ... It no longer proceeds from presuppositions in order to become, but rather it is itself presupposed, and proceeds from itself to create the conditions of its maintenance and growth.’ (K. Marx 1974a, 459-60).

According to Marx the civilizing influence and exploiting effects of capital goes hand in hand:
“Thus, just as production founded on capital creates universal industriousness on one side - i.e. surplus labour, value creating labour - so does it create on the other side a system of general exploitation of the natural and human qualities, a system of general utility, utilizing science itself just as much as all the physical and mental qualities, while there appears nothing higher in itself, nothing legitimate for itself, outside the circle of social production and exchange ... In accord with this tendency, capital drives beyond national barriers and prejudices as much as beyond nature worship, as well as all traditional, confined, complacent, encrusted satisfactions of present needs, and reproductions of old ways of life. It is destructive towards all of this, and constantly revolutionizes it, tearing down all the barriers which hem in the development of the forces of production, the expansion of needs, the all-sided development of production and the exploitation and exchange of natural and mental forces. But from the fact that capital posits every such limit as a barrier and hence gets ideally beyond it, it has really overcome it, and, since every such barrier contradicts its character, its production moves in contradictions which are constantly overcome but just as constantly posited. The universality towards which it irresistibly strives encounters barriers in its own nature, which will at a certain stage of its development, allow it to be recognized as being itself the greatest barrier to this tendency, and hence will drive towards its own suspension.” (Ibid., 409-10).

It is important to point out here that, according to the above written, Marx's ontology does not only refer to capital as a self-realizing process: it rejects phenomenalism as well. As we saw above, capital appears in reality, in a contradictory form as a synthesis of its ‘barriers’ and its ideal form. As a consequence capital appears as a result of its internal contradictions as
capital in general (the contradictions of capital and labour in the valorization process), as a result of competition between different capitals and as a result of the ideal form of capital (or valorization) and the social and cultural barriers which it is confronted by. Therefore, appearance (or facts', 'empirical' reality, etc.,) is seen to be a result of essence (i.e. capital as self-realizing value). This ontology rejects the nominalist and phenomenalist view of positivism (see e.g. L. Kolakowski 1972, chapter 1), which on its part rejects the notion of essence. We must also emphasise that essence is not a nominalist "bridging of facts", but, according to Marx, reality which is really existing just as much as concrete institutions and other facts on the surface of reality. As Marx writes in the introduction to chapter 8 of the third volume of Capital

"In a general analysis of this kind it is usually always assumed that the actual conditions correspond to their conception" (K. Marx 1971a: 143)

Capital-in-general is really existing and not a mere abstraction. As a consequence there are two dimensions in Marx's methodology; on the one side we have analysis of capital as a unity of essence and forms of appearance, reflected in the categorical presentation - on the other side we have analysis of the forms of capital in its historical reality ('real analysis'). We will now discuss Marx's method within the framework of his 'epistemology'.

Marx's epistemology - Marx's method.

It seems to us that Marx's method (or canons to study the economic formation of society as a process of natural history), is influenced by three main sources and methodological ideas, i.e. that of natural science, mathematics and Hegel's speculative philosophy.

a) Marx did not only assimilate his methodology with that of natural science, his methodology has some common elements
with the classical methodology of the natural sciences developed by Copernicus, Galilee, Kepler, Huygens, Leibnitz, Newton, Lagrange, D’Alambert. Marx refers often to these authorities in terms of method and results of their observations which Marx mentions in letters and in his Capital\(^{18}\) as well as “Mathematical manuscripts”. It is not a question of naive positivist reduction of the methodology of social science to that of the natural sciences, but a question of methodological views and procedures borrowed from classical mechanics and mathematics. It is a question of such things as for an example the method of conceptual analysis, the mathematical concept of function, the request for illustrating laws by mathematical forms, analysis and synthesis, abstraction and successive approximation as inseparable procedure, the procedure of idealization, thought experiments etc.

The influences of Newton on social science, is well known in the works of A. Ferguson and his disciple A. Smith. These influences are echoed in Ricardo’s and Marx’s works. In his preface to the first edition of Principia, Newton wrote that the real problem of natural science is to work out the natural forces from the moving phenomena and then further, on the basis of these forces, to explain (illustrate) the other phenomena. As he had worked out in mathematical form the relations between the sun and the planets in terms of gravitation, then he deduces from these with help of other mathematically based statements, the movements of the planets, comets, the moon and oceans (J. Witt-Hansen 1973: 61-2).

\(^{18}\) See e.g. ‘Preface to the first German edition of Capital (1867): “The physicist either observes physical phenomena where they occur in their most typical form and most free from disturbing influence, or, wherever possible, he makes experiments under conditions that assure the occurrence of the phenomenon in its normality. In this work I have to examine the capitalist mode of production, and the conditions of production and exchange corresponding to that mode”. And he claims that his standpoint is that “the evolution of the economic formation of society is viewed as a process of natural history”.
We find the same train of thought in A. Ferguson's Institutes of Moral Philosophy. The method of science is twofold according to him; analytical and synthetical. The former one, the method of observation, consists of working out general rules from the observed. The latter one, the method of presentation, consists of going from these general rules to their specific uses. It is the method of extending science (ibid., 63. A. Ferguson quotes Newton to illustrate this: see A. Ferguson 1800, 2-3).

