Aristotle, Kant, and the Ethics of the Young Marx

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I would like to argue that the young Marx's ethical views have been influenced not only by Hegel but even more so by Aristotle and Kant. Marx draws away from Hegel's concept of essence toward one more like Aristotle's, and he operates with a concept of universalization similar to that found in Kant's categorical imperative. At the same time, Marx's task is to reconcile these Aristotelian and Kantian elements.

Marx's main concern, however, is not simply to explain what morality is but to explain how it can be realized in the world. For us to understand his views we first must gain at least a basic understanding of what morality means for the young Marx. To do this we must examine several concepts and the way in which they are connected to each other: his concepts of freedom, essence, and the state. Then we will be able to understand his concept of universalization and will begin to see how it is like Kant's concept of a categorical imperative. Once we have taken these preparatory steps, we can begin to talk about what really interests Marx, namely, how morality can be realized in society. Let us begin by discussing Marx's concepts of the state and freedom.

In his very earliest writings, by which I mean those written before the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law of 1843, Marx accepts a Hegelian form of state. For Marx, the state should be an organic unity that molds its members and institutions into a spiritual whole. It transforms individual aims and particular interests into general aims and universal moral concerns. It transforms "natural independence into spiritual freedom, by the individual finding his good in the life of the whole, and the whole in the frame of mind of the individual."
Morality, for the young Marx—as for Hegel, Aristotle, and others—only arises in a state, and moral theory is inseparable from social and political theory. Morality involves obeying universal rational laws, but it is not enough that these laws be subjectively rational, that is, based on the rationality of the individual. These laws and their rationality must be objective. They must be the public laws of the state, and reason must be objectified in the state’s institutions. Only in this way can freedom be objective. It is only the state that is “the great organism, in which legal, moral, and political freedom must be realized, and in which the individual citizen in obeying the laws of the state only obeys the natural laws of his own reason, of human reason.” The state must be the realization of reason; then morality will be the “principle of a world that obeys its own laws.”

We can begin to understand this by looking at Hegel. He distinguished between Moralität, which is usually translated as “morality,” and Sittlichkeit, which is usually translated as “ethics” or “ethical life.” Moralität, which begins with Socrates and reaches its high point in Kantian morality, is individual, reflective, and rational. It is based on the autonomy of individual self-consciousness, on personal conviction and conscience, and is a relatively late development in history. Sittlichkeit, best represented perhaps in the Greek polis before Socrates, is ethical behavior governed by natural custom and tradition. It is based on habit in accordance with the objective laws of the community. Personal reflection and analysis have little to do with ethical life.

Clear and simple examples of the difference between Moralität and Sittlichkeit can be found in Plato. Euthyphro, for example, when he is asked to explain the meaning of a moral notion is quite able to expound at length on the customs, traditions, and myths that exemplify and underlie the notion—traditions that it has never occurred to Euthyphro to question, analyze, or reflect upon. This is Sittlichkeit. Socrates, on the other hand, forces Euthyphro to analyze and reflect. Socrates asks how we know that something is moral, why it is moral, what makes it moral; and it is clear that for Socrates only our own rationality can decide such questions. This is Moralität. Again, in the “Myth of Er” at the end of the Republic, we meet a man who is about to select his next reincarnated life. We are told that in his previous life he had been a good man but only because he had been brought up in a good city. His ethical behavior had been based on custom, tradition, habit, and upbringing, not on philosophy, reason, and reflection. He had behaved properly, but not because he knew what morality was. Consequently, possessing Sittlichkeit but lacking Moralität, he chooses the life of a grand tyrant before noticing that it will involve eating his own children.

The task of the modern ethical theorist, for Hegel, is to reconcile Sittlichkeit and Moralität. Sittlichkeit without Moralität is inadequate. And, for Hegel, Moralität without Sittlichkeit is impossible, as can be seen in Hegel’s critique of Kantian morality—the highest form of Morali-
In the *Phenomenology*, Hegel argues that it is impossible to discover one’s moral duty simply by analyzing abstract principles to see if they are universal and noncontradictory. For example, both private property and its opposite—common ownership or the absence of private property—are equally universalizable and noncontradictory. Without Sittlichkeit—without an objective, immediately given, ethical substance embedded in custom and tradition, which actually is rather than merely ought to be—it is impossible to discover one’s moral obligation through analysis. Moralität gets its content from Sittlichkeit. Moreover, Moralität without Sittlichkeit would leave us with an inadequate form of freedom. Certainly for Kantian Moralität, the individual is free; in fact, morality is based on freedom. But it is individual subjectivity alone that is free, the individual will deciding its action in accordance with reason. The individual is not necessarily free to realize the moral action. The world may well present obstacles to its execution without, for Kant, affecting the individual’s moral freedom in the slightest. For Kant, such empirical factors—whether they be obstacles or aids—are irrelevant to freedom. Nor do feelings play a role. They need not agree with the action for it to be moral and free. Nor is our freedom affected if our feelings are opposed to the moral action. But for Hegel and Marx, freedom is realized only when the objective external world and our feelings fit, agree with, and support the subjective rational freedom of the individual. Laws and institutions, feelings and customs, as well as the rationality of the individual, must form a single organic spiritual unity.

Thus, for Hegel and Marx, freedom demands three things: (1) that the individual be self-determined by universal and rational principles; (2) that the laws and institutions of the state also be rational, so that in obeying civil laws you obey the laws of your own reason; and (3) that feeling and custom have been molded so as to agree with and support these rational laws.

For Kant, the possibility of freedom required that the transcendental self not be located in the natural, causally determined, phenomenal world. A noumenal realm, apart from the natural, was necessary as the source of self-determined free action. Many German philosophers after Kant (including Marx and Hegel), in rejecting the existence of an unknown thing-in-itself, reject the existence of this noumenal realm and thus must have a different model of freedom. Rather than locate a transcendental self in a realm apart, they deny that there are such different realms and they view reality as a single field with two elements reacting against each other such that ultimately the natural objective element is absorbed into the conscious subjective element. In this way the object is no longer alien or other. They argue in various ways that the subject is the essence of the object—that it finds itself, its own rationality, in the object. Thus, the object is not heteronomous but compatible with the subject’s freedom. For Hegel, this requires an Absolute Spirit or God, responsible for creating and molding the natural and social world through history. Ulti-
mately, for the young Marx, the human species—through its labor—
constitutes, molds, and purposively controls the objective social and
natural realm. The subject exists and develops within the natural and
social realm, but it also constitutes and comes to control it. The subject
constitutes the object, objectifies itself in it, finds itself at home with it,
and thus is free.

The human species works on its world through history and transforms
it to conform with its own essence, such that in confronting the world the
human species discovers itself and becomes conscious of the power of its
own rationality objectively embedded in that world. Freedom, in short, is
this development and objectification of reason in the world. Realizing this
and living accordingly is morality.

