

What Is Man? Interpreting the Philosophical- Anthropological Ideas of Karl Marx Part 1: Generic Essence and Praxis

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Abstract

This article uses the key concepts available in Karl Marx's texts and attempts to answer the question, "What is man?" The author explores such constitutive aspects of man's generic essence (*Gattungswesen des Menschen*) and of man's worldly being as corporeality and relationship with nature; suffering as a product of desire; praxis (*Praxis*) as productive creative activity (*produktive Tätigkeit, Selbstbetätigung*) that is carried out in the dialectical processes of objectification (*Vergegenständlichung, Äußerung*) and de-objectification (*Entgegenständlichung, Aneignung*); man's universality; objectivity (*Gegenständlichkeit*) of the man-made human world; intersubjectivity and sociality/sociability (*Gesellschaftlichkeit*); interplay of social relations (*das Ensemble der gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse*); the existential and emotional relations of man (*menschlichen Verhältnisse zur Welt*) to the world of nature, to human activity, to the results of one's labor, to other people, and to oneself. We demonstrate that the generic essence of man is not granted by nature but evolves in the course of historical development. Moreover, in *Capital*, Marx distinguishes between the invariant essence (*Praxis*) and historical modifications of praxis. Therefore, history is understood as "continuous change of human nature," and man himself as a historical being. In spite of later reductionist interpretations, Marx conceptualizes man as a living, uniquely generic (socially individual), integral being, whose essential mode of existence is praxis (social conscious purposeful transforming objectal-instrumental material and spiritual activity). Man is an integral bodily-spiritual being, transforming the natural world (*Welt*) and creating "worlds" of his own, those of material, social, and spiritual culture (*Umwelt*), society and its relations (*Mitwelt*), which are interiorized and form an inner world (*Innerlichkeit, Eigenwelt*) in the process of practical activity. The article concludes that, following Marx's philosophical anthropology, man should be considered not only as a "practical being" but also a suffering one, experiencing his worldly existence in the form of partial, existential relations to the world and to himself.

Keywords: generic essence of man, praxis, universality, instrumentality, objectivity, historicity, social relations, existential relations to the world.

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Что такое человек? Осмысление философско-антропологических идей Карла Маркса

Часть 1. Родовая сущность и прaxis

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Аннотация

На основе анализа ключевых понятий, содержащихся в текстах Карла Маркса, в статье предпринята попытка ответить на вопрос «Что такое человек?» Автор исследует такие конститутивные аспекты родовой сущности человека (*Gattungswesen des Menschen*) и человеческого бытия-в-мире, как телесность и взаимоотношения с природой; страдание как чувство, обусловленное наличием потребностей; прaxis (*Praxis*) как творческая продуктивная деятельность (*productive Tätigkeit, Selbstbetätigung*), которая осуществляется в диалектическом процессе опредмечивания (*Vergegenständlichung, Äußerung*) и распредмечивания (*Entgegenständlichung, Aneignung*); универсальность человека; предметность (*Gegenständlichkeit*) как искусственный мир человека; intersубъективность и социальность (*Gesellschaftlichkeit*); ансамбль общественных отношений (*das ensemble der gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse*); экзистенциальные, эмоциональные отношения человека и мира (*menschlichen Verhältnisse zur Welt*) природы, человека к собственной деятельности, результатам своего труда, к другим людям и самому себе. Показано, что родовая сущность человека не дана природой, а возникает в ходе исторического развития. Более того, в «Капитале» Маркс различает инвариантную сущность (*Praxis*) и исторические модификации праксиса. Поэтому история понимается как «непрерывное изме-