Marx makes a similar distinction when he describes his method, i.e., method of 'inquiry' and 'presentation' to illustrate his method. But he develops it further as he transforms it in a hegelian line of discourse and furthermore he emphasizes the historicity of the scientific discourse as well. His method of inquiry consists of appropriating:

"...the material in detail, to analyse its different forms of development and to trace down their inner connection" (K. Marx 1976, 102, Postface to the second German edition of Capital).

In Grundrisse the procedure is described by Marx in these words:

"It seems to be correct to begin with the real and the concrete, with the real precondition, thus to begin, in economics, with e.g. the population, which is the foundation and the subject of the entire social act of production. However, on close examination this proves false. The population is an abstraction if I leave out, for example, the classes of which it is composed, these classes in turn are an empty phrase if I am not familiar with the elements of which they rest. E.g. wage labour, capital etc. These latter in turn presuppose exchange, division of labour, prices etc. For example, capital is nothing without wage labour, without value, money, price etc." K. Marx 1974a, 100).
Marx presumes that unlike this false method (peculiar to the economists of the seventeenth century), the correct method consists of working out economic systems from analysis of small number of determinant, abstract, general relations, such as division of labour, money, value etc. And then from the economic system the analysis continue to the level of the state, exchange between nations and the world market (ibid., 100-1).

Marx planned in Grundrisse to give a total account of the capitalist system including analysis of taxes and state dept, politics of colonialism, the world market and crises. As he proceeded in his analysis of political economy, his studies developed more and more in the direction of dealing with the general concept of capital which became a dominant concept. As a consequence he did never write the books in his original plan of Grundrisse on wage labour, landed property, the state and foreign exchange. These became secondary problems in his studies and he thought that others could deal with them on the basis of his studies in Capital. At the same time, in the period of the writing of Grundrisse and his 'later Hegel-studies', he speaks for the first time explicitly about the dialectical form of presentation. This dialectical form refers to the epistemological view that forms of appearance or phenomena are necessitated by the nature of essence. The way in which economic relations appear as natural and a-historical and in a mystical form (leading to fetishism of these forms) is necessary by the nature of the economic system, dominated by capital for example in the case of capitalism. As a consequence, the validity of theories of society are temporal as the essence which theories are based, is temporal. Marx's Capital is only valid as a theory of the capitalist system (see H. Reichelt 1973). We will deal with 'historical validity of theories further below'.

---

19 In his Afterwords to the Second German Edition of Capital Vol. 1, from 1873, Marx accepts professor Sieber’s claim that “the method of Marx is the deductive method of the whole English school”. Furthermore, he quotes M. Block’s illustrating description of his
Meanwhile, Marx’s dialectical form of presentation has its roots in the chapter on the method of political economy in Grundrisse. As we saw above, Marx makes a distinction between the method of inquiry and the method of presentation. He describes the first one as going from the imaginary concrete empirical facts to abstract concepts and relations. The method of presentation goes in the opposite direction as it consists of going from the abstract to the concrete (K. Marx 1974a, 100-1). And he defines further its content as follows:

"The concrete is concrete because it is the concentration of many determinations, hence unity of the diverse. It appears in the process of thinking, therefore, as a process of concentration, as a result not as a point of departure, even though it is the point of departure in reality and hence also the point of departure for observation (Anschauung) and conception. Along the first path the full conception was evaporated to yield an abstract determination; along the second, the abstract determinations leads towards a reproduction of the concrete by way of thought ... the concrete totality is a totality of thought, is a product of a thinking head, which appropriates the world in the only way it can, a way different from the artistic, religious, practical and mental appropriation of this world. The real subject retains its autonomous existence outside the head just as before; namely as long as the head's conduct is merely speculative, merely theoretical. Hence, in the theoretical method, too, the subject, society must always be kept in mind as the presupposition." (ibid., 101-2).

We can now ask what is the epistemological status of this 'concrete-totality-in-thought'. In reality, bourgeois society does method in Capital and emphasises that the laws that his enquiry leads to are limited to particular historical type pf economy and he therefore calls his method 'dialectic'.
not exist in pure form, according to Marx, not corresponding to its concept, not adequate to itself (ibid., 885). Because of different social and cultural barriers etc., it does not appear in its ideal typical form. Marx does only in *Capital* analyse the "... inner organisation of the capitalist mode of production, in its ideal average, as it were " (K. Marx 1871a: 831). At the same time Marx claims that "In a general analysis of this kind it is usually always assumed that the actual conditions correspond to their conception, or, what is the same, that actual conditions are represented only to the extent that they are typical of their own general case." (ibid, p.143). The problem is that Marx does not develop any rules of correspondence of the ideal and empirical. It is an open question whether his overall determinist view would do as bases for a form of verification; i.e. the logical form of prediction. The only guarantee for correspondence is that the empirical reality of bourgeois society is contradictory in itself. These contradictions reflect the underlying inner laws of (the logic of) capital. But the problem is even more complex as the forms of appearance are not only contradictory, but vary according to different historical circumstances and the specificity of these 'conjunctural' forms have to be analysed separately. This is the third moment of Marx’s field of analysis, i.e. real-analysis (as opposed to investigation and presentation).

