

Lecture, 7 February 1963

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Ladies and gentlemen, in my previous lecture, I introduced the concept of a negative system, or, as one might also say, a critical theory, in connection with Marx's materialism, and I took the opportunity to develop for you a number of points concerning the concept of a system.¹ At the end I remarked only cursorily that thinking that breaks free from systems need not descend into the randomness of *aperçu*, as is often claimed of free thinking especially by people who have nothing else to rely on but their trust in systematics. Of course, I cannot unfold for you here what a philosophy should look like that, on the one hand, frees itself from the system, yet on the other hand, holds fast to the idea of the boundedness of thought that is still free and not scientifically controlled. I can only say that all I attempt and strive for is in fact, in the service of drafting such a form of thought and nothing else. I do believe, in any case – and here once again I would like to follow Marx – that the moments of thought freed from the compulsion of the system must be constituted through carrying out the concrete critique of systematic thinking itself – as is implied, for that matter, in one of the central concepts of Hegelian dialectics, namely the concept of determinate, or positive, negation. I do not wish to say more than this programmatic outline at this point;² it would entirely exceed the framework of a terminological introduction.

Still, I think I at least owe it to you to elucidate this in slightly more concrete terms, using Marx's own model since we are here speaking of Marxian materialism and the very strange relationship of this materialism, as a form of thought that is principally opposed to system thinking, to its own system [*zum System*]. In doing so, I follow my usual procedure of not providing general reflections, but rather as definite [*bestimmen*] a model as possible – one that is not just an illustration of abstract ideas extraneous to our concrete analytical context concerning the concept of materialism.³ You may perhaps recall that I told you that in Marx there is a specific ma-

terialist moment that differs significantly [*wesentlich*] from the famous inversion of Hegelian dialectics, which Marx claimed to have turned from its head onto its feet. What's more, Marx is not merely, historically, the further development of Hegelian dialectics; rather, as is the case with every major thinker, not least with Hegel himself, he also took in the entire consciousness of his era. In Marx you will find not only elements of the French Enlightenment, which was left unresolved and maligned by German Idealism, above all by Fichte and Schelling, and not only elements of so-called classical political economy and positivism, but also a specifically materialist element itself that one might even call naturalistic. And this element, curiously enough – and I say this as evidence of the extraordinary complexity of these interconnections in Marx – combines in a most peculiar way with decidedly Hegelian motifs.

I am thinking here of none other than Marx's concept of productivity, of which I told you last time that it represents [*darstellt*], as force of production alongside the concept of relations of production, one of the invariants, so to speak, of Marx's *soi-disant* system. The concept of productivity in Marx necessarily refers to nature, whereby the concept of 'nature', through which productivity takes place, remains itself unelaborated [*unerörtert*], just as it does in the famous expression 'metabolism with nature'. One may well assume that Marx had very good reason to stop short his dialectical reflection, with respect to the concept of nature, so as not to conceive of this point – which for him is precisely the moment that cannot be dissolved purely into the subject, that is to say, into human labour – once again as being constituted by humans. He obviously did not want the concept of nature to lapse back into identity thinking. If Marx offers us no 'philosophy of nature', so to speak, then this itself, I would think, has a philosophical significance.

Now, to get a firm handle on Marx's conception of productivity, it is peculiar that Marx's concept of pro-

ductivity corresponds almost exactly, down to the very expressions, with the famous 'Lord and Bondsman' section from Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Therefore, I would like first to read to you the source from *Capital* that is relevant here, in order then to show you that while one can most clearly grasp [*am drastischsten entnehmen*] Marx's materialism from the concepts of productivity and of productive labour, within his critical analysis of bourgeois society, these concepts take on a second, completely divergent form [*Gestalt*]. This second form is extraordinarily surprising and perhaps better suited than anything else to substantiate my thesis, which differs from the entire official interpretation of Marx, of the thoroughly anti-systematic, that is, critical character of Marx's system. First, I offer you a passage from the first volume of *Capital*, in which he explains the concept of productive labour in a manner immediately following upon Hegel; I would ask you to compare it with the corresponding passage in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, as I am not able to do this at the moment: 'In the labour

process, therefore, man's activity, via the instruments of labour, effects an alteration in the object of labour which was intended from the outset'. That is, the physical object that is being worked on. Now it continues in a very Hegelian manner: 'The process is extinguished in the product. The product of the process is a use-value, a piece of natural material adapted to human needs by means of a change in its form'.⁴