For Marx in his earliest writings, “morality is based on the autonomy
of the human mind” and freedom “is the generic essence of all spiritual
existence.” To understand Marx’s ethics we must begin to understand
his concept of essence and how it is linked to freedom and the state. In
the first place, for Marx, essences develop. Freedom, for example, much
as for Hegel, develops from being the special privilege of particular
individuals to being a universal characteristic of all human beings. Each
sphere or institution in the state has its own essence that develops
according to the inner rules of its life. This is its particular freedom, and
it must be allowed to develop in its own particular way. For Marx, “only
that which is a realization of freedom can be called humanly good.” Moral
good, for Marx, is the realization of freedom. Freedom does not
mean being unhindered in any and all ways, but it means the unhindered
development of what is the essence of the thing. The realization of the
thing’s essence—its nature, what it inherently is—is the thing’s good.

As we shall come to see even more clearly, Marx’s concept of essence
is in many ways like Aristotle’s. For Aristotle, the essence of a thing is
formulated in its definition. The essence cannot be independent of its
matter or substratum, but neither can it be defined in terms of its matter
alone. The definition grasps the form of the thing. For Aristotle, the
thing is more properly said to be what it is when it has attained to the
fulfillment of its form than when it exists potentially. The essence of the
thing is exhibited in the process of growth or development by which the
form or essence is attained. Each thing has a process, activity, or
function; and when it fully achieves its proper activity or function, it
realizes its essence and achieves its end or good. For human beings, their
proper activity—their end, their essence—is activity in accordance with
reason, and the realization of this end implies happiness. In certain
ways Marx’s concept of essence is closer to Aristotle’s than to Hegel’s.
For Marx and Aristotle, things exist on their own and have their own
essence. For Hegel, at least ultimately, there is a single essence and this
essence is identified with the Idea or God. For Hegel, individual empiri-
cal things are products, manifestations, of the Idea. Marx criticizes Hegel
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for turning things into attributes, predicates, of the Idea. Marx argues that this robs individual things of their own reality.\(^\text{17}\) On the other hand, Marx does not accept Aristotle’s notion that the form or end of a thing is fixed and unchanging.\(^\text{18}\) For Marx, essences change and develop through history. Furthermore, Aristotle does not have much to say about a link between freedom and essence, whereas, for Marx as for Hegel, there is an intimate connection between freedom, the laws of the state, and essence.

In his earliest writings, Marx has not rejected law as he does later. Freedom exists in the state as law; in fact, a “statute-book is a people’s bible of freedom.” Laws are the positive universal norms in which freedom—the development of essence—acquires a theoretical existence independent of the arbitrariness of individuals. Universal laws embody essence; on the other hand, the particular interests of individuals are unessential, arbitrary, and accidental. To be led by particular interests rather than universal rational law is to be immorally, irrationally, and slavishly subordinated to a particular object. Laws cannot be subordinate to wishes; wishes must be subordinate to laws.\(^\text{19}\) Echoing Rousseau’s claim in *Emile* that subordination to persons is slavery while subordination to rational law is freedom, Marx holds that persons must not stand above laws nor can persons be a guarantee against bad laws or the misuse of laws. Instead, laws must be the guarantee against persons and their particular interests. For Marx, unconscious natural laws of freedom are formulated as conscious laws of the state. Laws are thus the reflection of actual life in consciousness. Since laws embody essence (which is to say, since they are natural), when the individual ceases to obey these laws of freedom the state can compel the individual to obey the law and thus, as for Rousseau, it compels the individual to be free. A civil law is like a law of nature. For example, it is like the law of gravity in that it confronts the individual as something alien and restrictive only when the individual attempts to violate or ignore the law. The laws of the state are the conscious expression of natural laws; they express the essence of things. The laws of the state do not regulate the legal nature of things; rather, the legal nature of things regulates the laws of the state.\(^\text{20}\)

For Marx, there are two interconnected sides to any moral or political reality: an objective and a subjective side. To understand the objective side, a scientific study of the concrete empirical object itself is necessary. The subjective side requires the formulation of the essence of the object as a conscious, universal, and recognized law. On the objective side, instead of attributing everything to individual will, one must study the actual nature of the circumstances as these can independently determine the actions of individuals. Moreover, Marx thinks that such study can bring about the same degree of certainty as that achieved in natural science. He argues that the legislator, in order to formulate laws, should be a natural scientist. Civil laws are not made or invented any more than
the law of gravity is; the actual inner laws of social relations are discovered and consciously formulated as civil laws. 21

Marx is willing to say that "in the political sphere, philosophy has done nothing that physics, mathematics, medicine, and every science, have not done in their respective spheres." Just as science emancipated itself from theology and established its own independent sphere, so modern political theorists proceed by deducing the natural laws of the state from reason and experience, not from theology. 22

Once this objective concrete study of the particular essence of a specific object has been carried out, then, on the subjective side, the essence must be formulated conceptually and rationally as a universal law that becomes an ideal self-conscious image of reality and can be recognized as such. This subjective formulation is just as important as the objective study. As Kant said, freedom consists not in acting in accordance with law but in accordance with the concept of law. 23

Marx tells us that we must measure existence by essence. We must evaluate any particular reality by measuring it against its idea or concept. 24 An essence is grasped abstractly and conceptually; it is the idea or concept of a thing—its definition, Aristotle would say—as opposed to its sensuous empirical existence. 25 Moral evil is the outcome of a state of affairs in which an empirical existent is shut off from and fails to live up to its essence. Marx later calls this failure alienation. On the other hand, moral good is the result of existence conforming to essence. 26 Thus, for example, we can evaluate the moral worth of a state by examining its essence and asking whether or not the actual state fulfils, lives up to, or can be derived from and justified by this essence. 27

When we turn to a consideration of the human essence, we must add another concept. Anything, for Marx, is an aspect of the human essence if that thing is needed by the human being. The presence of need indicates that an existent is essential to a being: without it the being cannot have a full, realized, and satisfied existence. 28 If this need is frustrated, if it cannot be satisfied, or if its satisfaction frustrates other needs, existence is out of accord with essence, and alienation is present.

We have already said that for Marx the human essence develops. Marx's concept of need is an important tool for understanding this development. New needs arise and are transformed in the context of evolving social conditions and relations. Moreover, new needs set the individual specific tasks and thus require transformation of the world if the need is to be satisfied. By following and understanding the reciprocal transformation of needs and of the world, we can chart the development of the human essence. Needs—for example, for food, human interaction, or education—are not satisfied in the same way and through the same cultural processes at all times. They have different contents and objects, and their satisfaction involves different sorts of activities. Thus for Marx the needs are different needs. 29 Even basic needs are different needs in different historical periods. 30 By understanding what at a particular his-
historical point is experienced as a need, we then can understand the level to which the human essence has developed and the degree to which existence has been transformed to fit the level that essence has reached. We then can evaluate the situation morally. For example, by determining the specific character of needs generated in a particular society and the productive forces and social processes available for satisfying these needs, we can begin to discover to what extent needs are satisfied, and we can measure this against the degree to which needs can be satisfied, or should be satisfied. We can discover to what extent existence corresponds to essence.