The inner laws correspond to reality, but as they are 'ideal average', we must conclude that they can only be tendential. But is this the case? Why does Marx speak of the inevitable, iron necessity of the collapse of the capitalist system? Here Marx seems to contradict himself. How does he then work out these tendential, general, inner laws of capitalism? These laws are

---

20 It is worthwhile to highlight here the difference between Marx’s and John Stuart Mill’s view, who emphasises that the laws of political economy appear in different forms in different historical context (due to 'disturbing causes' J. Mill 1844:106). Marx criticises Mill, like the rest of bourgeois economists, for presuming that laws and relations of production are eternal. There are no eternal, a-historical laws according to Marx (1974a: 87 and 758-9).

21 i.e. the prediction of the inevitable collapse of the capitalist system
produced by the method of presentation. As soon as investigation or inquiry has resulted in the most abstract concepts of the economic system, then the method of presentation can work out the essence of the system, i.e. its inner relations. The procedure can be seen from the list of content of Capital, vol. I. Marx starts with the most abstract forms of appearance and then he gradually approaches the inner laws, valorization and accumulation of capital. He starts with the concept of commodity and works out its inner contradictions as being a synthesis of use-value and exchange-value. He works out the historicity of these forms and the money form and then proceeds into the forms of capital and valorization.

We are not concentrating on Marx's methodology in details, rather the epistemological aspects. But it seems to us that Marx’s problematic of the relations between essence and appearance is the fundamental base of his critique of political economy and he attempts to supersede it by developing a 'correct' method (c.f. Introduction to Grundrisse, K. Marx 1974a). As a consequence we will analyse the basic moments of his critique.

Marx's critique of political economy.

The fundamental moments of Marx's critique of political economy can be summarized as follows:
1) he criticizes it for its fetishism of the existing economic and social relations;
2) as a consequence he criticizes it for being apologetic;
3) he criticizes it from a moral point of view in his analysis of the dehumanization of labour, using economic terminology and finally;
4) Marx's awareness of the political relevance of his work is fundamental to his critique.

As for the problem of fetishism we should highlight two aspects. On the one side fetishism refers to the illusion that social phenomena are thought of as natural and a-historical and as a-historical they lead autonomous life above the heads of
people and control them. In political economy fetishism consists of the illusion that wealth generates from anything else than human labour. That it appears otherwise has to do with the fact that in capitalism, individuals produce independently so that the social character of their production appears only in an objectified form, i.e. as market relations. As commodities have market value, or exchange-value, in money-form their social nature as bearers of use-value that satisfy peoples needs disappears (K. Marx 1976, 163-77). Labour has become a commodity as a consequence of the alienation of the means of production from the labourers and this commodity has the use-value of creating value and surplus-value. As Marx writes:

"...what stamps money or commodities as capital from the outset, even before they have been really transformed into capital, is ... the circumstance that this money and this commodity, these means of production and these means of subsistence confront labour-power, stripped of all material wealth, as autonomous powers, personified in their owners. The objective conditions essential to the realization of labour are alienated from the worker and become manifest as fetishes endowed with a will and a soul of their own. Commodities, in short, appear as the purchasers of persons. The buyer of labour-power is nothing but the personification of objectified labour which cedes a part of itself to the worker in the form of the means of subsistence in order to annex the living labour-power for the benefit of the remaining portion, so as to keep itself intact and even to grow beyond its original size by virtue of this annexation. It is not the worker who buys the means of production and subsistence, but the means of production that buy the worker to incorporate him into the means of production." (ibid., 1003-4, in Results of the Immediate Labour Process).
This quotation shows that fetishism is not only conceptualized by Marx as illusion, pure and simple, as it exists as a form of the social relations of capital. It is illusion insofar as it is a-historical consciousness. In a different context Marx wrote the following about this matter:

"The crude materialism of the economists who regard as the natural properties 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 an idealism, even fetishism, since it imputes social relations to things as inherent characteristics, and thus mystifies them." (K. Marx 1974a: 687).

Concerning fetishism, we should secondly highlight that Marx criticizes political economy as its fetishism blocks its theory, becomes its barrier for further development. Science deals with the inner relations of things and goes beyond the paradoxical experience of everyday life, according to Marx (1965: 42). Even Ricardo does not free his theory from the paradoxical forms of appearance of everyday life. Ricardo in a paradoxical way came to the conclusion that although commodities are exchanged according to his labour theory of value - differences in rates of profit had to do with exemptions from this law (such as different turnover time of capital in the processes of production or circulation). But, one can't state at the same time that a law works and that there are exemptions from it. Marx's solution to the paradoxical conclusion is to leave Ricardo's exoteric method and to define value in a new way, not based on cost prices, pure and simple (or 'exoteric'):

"To explain ... the general nature of profits, you must start from the theorem that on an average, commodities are sold at their real values and that profits are derived from selling them at their values, that is, in proportion to the quantity of labour realized in them. If you cannot
explain profit upon this supposition, you cannot explain it at all. This seems paradox and contrary to every-day observation. It is also paradox that water consists of two highly inflammable gases. Scientific truth is always paradox, if judged by every-day experience, which catches only the delusive appearance of things." (K. Marx 1965: 42).