нение человеческой природы», а человек – как историческое существо. Несмотря на последующие редукционистские интерпретации, человек у Маркса – живое уникально-родовое (социально-индивидуальное) целостное существо. Его сущностью и способом существования является прaxis, т.е. общественная сознательная целеполагающая преобразующая предметно-орудийная материально-духовная деятельность. Человек – единое телесно-духовное существо, преобразующее мир природы (*Welt*), и созидающее свои «миры» – материальной, социальной и духовной культуры (*Umwelt*), общества и общественных отношений (*Mitwelt*). Все перечисленные «миры» в процессе практической деятельности интериоризируются и формируют внутренний мир человека (*Innerlichkeit*, *Eigenwelt*). Поэтому, как заключает автор статьи, следуя философской антропологии Маркса, человек должен рассматриваться не только как «практическое» существо, но и как страдающее, переживающее свое бытие-в-мире в форме равнодушных, экзистенциальных отношений-к-миру и самому себе.

Ключевые слова: родовая сущность человека, прaxis, универсальность, орудийность, предметность, историчность, общественные отношения, экзистенциальные отношения к миру.

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Introduction

In recent years, both in the world and in Russia, social science and humanities have developed many various paradigms, theories, and concepts where the notions of man and humanism are used in one context or another. To list a few, these are transhumanism, posthumanism, ecohumanism, feminist humanism, technohumanism, as well as areas of scientific research related to such humanistic issues as bioethics, virtual ethnography, digital anthropology, LGBT theory, gender and queer studies, postcolonial and neo-racial studies, and so on.

Some of these *neo-humanists*, namely, transhumanists, propose various projects of human bodily improvement (“enhancement project”),

various artificial implants into the human body to prolong life, with a view to immortality. Others (supporters of neo-eugenics) talk about genetic improvement [Camp 2015, 21–25]. Still others, posthumanists, dream of a radical overcoming not only of humanism associated with anthropocentrism (understood as ungrounded “preference” for the human view of the world). They even suggest going beyond the human, to bacteria, insects, plants, and quanta, which are discussed as “conceptual personae” [Ferrando 2019, xiv]; this may bring out a subsequent ecstatic union with this whole world, where boundaries will disappear between the human and the non-human, living and dead, natural and artificial. Finally, adherents of the techno-human condition generally talk about the need to abandon the human as such [Allenby & Sarewitz 2011].

However, if *neo-Marxism* (through A. Gramsci, G. Lukács, K. Korsch, G. Marcuse, E. Fromm) and *post-Marxism* (F. Jameson, S. Žižek, C. Mouffe, E. Laclau) are still directly related to K. Marx and classical Marxism. But do all these newfangled neo-humanistic theories have anything to do with Marxism? Or do they discredit Marxism by theoretically defending various kinds of minorities? Indeed, Marxism was originally on the side of the oppressed majority. Or, on the contrary, perhaps today such neo-humanistic trends testify to the inner creative potential of Marxism?

There is one very important detail. The fact is that most of the above-listed forms of “humanism” – let us use the umbrella term “neo-humanism” – in one way or another in the ideological and political terms, correlate themselves with left radical movements and, first of all, with Marxism, understood in the broadest sense. At the same time, the basic orientation of neo-humanists is focused on some ideas of neo-Marxism (sexual revolution, gender emancipation, total negation, fight against all forms of discrimination) and post-Marxism (with its ideas of pluralism, multiculturalism, poetic thinking, nomadism, rhizome, etc.).

Before discussing such broad topics and answering (positively or negatively) the questions posed, we first need to decide which Marxism we are actually talking about. On the other hand, both formally and substantially, the concept of humanism can be defined only on the basis of a clear answer to such questions as “What is man? What is human? What are the humane and the inhumane?” Without answers to these fundamental philosophical and anthropological questions, all talk about any kind of “humanism” is pseudoscience, or, as St. Anselm aptly put it, *flatus vocis* – a mere vibration of the air.

Therefore, in order to understand the legitimacy or, on the contrary, impossibility of attributing various neo-humanistic concepts to one or another branch of Marxism, in the proposed series of articles, we address the issues formulated above. In this opening article we attempt to answer the question, “What is man?”

