

# The inorganic body in the early Marx

## A limit-concept of anthropocentrism

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The effort to revive and recover critical theory and its intellectual precedents has become more difficult at a time in which ‘critique’ is regularly denounced as negative, skeptical and anthropocentric. Bruno Latour, for instance, imagines that when we speak about what is ‘critical’, we have in mind a fully negative project, a practice of debunking and dismantling hegemonic presumptions about the world, and that critical theory only intensifies skepticism and lacks transformative power and commitment to emancipatory ideals.<sup>1</sup> The validity of his claim depends on a careful consideration of what ‘negative’ means, and a querying of whether ‘the negative’, in fact, deserves such a negative reputation. Even if a ‘critical’ approach is one that aims not to reproduce those forms of thought that ratify modes of social life that reproduce forms of domination or subjugation, that does not mean that critical theory refuses to reproduce all forms of thought or that it objects to all surface phenomena. To oppose a naturalised form of knowledge because oppression is taken for granted within its terms is not to oppose all nature, or to claim that nature ought to be replaced with expressions of a purely human expressive power. To make a naturalised mode of subjugation into an object of knowledge is not to destroy its reality, but only to form it as an object of knowledge, judgement and transformation. In this way, ‘negation’ – understood as ‘suspending the taken for granted character of reality’ – opens up a critical perspective on that form, and conditions the possibility of precisely those forms of intervention and aspiration that Latour denies to the critical project. One does not take leave of the world of facts, but, in recognising that it is a world, finds modes of dynamic engagement with them.

One problem with Latour’s criticism of ‘critique’ is

that he relies on an account of critical theory which positions it as the contemporary manifestation of the history of a consequential error inaugurated by Kant. Latour writes:

The mistake we made, the mistake I made, was to believe that there was no efficient way to criticise matters of fact except by moving away from them and directing one’s attention toward the conditions that made them possible. But this meant accepting much too uncritically what matters of fact were. This was remaining too faithful to the unfortunate solution inherited from the philosophy of Immanuel Kant.<sup>2</sup>

Latour seems to understand positivism here as the object of critique, and goes on to claim that matters of fact have to be re-approached in a way that affirms their own potential and agentic powers. That may well be the case. But why would such a project be antithetical to critique? Further, is Latour right to imagine that critical theorists have all been ensnared by a view that fails to attend to matters of fact (and recasts them as matters of concern) in order to discern their own critical potential? Latour seems to be asking whether it is not time to stop acting on the world, but in making this claim – if it is his claim – he seems to imagine action as an anthropocentric activity, even though there is a significant tradition of critical theory that contests such an assumption.

For Latour, critique is undertaken by a subject whose main aim is to distance itself from, and so to negate, the realm of what is (considered as what *simply* is). Negation, for Latour, cannot account for the shared agency at work between subjective and objective fields. This misunderstanding, in his view, follows from Kantian epistemology. Moreover, it fails to understand properly that the realm of ‘facts’ and ‘matters of concern’ offer crit-

ical possibilities themselves. Latour's argument could no doubt be easily refuted by a more nuanced consideration of the relation between subject and object, and between nature and life, in German Idealism that might prove to be not so very antithetical to his own views. Alternately, another criticism could show that Latour misunderstands negation, especially the Hegelian notion of determinate negation, as part of a philosophy of immanence, which has important considerations for a non-positivist account of nature. Critical theory, too, has offered an array of positions *against* skepticism, all of which are overlooked when Latour understands skepticism to be the signature characteristic of critical theory. Finally, the Kantian position he associates with a hyper-subjectivism that abandons the realm of objective reality is neither a fair and grounded characterisation of Kant nor of critical theory's concerns.

Yet, Latour's errant critique provides an opportunity to approach the 'critical' aspect of critical theory in contemporary terms, where we can see critique emerge from situations of crisis. If critical theory is sequestered from social engagement and activism, vacating the very domain from which the political problematic emerges, it deprives itself of the capacity to trace that very emergence. This important relation between working inside and outside of the academy is linked to the further problem of the border between the university and its world. Such a critical practice neither takes distance from facts nor negates their existence or importance; on the contrary, a constellation of such 'facts' impresses itself upon our thinking, and so the world acts on us and exercises a historical demand on thought. The demand for climate change intervention is but one case in point. An objection to how the environment has been toxified requires an intervention that would allow for its detoxification and renewal. This is not a form of mastery, but an acknowledgement that organic creatures require the continuation of their own organic life and organic life more broadly. So, yes, critical thought is immersed in matters of concern, responsive to the demand those matters make upon us, but it also challenges the notion that we are subjects who only make our worlds and are not formed and affected by a world we never made. We are thinking creatures who register damage and potential in the somatic lives in which we live, feel and think. Caught up in the temporal vector of past, present and future, we

think within a mode of thought formed in, by, against – and even for – the impress of the world.

## 'Anthropocentric'?

It is in light of the above conception of critical theory, and of its critique, that I want then to ask a more specific question in what follows: how best to re-approach, today, Marx's 1844 Manuscripts in order to take up the question of whether the young Marx is, as is commonly assumed, and in the form that Latour has most recently implied, *anthropocentric*? What prompts me to ask this question is a famous, but very enigmatic paragraph in those manuscripts that refers to nature as man's 'inorganic body'. It is a surprising claim, and I will first attempt to locate it in the text and to offer my understanding of this idea within the context of Marx's general arguments in these early writings. Most importantly, I want to suggest that a consideration of this notion of the inorganic body in Marx has implications for the contemporary critique of critique, especially as it relates to the accusation of anthropocentrism.

This is a question that was posed in a different way in a set of debates conducted in the 1970s and 1980s by British scholars, especially John Clark, who sought to settle the question of whether Marx's views were compatible with an ecological perspective, and which in turn prompted a series of inquiries into how best to understand Marx's theory of nature.<sup>3</sup> The issues raised by this are important not only because the early manuscripts of 1844 are usually understood to be superseded by Marx's later work, especially by *Capital* and the *Grundrisse*, but because it is widely assumed that the early manuscripts rely on a theory of alienation and an account of the subject that is speculative at best and which deflects from the structure and aims of the theorisation of the structural or systemic character of capitalism developed in *Capital* and Marx's subsequent writings. Although a return to the early Marx does not necessarily aim to retrieve or rehabilitate his early account of labour, it does raise questions about how we understand labour and the labouring body, the human and its relation to nature and other living processes.<sup>4</sup>

We know that the labourer works on nature, and that he or she requires nature for the purposes of subsistence. We also know, I presume, that the body is sensuous, and

that its work on natural objects implies a sensuous engagement with those objects. But if nature is in some sense the ‘inorganic body’ of the human, then another kind of relationship is posited, namely, one in which the body of the human is no longer exactly discrete. Indeed, its boundaries are neither exactly known nor knowable. If there is an inorganic body of the human, and it is all of nature, then the human body extends to all of nature, or, conversely, all of nature comprises the human body. The relation of the human body to all of nature proves essential to the human body, or the relation of nature to the human body proves essential to nature. How we conceive of this relation has implications for answering the question of just how anthropocentric are the early manuscripts, or whether there is a largely unexamined critique of anthropocentrism to be found within their pages? My suggestion is that we need to reconsider this speculative claim about nature as ‘inorganic body’ to answer that question.