Instead of identifying value with cost prices as Ricardo does, Marx defines value in an 'esoteric' way as the average socially necessary labour time for the production of particular commodities. According to Marx (1863), different rates of profit between branches of industry are determined by the overall mass of surplus-value or unpaid labour-time in society. Rates of profit can only differ between branches within this framework, but do not originate in exceptions from the law of value or in A. Smith's 'natural prices' etc.

But political economy is not only incorrect and does not only build on 'exoteric fetish', it is apologetic for the existing society as well. It is determined by social interests. Bourgeois economists do not emphasise that in the history of capital, the hoard is transformed into capital only by means of exploitation of labour. It is historically determined and not any natural thing:

"The bourgeois economists who regard capital as an eternal and natural (not historical) form of production than attempt at the same time to legitimate it again by formulating the conditions of its becoming as the conditions of its contemporary realization; i.e. presenting the moments in which the capitalist still appropriates as not - capitalist - because he is still becoming - as the very conditions in which he appropriates as capitalist. These attempts at apologetics demonstrate a guilty conscience, as well as the inability to bring the mode of appropriation of capital as capital into harmony with the general laws of property proclaimed by capitalist society itself" K. Marx 1974a, 460).
Marx was much aware of the political importance of his critique of political economy which he directly faced in the form of censorship (c.f. problems in publishing his *Critique of Political Economy* in Germany in 1858 (see M. Nicolaus's Forward in Marx 1974a, 56). And he remarked concerning the publication of his 'Critique':

"I hope to win a scientific victory for our Party. It will now have to show, however, whether it is numerous enough to buy enough copies to satisfy the publisher's 'scruplus'" (ibid., quoted in M. Nicolaus, 56).

But by political importance of the work we do not mean political knowledge interests or historicist 'world-view'. Marx thought he was indeed performing 'correct' scientific work.

But Marx's theme is more than analysing the laws of necessity of capitalism with its political and scientific importance - it is also ethical. As Marx wrote to Lassalle about his book *Capital*:

“The work I am presently concerned with is a *Critique of Economic Categories* or, if you like, a critical exposé of the system of the bourgeois economy. It is at once an exposé and, by the same token, a critique of the system”.

i.e. a critique of the capitalist system. This system will not only collapse by necessity of its inner laws; dehumanization of humanity is its result. Capitalism is an inhumane system both in the ethical and anthropological sense. As Marx puts it:

"Thus just as production founded on capital creates universal industriousness on one side - i.e. surplus labour, value creating labour - so does it create on the other side a system of general exploitation of the natural and human qualities; a system of general utility, utilizing science itself just as much as all the physical and mental
qualities, while there appears nothing higher in itself, nothing legitimate for itself, outside this circle of social production and exchange." (K. Marx 1974a, 409).

And in the Results of the Immediate Labour Process Marx claims that the capitalist is subsumed under the self-valorization of capital:

"...the creation of surplus-value - is therefore the determining, dominating and overriding purpose of the capitalist, it is the absolute motive and content of his activity. And in fact it is no more than the rationalized motive and aim of the hoarder - a highly impoverished and abstract content which makes it plain that the capitalist is just as enslaved by the relationship of capitalism as is his opposite pole, the worker, albeit in a quite different manner." (K. Marx 1976, 990).

And in the case of the motives of the worker Marx claims:

"...the sole purpose of work in the eyes of the wage-labourer is his wage, money ... he is wholly indifferent towards the content of his labour and hence his own particular form of activity." (ibid., 1033. Whether this is an exaggeration is not of our concern here).

To conclude, the ethics and motives of the capitalist and worker are subsumed under the process of self-realization of capital. In terms of the a-moral and dehumanizing effects of capital accumulation Marx writes in ‘Capital’:

"...within the capitalist system all methods for raising the social productivity of labour are put into effect at the cost of the individual worker ... all means for the development of production undergo a dialectical inversion so that they become means of domination and exploitation of the producers; they distort the worker into
a fragment of a man, they degrade him to the level of an appendage of a machine, they destroy the actual content of his labour by turning it into atorment; they alienate [entfremden] from him the intellectual potentialities of the labour process in the same proportion as science is incorporated in it as an independent power; they deform the conditions under which he works, subject him during the labour process to a despotism the more hateful for its meanness; they transform his life-time into working-time, and drag his wife and child beneath the wheels of the juggernaut of capital ... Accumulation of wealth at one pole is ... at the same time accumulation of misery, the torment of labour, slavery, ignorance, brutalization and moral degradation at the opposite pole, i.e. on the side of the class that produces its own product as capital." (K. Marx 1976, 799).

Finally, we should conclude by highlighting the view Marx has of science, i.e. his own work as being scientific and his view of natural science. As mentioned above, Marx had conscious, determinate views of what constitutes the correct method of science. When he writes about his method in Grundrisse, he makes a clear distinction between the theoretical and real and the system which is produced by the theoretical practice that is, according to him, a different appropriation of the world than artistic, religious, practical and mental appropriation of that world. The real subject which is reflected in the theoretical retains its autonomous existence outside the head just as before, says Marx. This is a similar distinction as A. Ferguson makes between science and art:

"science is the knowledge of general rules, and their applications. Art is the application of knowledge to practice." (A. Ferguson 1800, 2).