Moreover, existing needs always point not merely to the past but to the future. They continually indicate how existence must be further transformed to meet our needs and further realize our essence. The successful transformation of existence to satisfy a need will transform the need or allow new needs to be felt. This will give rise to a demand for a further transformation of existence. Humans always have a moral goal; they always are involved in transforming existence to fit their essence.

How do we judge, once we have grasped the objective nature of a thing and formulated it conceptually as law, whether essence and existence are in accord? Here Marx has been strongly influenced by Kant, and we can begin to see how Marx’s concepts of essence and freedom are linked to his concept of universalization. Marx holds that the test of whether existence measures up to essence is to compare form and content. The content of the law must not contradict the form of the law. The objective content of law arises from the particular nature—the actual life—of the thing in question. On the other hand, for Marx as for Kant, universalism is the proper form that any law must have. The content of law must be capable of being given a universal form without contradiction. The state and its laws must represent universal ends, not private or particular interests. If laws represent private interest (the interest of a special group or class opposed to others), the state becomes a mere means to further this private interest, and the content of the law contradicts the universal form of law.

This concept of universalization can go some way toward distinguishing true from false needs—essential needs as opposed to mere whims that it would be foolish to take as essential. Needs that we could will that all human beings develop and satisfy would be true needs. However, unlike Kant, universalization does not seem to be the sole criterion for Marx. In the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, his goal is to develop a human being rich in needs—a human being with as wide as possible a range of needs and the highest possible development of each need (as well, of course, as the means of satisfying them). It would also seem likely, since he is opposed to leveling and homogenization, that he is after diversity of needs. Thus it would not make sense to limit true needs to those needs we would will that all human beings develop. Marx operates not just with a Kantian categorical imperative but with an Aristotelian
concept of essence, and the realization of one’s essence calls for the development of needs that might not be universalizable. However, the principle of universalization can still operate here in a negative way. It can tell us that those needs whose satisfaction would contradict, hinder, or frustrate the development and satisfaction of the needs of others must be ruled out. Any needs that would not be objectionable in this way—though we would not will that everyone develop them—would be true needs in the sense that they develop the human essence.\textsuperscript{35}

In further agreement with Kant, Marx holds publicity to be a test of laws. He holds that private interest “cannot bear the light of publicity.” For Kant, any action that would be frustrated by publicly proclaiming it beforehand is to be considered illegal. This principle functions in the legal sphere much as the categorical imperative does in the moral sphere. Marx and Kant agree that only what is universal can stand the light of publicity; particular interests that contradict the general interest cannot: form and content would be in contradiction. For Marx, when laws are formulated, material content is idealized and raised to the conscious level of public universality such that a people can see itself, its essence, reflected in a mirror.\textsuperscript{36}

At this point, it should be clear that Marx in many ways agrees with the natural law tradition. He holds that there is an independent moral ground from which to judge the validity or justice of civil laws; laws are not valid simply because they have been properly instituted. He sees this normative criterion of civil law as rational and rooted in nature and, like many natural law theorists, sees a close relationship between descriptive laws of nature and laws as prescriptive social norms. Finally, as does much of this tradition, Marx holds a doctrine of essence—one very much like Aristotle’s.

Marx’s concept of nature is an unusual one, and is quite different, say, from Kant’s. Laws of nature and civil laws that are like laws of nature are not opposed to freedom as “phenomena” is opposed to “noumena.” Such civil laws are laws of freedom given three conditions: (1) that these laws embody our essence (and our essence is natural; we are parts of nature); (2) that these laws are universal and rational (not based on particular interest); and (3) that the unconscious essential laws of the object have been consciously recognized and publicly instituted as universal norms such that we act in accordance with the concept of law, not just in accordance with law.\textsuperscript{37} Marx is not confusing facts with values. It is not enough simply to follow nature or one’s essence. One must rationally know what this essence is and act accordingly, in the sense that one’s act is regulated by conscious, publicly recognized, universal principles. Yet in doing so, one’s act does not stem from a realm outside of nature, as for Kant, nor is the act contrary to nature. The human being, including consciousness and reason, is a part of nature for Marx.\textsuperscript{38}

Marx’s concept of essence makes possible the transition from fact to value. Much as for Aristotle, discovering the essence of a thing is to
discover what it is in fact, and this tells us what particular individuals of the species can become. It allows us to identify the range of possible development and the fullest development of the thing in a factual way. With human beings, reason can then seek to realize these possibilities. But why ought reason to seek this end? Why should it value such a goal? Reason must do so to realize itself. It too is a part of nature and has an essence to realize. If it does not do so, if it does not unfold itself (which is its natural course), we can say that it has been frustrated and is unfree. But this is still to say that it merely must or can realize itself, not yet that it ought to. If an acorn succeeds or fails in becoming a oak tree, we do not speak of the presence or absence of moral freedom. But if a human being—if reason—succeeds or fails in realizing itself, we do. Reason aims at its realization because of its nature. But this aim is not impressed on it from outside, nor is its aim immanent but unconscious. Because of its particular nature, reason can achieve its realization only in a particular way—consciously and freely. Here we can say legitimately that reason ought to realize itself, because it can realize itself only by acting consciously and freely, and yet we also can say that it is its nature to do so.

Marx's view, however, is even more complex than this. If to be actual, objects must be constituted and recognized, then facts are not simple givens. Natural objects, for Marx—and recall that the essences of natural objects are the basis for the formulation of civil laws—are not given factually, but constituted. Furthermore, our consciousness, our needs, and thus our values play a role in determining this constitution. Thus, we cannot have a neat distinction between facts and values. Nature is transformed and developed by human beings. This process is directed by their needs, which in part are needs for given natural objects; but labor, in satisfying need, transforms both the natural object and our needs and consciousness, and reciprocally our needs and consciousness play a part in constituting facts—natural objects. Thus, when we study natural objects—which already are value embedded—in order to grasp their essence and derive civil laws, we cannot say that we deduce moral conclusions from nonmoral premises. Facts and values interpenetrate all along the way.

This would also be true for human beings. We have said that they are formed by their culture—by other human beings. The human essence, then, is not just factually given; it is constituted and developed by the social and cultural activity, the labor, of other human beings who form the culture we internalize. Moreover—since values and needs would obviously play a part in constituting culture—as we internalize this culture, our essence would be formed by these values and needs. Values then would be embedded in our essence. Fact and values would interpenetrate here too. So again, when we study the human essence so as to formulate universal moral laws, we would not be deducing moral conclusions from nonmoral premises.

It is true to say that we cannot deduce moral conclusions from non-
moral premises. But it does not follow from this that we cannot derive values from facts. If a set of abstract premises could be exclusively factual and truly contain or imply no values, then we could not deduce moral conclusions from them. But if real world facts—especially if they are constituted by us—already have values embedded or implied in them, we can derive values from these facts.