Throughout his activity, Marx did not evolve an integrated understanding of all these basic categories (man, humane/inhumane, genuine/ingenuine, humanism, etc.). His theory underwent development, moving from descriptive and one-sided definitions to deeper and more comprehensive ones. Due to this, proceeding from the disparate and often contradictory ideas of Marx, as well as referring to the humanistic direction in Russian and foreign Marxian studies, we will try to offer a holistic and consistent interpretation of Marx’s philosophical anthropology, on the basis of which we will then critically analyze various forms of modern “neo-humanism.”

Doing this is not purely scientific historical and philosophical work, as it also clearly demonstrates the relevance of Marx’s ideas and the feasibility to use them as a basis for critical analysis of specific social phenomena and processes.

Nature and body

In fact, Karl Marx’s procedure for defining a human can begin with any category, with any attributive property that characterizes man’s generic essence – all the same, in the end we will come to a common understanding of the human being. And since the latter is understood by Marx as an integrity, then a view from any one perspective will always dialectically reflect the whole. The final definitions will coincide in the main things.

Since Marx was a materialist, in our study we begin with the *materialistic* (to some extent, naturalistic) thesis: “man is a part of nature” [Marx 1975a, 276]. Purely phenomenologically, this means that man first of all reveals himself as a natural organism. At the same time, in the very first approximation, the body is understood as the basis of individual being: Marx constantly speaks of a “real, corporeal man” [Marx 1975a, 336] as a “as a natural, corporeal, sensuous objective being” [Marx 1975a, 336], “the real living individuals themselves” [Marx & Engels 1975, 37]. However, the proposition that “man is a part of nature” is only one side of the dialectical integrity. The other is that “nature is man’s inorganic body” [Marx 1975a, 276]. Taken together, these two points confirm, on the one hand, the immanent integration

of man-in-nature, man's being-in-it, on the other hand, the fact that "man lives on nature" [Marx 1975a, 276].

Therefore, man depends on nature, as his body is a part of the natural body, and nature is his external body, for "nature is (1) his direct means of life, and (2) the material, the object, and the instrument of his life activity" [Marx 1975a, 275–276].

These corporeal individual aspects of human existence are so fundamental for K. Marx that it is from them that he and F. Engels begin their philosophy: "setting out from real... men in the flesh [*leibhaftigen Menschen*]" [Marx & Engels 1975, 36].

Suffering, need, life

Being a corporeal being, man is existentially dependent on nature as his other body, "with which he must remain in continuous interchange if he is not to die" [Marx 1975a, 276]. This vital dependence means that man is a *sensual* being. Marx noted: "To be sensuous, that is, to be really existing, means to be an object of sense, to be a sensuous object, and thus to have sensuous objects outside oneself – objects of one's sensuousness. To be sensuous is to *suffer*. Man as an objective, sensuous being is therefore a *suffering* being [*leidenschaftliches Wesen*]" [Marx 1975a, 337].

If we leave aside all philosophical arguments about *suffering* [Kondrashov 2019, 158–164] and *sensuality* [Preobrazhensky & Starikova 2020] in Marx, then in the simplest, even ordinary sense, they mean the physiological dependence of man on nature as the world of objects that satisfy man's needs. Marx understands suffering as a feeling conditioned by presence of needs.

Since *need* is a property of a living being, (there are needs of "eating and drinking, housing, clothing and various other things" [Marx & Engels 1975, 41–42]), Michel Henry rightly saw a core of Marx's philosophy in his concept of life [Henry 2019, 19, 23, 43, 89] because he believed that Marx's fundamental intuition was his idea of "the bodily subjectivity of a living individual, which determines his existence" [Yampolskaya 2008, 16].