To call nature an ‘inorganic body’ proves enigmatic in part because it is referred to as a singular body, suggesting that it is in some way a unity, even if internally differentiated. Moreover, there is an obvious question as to why nature would be called ‘inorganic’ rather than ‘organic’ – what is the difference, and how does the former turn into the latter? We might expect the organic to turn into the inorganic as a result of human labour, but in this case – and in relation to the problem of subsistence – the inverse is in fact the case. To understand what this means, we have first to understand the difference between the organic and the inorganic in Marx, and to see what it means when these become two modalities for describing the body or, rather, two modalities through which the body appears.

As I hope to show, we are left to infer that ‘man’ has both an organic and an inorganic body: ‘his’ organic body is the one that ‘he’ experiences as bounded and discrete, separate from the rest of nature, but nature – the whole of nature – constitutes his *inorganic* body.<sup>5</sup> So, he is one body and distinguished from another, but the distinction is also one that he himself lives. Are we to presume that there are two bodies, or only one body which has an organic as well as an inorganic dimension or modality? It would seem that the organic body – what Marx calls the human *Leib* – is discrete, but the inorganic body – what he calls *Körper* – is not, and that therefore we ought not

to assume an absolute distinction between these two dimensions. What becomes immediately clear, however, is that there is a living character to the organic body (*Leib*) that is distinct from the inorganic body. The problem is made more complex by the fact that usually *Leib* denotes the lived body, and *Körper* can mean a simple discrete density, alive or dead.<sup>6</sup> And yet, it would not be right to say that the inorganic body is simply dead. Nature is alive, but not quite in the same sense that the body is. So, organic is not to inorganic as life is to death. Organic and inorganic are potentials of one another, and the problem of life seems to cut across that distinction in a way that is yet to be clarified.

But first, we should ask: how does that distinction inform our interpretation of what is going on with this phrase, nature as ‘inorganic body’, and with the broader question of whether Marx in his early manuscripts proposes an anthropocentric account of nature? Nature is an object of work and an occasion for the labourer’s self-reflection; it is the substance on which he works, as well as that which sustains his existence: sometimes the object on which the labourer works is food. Nature is of course one basis for one human’s connection with other humans, but it is also that which constitutes his ‘species being’. For the human creature may belong to his own species, but if that species is one among many such species, and if, as a living species, it is linked with other forms of life, then we have to understand the kind of link or relation that this is. This may well give us some insight into the sense of Marx’s claim that ‘nature is man’s inorganic body’.

I will consider the paragraph in which Marx introduces this formulation in a moment, but first let me offer some background. In the 1970s and 80s, Marxist theorists in the UK and elsewhere became concerned with the question of whether Marx’s views are compatible with ecological thinking. Some asked the question: is the claim that ‘nature is man’s inorganic body’ an ecological claim? Is it the case that humans should act, or are naturally disposed to act, as if their own bodies were in some sense coextensive with nature? Is it the case that man acts in such a way that he participates organically in nature? Is the action that is proper to man at once a natural activity, overcoming, as it were, a radical distinction between human action and natural process? John Clark points out that Marx also describes locomotives and rail-

ways as ‘organs of the human brain’,<sup>7</sup> thereby suggesting that these human institutions develop from ideas emerging from human consciousness, but that they emerge from the organic dimension of the brain as well, since without the brain, those ideas would not exist at all.<sup>8</sup> The brain is not simply the condition of possibility for the mind, but seems in some sense to be generative of human inventions such as locomotives and railways. These latter are not simply produced by the brain/mind, if you will, but they are organs of the human brain. The organ is not in the brain, or not exclusively in the brain, but also in the expression or work itself. This is but one instance in which the expectation that organs are necessarily or entirely lodged inside the body turns out to be not quite right, since they are not only in the means of production (railways and locomotives), but they are ontologically bound up with one another. Note how the copula works: the locomotives are the organs of the brain; nature is the inorganic body of humans. How do we understand equations or ontological equivalences such as these?

Carolyn Merchant points out that *organic* in the seventeenth century referred to the bodily organs, structures and organisation of living beings.<sup>9</sup> *Inorganic* referred to the absence of bodily organs. The human would seem, then, to be organic, and external nature to be inorganic, if we follow that distinction. However, in the case of Marx, as Foster and Burkett argue, one sense of the ‘inorganic’ would refer specifically to the extension of the human body and its activities through the use of tools and instruments; hence, a technical augmentation of bodily powers. And yet, as Foster and Burkett also point out, none of these distinctions can quite capture the Hegelian background of Marx’s distinction.<sup>10</sup> That understanding underscores the appropriation of nature for the purposes of amplifying human powers. As I will hope to show, the distinction between organic and inorganic body is thus a relative one, and one that shifts according to how we understand the relationship between work and the means to live. Indeed, in the midst of this discussion, Marx offers an alternative way of considering labour, one that is neither distinctively humanist nor modeled on domination.