It is a traditional view that Marx holds, the concrete totality which is built in theoretical practice, i.e. the concrete in thought,
or Marx's theory of the capitalist system, is an ideal system (or ideal type) and is not to be confused with the 'real subject'. Furthermore the work of Marx does not aim at analysing, in a chronological way, how the capitalist system came about. His aim is to analyse the system as an autonomous subject, or self-realizing subject. As he writes:

"Capital is the all-dominating economic power of bourgeois society. It must form the starting point as well as the finishing point ... It would ... 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 historic 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 historic movement. Rather, their order within modern bourgeois society." (K. Marx 1974a, 107-8. See also *Capital*, K. Marx 1976, 168).

This theory of the capitalist system or 'concrete in thought' is only valid for the real bourgeois society and so are the concepts on which it is based. As Marx says in *Grundrisse*:

"Although it is true ... that the categories of bourgeois economics possess a truth for all other forms of society, this is to be taken only with a grain of salt. They can contain them in a developed, or stunted, or caricatures form etc., but always with an essential difference." (K. Marx 1974a, 106).

As an example Marx takes the category of labour and shows that labour as abstract in reality and the abstraction, abstract
labour is generated only in the concrete totality that has developed the most abstract forms of social relations, i.e. capitalism:

"Indifference towards any specific kind of labour presupposes a very developed totality of real kinds of labour, of which no single one is any longer predominant. As a rule, the most general abstractions arise only in the midst of the richest possible concrete development, where one thing appears as common to many, to all. Then it ceases to be thinkable in a particular form alone. On the other side, this abstraction of labour as such is not merely the mental product of a concrete totality of labours. Indifference towards specific labours corresponds to a form of society in which individuals can with ease transfer from one labour to another, and where the specific kind is a matter of chance for them, hence of indifference. Not only the category, labour, but labour in reality has here become the means of creating wealth in general, and has ceased to be organically linked with particular individuals in any specific form. Such a state of affairs is at its most developed form in the most modern form of existence of bourgeois society - in the United States. Here then, for the first time, the point of departure of modern economics, namely the abstraction of the category 'labour', 'labour as such' labour pure and simple, becomes true in practice ... This example of labour shows strikingly how even the most abstract categories, despite their validity -precisely because of their abstractness - for all epochs, are nevertheless, in the specific character of this abstraction, themselves likewise a product of historic relations, and possess their full validity only for and within these relations." (ibid., 104-5).

Marx's 'dialectical objectivism'.
This quotation summarizes clearly the foundation of Marx's epistemology which we prefer to call 'dialectical objectivism'. This objectivism differs from the objectivism of the English and French Enlightenment in its emphasis on the historicity of validity (see H.-G. Gadamer 1977 on the English and French Enlightenment). In Capital Marx states his 'dialectical objectivism' objectivism clearly:

"The categories of bourgeois economics consist precisely of forms of this kind. They are forms of thought which are socially valid, and therefore objective, for the relations of production belonging to this historically determined mode of social production, i.e. commodity production." (K. Marx 1976, 169).

This 'dialectical objectivism' is a form of realism that is different from 'historicist' realism (c.f. G. Lukács). This objective knowledge and categories which Marx speaks of is not claimed to be a priori determined by 'proletarian' or 'communist' world view. It is simply objective truth and for that matter scientific. If we buy it we can ask how does 'praxis' come into the picture; what is its role in Marx's epistemology. Although Marx emphasises the social origin of abstract concepts as generated by the fact that social relations have become abstract in themselves in reality, his 'realism' does not lead to the epistemological level of individuals (c.f. 'existentialist' epistemology). The knowledge producing individual is subsumed under social relations in his theory. Following the distinction between scientific/theoretical forms of knowledge and other forms of knowledge such as artistic, religious, mental etc. - Marx's epistemological praxis or production of knowledge refers to theoretical praxis, i.e. the production of concrete-totality-in-thought as a result of correct method (K. Marx 1974a, 100-2). Marx does not deal with the problem of the relations between the individual and her/his knowledge in 'existential' terms (i.e. 'dialogical terms' c.f. H.-G. Gadamer),
instead he analyses the epistemological praxis-relation in abstract terms; i.e. he places theoretical praxis in the context of the overall relationship between 'man' and 'nature'. In critical remarks on Adolph Wagner's *Textbook in Political Economy* from 1879/80, he traces the origin and development of theoretical praxis in its pure form, back to original active relation between 'man' and 'nature'. That is, the goal oriented relation in which 'man' works on nature so as to satisfy her/his needs. In that sense pure theory in natural science has, according to Marx, its origin in the active relation between 'man' and 'nature'. Then Marx adds that what aspects or parts of nature become the object of natural science is determined by the social context (K. Marx 1881). Postulates like these do obviously not challenge objectivism.

We have already highlighted some of the similarities of Marx's view of science and the traditional views of Newton and Ferguson. Marx makes a clear distinction between 'concrete-in-thought' or theory and practical appropriation of the world. Furthermore, Marx appears to preferred mathematical forms of knowledge if possible. This can be seen in some of his letters to Engels and as can be seen from his tiresome work in the mathematical manuscripts, (J. Witt-Hansen 1973: 61).