I would like to add something here I did not mention in the previous lecture. In the course of our broad considerations, it was not yet as essential as it is here that the concept of value in Marx – and Marxian economics is indeed a theory of value – is differentiated in itself: every commodity, according to him, is composed of use-value and exchange-value. Use-value is the concrete form of value, that any object has for those who consume it; you will see later that this concept, which one can perhaps call the system-transcendent concept of value, takes a highly surprising turn. Opposite this is exchange-value, which is value that expresses itself in the average amount



of social labour time expended in producing an object, and according to which the product is exchanged on the market within bourgeois society. Here one could speak of the system-immanent concept of value. Marx refers to the product emerging from the labour process as its use-value in the sense that when the tailor has made a suit from fabric that comes from God knows where, I can put it on, use it, and it has for me a concrete, immediately useful meaning, which does not necessarily have to coincide with its price or with its value as an object of exchange, as a commodity. This is meant simply to clarify what Marx is discussing here.

The product of the labour process is a use-value, a natural material [*Naturstoff*] appropriated to human needs through a change in form. You find here that the concept of 'nature' is already understood in the philosophical sense of the *constitutum*, something thingly and given [*Dingliches, Vorliegendes*], as is also the object of the natural sciences, however, any reflection on its constitution is cut short or rejected *ab ovo*, as it itself is conceived as a function of the labour process. 'Labour has become bound up in its object', namely this natural material; 'labour has been objectified, the object has been worked on. What on the side of the worker appeared in the form of unrest [*Unruhe*] now appears, on the side of the product, in the form of being [*Sein*], as a fixed, immobile characteristic. He', that is to say the worker, 'has spun, and the product is a spinning [a quantity of spun yarn]'.⁵ Incidentally, you can see here very well what is meant by the recurring concept of congealed or objectified labour in Marxian materialism; at the same time, however, you can see that, just as in Hegel, this congealed labour is not conceived in Marx as something purely subjective, but as something already mediated out of the subject and object. That is, it is conceived as something that contains within itself both the labour of the subject and the natural material through which [*an dem*] this labour is performed. This became extremely important in Marx's polemic against the Lassalleans, who neglected precisely this nature-moment. Marx polemicalised against the famous claim that labour is the source of all wealth, pointing out that it is also this natural material, in his *Critique of the Gotha Program*. This, then, has far-reaching consequences for the entirety of Marxian materialism – consequences that are connected, if you will, to the problem of hedonism, this [i.e., insisting on

natural material's role in the creation of social wealth],⁶ in fact, dispenses with labour metaphysics and glorification of labour, which has led to what is called the 'work ethic' throughout bourgeois philosophy and political economy, and of which there is not a trace to be found in Marx, in contrast to the present Eastern bloc.

Marx continues: 'If we look at the whole process from the point of view of its result, the product, it is plain that both the instruments and the object of labour are means of production' – in other words, not only the hammer, but also the raw material belongs among the means of production – 'and that the labour itself is productive labour'.⁷ I would first of all like to point out to you here the materialist moment, which is crucially important for the entire Marxian system, yet which I can only indicate without being able to unfold for you here in its full implications and structural philosophical significance. That is, for Marx, productive labour initially refers only to that labour which produces any kind of material goods, because, according to the determination Marx gives to labour, it must be performed on a natural material, that is, on something non- intellectual [*nicht Geistigen*]. There are extraordinarily strange passages in *Capital* that push this materialist motif, I would say, to the brink of absurdity, to the edge of paradox, insofar as Marx designates a labourer as productive only in the narrowest sense of their involvement in the production apparatus of such material goods. Even a worker who transports a good from one place to another is no longer considered to be performing productive labour, because his labour would no longer be, in this sense, producing material goods, as implied by this definition. This leads to the very strange theory that a worker in a factory who carries a block from one place to another within a labour process [*Arbeitsgang*] is still doing productive labour, while the worker who carries the finished pipe, or whatever it is, to the van, or as we would assume today, to a truck headed to a warehouse or a cooling facility [*Kühlungsanlage*], is no longer doing productive labour.