Indeed, if we turn to Marx's text, we can see that the category of *the living* plays a great role in his worldview. Thus, in *German Ideology*, Marx and Engels directly declare that their "the premises... are the real individuals, their activity and the material conditions of their life" [Marx & Engels 1975, 31], "real, active men" [Marx & Engels 1975, 36], from the real-life process (*Lebensprozeß*) and with a certain mode of

life (*Lebensweise*), which account for the emergence, development, and functioning of the state, social institutions, forms of family, civil society and consciousness [Marx & Engels 1955a, 24]. In *Capital*, Marx constantly contrasts capital as dead labor as opposed to living, creative labor [Sáenz 2007]. In the *Economic Manuscripts of 1861–1863*, he writes: “It is, in general, a characteristic of capitalist production that the conditions of labour confront living labour as independent, as personified, that it is not the worker that employs the conditions of labour, but the conditions of labour that employ the worker” [Marx 1991, 479].

However, let us return to the suffering-need. Since the desire to satisfy one’s needs is the driving force of all life forms, my suffering (*Leiden*) necessarily gives rise to my passion (*Leidenschaft*): “because he feels that he suffers, a *passionate* being. Passion is the essential power of man energetically bent on its object” [Marx 1975a, 337].

In this respect, human existence turns out to be dynamic, since need, as a driving force, *treibendes Motiv*, operates as a kind of “driver” that triggers human activity [Heller 1976], makes a living being go out into the world and strive for objects of his desire in order to satisfy the needs, which phenomenologically reveals itself either in the form of pleasure, joy (when a need is satisfied), or in displeasure, torment, pain (if the need is not satisfied). In this respect, Marxian anthropology and psychology are dynamic: “I refer to his [Marx’s] concept of man’s nature as a dynamic, energetic one. He sees man as being driven by passions, or drives, although man is largely unaware of these driving forces” [Fromm 1968, 84].

Praxis

Being a living, corporeal, sensuously suffering being, i.e., having needs, man, like any other living being, seeks to satisfy them. This “passionate” striving itself (Marx sometimes uses the word *appetite*) as the driving force of all life, is realized in specific forms of activity. Thus, an amoeba and an owl satisfy their needs differently than an earthworm or salmon, and a cat in ways that are different from a dragonfly or a toadstool. Due to their physical organization, each of these living beings: (a) lives in its environment, (b) has its own “range” of needs and their objectives, for which it dynamically strives in order to satisfy its need, (c) and the way a living being acts in the world, the means of satisfaction inherent only to it, constitutes the generic character of this living organism. Marx writes, “The whole character of a species – its species-character – is contained in the character of its life activity” [Marx 1975a, 276].

How does man satisfy his needs? K. Marx answers: while an animal only consumes what is given by nature, i.e., it adjusts to nature, man, by transforming nature, produces in order to consume, which means that he adapts nature to himself. The way of such active adaptation of man to the environment is conscious transforming activity (*Tätigkeit*), or praxis (*Praxis*)¹. Let us discuss this activity in more detail.

(1) *The transforming nature of praxis* is that man takes natural material that has some specific properties but in this natural form cannot satisfy his needs, and man changes certain aspects of this natural material. In the new, transformed condition, the product acquires such new properties as could satisfy this specific human need. Thus, for example, an ordinary wooden stick cannot be used to satisfy the need for digging a hole, while the same stick modified in a certain way (featuring a handle and a sharpened end) will already have such a useful property, turning from a simple object of nature into something radically new, man-made, which did not exist before in nature – into a digging stick.

This kind of conscious targeted transforming activity is, strictly speaking, a way of production, which radically distinguishes man from animals. F. Engels noted: “The essential distinction between human and animal society is that the most animals do is *garner*, whereas humans *produce*. This unique but crucial distinction alone makes it impossible simply to extrapolate the laws of animal societies to human societies” [Engels 1991, 276]. In his turn, Marx writes: “Conscious life activity distinguishes man immediately from animal life activity” [Marx 1975a, 337].