Thus, to say that morality means realizing one’s essence does not mean that morality is being reduced to merely acting in accordance with nature or being determined by our nature. This alone would not make us moral or free. Our essence, it is true, is to be part of nature; but nature, existence, has been transformed to accord with it. Our essence has also developed, and consciousness was the most important factor in this development. As we have seen, in transforming our existence to suit our essence, we transform our world and thus ourselves in accordance with our needs and values. This is a process in which facts and values inevitably interpenetrate, mutually influence each other, and thus develop. To fully realize our essence, this process finally must take place consciously and freely. We must discover and bring to consciousness the values that have been objectified in our world and formulate them as universal rational laws. If we regulate our actions in accordance with these laws, then we have realized our essence and are free and moral.

Eugene Kamenka discusses these matters in a particularly clear way. His book on Marx’s ethics is especially chapter 9—is most impressive, though I am not in agreement with everything he says. In connection with the fact-value controversy, he points out that “good” has been treated both as a quality and as a relation. A scientific or an objective form of ethics can be established most easily if good is treated as a quality. Here, good is taken to be a characteristic that can be investigated in a factual way. Such an approach, however, destroys the illusion that there is anything about the good that logically implies or requires that we seek or support it. On the other hand, a traditional advocative conception of ethics is most easily established by treating good as a relation. Here, good is something for us—something demanded, required, or pursued, which it is wrong to reject. However, Kamenka suggests that, if good is treated as a relation and not a quality, there can be nothing objective about claiming the good should be sought.

For Kamenka, ethics can be advocative or objective, but not both—as that would mean that good had to be both a quality and a relation. Kamenka thinks such an amalgamation is confused and would lead to treating relations as constituting the qualities of things. This position follows from a doctrine of internal relations, as Bertell Ollman points out. Kamenka argues that things cannot be constituted by their relations because a thing must have qualities before it can enter into relations. It must be something before it can be commended, rejected, or pursued. Qualities do not depend logically on relations, nor do qualities by themselves imply relations.
Thus Kamenka rejects a strict doctrine of internal relations of the sort Ollman attributes to Marx.\textsuperscript{41} Carol Gould has shown that Marx does not hold such a strict doctrine of internal relations in the later writings.\textsuperscript{42} Even in Marx's early writings, it seems to me that relations do not constitute qualities, though they do transform preexisting qualities. In particular, our most essential relation to things—labor—transforms the qualities of natural objects, of our needs, our senses, and our consciousness. This is not, prima facie, an illegitimate way to link qualities and relations, facts and values.

Kamenka seems to understand what Marx is trying to do, and he argues that to accomplish it Marx is driven to absorb all differences into a strict monism. Since Kamenka thinks that the only way to amalgamate qualities and relations, facts and values, is to hold that relations create or constitute qualities, he holds that Marx is driven to the untenable position that all qualities must be absorbed into relations, that all differences between subject and object, the human being and nature, must disappear: they must be totally obliterated. The object must be totally absorbed into the subject.\textsuperscript{43} But this is not Marx’s position. Marx holds very clearly in the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts that an objective being, a human being, must be related to independent objects outside itself.\textsuperscript{44} Labor does constitute or absorb, but only by transforming preexisting qualities of the object. Thus, it does not obliterate all distinction between subject and object. It only unifies subject and object in essence. It overcomes the alienness of the object, not all difference.\textsuperscript{45}

II

We have said enough about Marx's concepts of freedom, essence, and universalization for us to have at least a basic idea of what morality means to him and now we can begin to discuss what he sees as most important, namely, how such morality is to be realized in the world.

Marx is seeking an agent with certain characteristics—an agent capable of transforming society in a revolutionary way because this agent’s natural course, its essence, leads it toward the universal. Its activity and goal are moral because it is capable of reconciling essence and existence and thus of actually realizing freedom and morality in the world. In his Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law, Marx finally decides that the proletariat is the historical agent he is looking for.

Philosophical criticism, Marx argues, gives rise to a “categorical imperative” to overthrow all relations in which man is not “the highest being for man.” Just as for Kant, human beings must be treated as ends in themselves. All institutions that treat humans merely as means must be transformed in a revolutionary way. If this revolution is to realize the categorical imperative that humans be treated as ends in themselves, then theory—the philosophical ideas of German Philosophy—must become a
material force. To do this, philosophical theory must grip the masses.\textsuperscript{46} This can only happen if theory matches and realizes the needs of the masses. A fit between theory and need will close the gap between philosophical ideals and the world—between essence and existence. The universal—freedom and the categorical imperative—and particular needs will accord and promote each other. Marx tries to argue that the particular class interest of the proletariat truly accords with the universal: it accords with the categorical imperative. Marx’s point is a very interesting and ingenious one. Because the proletariat is so oppressed, so deprived and degraded, its particular class interest—its selfish needs—are so fundamental that they could hardly be viewed as demands for special privileges. Such needs and interests would be the basic needs and interests of any and all human beings. They would be essential needs—needs for decent food, clothing, shelter, education, normal human development, and so forth—needs we would demand be satisfied for anybody. These would be needs that the categorical imperative would demand be satisfied for all. Because the proletariat is so oppressed, its particular interests correspond with the categorical imperative.

Thus Marx thinks that the proletariat “cannot emancipate itself without . . . emancipating all other spheres of society.” The proletariat “is the complete loss of man and hence can win itself only through the complete rewinning of man.”\textsuperscript{47} Since the proletariat’s needs are essential needs—needs in accordance with the categorical imperative—if we can satisfy them, if we realize the universal, we can emancipate humankind generally.

Nevertheless, one might object that there remains a fundamental difference between Kant and Marx. For Marx it is revolution that realizes morality, while for Kant revolution is rejected as immoral. This would seem to make their views quite dissimilar. But even here, if we carefully study Kant’s views on revolution, we will find less of a difference from Marx than we might expect.

Kant develops what he calls a “principle of publicity,” which he thinks shows that revolution is illegal. The principle of publicity functions for legality much as the categorical imperative functions for morality. Any action that would be frustrated if it were revealed publicly beforehand, Kant holds, must be considered illegal. The principle as stated here is negative. It will tell us that actions incompatible with publicity should be illegal; but on the other hand, it is not the case that all actions compatible with publicity should therefore be considered legal. For example, a powerful government with a sufficiently strong army may well be able to reveal an oppressive plan without at all risking its failure.\textsuperscript{48} The principle will indicate some but not all acts that should be illegal.