But there are also other similarities such as Marx's references to astronomical paradigms. This can be seen from Marx's problematic of appearance and essence. Marx refers implicitly to Copernicus's thought-experiment of the heliocentric system (namely if someone would stand on the sun, h/she would see the real movements of the stars etc.). As we saw above, Marx claims that the explanation of the general nature of profits seems paradoxical and contrary to every-day observation. And he adds:

"It is also paradox that the earth moves round the sun, and that water consists of two highly inflammable gases. Scientific truth is always paradox, if judged by every-day experience, which catches only the delusive appearance of things." (K. Marx 1965, 42).
The same train of thought is to be found in *Capital*. There Marx writes:

"...a scientific analysis of competition is possible only if we can grasp the inner nature of capital, just as the apparent motions of the heavenly bodies are intelligible only to someone who is acquainted with their real motions which are not perceptible to the senses." (K. Marx 1976, 433).

**Marx's concept of capital and Newton's concept of the law of inertia.**

There is even certain similarity in Newton's law of inertia and Marx's concept of capital as autonomous subject. Both are based on idealization and both are based on the idea that an object (planet/capital) keeps its direction of movement as long as it is not affected by the forces of other objects (other planets or respectively social-cultural barriers etc). These are pure thought-experiments as is Galilee’s sailing ship (see e.g. S. Toulmin 1966).

But, Marx's references to the traditional views of natural science are not just implicit. He often compares and assimilates his own method with that of natural science. He likens his method both to that of physics and biology. In the *Preface to the First Edition of Capital*, Marx writes:

"The physicist either observes natural processes, or, wherever possible, he makes experiments under conditions which ensure that the process will occur in its pure state. What I have to examine in this work is the capitalist mode of production and the relations of production and forms of intercourse [Verkehrsverhältnisse] that correspond to it. Until now, their locus classicus has been England. This is the reason
why England is used as the main illustration of the theoretical developments I make.”

And in the Postface to the Second Edition of Capital Marx writes and makes the words of one of his critics his own as he describes his method:

‘In short, economic life offers us a phenomenon analogous to the history of evolution in other branches of biology ... The old economists misunderstood the nature of economic laws when they likened them to the laws of physics and chemistry. A more thorough analysis of the phenomena shows that social organisms22 differ among themselves as fundamentally as plants or animals. Indeed, one and the same phenomenon falls under quite different laws in consequence of the different general structure of these organisms, the variations of their individual organs, and the different conditions in which those organs function ... The scientific value of such an inquiry lies in the illumination of the special laws that regulate the origin, existence, development and death of a given social organism and its replacement by another, higher one.’

Marx adds that here we have the dialectical method (and we can add that it is based on process ontology as Marx sees social development as a part of the process of natural history).

Capital and the alienation and alienating function of the natural sciences.

Although Marx refers to natural science in this way it does not go that he totally accepts them as ideal. As we saw in the remarks on Wagner, there he emphasizes the practical

22 i.e. particular types of societies among which the capitalist is only one.
dimension in natural science. Natural science is a progressive force in Marx's view but it is abused as it is subsumed under capital. It is both alienated and part of the alienating force of capital. First of all, as we recall from German Ideology, Marx criticized natural scientists for a-historical world view or fetishism. In Capital he remarks that:

"The weakness of the abstract and ideological conceptions expressed by its spokesmen whenever they venture beyond the bounds of their own speciality." (K. Marx 1976, 494).

At the same stroke Marx stamps the view that science is alienated by capital; i.e. it is subsumed under the self-realization of the valorization process of capital:

"Science, generally speaking, costs the capitalist nothing, a fact that by no means prevents him from exploiting it. 'Alien' science is incorporated by capital just as 'alien' labour is." (ibid., 508).

Today, the presumption that science is free for capitalists is obsolete in many respects as corporations have to invest huge amounts in research and technological inventions for the sake of competition. They also invest in research and technology alliances with each other and even collaborate with the state in innovation partnerships.

As a part of the subsumption problematic, Marx analysis both the dehumanizing effect which technological development has for the workers in the process of increased productivity ('real subsumption' of labour) - and on the other side he analysis the direct uses of scientific and technological development in capital accumulation. These are among the main themes of the Results of the Immediate Labour Process (see K. Marx 1976).

Concerning the first aspect mentioned, Marx analysis the consequences which the subsumption process has on the one side on the distinction between manual and intellectual labour in
the production process and on the other side the 'technological relations' between workers and means of production or machines. As in the early texts Marx highlights the dehumanization of the workers as they are robbed of their intellectual potentialities in work/factories. In capitalism Marx writes:

"...even the social form of labour appears as a form of development of capital, and hence the productive forces of social labour so developed appear as the productive forces of capitalism. Vis-á-vis labour such social forces are in fact 'capitalized'. In fact collective unity in cooperation, combination in the division of labour, the use of the forces of nature and sciences, of the products of labour, as machinery - all these confront the individual workers as something alien, objective, ready-made, existing without their invention, and frequently even hostile to them. They all appear quite simply as the prevailing forms of the instruments of labour. As objects they are independent of the workers whom they dominate ... The social forms of their own labour - both subjectively and objectively - or, in other words, the forms of their own social labour, are utterly independent of the individual workers." Few sentences later Marx adds: "The same transformation may be observed in the forces of nature and science, the products of the general development of history in its abstract quintessence. They too confront the workers as the powers of capital. They become separated effectively from the skill and the knowledge of the individual worker; and even though ultimately they are themselves the products of labour, they appear as an internal part of capital wherever they intervene in the labour process." (ibid., 1054-5).