In any case, the idea of a technical amplification of the body suggested by those railways considered as the organs of brains is far from the model of artisanal work that informs Marx’s discussion of human alienation and

the value of labour. Human consciousness is that which, through labour, seeks to externalise itself in a natural object for the purposes of gaining a reflection of its own value in the object that it transforms by labour. The entire theory of alienation is based upon this early and generalised labour theory of value. But the theory of alienation also tends to assume that there are essential human activities and that labour is chief among them. Labour provides what is needed to live; labour also expresses essential human potentials; and labour links us with other labouring beings, actualising our species-being.<sup>11</sup>

## ‘Humanist’?

The efforts in the last several decades to move beyond the early Marx have been based on a number of arguments, chief among them the speculative and ungrounded character of the early theory of labour itself. Louis Althusser, in particular, provided a powerful criticism of the early Marx, claiming that he was still here under the influence of Feuerbach’s humanism, and insisting that his description of essential human capacities and requirements constituted a philosophical anthropology that should be displaced by a structuralist account of ideology. In his early essay on ‘Marxism and Humanism’, Althusser quotes the key formulation by Marx in the 1844 Manuscripts: “Communism ... [is] the real appropriation of the human essence through and for men ... this communism as a fully developed naturalism – Humanism”.<sup>12</sup> Althusser contrasts an ideological view of the human with a scientific, that is, structural account of how capitalism works to produce a subject. He criticises the Feuerbachian humanism of the early Marx for basing its critical project on the notion that social reality produced within the terms of political economy contradicts the essence of man. The problem with this view, of course, is that it must first assume what the essence of man is in order to show how present reality produces an alienated reality. On this model, alienation is to be understood as a contradiction that needs to be resolved. Althusser writes:

History is the alienation and production of reason in unreason, of the true man in the alienated man. Without knowing it, man realises the essence of man in the alienated products of his labour (commodities, State, religion). The loss of man that produces history and man must pre-



suppose a definite pre-existing essence. At the end of history, this man, having become inhuman objectivity, has merely to re-grasp as subject his own essence alienated in property, religion and the State to become total man, true man.<sup>13</sup>

Althusser rightly remarks that this recourse to human nature as the foundation of political organisation and political theory required accepting a theoretical humanism that has no foundation. Who is this 'man' who anchors the social organisation of political economy? Althusser's great contribution was to insist that this man is himself *a product* of that economy, understandable only in relation to its constituting social structures. Over and against this early humanism, Althusser tells us, Marx came to accept a theoretical anti-humanism, one that relied on an analysis of human practice. In 'Marxism and Humanism', Althusser claims that Marx's turn away from anthropocentrism happened when he turned to 'the different specific *levels* of *human practice* (economic practice, political practice, ideological practice, scientific practice) in their characteristic articulations, based on the specific articulations of the unity of human society.'<sup>14</sup>

In every instance, a practice would be related to a social structure rather than an idea of human essences, or essential human activities. The conclusion was that if we take any human activity as definitive of the human, we obliterate the constitutive power of social structures. For Althusser, there can be no analysis of human action outside of the context of human structure. By following this imperative, the early Althusser argued, the transition from an ideological analysis to a scientific analysis becomes possible. Humanism, and all of its presuppositions, is an ideology. And ideologies are not themselves inventions of 'consciousness' but part of the very structure of societies.

Althusser's theory of interpellation will follow from this claim: subjects are produced by societies in ways that reproduce – or seek to reproduce – the structures of society. Ideologies, however, cannot be understood as purely instrumental. They represent the *imaginary* relation of individuals to the conditions of their existence. We could elaborate on this point for quite some time, especially with the assistance of the work of Étienne Balibar, but let us for the moment simply note that hu-

manism, expressed symptomatically by the early Marx, is considered to be an ideology, that is, it represents an imaginary relation to the conditions of existence, and that it does not qualify as a science. It tells us nothing about the essence of man; indeed, to speak of an essence is to once again evade the social structures and their imaginary relation to the conditions of existence. As those conditions change historically, so too does the imaginary relation to those conditions. And since those conditions are transformed over time, and so by definition subject to transformation, so too is the imaginary relation to those conditions. The key question is thus displaced from *what is man?*, or *what is essential to man?* – a question that belongs to a theoretically humanist version of philosophical anthropology – to the question, *what is the imaginary relation to the conditions of life?* – which takes us to a specific and complex understanding of the subject in light of both psychoanalysis and history. This is a wonderful trajectory that I cannot continue here. But note that the preoccupation with alienation is replaced by a preoccupation with ideology. Indeed, to some extent, alienation became so tainted by its humanist conceits that most left-wing intellectuals did not return to the topic for several decades.

Those of us who have worked within the domains of structuralism and post-structuralism over the past decades are profoundly indebted to Althusser's revolutionary intellectual move. My own debt to this shift in perspective is enormous, regardless of whether or not I always knew it. But just as Étienne Balibar has recently sought to return to the idea of a philosophical anthropology to ask whether we have considered its possible meanings, so I am asking whether attributing an unequivocal humanism to the early Marx is fully justifiable. Althusser was, in my view, right to claim that we do not need to foreground a contradiction between the essence of human nature and the actual conditions of life to develop a criticism of capitalism. One problem is the reliance on contradiction to expose the problem; the other is a presumption about what constitute the essential activities of humans. If we proceed without reliance on contradiction or humanism, then what is left? The imaginary is not reducible to the human imagination; Althusser's deployment of Lacan seeks to establish how the human is constituted within the imaginary but not as its origin. This is another excellent topic, but not precisely my own

in this essay.

The effort to move beyond the early Marx has been supported not only by Althusser's brilliant reading, but also by those who claim that Marx's relation to nature is primarily one of domination. Further, it is argued that Marx did not anticipate the destruction of nature that would follow from an unrestrained mode of production. If it is the human essence to work on nature, and this is so for all time, then, for the human essence to be perpetually realised, nature must remain a limitless resource. This last has been termed a 'productivist ideology' in Marx,<sup>15</sup> even though Marx explicitly condemns 'the drive toward unlimited extension of production'. In the 1844 manuscripts, at least, labour is understood as an appropriation of nature or, better formulated, an expropriation of nature. Whether these are necessarily forms of domination remains, however, a question.

Nature is not only that upon which humans act, but nature belongs properly to the labouring subject. This becomes most clear when the worker is reduced to a struggle for physical subsistence. The natural and the physical aspects of human work are not the same, but the reproduction of the physical person is required for work to continue. Nature can sometimes mean the physical, but it is also a relationship of one natural creature to others, or to life, or indeed to living processes. His essence is not his nature, but those two concepts overlap as well. Humans lose their essence when they work only for subsistence, that is, to reproduce themselves as living beings. Labour that creates value is different from subsistence labour. Deprived of a proper sense of work, the human would not be able to realise his consciousness in the object that he creates. He becomes increasingly concerned with his subsistence rather than with the realisation of his essential powers, at which point physical nature and consciousness diverge from one another.

In fact, one dimension of alienation consists in the worker's failure to recognise himself as a realised consciousness, since he becomes an object, an instrument, a form of labour whose profits are calculated and exploited by those who own the means of production. Through this process, he is deprived of human spiritual or conscious activity. So, nature, considered as external to the worker, is required for the life of the labourer, which is also nature, and it provides the object for labour, especially when labour is considered on an artisanal model.