Thus, for Kant, the principle of publicity shows revolution to be illegal.\textsuperscript{49} However, Marx employs a principle of publicity to support revolution. How is this disagreement possible? The answer, it seems to me, is that Kant has made a mistake. He confuses a revolution with a
and then independent market laws set in—market laws that cannot be controlled by any individual. Since human beings need these products but do not control them, they come to be dominated by the process of exchange. They are estranged. Moreover, since need indicates essence, the inability to satisfy need indicates that one’s existence is estranged from one’s essence.⁵³

Again, since human beings need other human beings in many ways (to carry on production at anything more than the most minimal level; even to develop language; and, in short, to develop as human beings), then, given that need indicates essence, it follows for Marx that we are related essentially to others: the human essence is social. In an exchange economy these essential social relationships, Marx thinks, are estranged. Exchange and money, as they develop, stand between human beings and mediate—indeed, control—their interaction. This is quite visible during economic crises, but it occurs at all times. Humans are not free; their essential relations are controlled by an alien power.⁵⁴

Moreover, like Aristotle, Marx thinks that exchange perverts human virtue. Moral virtues no longer appear as ends to be sought but as means we are forced to use to achieve ends determined by the market. For example, in the relationship between lender and borrower (which Marx discusses at some length), normal human virtues are calculated in terms of potential credit risk. Trustworthiness, for example, no longer appears as a value or a virtue that is an end in itself; for the borrower it becomes a means to gain credit, and for the lender it appears as a means to ensure the likelihood of repayment. The value of a human being is estimated in money. Credit standards become the standards of morality; and human beings are viewed as elements, means, in an impersonal and alien process. Given the existence of human need and the lack of control over the products necessary to satisfy these needs, human morality will almost inevitably be shaped, dominated, and distorted by market forces.⁵⁵

So also, in a developed exchange economy, the essential activity of human beings—which for Marx is their labor—no longer aims at producing products directly needed by the laborer. It no longer serves to realize the human essence. Labor and its product become a mere means to be exchanged for a wage to guarantee bare existence. Existence is not transformed and made a means to realize essence; rather, essence, essential human activity, becomes a means to preserve a minimal existence. For Marx as for Aristotle, production or “wealth-getting” directed toward the satisfaction of basic needs and the preservation of life or existence is, of course, necessary. But such activity is not properly one’s highest end. It should be seen as the necessary basis for allowing one to proceed on to the sorts of activities involved in the good life—a life involving activities that are ends in themselves and thus the highest realization of one’s essence.⁵⁶ To turn these activities into means to mere existence is to turn things upside down and to fail to realize one’s essence.

Again like Aristotle, Marx thinks that, without exchange, humans
would produce no more than they needed. The limit of need would form the limit of production. Production would be measured by need and thus by the human essence. This, for Marx, is real exchange—the exchange of labor for the product. In a market economy with wage labor, what is produced is not controlled by the wage worker. Here, need no longer measures production; but production, or the ownership of the product, is the measure of how far needs will be satisfied. Independent and alien forces determine the distribution of the product and thus the extent to which need and essence are satisfied.

There is another problem involved in exchange. Adam Smith, and Hegel as well, argue that in an exchange economy a common good is produced unconsciously through an invisible hand. Each seeks their own self-interest; but, given the complex interdependence of each on all, self-seeking produces the common good more effectively than if individuals had sought it consciously.

It is quite clear that Marx completely rejects the Smith–Hegel model for society. Moreover, his objection is in large part a moral one. As far back as Socrates, and certainly for Aristotle as well as for Kant, simply to produce a good, or to act merely in accordance with given moral expectations, does not amount to morality. To act morally, one must know rationally what the good is, and the act must be motivated by this rational knowledge. To act selfishly and allow a good to come about behind your back—no matter how effective it might be—is not moral. Morality requires conscious intent. We have already seen that to realize one’s essence requires that this essence be grasped consciously and that one should set about transforming existence accordingly. The same applies at the social level.

It is true that Marx relies on self-interest rather than morality as the motive force of revolution (though morality and interests do converge). An invisible-hand argument has a legitimate place in explaining how it is possible to move from existing society to an ideal society because it allows us to avoid simply positing that people first must become ideally moral in order to realize the ideal society. But invisible-hand arguments have no place, for Marx, when discussing the ideal society itself. This society must be consciously and purposively directed. In fact, even when Marx does use an invisible-hand argument, we must see that his approach is different from that of Adam Smith for whom competitive self-seeking unconsciously produces a common good. For Marx, while interests do unconsciously tend toward the common good or the ideal society, to move effectively toward this ideal society we must become aware of this tendency and assist it consciously. In his discussion of such an ideal society, Marx says,

Let us suppose we had carried out production as human beings. . . . (1) In my production I would have objectified my individuality, its specific character, and therefore enjoyed not only an individual manifestation of my life
during the activity, but also when looking at the object I would have the individual pleasure of knowing my personality to be objective, visible to the senses and hence a power beyond all doubt. (2) In your enjoyment or use of my product I would have the direct enjoyment of being conscious of having satisfied a human need by my work, that is, of having objectified man’s essential nature, and of having created an object corresponding to the need of another man’s essential nature. (3) I would have been for you the mediator between you and the species, and therefore would have become recognized and felt by yourself as a completion of your own essential nature and as a necessary part of yourself, and consequently would know myself to be confirmed both in your thought and your love. (4) In the individual expression of my life I would have directly created your expression of your life, and therefore in my individual activity I would have directly confirmed and realized my true nature, my human nature, my communal nature.

Our products would be so many mirrors in which we saw reflected our essential nature. 59

Social relationships, for Marx, should be direct and conscious. The common good should not be produced through an invisible hand; the needs of others should be satisfied consciously and purposefully. Exchange should not be allowed to operate independently of human beings, out of their control, dominating and frustrating their needs, subverting human values and virtue, standing between human beings and dominating their interaction. Humans should consciously and purposively direct their own interaction.

We have said that, since need indicates essence, the fact that humans need each other indicates that their essence is social. It is true that human need will produce social interaction whether human beings consciously regulate it or not. Humans must interact socially in order to produce, distribute products, and develop. If not consciously directed, this interaction will take the form of exchange, and market forces will come to dominate individuals and produce estrangement. If this interaction is cooperative, consciously controlled, and purposively directed, then society (Gesellschaft) is transformed into a community (Gemeinschaft). Conscious cooperative and purposive control of social interaction produces community. Marx clearly is arguing that a community—a communal organization of society—is the only sort of society that can realize the human essence; it is the only moral society. The human essence is communal. In general, essence is only fully realized if it is brought to consciousness and if existence is transformed to fit essence. To realize fully the human essence, social interaction must be understood consciously and directed purposively. Society must be transformed consciously. 60 In short, human interaction must be communal if existence is to accord with essence.

Thus, Marx envisions a society in which need directly regulates production. Individuals work not merely as a means to exist, but in order to satisfy and develop needs, that is, to realize their essence. The distribu-
tion of products in this society should take the form of direct communal sharing purposively designed to satisfy the needs of others such that a conscious bond is formed. In such a society, one would recognize consciously as well as feel the power and importance of others who satisfy and develop one's essence and one's own power and importance in satisfying the essence of others. Social relations would be moral relations. Relationships between individuals would be like the community of friends that Aristotle thought necessary for a good state. Furthermore, community, for Marx, replaces the existing alienation of civil society from the political state. It transforms unconscious civil society into a consciously controlled and purposively directed economic community and eliminates the dominating estranged political state by making the universal elements of community and cooperation operative in day-to-day life.