As we know, many animals also use tools of labor in their life, but the specificity of human practice is that, in contrast to the random tool activity of an animal, man transforms it into the basis of his being. If an animal has learned, say, to open a box with food, then this skill is not transferred through training to its offspring. The acquired skills die together with the specific animal. Man, through tradition, passes on what he has acquired and invented to subsequent generations, and

¹ Within the framework of the presentation of the Marxian conception, we use the term *Praxis*, found only in his early works, in order to emphasize the immanent unity of material and ideal activity in its structure, thus distinguishing it, on the one hand, from practice (*Praktik*), always deliberately or unconsciously opposed to theory, and on the other hand, from labor (*Arbeit*), which, while partly coinciding in content with praxis (as a human activity), nevertheless has many other important meanings and connotations in Marx, which go beyond the framework of formal praxis, for they are associated with concrete historical conditions required for its implementation.

therefore tradition (as one of the forms of historicity) turns out to be essentially constitutive for human existence as a whole.

(2) *The immanent unity of praxis.* Praxis as a conscious adaptive activity immediately reveals itself as an immanent unity of physical and mental (cognitive, goal-setting, emotional) activity. From the point of view of Marx, there are no “purely material” or “purely ideal” activities – they always proceed in unity: writing a philosophical treatise, and working on a lathe machine, or raising children in a nursery, as well as easily solving a logarithmic equation or listening to a piece of music (as an aesthetic activity) and the “driving in a nail,” – all these forms of human activity also contain integrated material and ideal components: “thinking and being are thus certainly *distinct*, but at the same time they are in *unity* with each other” [Marx 1975a, 299]. In this or that case, we can only talk about the dominance of the material or ideal aspect of integrated praxis in this or that activity.

Analyzing the first thesis on Feuerbach [Marx 1975b, 1], Adolfo Sánchez Vázquez points out that here Marx indirectly assumes the immanent unity of praxis through his criticism of two different one-sided philosophies: “‘hitherto existing materialism – that of Feuerbach included’ which only grasped the objective side in the form of contemplation, and idealism, which of course reflects the side of human activity neglected by ‘hitherto existing materialism,’ but which could only arrive at a concept of praxis as ideal, intellectual, and not ‘real, sensuous’” [Gandler 2015, 100]. Sánchez Vázquez “grants a special value to the two moments of praxis: on the one hand, following its objective side, praxis consists of the true transformation of the world as it exists now... in this sense the concept of praxis refers just as much to palpable things, to nature, as to the relations which exist between humans and nature and also between humans and humans, whose totality constitute society. On the other hand, the subjective side of praxis constitutes the active moment, initiative, the aspect of the human being as an actor in history, who focuses consciously on objectives and attempts to realize them. In this sense, Sánchez Vázquez understands praxis as ‘activity... oriented toward the end of transforming an object (nature or society), devised by the conscious and active subjectivity of men.’ The activity that he understands as praxis is, ‘consequently, activity – in indissoluble unity – objective and subjective at the same time’” [Gandler 2015, 99].

“Determinant in this practical process is neither objective transformation (separated from subjectivity) nor subjective activity (separated from objectivity), but rather the unity of both moments” [Sánchez Vázquez 1983, 36].

Mario Tronti notes: “For Marx, thought is praxis and his object is praxis; that is, in praxis one confirms the existence of both limits, and in it, therefore, thought and reality coincide. Praxis is the process of understanding that Marx, along with Hegel, considers the overcoming of the antithesis between “the one-sidedness of subjectivity and the one-sidedness of objectivity” [Tronti 2016].

(3) Formal dynamic structure of praxis. Activity consists of several stages: a *subject*² develops some *need* and sets a conscious *goal* to satisfy it, for the implementation of which he performs some *work* on an *object* with certain *tools*, and the subject achieves a positive or negative *result*, i.e., achieves or does not achieve the set goal. In other words, the subject either satisfies his need or not. This structure is formally identical in all historical epochs. Structurally, any human activity is just that, be it visiting a museum of medieval art, blowing one’s nose in a handkerchief, robbing a bank, giving a lecture or fishing, cleaning a room or carrying out economic reforms in a state.