Under conditions of capitalist political economy, where the worker's labour does not belong to himself, where his labour is valued according to its exchangeability, the more he works, the less he is paid and the more jeopardised is his own physical subsistence. Here we see one version of an operative contradiction in the account of alienation, but it is a conditioned contradiction, one that only becomes possible once work no longer secures subsistence. Even so, there is no way to separate the question of subsistence from realisation, even though the essence that is realised is one that has to persist in life for itself and with others – indeed, those last two purposes are part of the essence itself; the essence cannot be separated from the living character of the worker.

If we were to refer to 'human nature' in this sense there would emerge something of a tension, if not a contradiction, since the sense of what is natural – including the requirements of subsistence – are presupposed by the sense of what is 'human': the realisation of essential human potentialities. And yet, we may ask, is the natural only a condition of possibility for the realisation of the human, is it a proper part of the human? Does the human have its own part of nature, its own nature, and if so how is it related to other parts, other natures? This last question is raised by Marx's concept of the *species-being*, which raises in turn the question of whether the consideration of nature in Marx, or indeed in the Hegel upon which he draws, is distinctively human, or whether that distinction derives from a vital set of differences, and so posits the human in a de-centred way, as a proper part of a larger nature? In his discussion of estranged labour, Marx refers to nature as the material on which the labourer labours, but also the means of life of the labourer. Thus, nature becomes linked to notions of materiality, and to life and what is living, as well as the means to life. Marx writes the following:

Let us now look more closely at the objectification, at the production of the worker; and in it at the estrangement [alienation], the loss of the object, of his product. The worker can create nothing without nature, without the sensuous external world. It is the material on which his labour is realised, in which it is active, from which, and by means of which it produces. But just as nature provides labour with [the] means of life in the sense that labour cannot live without objects on which to operate, on the other hand, it also provides the means of life in the more restricted sense, i.e., the means for the physical subsist-

ence of the worker himself. Thus the more the worker by his labour appropriates the external world, sensuous nature, the more he deprives himself of means of life in two respects: first, in that the sensuous external world more and more ceases to be an object belonging to his labour – to be his labour's means of life; and, second, in that it more and more ceases to be means of life in the immediate sense, means for the physical subsistence of the worker. In both respects, therefore, the worker becomes a servant of his object, first, in that he receives an object of labour, i.e., in that he receives work, and, secondly, in that he receives means of subsistence. This enables him to exist, first as a worker; and second, as a physical subject.<sup>16</sup>

On this account, nature emerges first as the sensuous external world, the condition of the worker's labour. He must work on nature; he must have a sensuous object before him. Labour is realised through the work he performs on and through the object. Human labour *animates* the object, and its realisation requires that object for that purpose. In this first sense, then, human labour animates the object. The object is not itself animated nor does it animate anything other than itself. But why not? Why is the animated character of the object dependent on humans animating the object? Why does animation find its source in the human?

This formulation seems to confirm the anthropocentric understanding of Marx's view, one that is suggested by those object-oriented ontologies that emerge from the framework offered by Bruno Latour. The second claim, however, complicates the first. Nature provides humans with *the means of life*. And this is true for two separate, but related reasons. The first is that nature provides the object on which to labour, so there is no labour without nature (at least according to this model of labour), without its object. But labour is required for human life in the sense of subsistence. Under conditions of political economy, one must work in order to subsist as a physical subject, and so one's own continuing sensuous existence depends upon the ability to find and sustain work that will provide one with a wage that can secure the means of subsistence. The more one works on the sensuous object, the more exploited one's labour, the more value is extracted from labour for the purposes of accumulating profit. The result, Marx tells us, is that the labourer's own physical subsistence is imperilled. This is different from the non-realisation of his human express-

ive capacities, but related. Physical subsistence does not suffice to realise those expressive capacities, but the realisation of those expressive capacities cannot take place without physical subsistence.

The labourer cannot work on the object and derive from that labour the means to live. The more he works on the object, the less he possesses the means to live. In this sense, the labourer becomes a servant to the object. But this is only true to the extent that the object belongs to someone or to a system that seeks to keep his life alive enough to continue to work. And this is only true to the extent that the object of labour is a condensation of that power, that system. But when labour is in great supply, even the labourer's subsistence is no longer required. The labour can be extracted from the living being and the living being can fall ill or die, and those who own the means of production will find another labourer from whom labour can be extracted until the physicality of the worker is exhausted or broken beyond repair. So the labourer works on nature in order to secure his own subsistence, but the organisation of labour is such that the more he works on the object, the more the value of his labour is separated from his subsistence, and his life is threatened. The more he works on the sensuous object, the more his own sensuous existence becomes imperilled. He risks the loss of his own physicality, his sensuous existence, his very life, by pursuing the means of life within a system of work that is willing and able to dispense with his life. Work does not sustain him or provide subsistence, but becomes the means through which subsistence is imperilled; in this way, work deviates from the goal of the realisation of essential powers or activities.

The means to live is called 'subsistence' within the language of political economy; it foregrounds the continuing physical life of the worker and demonstrates the condition of induced precarity imposed not only by a capitalist system of work (which will be given further elaboration in Marx's subsequent texts), but by conditions in which work is temporary, contingent, and where the radical substitutability and dispensability of the worker becomes the norm.

We might be tempted to say that Marx understood *the proletariat* as the name for the collective potential of the worker, and that, today, *the precariat* is the better name for the collective for whom work is elusive, temporary, and debt has become unpayable. But we can see even

in the early Marx that an understanding of precarity is already at work, even if this is not his own term. Precarity is the constant threat to the worker's prospect of physical subsistence or, indeed, for those who cannot find work, for those who are regularly abandoned by a system of work that considers them to be exhaustible and replaceable and for whom little or no social protections exist, for whom the entire idea of social protection is fading.

Subsistence is not simply the condition for the realisation of labour; it is also the object of labour and the variable standard used by capitalist modes of production. Indeed, one argument Marx makes is that standards of subsistence are regulated by those who seek to exploit the worker. There is no one standard of subsistence; there is no agreed upon set of requirements. Those requirements are themselves established by those who seek to keep them to a minimum or who are indifferent to the prospect of the worker being injured, falling ill, becoming incapacitated, or even dying. Or, when it is assumed that workers will be replaced at will, subsistence as a standard does not exist as such, since it is hardly required for the purposes of production. And though, as we have seen, Marx does distinguish between the domain of physical need and the true domain of human freedom, he shows us at the same time that such a distinction is tenuous at best. To understand this, we have to understand what kind of animal the human is, which means that we have two more notions to consider in our reconsideration of the 1844 Manuscripts. The first is 'species-being' and the second is Marx's contention that 'nature is the inorganic body of man'.