Marx claims that the human essence is social, whereas Aristotle claims that humans are political animals. These claims may appear incompatible, but they are not. Aristotle does not make a distinction between the social and the political. Marx does distinguish between the two; but when he claims that the human essence is social, he is not opposing the social to the political, as he does when he opposes civil society to the political state. For Marx, both state and society are to be absorbed into community. We certainly cannot say that, for Marx, the human essence is social as opposed to political or communal. The highest realization of society is community, and the political state involves community in an alienated form along with domination. To realize the human essence means to overcome the isolation of society as well as the domination and estrangement of the political state by realizing community. The realized human essence is communal. For Aristotle, we can say that the "political" involves both communal interaction and domination—certainly the domination of slaves. Thus, both thinkers hold that realized human beings require community. The difference between Marx and Aristotle, then, is that Marx wants community without domination. However, at points, this even seems to be Aristotle's ideal. He says, "If . . . every tool, when summoned, or even of its own accord, could do the work that befits it, just as the creations of Daedalus moved of themselves, or the tripods of Hephaestos went of their own accord to their sacred work . . . then there would be no need either of apprentices for the master, or of slaves for the lords."

IV

In the Comments on Mill and especially in the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, we find clearly presented the very important concept of objectification (Vergegenständlichung), which allows Marx to formulate many of his views in a sharper and clearer way. An object, for
Marx, is the result of an objectification: it is an entity necessary to maintain the existence and to satisfy the essence of another being. Objectification, for Marx, is the expression, manifestation, or realization of the powers of an entity in an object. For example, Marx says the plant has the sun as its object: the plant needs the sun to exist and grow. And reciprocally, the sun has the plant as its object: the sun realizes, objectifies, its life-developing powers in the growth of the plant. For humans, an object is something needed by the human being to satisfy its essence and maintain its existence; food, for example, is the object of hunger. Humans also need objects in which they can objectify their powers—for example, raw material on which to work. Human beings must labor upon nature and transform it in order to satisfy their needs. They transform existence to suit their essence. The existing natural world is thus rearranged and formed through labor, fashioned into the sorts of objects that can satisfy the existing level of needs and essence. The need-satisfying object is the outcome, the product, of a process of objectification. Objectification begins with a subject whose powers, capacities, and ideas have developed historically to a given level as conditioned by the subject’s social world—its specific level of technology, organization of production, culture, and so forth. For these subjective factors (these powers, capacities, and ideas) to be objectified—that is, realized and developed—they must be set to work and produce an object. If they are not set to work, not exercised, they certainly do not develop, and in fact they really do not exist except in potential. One can identify the level to which these subjective factors have developed by studying the sorts of objects human beings are capable of producing. Furthermore, with the production of a new object—say, a tool—new powers and capacities will be called into play, exercised, and developed in using the tool; these then can give rise to new ideas and needs, which can call for further new objects and thus again new powers, capacities, and ideas to produce and use them. Needed objects promote the development of objectification, and objectification promotes the development of needed objects. Existence is transformed, and needs and essence develop.

To realize the human essence, for Marx, it is not only necessary to realize and to satisfy the needs of human beings, but it is also necessary to develop their powers. In fact, there is an intimate connection between powers and needs for Marx. The ability to realize any power would involve certain needs, as, for example, when workers need raw material in which to realize their labor. The satisfaction of any need would imply the maintaining, reinforcing, or realizing of a power, as, for example, the satisfaction of the need for food sustains workers’ abilities to manifest their power through labor. Furthermore, the drive to realize any power, for Marx, would be felt as a need—not as a basic need, but as a higher need. It is important to notice that in the early writings the entire natural and social world is seen as the outcome of objectification; it has been progressively transformed by human labor into need-satisfying objects.
Raw, untransformed nature—Marx thinks—no longer exists, nor could it satisfy human need.  

It follows from this concept of objectification, for Marx, that humans can contemplate themselves in their object. They can view their entire world as something produced by themselves—the realization of their powers and ideas. They find the world to be a place that satisfies their needs and thus confirms and reinforces them. Their existence has been transformed to correspond with their essence. Their objects are not alien and other; they are their essence.

Moreover, for Marx, individuals should have the same relation to other human beings. Other humans are the individual’s objects; they are needed by the individual. In a very interesting way Marx is trying to rid the terms object and need of their usual meaning. To say that humans are objects is not to say that they are things, or that they are needed as we need things, or that they are to be used as things. Objects, for Marx, are not means; they are ends. Objects are part of our essence. To say that other human beings (i.e., humankind, or the human species) are our object is to say that we need them. They are part of our essence. Without them, any complex production would be impossible, language would not exist, and individuals would not develop as human beings. Moreover, the human species is an object in the sense that human beings become what they are at any point in history by internalizing culture and society, which have been produced as the objectifications of other human beings. We are thus the products of the objectifications of the human species. So also we become what we are by exercising and objectifying the powers and capacities that have been produced in us and thus again influence and produce others. The products of objectification satisfy and develop not just the individuals who produced them, but others in society. Objects produced by others free us from the domination of need and allow us to pursue higher needs and thus develop higher powers, capacities, and ideas, which in turn make possible higher forms of objectification and thus a higher development of others as well as ourselves. The development of the individual’s needs and powers, the individual’s essence, both is dependent on and contributes to the development of the species’ powers and needs—the species’ essence. Thus we can contemplate ourselves—our essence—in other human beings, and the species in ourselves. The species is the product of our objectification, and we are a product of its objectification.

We have already seen that Marx wants social interaction to be communal, that is, conscious and purposive. To be free, individuals must consciously and purposively make the species their object or end. Marx claims that the human being is a species being and that a species being is a being capable of making its species the object of its theory and practice. This means that the individual is capable of conceiving a universal or general idea, that is, the idea of the species. Animals, unlike humans, can only conceive particulars. The human essence is identified by locating
the characteristics that distinguish humans from animals—the species from the genus. It is much like the Aristotelian notion that humans are rational animals. On the other hand, to make the species the object of practice means to make the species the end or goal of practical activity. Thus, to realize one’s essence one must make the species the conscious object of theory and practice. Since the human essence only develops through the collective process of transforming existence to suit need and the objectification of its powers and capacities through labor, and since the development of the powers and capacities of the species is the outcome of the objectification of individuals whose powers are developed due to the objectification of the species, and since the realization of essence requires consciousness, it follows that the individual’s fullest and highest development is dependent on individuals’ making the development of the species their conscious and purposive goal.

Thus, to say that human beings are species beings, that they have a species essence, or that human labor is species activity is a way of saying that the human essence is communal, that is, that social interaction must be conscious and purposive. Individuals are in essence what they become through interaction with others. To make the development of the species one’s end is to make the development of one’s own essence one’s end or object.