This is the core of Marx's theory of the socially determined, capitalist abuses of science. But science is pregnant
with progressive potentiality. As he writes in the *First Draft of The Civil War in France*:

‘...only the working class can ... convert science from an instrument of class rule into a popular force, convert men of science themselves from the panderers to class prejudice, place-hunting parasites, and allies of capital into free agents of thought ... Science can only play its genuine part in the republic of labour.’ K. Marx 1974b, 259).

Marx wrote these lines in 1871. We should end here as these words sound well and stimulating.

But we have still one problem to discuss and that is the epistemological status of the so-called 15 sentences which for some are the fundamental statements of historical materialism. We are here referring to the place in the *Preface to 'A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy'* (K. Marx 1971b, 19-23), where Marx presents some statements concerning the dynamics of the development of societies moving from one stage to another, i.e. diachronic development. For our purpose these statements are most important:

"At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production ...From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution." (ibid., 21).

Some positivist inspired interpreters have taken these sentences as hypothesis of prediction and tried to refute them with empirical "facts" from the history of, say, capitalism. This view is totally wrong. Marx has no ontological theory of history in general or a diachronic theory. Marx works on the synchronic level, a fortiori, on the capitalist system. The epistemological status of his diachronic views (which he himself calls materialist
view of history) is of two kinds: On the one side it is principles of work to organize material. As he states clearly in the *Preface*, the sentences are "guiding principles of my studies" (ibid., 20). On the other side, his view is fundamentally taxonomic or typology of stages of development of society and of modes of production. As A. Glucksmann has highlighted, there is no consistent theory of different modes of production in Marx’s work, only chaotic sketches (A. Glucksmann 1977).
VI. Conclusion.

In order to end our journey through the development of Marx’s epistemics and sum up our learning from reading his works, we can highlight some fundamental elements of similarity and difference in this development.

a) The static view.
To summarize what we have highlighted in the chapters above, we can say that there are some fundamental elements in the problematique of Marx’s writings, elements or themes that we find permanently in the background throughout his career. We can say in short that his theme is a politically relevant, materialist, humanist critique of idealism and fetishism in philosophy and science. We have highlighted the fundamental theme as consisting of 1) humanist ontology referring to Marx’s anthropological/philosophical ontology which rejects the idea of a-historical social relations and concepts (such as the fetishism of private property and ’Idea’ or ’Absolute Spirit’); 2) the determinist social ontology; 3) the motives of being politically relevant (which is related to Marx’s view that communism, or rather his own studies, grasps the necessary social development) and; 4) the moral critique of capitalism which is based on the problem of alienation and dehumanization in capitalism.

b) The dynamic view.
The points made above, are only the fundamental elements of Marx’s problematic in general. This is a static picture which does not take into account its structural development and within this development its differences and continuity.

1) In terms of continuity we have elements that do not change in Marx’s problematique throughout his career:
   i. Marx holds his anthropological/philosophical ontology right through his career. It is the view that ‘man’ is in internal relationship with nature as he/she uses and subordinates natures independent forces so as to satisfy ‘mans’ needs and goals that are socially determined. Unlike animals, ‘man’s’ behaviour is not controlled by instincts, but by conscious goal-oriented activities. This is what we call ‘humanist-naturalism’ (which must not be
confused with the a-historical naturalism in the positivist sense). His ontology is Aristotelian throughout his career in the sense that 'materia' is defined as potentialities to be formed. Furthermore, his ontology is a process ontology as the relationship between 'man' and 'nature' are seen as socially determined which in its turn is seen as "a process of natural history";

ii. Throughout Marx's writings we find the social-determinist ontology. Comparing the two ontologies (the social one and the anthropological/philosophical one) we can conclude that in terms of 'subjects' we have two different 'subjects' in Marx's writings. On the one side, is 'man', as a 'subject', a free being in natural history. On the other side, social relations (in capitalism) are the 'subject' and 'man' is subsumed, dominated by this 'subject'. Furthermore, right through Marx's writings we find the social determinist ontology which presumes that polarization in capitalist society, between the two main classes (capitalists and proletariat) is a result of necessity, and by necessity of the social and economic laws of capitalism, this system will collapse. This social determinism of Marx is strengthened by Marx's constant assimilation of social laws to natural scientific laws (physical laws, chemistry etc.) right from the early Mosel article to Capital. On the philosophical level, this social determinism is formulated as the problem of alienation, which does not only refer to property relations (the fact that the products of labour belong to another), but more importantly refers to the situation that 'man' is controlled by social relations and not vice versa. Related to this problematic, right through his writings Marx analyses dehumanization in capitalism and his analyses are implicitly based on some ideal state of 'human/e society'. Finally, throughout Marx's writings we find the materialist view that peoples illusions are to be explained by the structure of social relations that determine every-day experience. It goes as well that Marx holds the view that the duplication between private and public, civil society and state and the fact that social relations have become real-abstract, thing-like or
reified, is to be explained by the structure of social relations in civil society.