## 'A Continuous Interchange'

Consider the paragraph from 'Estranged Labour' in which both these concepts are discussed together:

Man is a species-being, not only because in practice and in theory he adopts the species (his own as well as those of other things) as his object, but – and this is only another way of expressing it – also *because he treats himself as the actual, living species* [my emphasis]; because he treats himself as a universal and therefore a free being. The life of the species, both in man and in animals, consists physically in the fact that man (like the animal) lives on organic nature; and the more universal man (or the animal) is, the more universal is the sphere of inorganic nature on which he lives. Just as plants, animals, stones,





air, light, etc., constitute theoretically a part of human consciousness, partly as objects of natural science, partly as objects of art – *his spiritual inorganic nature, spiritual nourishment which he must first prepare to make palatable and digestible* – so also in the realm of practice they constitute a part of human life and human activity. Physically man lives only on these products of nature, whether they appear in the form of food, heating, clothes, a dwelling, etc. *The universality of man appears in practice precisely in the universality which makes all nature his inorganic body* – both inasmuch as nature is (1) his direct means of life, and (2) the material, the object and the instrument of his life activity. *Nature is man's inorganic body* – nature, that is, insofar as it is not itself human body. Man lives on nature – means that nature is his body, with which he must remain in *continuous interchange* if he is not to die. That man's physical and spiritual life is linked to nature means simply that *nature is linked to itself*, for man is a part of nature. In estranging from man (1) nature, and (2) himself, his own active functions, his life activity, estranged labour estranges the species from man. It changes for him the life of the species into a means of individual life. First it estranges the life of the species and individual life, and secondly it makes individual life in its abstract form the purpose of the life of the species, likewise in its abstract and estranged form.<sup>17</sup>

We know that for Marx alienation can be from the object of labour, and from the activity of labouring, but also from one's species-being (*Gattungswesen*). In what sense, however, is the human supposed to be a species-being? First, Marx explains that the human is a species-being both in a practical and theoretical sense, but only insofar as he makes the species into his object, and regards himself as a species among species. He relates to himself as a contemporary and living species insofar as he relates to himself as a universal and, therefore, free being (*Wesen*). We might reasonably expect humans to be distinguished from animals on the grounds that humans achieve or evince freedom and universality as an aspect of their species-being and animals do not. Indeed, Marx gives us reasons for doing so, when he writes, for instance, that the 'generic character' of man is 'free conscious activity' and that this differentiates humans from animals. Further, the distinctive feature that distinguishes 'man' as a species-being is that he can cast his own life as an object not only for himself, but also 'the whole of nature'. In this respect, only 'man' produces universally, and not animals. At the same time, however, Marx approaches this distinction from another angle: we learn that hu-

mans are animals among animals, and that animality is never overcome as long as humans relate to themselves as a species-being. When we speak about the life of the species, *das Gattungsleben*, we refer to that which commonly characterised both humans and animals. Marx makes this more precise when he claims that the life of species consists in the fact that, physically, both humans and animals live on (*von*: or 'from') 'inorganic nature'. Contrary to expectation, it turns out that what is universal in humans turns out to be universal in animals as well, since this inorganic nature is the very field or domain of universality. Marx here describes a relation of dependency on nature without which neither humans nor animals can survive. They are joined in this dependency, this requirement to find and secure a means to live, to ready and make palatable an exterior nature for the purposes of subsistence. They do not have a life separate from the process by which they live on (or from) nature. Moreover, they must prepare this nature – he uses the word '*Zubearbeiten*' – and make it ready for consumption or for pleasure. One form of nature thus works over another form of nature.

This is not a form of labour that dominates nature, neither is it necessarily part of the system of exchange. This 'working over' and 'working with' material conceived as a form of preparation characterises the preparation of food as much as it describes readying the object of science or art (considered as theoretical domains) for consideration. Considered theoretically, those objects constitute the *spiritual* inorganic nature of man; but when they are considered practically, they constitute the *material* inorganic nature of man, that is, as part of the furtherance and reproduction of the living being and beings. The spiritual and the material are not differentiated in a timeless way; they transform into one another depending on how they are approached. Further, these dimensions of inorganic nature are not simply the external objects upon which the human works, but constitute part of what the human is. We know that the human changes the object through work, and that the work comes to reflect the human labourer. But it is also the case that the labourer is changed by his object, and the entire system of nature. These latter are a proper part of his activity; in fact, they constitute his body in a very specific sense in that the body has now an organic and inorganic dimension. The distinction between the two varies depending on whether

the approach to nature is theoretical or practical. How, then, does this distinction work, and what does this dual kind of body imply for Marx and the putative anthropocentrism of his early writings?

From a contemporary perspective, we have grounds to ask why nature, or some part of nature, was ever described as 'inorganic'? We might reasonably expect that animals and humans depend upon organic nature, in the sense that they depend on food or natural materials used for shelter. In what sense is wood, for instance, inorganic; or under what conditions does wood become inorganic in Marx's sense? My understanding is that, first, organic nature is animated whereas inorganic nature remains inanimate or de-animated, and, second, a tree is understood as organic until it is transformed into usable wood and thereby becomes 'inorganic' in Marx's terms. It retains its material character, but its life now derives from the human activity that prepares it for use or consumption or enjoyment. As it is worked with and worked over, the object becomes inorganic and inanimate, but it also acquires an animate quality as a consequence of this form of labouring.

Does this passage unequivocally support the thesis that Marx affirms the human domination of nature for the expression of a properly or distinctly human universality? Or, is something else going on, a relation between humans, animals and nature that cannot be centred on the human? At one point, Marx describes this as an 'interchange' suggesting that what is universal in nature is this dependency of living creatures on nature in order to continue to live. We could use the word subsistence [*Subsistenz*] to describe this human requirement to live on nature, but subsistence is a variable standard derived from political economy, which is different from the sense of living dependency that Marx here brings into relief. Perhaps persistence is the better word to describe the activity and aim of seeking the means to live. In this key paragraph, where Marx discusses nature as the inorganic body of the human, he claims that, in a practical sense, the universality of humans appears practically in the course of making the entirety of nature into its inorganic body: *Die Universalität des Menschen erscheint praktisch eben in der Universalität, die die ganze Natur zu seinem unorganischen Leib macht.*<sup>18</sup> Inorganic nature does not exist as such but is achieved through a certain form of labouring. This establishment of inorganic nature takes

place as nature becomes the immediate means of life [*Lebensmittel*]; nature is relieved of its own animate quality as it animates, brings alive, or keeps alive, the labourer: its matter, as it were, is made into the object and product [*Werkzeug*] of the life activity of the labourer.