Marx’s concepts of objectification and of species essence involve a view of freedom that in many ways is like that of Kant. Unalienated human beings are self-determined in the sense that they are not driven by need but regulate the satisfaction of need consciously. They are not dominated by alien market forces, but control their social interaction themselves. Such human beings are not determined heteronomously. Their activity is not determined by particular interests or individual needs, but is directed consciously toward the realization of the human essence, that is, toward the satisfaction of needs common to all, needs that can be universalized, needs whose satisfaction would be demanded by the categorical imperative.

We must say a bit more about the relationship between needs and the categorical imperative. Kant, at least in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, admits that inclinations, interests, or needs are embedded in the content of any maxim. But to act morally and freely we must will to carry out the maxim not because of these interests, needs, or inclinations, but solely because the maxim is universalizable and thus rational. In other words, Kant has no objection to the fact that ends, interests, needs, goods, or purposes will be embedded in our maxims. They are expected to be there, but they must not be the elements that determine our will; only the possibility of universalizing the maxim without contradiction can do that if the act is to be free and moral. Perhaps the clearest example of this can be found in Kant’s claim that the categorical imperative requires us to seek our own happiness. It is at least an indirect duty to seek happiness, not because we desire it (though, of course, we do desire it), but because
it is impossible to universalize not seeking it. This too, I think, is Marx's view. We do not seek the object because it satisfies a particular need or interest of the individual (though, of course, it does so). That would be to be need-driven and dominated by the object. That would be heteronomy. We seek an object because to do so is universalizable, because the need for the object is common to all human beings, because it would be impossible to universalize not seeking the object, all of which is also to say that the object realizes the essence of the species.

The categorical imperative applies to powers as well as needs. Even for Kant the categorical imperative would require individuals to develop their talents. But, for Marx, powers are not important merely for the individual. The powers of individuals affect and transform the sociocultural world that other individuals internalize. The entire sociocultural world is the outcome of what individuals have contributed to it through the manifestation of their powers, and this sociocultural world molds all individuals and makes possible the development of their powers. Thus, for individuals to seek their own realization, they must seek the full realization of the powers of other individuals—the powers of the species as a whole. This would require that we act on the universal—in accordance with the categorical imperative, which would demand the realization of quite specific powers of any particular individual, since such powers could contribute to the development of the species. It would be society's obligation to provide the conditions under which such powers could be realized. Moreover, as we saw earlier with respect to needs, Marx operates not just with a Kantian categorical imperative but with an Aristotelian concept of essence, and the latter would call for the development of powers that we might not be able to will that all human beings develop but that nevertheless would develop the essence of the individual and conceivably contribute to the enrichment of the human species. The categorical imperative would, of course, also demand that those powers that would harm others should not be realized.

Furthermore, despite the importance of objects, needs, and powers, Marx implies that it is species activity itself that is our highest goal. Much as for Aristotle, activities can have their ends or objects outside themselves, or the activity itself can be our highest end. For Marx, it is true that objects are ends—not means—and that activity cannot occur without objects and the satisfaction of needs; but it is the activity of producing objects and satisfying needs that is the highest end, and not the objects of particular interests or individual needs themselves. The end is a certain form of activity—activity that is free, that is, conscious and purposively directed toward the realization of the species. It would not be a means to something else, but an end in itself. Such action would not be heteronomously determined.

At the same time, we can say that for Kant moral obligation is based not on seeking the good, but on freedom. We obey the categorical imperative because only by doing so are we rationally self-determined.
and thus free. Here, too, we do not act to realize an external end; our act itself—freedom—is the end. For Marx, too, moral obligation is based on freedom in this way. Free species activity is itself the end. But this also means that the end is the realization of the essence of the species—its good. And only through the realization of the essence of the species can we realize our powers, capacities, and freedom—our own good.

In this way, Marx links Aristotle and Kant. Realizing our essence is identical with acting on a categorical imperative. This identification is possible because Marx understands our essence as a species essence. To realize our essence, we must act consciously and purposefully for the benefit of the species. But to act for the benefit of the species is to act for the universal: it is to act on the categorical imperative. Such species activity is an end in itself. At the same time, to act for the universal is to realize the species and thus to realize one’s own essence; and to realize one’s own essence is to be free.

Marx does not accept the Kantian notion of a noumenal realm. This is necessary for Kant because without it we would be entirely situated in the phenomenal realm, and all of our action would be determined causally and heteronomously. Instead of a concept of noumena, Marx employs a concept of essence. In the absence of alienation, neither the object nor need for the object indicates heteronomy, because the needed object is not, in itself, heteronomous; it is part of our essence. As we have seen, both the subject and the object are parts of nature, and the object is ontologically absorbed into the subject in the sense that the human species constitutes and comes to control collectively the objective world. It finds itself reflected in that world, and finds the world to be one with itself in essence.

Kantian autonomy does not satisfy Marx, because only the intentions and volitions of the individual are free. In abstracting so radically from results, consequences, and goods, the individual—for Kant—is free even if the external world frustrates the realization of subjectively free activity. Not so for Hegel and Marx. The external world—the object—must have been transformed to fit our essence. It must be a reflection of ourselves that reinforces and confirms us. The free action of the subject must be realized in the world for full freedom to be possible. Thus our relation to the object is not only a free relation but one that realizes our essence, and thus must be universalizable.

My contention that Marx tries to link Aristotle and Kant can be reinforced by considering another issue. Marx implies in several places that species activity ought to lead to happiness or that it ought to be enjoyable and satisfying. We have discussed already the relation of species activity to morality and freedom; we now must see how it is connected to happiness.

Moral theorists view the relation of virtue to happiness in different ways. Some theorists tend toward identifying the two; others deny such a
Aristotle, Kant, Young Marx connection. For example, Plato in the Republic (it seems to me) changes the normal meaning of happiness and redefines it so that it is identical with, or at least necessarily accompanies, virtue. The contemplation of the form of the highest good—grasping true being—necessarily involves true happiness. There is no suggestion of this in Marx. Classical utilitarians, on the other hand, define virtue so as to make it identical with happiness or at least hold that it follows necessarily from happiness. I will try to show that this is not Marx’s view. Other theorists like Kant and Aristotle reject the tendency to identify virtue with happiness. One can be virtuous without necessarily being happy, though one cannot be happy, at least in the highest sense, without being virtuous. To link virtue and happiness, further conditions are necessary. To use Kant’s language, the connection between virtue and happiness is synthetic, not analytic.