This problem has meanwhile taken on great significance in the odd distribution of weight between productive labour in the narrow Marxian sense and handiwork or repair work, which Marx would describe as unproductive, but whose purview [*Umfang*], under today's conditions of mechanisation and automation, far exceeds that of productive labour as he sees it. I only say this to show

you that if philosophy really rolls up its sleeves, as it does with Marx, and immerses itself in questions of the production process – which in the case of Hegel, I would say, really only happens from a certain noble distance – then philosophy can get its hands not just dirty, but burn them badly under certain circumstances as well. That is to say, all of these questions are, in contemporary society, fraught with the gravest sorts of problems. For reasons which I hinted at last time, namely the neurotisation that consciousness has experienced with respect to Marx, they have not yet been properly tackled at all. So this is for now Marx's elementary concept of productive labour and the heavy materialist emphasis that this confers onto his work.

Still, this concept of productivity continues beyond its initial conception [*daß es bei diesem Begriff der Produktivität nicht bleibt*]. True to his system, and true to his intention to grasp concepts first in a system-immanent way and then to confront them with the reality to which they correspond, Marx then arrives at a quite different concept of productive labour. The concept of productive labour that I have just read to you appears – this is why I emphasised the concept – in the context of the concept of use-value. But I have already told you that according to Marxian theory every commodity – and the analysis of the commodity form, that is, the form of the object of exchange – is indeed the centre from which the entire Marxian analysis of modern society proceeds, where it comes together – or perhaps one ought to say, where it can be seen from two points of view, as ‘coming together’ [*Zusammensetzen*] in the sense in the sense of Chemism [*Chemismus*] is misleading – namely, viewed as use-value on one side, and on the other, as exchange-value.⁸ Alongside the concept of productivity that he has so far developed – which is the ‘actually’ [*eigentliche*], one might almost say the ‘immediately’ materialist one, which centres on the concept of use and is oriented toward the material thing itself – Marx adds the entirely different sense of what bourgeois society counts as ‘productive’. And since the analysis of bourgeois society and of its relations of exchange is the proper object of the Marxian system, this second meaning of productive labour assumes a certain preponderance in Marx's work. It predominates over the first not only quantitatively but also qualitatively. And you now can see clearly (through the second meaning of the concept of productive labour),

and this is what is of interest here: how the analysis of bourgeois society as a system is not meant to build a system of its own out of closed concepts, but rather to develop the illusoriness [*Scheinhaftigkeit*] of the system via [*an*] the illusoriness of its own foundational [*tragenden*] categories.



I would like to lay out for you this second side of the concept of productivity, and with it the concept of Marxian materialism as a whole, via a passage from *Theories of Surplus Value* – an unfinished work from Marx's *Nachlass* (written in 1863), which was originally intended to form the fourth volume of *Capital*. This volume crucially complements the analysis of the capitalist production process with a vast *bibliographie raisonnée* – that is, a systematic engagement with the existing literature. It is, indeed, quite characteristic of Marx, of the structure of Marx's thinking, that the usual distinction between so-called critical and systematic or original thoughts cannot be made at all, as Marx wrote a large part of his most important conceptions in the form of marginalia on what he had read. This is already an index of that peculiar transformation of the concepts of philosophy and of system in Marx which I am trying to bring to your awareness in the context of Marxian materialism. I would like to read

to you now a passage that develops the general program of this system-immanent concept of productive labour in contrast to the materialist use-value-oriented one.