Let us be clear: there is no life activity and no life without this Nature. And the universal, far from characterising a pure freedom or disembodied form of reason is, at least in one significant sense, precisely this dependency on life that is co-existent with all living beings, human or animal. So when Marx then claims that 'Nature is the inorganic body of the human', he is claiming that only as inorganic can nature keep the human alive.

This seems counter-intuitive. But Marx is working with a specific distinction between organic and inorganic that derives in part from Hegel's philosophy of nature. Marx first explains this phrase in the following way: 'the human lives from [or on] nature and this means that nature is his body, with which he must be in a continuous [ongoing] process [*beständigem Prozeß*] in order not to die'.<sup>19</sup> His point is then clarified that the human creature is not separable from the life processes on which he/she depends, and that this continuous interchange, this ongoing process is precisely what is meant by universality. Nature 'hangs together' [*zusammenhängt*] with its own self, and this relation, this continuous process, is, or constitutes, the inorganic body of humans. Nature becomes *inorganic*, but it remains a *Leib* rather than a *Körper* until nature enters into this exchange (although Marx himself shifts from a first reference to '*unorganischer Körper*' to a second, '*unorganisches Leib*', to mark the difference); indeed, the exchange with nature that characterises this form of labour transforms nature from an organic into an inorganic reality. This process holds for psychic and spiritual activities as well as eating and drinking.

The human, he then asserts, is a part of nature. As s/he eats, s/he is absorbed by nature. If the living human creature has both a *Körper* and a *Leib*, then it would appear to have two bodies or, rather, one body that appears under two distinct but related perspectives: one, animate and seeking to live, belongs properly to itself and that is *Leib*, and the other is the nature upon which it depends and with which it is in continuous interchange, and that is *Körper*. A living body, in other words, can only persist if there is a continuous exchange with nature, such that the conditions for persistence are provided for

and prepared for the continuation of life. The continuation of the interchange is the continuation of life itself, human life, so there is no life without interchange, and no way of conceptualising life outside the framework of this interchange. No human body can live without the body of nature; it is and is not its own body, and its very survival depends upon this doubling. This interchange involves dependency, interchange (not exchange), and animation; it establishes the body of nature as essential to the body of man.

Marx asks us to imagine this unity at the same time that he has affirmed the human in its creaturely dependency on a natural world that is worked over in such a way to offer a means to live, and only in such a way, that it supports the continuation, the persistence, of the lives of every species being. What we end up with here is not a straightforward vision of humans dominating nature, but human creatures, dependent on nature, as well as on the activity by which nature becomes support and sustenance for living beings. The human does not in this form of labour seek to glean a reflection of itself in nature, but works with nature to secure the means to live. That form of work could become the domination or destruction of nature for human use, consumption and exchange (profit). But if it did, it would no longer be the form of labouring activity that has as its end the achievement of a means of life not so much for the individual, but for the species-being, that wider domain of sociality related to what Hegel called the system of needs. Let us remember that only under conditions in which individuals are separated off from modes of social labour do they find themselves seeking the means to live on their own. This is an effect of social and economic formations, not an ontological premise of their operation.

If I am right – and others have made this argument as well<sup>20</sup> – then perhaps we have to consider this very specific use of both the terms organic and inorganic in Marx's work. Foster and Burkett point out that a consideration of the Hegelian influence on Marx would show that there is no absolute distinction (or 'barrier') between organic and inorganic, but only 'a dialectical relation of interdependence'.<sup>21</sup> They thus call into question the presumption that Marx's theory of labour is an instrumentalist one, suggesting that this misunderstanding can be tracked to the particular ways in which the notions of the organic and inorganic emerge in his work. This perspect-

ive has been amplified by Jason Moore when he refers affirmatively to ‘an open conception of life-making, one that views the boundaries of the organic and inorganic as ever-shifting’,<sup>22</sup> and later calls for ‘a language that comprehends the irreducibly dialectical relation between human and extra-human nature’.<sup>23</sup> The dialectic that unfolds at the site of the inorganic body, however, is one that requires a perspectival theory and a practice of perspectival variation. For it is only from the perspective of the human organism that nature appears as inorganic (and that this implies no refutation of the claim that nature is *in itself* organic); it means only that nature transforms from organic to inorganic as it enters into the process by which the living and organic human *Leib* seeks the means to live. Nature is organic, as it were, in itself, but considered from the human perspective, it starts to become inorganic once it starts to sustain the human at which point it is the human life that is sustained and animated by nature.

This last is surely a distinctly anthropocentric view, so it seems I have refuted my thesis that a non-anthropocentric trend can be found in the early Marx. There is, however, a countervailing process that is at work in this labouring for life that reverses the order of the transformative sequence we just traced, and is part of the dialectical unity that is being enacted. Marx is also arguing that humans are, and should be, understood as part of a larger organic nature. When human life ends, it becomes pure *Körper*, de-animated, but also co-extensive with a nature that is no longer approached to secure human sustenance. The body is no longer sustained by nature, and so becomes nature in a distinctly non-anthropocentric sense that was always a potentiality of its living version precisely because death is a potential in and of life (a potential in life, but one that is realised as necessity at a time that is for the most part unpredictable). So there are no two natures, and there are no two bodies, but there is a perpetual oscillation of perspectives (organic/inorganic) that depends on whether nature is approached theoretically or practically, facilitated by that practical mode of work that prepares nature as a means to live for the human. The same nature appears inorganic when it is external to human life, as something outside itself; this can happen through a theoretical perspective, but also one in which the problem of sustenance does not guide the human perspective and

approach (with the implication that theory is a form of not being hungry).