Though Marx does not discuss these matters explicitly, he seems to be closer to Aristotle and Kant than to the utilitarians. For example, in disagreeing with Proudhon he says that higher wages for workers would only produce better-paid slaves. In other words, higher wages and thus (certainly for utilitarians) greater enjoyment or happiness would be possible without affecting the fact that workers are alienated and unfree. But since, as we have seen, moral good requires freedom and the realization of essence, we can say that happiness without freedom is not a morally acceptable goal. It certainly would not realize the human essence. Again, in The German Ideology, Marx argues that the semi-artistic work of the medieval craftsperson was engaging and enjoyable but that this made the work even more slavish. In other words, to make alienated and unfree work enjoyable would be to tie the worker closer to such work and thus to increase the worker’s slavishness. Marx also tells us in The Holy Family that capitalists are alienated in a market economy—just like anyone else—but may still be happy and satisfied. Again, happiness without freedom is morally unacceptable. Morality cannot be identified with producing greater happiness.

How then does Marx link freedom and morality with happiness in the ideal case? To answer this, we first must notice that happiness can be understood in at least two ways. Happiness can mean pleasure, the satisfaction of natural desires or needs, as it does for Kant and at times for Aristotle. Or it can refer to the satisfaction that accompanies a well-performed activity, as it does in other places for Aristotle. The higher this activity—the more it accords with our essence—the higher the satisfaction or happiness.

Using the first definition of happiness, it is not easy to get morality and happiness to accord. For Aristotle, it is largely a contingent matter. The virtuous individual simply may suffer disappointment or pain. For Kant, the agreement of virtue with happiness is called the highest good. To realize the highest good, moral actions in accordance with universal rational principles would have to agree with the feelings or inclinations that produce happiness. For this to be possible, it would mean that the
natural world would have to be regulated so that the objects that determine feelings and inclination and thus happiness would always determine them in accordance with the demands of morality. For Kant, the highest good thus requires a postulate of practical reason—the existence of a God who would align nature and inclination with morality so that happiness could accompany virtue. For Marx, we might say, the human species replaces Kant’s God. The species itself remakes the natural world in accordance with its essence such that natural objects and thus the feelings determined by these objects would agree with the universal and conscious moral purpose of the species. The species, we might say, realizes the highest good.

At this point we can see that the two forms of happiness can coincide. The satisfaction of need, interest, and feeling would occur as the species transforms its world to suit its essence. But, for Marx, our highest end is not the satisfaction of needs or interests; it is free species activity itself. Thus, the satisfaction or happiness that accompanies a well-performed activity—a satisfaction or happiness that is higher when the activity is higher or more essential—would also be present.

We might also say that, for Marx, the species replaces Aristotle’s final cause—that highest being for whose good all action is done. It causes by being loved. Activity done for the final cause involves pleasure or happiness. Much the same could be said of the species.

Notes


5. Plato, Euthyphro, 4B–16A; Republic, 619B–619C.


9. PH 38–39, and SW 11: 70–71. PR 160–61, and GPR 214–15. These three characteristics also can be found in Aristotle, though he is discussing virtue not freedom; NE 1179b–1180a.


17. PH 50–51, and SW 11: 84–85. Moreover, for Hegel, the Idea manipulates the historical conflict of particular interests in order to realize itself; PH 20, 22–23, 25, 33, and SW 11: 48, 50–51, 54, 63.


33. For an example of the distinction between true and false needs, see *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, MECW 3: 324–26, and MEW, suppl. 1: 564–67.


35. Thus, we might distinguish between (1) needs common to all, whose denial we could not universalize, e.g., the need for food, (2) needs of particular individuals, groups, or classes whose satisfaction would frustrate the satisfaction of needs of others—that is, needs whose satisfaction we could not universalize—
e.g., needs involved in pursuing economic exploitation, and (3) particular and even unique needs not opposed to the needs of others whose denial or satisfaction it does not make sense to universalize, e.g., a scholar’s need for an unusual manuscript (also see W. K. Frankena, *Ethics*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973), pp. 32–33). However, it is not clear that Kant would be unable to accommodate this third category. He argues that an individual cannot without contradiction will to leave a talent undeveloped (F 40–41, and KGS 4: 422–23). Even if such an accommodation could be worked out, for Marx unlike Kant, there are still two factors present—the principle of universalization, and the realization of essence—and these two converge. All of this, of course, assumes a society able to satisfy needs. In a society of scarcity we might not even be able to satisfy those universalizable needs (even needs for food) we would will to satisfy.


49. PP 130, and KGS 8: 382.

50. PP 134, and KGS 8: 386.

52. Kant seems to come very close to holding this in “Old Question,” in On History, pp. 143-45, and KGS 7: 85-86.


61. NE 1155a, 1159b–1160a; Aristotle, Politics, p. 1280b.


64. Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts, MECW 3: 272, 336–37, and MEW, suppl. 1: 511–12, 578–79.

65. Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts, MECW 3: 304, 336, and MEW, suppl. 1: 544, 578.


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72. Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts, MECW 3: 333, and MEW, suppl. 1: 574.
77. Plato, Republic, 585A–585B.
79. CPrR 115, 117, and KGS 5: 111, 112–13. Aristotle does, in effect, define happiness as activity of the soul in conformity with virtue (NE 1097b–1098a, 1177a), and thus it might seem that the link between virtue and happiness is analytic for him. But elsewhere in the text we see that virtue is not quite a sufficient condition for happiness; a virtuous person who, for example, lacks a certain amount of wealth, who suffers, or who lacks health will not be happy (NE 1153b, 1178b–1179a).
82. German Ideology, MECW 5: 66, and MEW 3: 52.
84. These examples suggest an interesting point, namely, that alienation is not a psychological category for Marx. To be alienated does not mean necessarily that we will be aware of being alienated or feel miserable, or unhappy. Moreover, to overcome alienation it certainly is not sufficient to end misery or unhappiness. Workers content with their jobs are not necessarily unalienated. Alienation, most basically, means being unfree, and we can easily be unfree without being aware of it, just as we can be either happy or unhappy in our unfreedom. On the other hand, to overcome alienation does require that we become aware of it and understand its causes.
86. Hegel, too, holds both views; see PS 375, and PG 435. Also PR 83, and
GPR 127. It is true that "satisfaction that accompanies a well performed activity" is Aristotle's definition of pleasure (NE 1174b–1175b), which is not to be simply identified with happiness. But pleasure is certainly linked with happiness (NE 1153b), and it is a necessary ingredient of it (NE 1177a). In trying to define happiness, Aristotle identifies the proper function of the human being as activity in conformity with a rational principle or with virtue. Happiness then arises out of the performance of these activities, especially when they are performed with excellence (NE 1097b–1098a, also 1076a–1077a). When discussing pleasure as the satisfaction that accompanies a well-performed activity, Aristotle is discussing a broader sort of satisfaction arising from activities that need not in the strictest or highest sense be rational and virtuous. But if they are, then pleasure coincides with happiness. Indeed, there is nothing objectionable about this. Aristotle says we can choose pleasure partly for itself and partly as a means to happiness, though we never choose happiness as a means to pleasure (NE 1097b). Happiness arises out of the highest sorts of activities—activities that are ends in themselves and that accord with virtue and rationality (NE 1176b). And this happiness involves the highest form of pleasure (NE 1177a).


89. Aristotle, Metaphysics, p. 1072b.