Here now Marx says the following in *Theories of Surplus Value* in Part 2 of Volume 1:

Only bourgeois narrowmindedness, which considers the capitalist forms of production to be the latter's absolute forms – and therefore the eternal natural forms of production – can confuse the question of what productive labour is from the standpoint of capital with the question of what labour is productive in general, or what productive labour is in general, and therefore esteem itself very wise in giving the reply that all labour which produces anything at all, results in anything whatsoever, is *eo ipso* productive labour.⁹

Ladies and gentlemen, we are dealing here with a rather subtle, dialectically broken, ingenuous [*geistreichen*] thought, which therefore requires a certain amount of elucidation. In general, Marx is an extraordinarily difficult writer – not, as is sometimes said, because of the scientific apparatus of political economy or of Hegelian philosophy, but because the fabric of his own thought is extraordinarily difficult. If one believes that Marx can be appropriated as a popular writer simply because he addressed himself to the proletariat, then an adequate understanding of Marx is, in fact, completely impossible from the outset. The only prerequisite for an appropriate interpretation of Marxian materialism would be that one analyses things with the same degree of difficulty and differentiation found in his work.

In the passage I have read out to you, Marx criticises the bourgeois conception [of productive labour] on the grounds that, because bourgeois society has no adequate concept of itself, any labour that produces something, anything at all, appears [*erscheint*] from a bourgeois perspective to be 'productive', even though, according to bourgeois society's own rules of the game, to which Marx is now adhering in his analysis of productive labour, the concept of productivity must be very limited. Marx says, in other words, 'You all constantly throw around the term *productive*, you call every conceivable thing productive, now let's take a look at what productive labour actually is according to the rules that apply in your society' – and then follows the implicit, unspoken thought, which I will soon show you, is not a conjecture but is quite plainly present in Marx's text – 'we will see what nonsense this,

your system-immanent concept of productive labour necessarily leads to'. The point is, first and foremost, that productive labour, in the sense of the ruling capitalist system, refers only to labour that falls within the capitalist valorisation process – i.e., labour that produces exchange-value; whatever does not produce exchange-value – no matter how much use-value it may produce, no matter how productive it is in a higher sense – is, according to society's rules of the game, despite all of its idealistic lip service, precisely not productive labour. I will now read you this passage as well.

'It is only this particular relation to labour which converts money or commodity into capital, and that labour is productive labour which – by means of this relation it has to the conditions of production, to which there corresponds a particular position in the real production process – converts money or commodity into capital, i.e. preserves and increases the value' – and when he uses 'value' alone, Marx always means exchange-value – 'of the objective labour, which has attained an independent position vis-à-vis [labour power]'.¹⁰ So, in other words, whether something counts as immanently productive or unproductive in bourgeois society can be decided by no other criterion than the market: 'Productive labour is therefore labour which reproduces for the worker only the previously determined value of his labour capacity, but at the same time, as value-creating activity, it valorises capital or places the values created by labour in confrontation with the worker himself as capital.'¹¹ According to this, only labour that creates capital and as such possesses exchange value is truly productive within bourgeois society.

While the concept of productivity in bourgeois society is, one might say, ideologised, and labour glorified, in reality, productivity is limited to its potential for valorisation [*Verwertbarkeit*]. And while Marx, by contrast, wrestles labour away from this ideology, he still does not view labour in terms of its potential for valorisation, but rather in terms of its usefulness [*Nutzen*]. However – and this is extremely important, and I point this out to you as a major heresy against official Marxism – this usefulness need not be of any use [*Nutzen*] at all. To show you this, I will now read one of the most astonishing passages known to me in all of Marx's work, and I am very grateful that this passage was brought to my attention just a few days ago; here you can, so to speak, look be-

hind the scenes and see what is actually meant by this materialism.