(4) Dialectics of objectification/de-objectification. From the point of view of Marx, the main mechanism for implementation of praxis is the dialectic of the processes of objectification (*Vergegenständlichung, äußerung*) and de-objectification (*Entgegenständlichung, Aneignung*). In the process of implementation of an activity, the inner content of the human psyche/consciousness (projects, ideas, goals, emotions, knowledge, but above all – conscious needs) are transformed into an external objective thing. Following Hegel, Marx calls this moment of praxis by the term *Äußerung* – appropriation, manifestation of oneself in the world and solidification in the object, i.e., objectification. Thus, for example, man’s need to eat hot liquid or porridge-like food leads to the fact that man forms (by analogy with the palms of his hand from which they drink water from a stream) an image of a necessary object, which, through transformative labor operations, is embodied, materialized, objectified in wood or metal, and thus there is a new, artificial object – a spoon. The reverse transition of the ideal embodied in an object back to the man is carried out in the process of de-objectification (*Aneignung*, assimilation, making the object their own), when other people, using this object – a spoon, in their actions and states reproduce the ideal content inherent in it.

² In this research, the notion *subject* is always understood as a *social* man, i.e., either (a) a human as an element of a specific social structure (and the concept of *element* necessarily implies the presence of other elements), or (b) a human community (social structure, social sum of such persons).

Since all human activity is a unity of material and ideal activity, then the results of this activity – any objects created by people, necessarily contain material and spiritual (ideal) components: an ordinary saucepan or a philosophical system, a certain form of government or an architectural ensemble.

In his activity, man transforms his natural environment and creates an artificial, human world of objectivity. Therefore, praxis simultaneously acts as the generic essence of man, means of human existence in the world, and a substance of social being: “Yet the productive life is the life of the species. It is life-engendering life [Marx 1975a, 276]. Moreover, “the sensuous world as the total living sensuous *activity* of the individuals composing it” [Marx & Engels 1975, 41].

Because of this, objectivity (*Gegenständlichkeit*) is one of the main constitutive characteristics of both human activity and of man as such. It reveals itself both in the very process of transformation of the object by the subject (object-oriented activity), and in the form of objective results of this activity, i.e., in the form of various human relations, material and spiritual culture, which Marx calls our “second nature,” the elements of which, being built into the system of man–world relations, merge with purely biological needs (food, drink, warmth, sex) to such an extent that man can no longer do without them, and they act as ontologically equal with the elements of the first nature.

Final definition of praxis. Based on the undertaken essential and structural-dynamic analysis, the following definition can be given: praxis is a united material-spiritual, subject-object, and subject-subject, consciously targeted, social, object transforming activity that is characteristic only of humans, is realized through processes of objectification and de-objectification, and represents a purposeful conscious process of transforming a material or an ideal object by an individual or collective subject using material or cognitive resources in order to satisfy their needs. Therefore, it supposes such a transformation in object’s initial properties (which hindered satisfying a specific need) that gives this object new (artificial) properties that already allow satisfying this particular need.

Thus, from the point of view of Marx, man (in addition to the above definitions) also acts as a practical, active, world-transforming being, and praxis is the generic essence of man. The vital activity (*Lebenstätigkeit*) of man as a conscious being (*bewußtes Wesen*) is his essence (*Wesen*) [Marx 1975b, 566]; it is “free conscious activity that is precisely the generic character of man [*Gattungsscharakter*]” [Marx 1975b, 565].

Moreover, since praxis is a way of satisfying human needs, it is also a mode of human existence in the world: "It is just in his work upon the objective world, therefore, that man really proves himself to be a species-being. This production is his active species-life [*werkstätiges Gattungsleben*]" [Marx 1975a, 277].

Finally, it is in praxis that the entire content of human existence is contained: any socio-historical phenomenon is either activity itself or its mode, state, or result. Praxis, in simple terms, is everything that people do (ontic aspect) and the way they do it (ontological aspect). By virtue of this, praxis also acts as the basis of social life: "labour is a creator of use value, is useful labour, it is a necessary condition, independent of all forms of society, for the existence of the human race; it is an eternal nature imposed necessity, without which there can be no material exchanges between man and Nature, and therefore no life" [Marx 1960, 53].