To grasp the variable relation between the organic and inorganic body (and to make sure we do not accept these as two separate kinds of substances), it is important to return to Hegel whose influence on the early Marx can hardly be doubted. Indeed, it would appear that Marx draws on Hegel’s discussion as he elaborates his own views on the inorganic body of man that is the entirety of nature, but also his notion of species-being. In the *Encyclopedia Logic*, Hegel remarks that the living being lives inside itself, as a ‘constantly renewed inner process that the living being is.’ But that its corporeity can become an object for itself, appear as something external, and in this moment, its own body appears as ‘inorganic nature’.<sup>24</sup> Inorganic nature, interestingly enough, exists in the living being ‘as a *want* [*als ein Mangel*]’.<sup>25</sup> Its organs are distinct; they are ‘external’ to one another, and the body appears not as a lived body, but as an external power: ‘the living being confronts an inorganic nature to which it relates as the power over it, and which it assimilates.’<sup>26</sup> It wants what is external to itself in order to live, but also to ‘overcome’ that externality. Hegel writes,

Inorganic nature, which is subdued by the living being, suffers this subjection because it is *in-itself* the same as what life is *for-itself*. So, in the other the living being only comes together with itself.<sup>27</sup>

With death, the ‘species’ proves to be more powerful than the individual living being. And the externality is overcome, not however by enhancing the living being, but by affirming the dialectical interdependency that is life itself. Hegel adds, ‘For the animal, the process of the species [*die Gattung*] is the highest point of its living career.’<sup>28</sup> What the ‘process of the species’ does, however, is prove that this life, this immediate life, is mediated, that it belongs with others’ lives and finds its means of living only in the social and economic organisation of life – or, at least, this would be the Marxist variant on Hegel’s claim. The living being is not simply existing, immediate, but both mediated and generated; and just as it is generated from elsewhere it also passes away in its immediacy. It is a life that returns to itself in life, although the immediate life is not the same as the mediate one, and the inorganic cedes to the organic in death.

When Marx speaks about subsistence, he is not referring to the steady state of continuing as an organism,

but about a renewed and ongoing activity, one that is required for the continuation of life, for persistence itself. As a living being is generated, it is animated, brought to life, and only then animates the external world in turn; becoming animated is a function of being generated, which means that the powers of animation are from the start outside of the human subject, as are the forms of interdependency that condition and define the organic social creature, the species-being, that no longer complies with conventional humanism. While it is beyond the scope of the current discussion, I would like to link this idea of persistence to *the desire to live*. The desire to live may or may not emerge from the human organism, but this relation to alterity is named as want, as lack, suggesting that persistence and the desire to persist may not be fully separable. The effort to overcome externality can take the form of domination or dissolution, but another process is delineated here, one that brings us close to forms of work related to maintenance, to what is sometimes called reproductive labour.

The human organism is bound up with inorganic nature for its own life, and can become inorganic for itself, living as a being both animated in some respects and de-animated in others. The body is in its natural world not as an ontologically separate entity, but a relational process between terms that can become separated or unified. The body is in and of nature to the degree that this ongoing process, if disrupted or destroyed, can expose the body to precarity, and is an ongoing interchange that requires renewal – and the conditions for renewal.

What we might learn from the early Marx is that there are conditions under which the desire to live becomes more possible, conditions of labour that sustain or fail to sustain, forms of labouring that sustain or fail to sustain, and that the desire to live is always a desire to live in this world, and in a specific way. When the world is no longer sustaining, and persistence is imperilled, what then happens to the desire to live? If living is an interchange between this living body and the body of an inorganic nature to which it is ineluctably tied, and the social and economic organisation of sustenance destroys – or threatens to destroy – that exchange, the desire to live may well be imperilled.

As mediated, as species, we are always more and less than this body, and this body extends to others and to the conditions of life itself. Neither persistence nor the

desire to live can be taken for granted. They are less essential capacities or attributes than social possibilities for persistence that are enlivened or deadened depending on the conditions of life, including the presence or absence of work, forms of work that sustain or wreck bodies, economic formations that regularly abandon those they employ on a contingent basis, policies that imply the decimation of pensions, or the complete loss of social welfare and protection. And yet the avowal of this interdependency, and the decentring of the living subject it implies, gives us another way to think about interdependency and perhaps ultimately solidarity that refuses the strict distinction between the human condition and a sustained and sustainable environment. The human is not in nature and neither does it grasp nature simply as an object of knowledge, but its knowing is from the start vital without therefore exemplifying a form of vitalism.

The effort here to show the duality in Marx's early theory relates, of course, to the question of whether Marx can, and ought to be, mobilised for environmental politics; questions that are urgent but which are not possible to pursue here. If there is a duality to the distinctively human body, it is one that asserts and challenges that very distinctiveness, insisting on the living character of thought, and the necessity of life. The nature of work is not simply to remake nature as a reflection and expression of human powers, but to subdue human powers through modes of work that presume that the living human and the web of life are connected from the start. The dynamic activity that has as its aim the production of a livable life necessarily limits the powers of the human in relation to the living world. It avows a dependency without which neither life nor thought nor work is possible. One is this nature that one is not, and that paradox can give way to a dialectic that can hardly be grasped by following only one sequence in Marx's exposition at the expense of another. A practice of critique in and for this world must attend to, and intervene within, the accelerating destruction of various species and the threat of climate change to the continuation of the world as we have so far known it. Any project of social justice that is critical, that seeks to stop the acceleration of ecological destruction, has to begin with the presumption that the world in which all lives are valued equally, in which all are given their expressive freedom on grounds of equality, are bound to the living world at the level of need, desire

and obligation. So, this body, though separate from the body of nature, is bound to that body, and that bind, that relation, is what we now mean by 'body'.

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## Notes

1. Bruno Latour, 'Why Has Critique Run Out of Steam?: From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern', *Critical Inquiry* 30 (2004), 231–2.
2. *Ibid.*, 233.
3. John P. Clark, 'Marx's Inorganic Body', *Environmental Ethics* 11:3 (Fall 1989), 243–58.
4. See Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt's *Labour of Dionysus: Critique of the State-Form* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1994), and the reformulation of labour not only as a mode of production, but as the performative mode of producing the political.
5. Editors' note: In gendering 'man' and, specifically, the worker as male here, and throughout the article, the author follows Marx's own practice (and that of his translators) in the 1844 Manuscripts and elsewhere.
6. This distinction becomes more important in the twentieth century for Merleau-Ponty and then for Helmut Plessner. See Hans-Peter Krüger, 'Persons and their Bodies: the Körper/Leib Distinction and Helmut Plessner's Theories of Ex-centric Positionality and Homo Absconditus', *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 24:3 (2010), 256–74.
7. Clark, 'Marx's Inorganic Body', 243–58.
8. Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, trans. M. Nicolaus (New York: Penguin, 1993), 706.
9. Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution* (London: Bravo Ltd., 1990)
10. John Bellamy Foster and Paul Burkett, 'Marx and the Dialectic of Organic/Inorganic Relations', *Organisation & Environment* 14:4 (December 2001), 451–462; John Bellamy Foster and Paul Burkett, 'The Dialectic of Organic/Inorganic Relations: Marx and the Hegelian Philosophy of Nature', *Organisation and Environment* 13 (2000), 403–425. See also more recently, Jason W. Moore, *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital* (London: Verso, 2015).
11. Rahel Jaeggi, *Alienation*, trans. Frederick Neuhouser and Alan E. Smith (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016).
12. Louis Althusser, *For Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster (London: Verso, 2005), 222.
13. *Ibid.*, 226.
14. *Ibid.*, 219–20.