‘It emerges from what has been said so far that to be productive labour is a determination of labour’, always system-immanent, ‘which has at first absolutely nothing to do with the particular content of the labour, its specific utility’, that is, as we said earlier, its use-value, or as it says here, ‘the peculiar use-value in which it is represented [*darstellt*].’ So, it [the definition of productive labour here] is completely different from how it was defined in *Capital*. ‘The same type of labour can be *productive* or *unproductive*.’ And now comes the astonishing part: ‘E.g., Milton, WHO DID THE [sic]¹² *Paradise Lost* for £5.’ – yes, sometimes in these late works, which he wrote in England, Marx uses a very peculiar language cobbled together from German and English, one of the idiosyncrasies of the late Marx – Milton, who wrote *Paradise Lost* for five pounds, ‘was an *unproductive worker*’. That is, he did not create exchange-value with it; it was not capable of valorisation. ‘But a writer who does factory labour for his publisher [bookseller]’ that is, the trashy film writer who supplies Hollywood with pathetic scripts that are completely ideological and worthless, ‘is a *productive worker*. Milton produces *Paradise Lost* for the same reason as a silkworm produces silk. It was an expression of his own nature. Later on, he sold the product for £5. But the Leipzig proletarian of literature who assembles books (such as – Marx writes mockingly – ‘compendia of political economy’) under the direction of his publisher is a productive worker, for his production is from the outset subsumed under capital, and only takes place so that capital may valorise itself. A singer who sells her songs on her own account is an unproductive worker. But the same singer, engaged by an impresario, who has her sing in order to make money, is a productive worker. For she produces capital.’¹³

Now, ladies and gentlemen, what emerges from these passages is that, indeed, all the categories of bourgeois society – for here productivity stands in for the principle of exchange, in a sense in other words, the entire system he develops – is not supposed to be a system of the Absolute or of Truth. Rather, he wants to show that the whole, which ensures Mr. Knittel’s¹⁴ works count as productive labour and Beckett’s do not, this system is precisely the Untrue. Consequently, it is a complete perversion to have made something like a system out of so-called dialectical

materialism in the name of DIAMAT. I would say that the question of understanding Marx only begins at the point where this peculiar break re-emerges; at that point, however, it becomes clear that behind Marx’s concept of productivity, there is an idea that goes far beyond the concept of mere material production.

If you have properly understood the overtones of this passage, and above all its peculiar pathos, which one might say still stems from a Romantic philosophy of nature [Naturromantik], in the formulation that Milton sang as a bird sings, or, as Marx puts it, that he spun as a silkworm spins silk, then you will indeed notice something of very great importance for the conclusion of our reflections on materialism as a whole: namely, that this materialism is ultimately negative; it is a negative system with respect to the very concept of materialism itself. In other words, Marxian materialism has a *telos* that fundamentally distinguishes it from the other materialist philosophies we have discussed so far: when the material conditions of humanity come into their own, when the reproduction of the human species and the satisfaction of human needs are finally freed from exchange-value – in other words, from the profit motive – then humanity will cease to exist under the compulsion of material conditions; the fulfilment of materialism would at the same time be the end of materialism. Following Marx, one might say that the bourgeois world is idealistic in its ideology and materialistic in its content [*Gehalt*]; Marx, by contrast, is materialistic in theory, and what he envisions in terms of content [*Gehalt*] I certainly would not call idealistic, but still, it is a constitution of the world [*Weltverfassung*] and also a constitution of thought [*Verfassung des Gedankens*] that belongs [*beheimatet*] well beyond the dichotomy of materialism and idealism.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to use our last minutes together to say a few words about the concept of materialism as a whole. You will have noticed that the concept of materialism does not present itself with a similar density nor with the same systematic unity as, for example, the concept of idealism. You will also have noticed that one cannot speak in the same way about a strict transition from one materialist system (if one can speak of such a thing at all) to another, as one can speak of a transition from one idealist system to another. This has to do with the fact that the systematic claim – that is, the claim to the identity of what is thought with the

thinking itself, as is the case with every idealism – cannot be made in the same way by materialism. And ultimately, it has to do with the fact that materialism culminates in praxis in a similar way to what I have just shown you via Marx’s dialectical motif, wherein materialism is actually the practice that would do away with materialism.