Human universality

Since man's praxis transforms nature and thereby creates an artificial world of objects, which, according to Marx's apt expression, becomes man's "second nature," in contrast to animals who are limited by instincts and a certain range of natural conditions, outside of which this species cannot exist (as a giraffe who cannot live in the Arctic, and a polar bear cannot live in Africa), and from which an animal cannot "jump out," a human person, on the contrary, escapes and transcends (*trans-cendere*) the specific natural bonds that limit him and regards himself as a supernatural being. Marx writes: "In creating a world of objects by his practical activity, in his work upon inorganic nature, man proves himself a conscious species-being, i.e., as a being that treats the species as its own essential being, or that treats itself as a species-being. Admittedly animals also produce. They build themselves nests, dwellings, like the bees, beavers, ants, etc. But an animal only produces what it immediately needs for itself or its young. It produces one-sidedly, whilst man produces universally" [Marx 1975a, 276].

Man, constantly pushing back his natural boundaries (necessity), becomes free from the specific limitations of nature (but not from nature itself). From now on, he exists and acts not according to pre-determined biological programs, but according to artificial programs (conscious, instrumental, technological, etc.). Thus, transforming the world, he adapts it to himself, but does not adapt himself to it. Due to this, he gets an opportunity to exist in any conditions, i.e., universally.

It is clear that these conditions are ontologically limited by the protein form of life. "As a biological being, man is a product of natural development. With his self-realization, which of course even in his case means only a retreat of the natural boundary, and never its disappearance, its complete conquest, he enters into a new and self-founded being, into social being" [Lukács 1980, 46]. "The life of the species, both in man and in animals, consists physically in the fact that man (like the animal) lives on inorganic nature; and the more universal man (or the animal) is, the more universal is the sphere of inorganic nature on which he lives" [Marx 1975a, 275].

This universality of man is manifested primarily in the fact that Man transforms all of nature into his inorganic body, "the universality of man appears in practice precisely in the universality which makes all nature his *inorganic* body" [Marx 1975a, 275]. In other words, man uses labor tools (these artificial extensions of his own hands) to transform nature and make it part of his own, human world, the world of culture, outside which man no longer exists.

Thus, *universality* means only that:

(1) unlike animals, who are tied to one specific ecosystem, man transforms conscious activity makes previously unusable nature his home, and inedible things, his food;

(2) man acts not according to genetically inborn instinctive programs, but according to conscious, symbolic, symbolic, non-biological, artificial programs; moreover, "the absence of innate programs of social behavior specifically gives to man the ability to master any programs and to be a self-programmed subject of his own self-development" [Goncharov 2012, 155];

(3) man does not act by means of his natural organs or sporadic use of tools, like animals, but makes the tools the basis of his metabolic exchange with nature, placing a tool as an intermediary between himself and nature, and radically transforming the ecology of nature itself [Foster 2000];

(4) man can exist in any natural environment, adapting it through technical, instrumental transformation and domestication, when he turns previously unusable things into objects of utility for satisfying his needs (e.g., turning a stick into a digging tool or domesticating fire), or even invents something that has never existed in nature (wheel);

(5) when man breaks free from the pure utilitarianism of animal life and turns to aesthetic activity: while, as Marx notes, "an animal forms objects only in accordance with the standard and the need of the species

to which it belongs, whilst man knows how to produce in accordance with the standard of every species, and knows how to apply everywhere the inherent standard to the object. Man, therefore also forms objects in accordance with the laws of beauty” [Marx 1975a, 277].

And in this regard universality is fundamentally connected with creativity and freedom: “man produces even when he is free from physical need and only truly produces in freedom therefrom. An animal produces only itself, whilst man reproduces the whole of nature. An animal’s product belongs immediately to its physical body, whilst man freely confronts his product” [Marx 1975a, 276–277]. However, this topic lies outside the present study.

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To be continued