15. Jean Baudrillard, *The Mirror of Production*, trans. Mark Poster (New York: Telos Press, 1975).

16. The German is as follows: Betrachten wir nun näher die *Vergegenständlichung*, die Produktion des Arbeiters und in ihr die *Entfremdung*, den *Verlust* des Gegenstandes, seines Produkts.

Der Arbeiter kann nichts schaffen ohne die *Natur*, ohne die *sinnliche Außenwelt*. Sie ist der Stoff, an welchem sich seine Arbeit verwirklicht, in welchem sie tätig ist, aus welchem und mittelst welchem sie produziert.

Wie aber die *Natur* [die] *Lebensmittel* der Arbeit darbietet, in dem Sinn, daß die Arbeit nicht *leben* kann ohne Gegenstände, an denen sie ausgeübt wird, so bietet sie andererseits auch d[ie] *Lebensmittel* in dem engeren Sinn dar, nämlich die Mittel der physischen Subsistenz des *Arbeiters* selbst.

Je mehr also der Arbeiter die Außenwelt, die sinnliche *Natur*, durch seine Arbeit sich *aneignet*, um so mehr entzieht er sich *Lebensmittel* nach der doppelten Seite hin, erstens, daß immer mehr die sinnliche Außenwelt aufhört, ein seiner Arbeit angehöriger Gegenstand, ein *Lebensmittel* seiner Arbeit zu sein; zweitens, daß sie immer mehr aufhört, *Lebensmittel* im unmittelbaren Sinn, Mittel für die physische Subsistenz des Arbeiters zu sein.

Nach dieser doppelten Seite hin wird der Arbeiter also ein Knecht seines Gegenstandes, erstens, daß er einen *Gegenstand der Arbeit*, d.h., daß er Arbeit erhält, und zweitens, daß er *Subsistenzmittel* erhält. Erstens also, daß er als *Arbeiter*, und zweitens, daß er als *physisches Subjekt* existieren kann. Die Spitze dieser Knechtschaft ist, daß er nur mehr als *Arbeiter* sich als physisches Subjekt erhalten [kann] und nur mehr als *physisches Subjekt* Arbeiter ist.

17. In German the full passage reads as follows: Der Mensch ist ein Gattungswesen, nicht nur indem er praktisch und theoretisch die Gattung, sowohl seine eigene als die der übrigen Dinge, zu seinem Gegenstand macht, sondern – und dies ist nur ein anderer Ausdruck für dieselbe Sache – sondern auch indem er sich zu sich selbst als der gegenwärtigen, lebendigen Gattung verhält, indem er sich zu sich als einem *universellen*, darum freien Wesen verhält.

Das Gattungsleben, sowohl beim Menschen als beim Tier, besteht physisch einmal darin, daß der Mensch (wie das Tier) von der unorganischen *Natur* lebt, und um so universeller der Mensch als das Tier, um so universeller ist der Bereich der unorganischen *Natur*, von der er lebt. Wie Pflanzen, Tiere, Steine, Luft, Licht etc. theoretisch einen Teil des menschlichen Bewußtseins, teils als Gegenstände der Naturwissenschaft, teils als Gegenstände der Kunst bilden – seine geistige unorganische *Natur*, geistige *Lebensmittel*, die er erst zubereiten muß zum Genuß und zur Verdauung – so bilden sie auch praktisch einen Teil des menschlichen Lebens und der menschlichen Tätigkeit. Physisch lebt der Mensch nur von diesen Naturprodukten, mögen sie nun in der Form der Nahrung, Heizung, Kleidung, Wohnung etc. erscheinen. Die Universalität des Menschen erscheint praktisch eben in der Universalität, die die ganze *Natur* zu seinem *unorganischen Körper* macht, sowohl insofern sie 1. ein unmittelbares *Lebensmittel*, als inwiefern sie [2.] die *Materie*, der Gegenstand und das Werkzeug seiner Lebenstätigkeit ist. Die *Natur* ist der *unorganische Leib* des Menschen, nämlich die *Natur*, soweit

sie nicht selbst menschlicher Körper ist. Der Mensch *lebt* von der Natur, heißt: Die Natur ist sein *Leib*, mit dem er in beständigem Prozeß bleiben muß, um nicht zu sterben. Daß das physische und geistige Leben des Menschen mit der Natur zusammenhängt, hat keinen andren Sinn, als daß die Natur mit sich selbst zusammenhängt, denn der Mensch ist ein Teil der Natur.

Indem die entfremdete Arbeit dem Menschen 1. die Natur entfremdet, 2. sich selbst, seine eigne tätige Funktion, seine Lebenstätigkeit, so entfremdet sie dem Menschen die *Gattung*; sie macht ihm das *Gattungsleben* zum Mittel des individuellen Lebens. Erstens entfremdet sie das Gattungsleben und das individuelle Leben, und zweitens macht sie das letztere in seiner Abstraktion zum Zweck des ersten, ebenfalls in seiner abstrakten und entfremdeten Form.

18. Karl Marx, *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte aus dem Jahre 1844* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2008), 36; 'Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844' in *Marx Engels Reader*, trans. Robert C. Tucker (New York: Norton, 1978), 75.

19. Ibid.

20. Foster and Burkett, 'Marx and the Dialectic of Organic/Inor-

ganic Relations', 451–62.

21. Ibid., 452.

22. Jason W. Moore, *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital*, 7.

23. Ibid., 9. I note that some forms of human labour, including chattel slavery, are also considered to be 'inorganic' – that is, not living in themselves, but only instrumental for the purposes of continuing the lives of those who are considered to be 'truly' living subjects. The distinction has thus been used for specific purposes within racial capitalism. See Angela Y. Davis, 'Women and Capitalism: Dialectics of Liberation and Oppression', in *The Angela Y. Davis Reader*, ed. Joy James and Angela Yvonne Davis (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1998), 161–209.

24. G.W.F. Hegel, *The Encyclopedia Logic*, trans. T. F. Geraets, W.A. Suchting and H.S. Harris (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991), 292.

25. Ibid., 293.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., 294.

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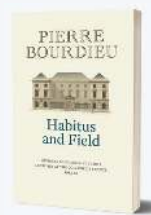
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