It follows, then, that there is an entire range of types of materialist thinking, which, although they do all have one element in common, are not so strictly interrelated as the different types of, for example, Kantian, Fichtean, Schellingian, Schopenhauerian and Hegelian idealism. I would like to name a few more of these types for you, as indeed, these types do not appear independent of one another, but rather their motifs are naturally interrelated. First, there is the type of metaphysical materialism as it existed in antiquity and emerged from ancient hylozoist speculation about nature. Then there is scientific materialism, which seeks to prove scientifically that matter exists as material [*Stoff*], the uniform principle from which the manifold of appearances [*die Mannigfaltigkeit der Erscheinungen*] can be derived. Then there is something we have not engaged with very closely, which might be called vulgar materialism or naturalism: this is the idea that intellectual processes [*geistigen Vorgänge*] are equivalent to brain processes; this vulgar idea has often been refuted by pointing out that, well, one does not see brain processes reflected in one’s facial expression [*Gesichtseindruck*], but something quite different from brain processes, so this equation is problematic. If one expresses this vulgar materialism in the form that ‘man is what he eats’, sometimes one might want to respond that unfortunately this is not the case, that ‘man does not live by bread alone’, but also by the ideologies that are grafted onto him and that, under certain circumstances, even make it possible for him to opt for conditions such as wars or other heroic historical periods like the Third Reich that lead directly to physical, material deprivation. Finally, there is what one might call ‘anthropological materialism’, a materialism that seeks to trace all phenomena [*Erscheinungen*], especially all social phenomena, back to the human as a natural being. Marx’s theory is genetically, to a significant extent, a critique of anthropological materialism, insofar as – if I may briefly mention (or add) this here regarding the structure of these concepts of materialism – with Hegelian tools and re-appropriating Hegelian motifs (a most striking example

of which I have already given you), Marxian theory takes up Hegel’s motif of inner contradiction and movement [*Bewegtheit*] against the static and ahistorical reduction of all phenomena [*Phänomene*] to the human being.

This dialectical materialism, of which I have mentioned a few categories in passing, essentially represents the antithesis of vulgar materialism as well as anthropological materialism. Materialism does not have to be empiricist but rather possesses, as I have shown you in Marx, categories such as ‘system’ and ‘total process’ [*Gesamtprozeß*], which correspond to the Hegelian concept of totality. Even in its telos, precisely in this motif of reason realising itself through history, Marx’s thought was, in fact, idealistic, or as it has been called, the heir to classical German philosophy. But his materialism – and I will close out with this – is not ‘realistic’ either; it does not comprehend [*auffassen*] reality immediately as it is, but as something mediated in itself, as something mediated through society. This empirical reality of appearance [*Realität des Scheins*] is, in the end, to be sublated through the realisation of reason itself. One of the simplest conclusions that follows from this thought is, perhaps, that in their practice, a so-called materialist may well be what vulgar materialism would probably deride as idealistic.¹⁵

Translated by Jake Orbison

Notes

1. This lecture has been transcribed and published twice in German. First, Suhrkamp published Adorno’s *Philosophische Terminologie* course as a two-volume set in 1974, edited by Rudolph zur Lippe. Most people who have encountered these lectures have read the transcript from the 1974 paperback. This transcript edits Adorno’s lecture for clarity, mostly streamlining his speech patterns but also, at times, altering the text for conceptual clarity. The lecture was then republished in 2016 alongside Adorno’s entire *Nachlass*. The 2016 transcript, edited by Henri Lonitz, has a much lighter touch than the zur Lippe edition, which appears to have sacrificed some fidelity to the lecture towards the conventions of written language. The 2016 edition provides the basis for the vast majority of this translation, but I have drawn on the 1974 transcript to clarify a few moments, which are marked in the text, because the 1974 edition offers necessary clarity. For example, in one instance, the 2016 edition renders Adorno’s quotation of Marx incorrect. See note 12.

2. Note the conceptual synthesis originally presented in the 1974 transcript:

1974: Ich kann nur sagen, daß alles, was ich so versuche und treibe, eigentlich dem Entwurf eines solchen in der ausgeführten konkreten Kritik des systematischen Denkens selber die Momente eines vom Systemszwang frei gewordenen Denkens sich konstituieren müssen; darin möchte ich noch einmal an Marx anschließen. Das liegt auch in einem der Zentralbegriffe der Hegelschen Dialektik, nämlich dem Begriff der bestimmten oder der positiven Negation. Mehr als dies Programmatische möchte ich Ihnen darüber jetzt nicht sagen.