iii. In terms of epistemological premises we find that science originates in the practice relationship between 'man' and 'nature'. He continuously makes a distinction between thought and the real or sensuous object, but his view of criteria of correspondence are unclear throughout his writings. However, throughout he holds the view of a single science (in Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts ‘human science’).

iv. Right through his writings Marx is aware of the political relevance of his writings and of being relevant. His original object of studies, jurisprudence, is by nature political (concerning law and the state) and he obviously was constantly reminded of the censorship of the German government (Marx was a fortiori writing for Germans in his major works and Capital was indeed first published in Germany and written in German). Besides that Marx’s motives for his works were political, they were ‘enlightening’ as well - as he was fighting against fetishism whether in philosophy or science and with objectivist mind and ‘correct’ method. Furthermore, his motives were moral as one can be seen from the frequent descriptions of the a-moral and dehumanizing consequences of capitalism that we find in his works, starting in his early writings and continuing in his later writings.

2) In terms of difference, concerning Marx’s overall intellectual career, we must highlight the following points:

i. His view of science. Marx’s conception of ‘a single’ or ‘human’ science develops through time. He never gives up his rejection of phenomenalism and his idea of the dialectical relationship between essence and appearance. This view explicitly appears first in Grundrisse and the following works (especially Theories of Surplus-Value). It is the idea that science is based on esoteric method, dealing with the inner laws of reality which supersedes the paradoxical everyday experience. In his later works rationalism appears to have stronger impact than before. He emphasises mathematical forms of knowledge and frequently refers to examples from astronomy to explain his views and
show that he is indeed doing science. Furthermore, Marx views show some rationalist trends not only in preferring mathematical forms of knowledge, but as well in that he draws a picture of the ideal average of the capitalist system; its ideal type. But unlike rationalist positivism (and Max Weber's rationalist epistemology) his view is not based on nominalism; he claims that the categories he works with correspond to reality. But unlike positivism that sees the methods of physics as the ideal for all sciences, Marx likens his method, or science, to biology, i.e. he prefers teleological explanations as well, and that corresponds to his social determinism and to his process ontology (reality is constantly developing).

ii. We must also highlight a change in Marx's 'paradigm' resulting from his re-reading of Hegel in 1858. What is new here is that the 'esoteric' method and the inner laws of capitalist society are subsumed under the concept of capital as a self-realizing 'subject' in history, a 'subject' which reproduces its general conditions of existence in an ever extending way. In short it is the 'subsumption's problematic'. Although there are structural similarities to Hegel's 'Idea' or 'Absolute Spirit', the ontological status is quite different as Marx refers to real existing social relations. Marx's analyses of the capitalist economy and society have different status. Unlike what he did in the 'early texts' - were he merely took for granted the theories and descriptions of political economy of civil society or the capitalist system - Marx now analysis alienation and for example science by deducing from the subsumption problematic. In Marx's writings his 'humanist naturalism' develops ever more into an economic determinist naturalism, especially after German Ideology and reaches its highest point in Grundrisse, i.e. in a formulation we can call 'over-determination' by the economy in capitalist social formations (at the same time this is an attempt to bridge the levels of logical analysis of the capitalist mode of production and 'real analyses', i.e. the role of this mode of production within social conjunctures). In Marx's words:
"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." (K. Marx 1974a, 106-7).

iii. As a consequence of the subsumption problematic, Marx's method changes. Now he opposes the method of presenting categories in their chronological order. Instead he holds the view of structural approach. Capital realizes itself, the point of departure of analyses is the present structure, capital in its average ideal pure form. The history of its becoming is secondary, merely used for the purposes of illustrating history. And, furthermore, this theory of the capitalist system and economic relations is only valid for this system and only this system alone.

iv. We should finally highlight that although Marx's epistemology is a praxis-epistemology, it is based on very abstract grounds, namely on the practice relation between man and nature. In the Results of the Immediate Labour Process the social determination of this practice relation is subsumed under the subsumption problematic. In that sense his epistemology becomes ever more a form of economic reductionism (i.e. a theory of the abuses of science and technology by capital).

3) As for final remarks, we should highlight some shortcomings of Marx's overall theme. Marx's 'dialectical objectivism' is directly an alternative to dominant ideology or horizons in philosophy and political economy. It is an alternative to world views based on abstract concepts and a-historical thought. But the 'paradigm', the world view which Marx builds his theories on, is merely postulated. An argument for methods of verification of their validity is lacking. The fundamental problem of Marx's work is that he does not analyse problems of correspondence. He does not see his theories as some kind of hypothesis to be tested; he presumes that they correspond. Furthermore, Marx does not reason for the ontological possibility of his ontological premises. We can hardly request that of Marx. After all, phenomenology and Heideggerian
existentialism was still to be born in Marx's era. Marx lived in the age when the objectivism of positivism and scientism gradually became to dominate other world views, especially in communities of scientists. Marx was influenced by these trends but he transformed them into his 'dialectical objectivism'.
Bibliography


Næss, A. (1972) Filosofiens historie; fra oldtiden til renessanse, Oslo: Universitetets forlag.