2016: Ich meine aber jedenfalls, daß – und hier möchte ich doch noch einmal an Marx anschließen – in der Kritik des systematischen Denkens und zwar in der ausgeführten Kritik, in der konkreten Kritik des systematischen Denkens selber die Momente eines vom Systemszwang freigewordenen Denkens sich konstituieren müssen, wie es im übrigen ja auch in einem der Zentralbegriffe der Hegelschen Dialektik, nämlich dem Begriff der bestimmten oder der positiven Negation liegt.

3. Cf. 1974: Das sehr merkwürdige Verhältnis des Marxischen Materialismus als eines prinzipiell gegen das System gerichteten Denkens zum System möchte ich Ihnen aber wenigstens an dem Modell von Marx selber ein bißchen konkreter ausführen. Ich folge auch dabei meinem Verfahren, das nicht in allgemeinen Reflexionen zu besorgen, sondern an einem möglichst bestimmten Modell, und wähle eines, das nicht als eine bloße Illustration von abstrakten Gedanken außerhalb unseres konkreten analytischen Zusammenhangs mit dem Begriff des Materialismus liegt.

2016: Aber ich meine nun doch, ich bin es Ihnen wenigstens schuldig, Ihnen, da wir hier von dem Marxischen Materialismus und dem sehr merkwürdigen Verhältnis dieses Materialismus als eines prinzipiell gegen das System gerichteten Denkens zum System sprechen, wenigstens an dem Modell von Marx selber das ein bißchen konkreter auszuführen, und ich folge auch dabei meinem Verfahren, das nun nicht etwa in allgemeinen Reflexionen zu besorgen, sondern an einem möglichst bestimmten Modell. Und ich wähle auch hier wiederum dieses Modell so, daß es nicht außerhalb, als eine bloße Illustration von abstrakten Gedanken, unseres konkre-

ten analytischen Zusammenhangs liegt, sondern sich auf den Gegenstand bezieht, mit dem wir befaßt sind, auf den Begriff des Materialismus.

4. Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Vol. 1 (London: Penguin Books, 1990), 287.

5. Marx, *Capital*, vol 1, 287.

6. This clarification is found in the 1974 edition.

7. Marx, *Capital*, vol 1, 287. Recall, however, Marx's footnote to the sentence Adorno cites here: 'This method of determining what is productive labour, from the standpoint of the simple labour process, is by no means sufficient to cover the capitalist process of production'.

8. N.B. 'Chemism' is a technical term in Hegelian philosophy. For an explication of this concept, see Karen Ng, *Hegel's Concept of Life: Self-Consciousness, Freedom, Logic* (Oxford: 2020), 219–243.

9. Karl Marx, *Marx Engels Collected Works (MECW)*, vol. 34, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1975), 128. In *Theories of Surplus Value*, this is published as an addendum to Part 1.

10. Marx, MECW, vol. 34, 131.

11. Marx, MECW, vol. 34, 132.

12. The idiosyncrasy of Marx's language reveals a difference in the reproduction of Adorno's lecture. Marx's manuscript reads, 'Z. B. Milton, who did the paradise lost, war ein unproductiver Arbeiter'. (MEGA II/4.1, Seite: 113, Absatz: Zeile 9ff). The 1974 zur Lippe edition of *Philosophische Terminologie* reproduces this faithfully, and accurately, as Adorno is clearly remarking on Marx's 'Denglish'. The 2016 Lonitz edition confusingly reads, 'Zum Beispiel: Milton, who did write' – oder, who wrote – 'the Paradise Lost "for five pounds"'.
13. Marx, MECW, vol. 34, 136.

14. Adorno refers here to John Kittel, a Swiss writer who wrote English-language pulp-novels and who collaborated with the Nazi regime as a member of the *Europäische Schriftsteller-Vereinigung*.

15. Cf. Lenin: 'Intelligent idealism is closer to intelligent materialism than stupid materialism. Dialectical idealism instead of intelligent; metaphysical, undeveloped, dead, crude, rigid instead of stupid'. V.I. Lenin, 'Conspectus of Hegel's Lectures on the History of Philosophy' (1915), Marxists Internet Archive, accessed July 8 2026, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1915/cons-lect/ch03.htm>