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**MARX
AND ANCIENT GREECE**

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Contained in this small volume (tome), enriched with references and notes, is the text of a speech which was given (took place) on 3rd February 1984 at the Ἐταιρεία Σπουδῶν Νεοελληνικοῦ Πολιτισμοῦ καὶ Γενικῆς Παιδείας τῆς Σχολῆς Μωραΐτη (= Society (Corporation, Company, Firm) for Studies of Modern Greek Culture (Modern Greek Cultural Studies) and General Paideia (Education) of the Moraitis School).

[ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE GREEK TEXT] (Whilst the themes are similar, P.K.’s German and Greek texts differ considerably in the way they are presented – with the German text going into far greater detail about the Young Hegelians, Bruno Bauer, Ludwig Feuerbach, et al., etc., so I have decided to translate each text separately (including in regard to II, 4 of the German text, and, 4 of the Greek text, which are in fact “mirror” versions of each other.))**]]**

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1. The interpretive position

Marx's intellectual(-spiritual) relationship with ancient Greece can be incorporated in a tripartite schema, which would include one side (aspect) oriented philosophically-aesthetically, and almost without reservation affirmative, another side (aspect) oriented historically-sociologically, where the ancient-Greek phenomenon is seen critically and is relativised, and finally, a third side (aspect), where affirmative and critical-relativistic consideration are reconciled within the framework of a certain philosophy of history. These three sides (aspects) co-exist, and indeed in conscious equilibrium, inside the mature thought of Marx, that is to say, of Marx especially as author of *Grundrisse* and *Capital*; nonetheless, the said sides (aspects) are not formed simultaneously, but successively, and their formation interrelates with the general movement of Marx's thought from its philosophical and aesthetic neo-Hegelian beginnings, towards that grandiose conception of the historical life of humans, which undoubtedly makes Marx one of the great founders of the contemporary social sciences. In other words: still before Marx became... a Marxist, he already had shaped (moulded or formed) a certain, definitely affirmative perception of the ancient-Greek phenomenon, which, moreover, in his eyes symbolises the realisation, or in any case, is connected with the pursuance, of specific (concrete) ethical and aesthetic values. Later, when he had more or less concluded and settled on his personal way of looking at social phenomena, Marx sees ancient Greece and its intellectual(-spiritual) representatives inside their historical dependencies and inside their historical limits (boundaries);

parallelly, nevertheless, driven apparently by his initial, still living –and always– sympathies for the classical ideal, Marx poses to himself the question as to how the at least partial hyper-historicity(/historicalness) or rather inter-historicity(/historicalness) of this ideal is reconciled with the ascertained fact of the historical dependencies of the ancient-Greek phenomenon; the answer is given from a philosophical-historical (i.e. pertaining to the history of ideas) and intensely Hegelian perspective, where the third side (aspect) emerges, the synthetic side (aspect) of Marx’s intellectual(-spiritual) relationship towards ancient Greece. This tripartite schema, in which at the same time the interpretive position which I shall support is summarised (synopsised), shows that a re-composition (reformulation, reconstitution) of Marx’s views is possible which is simultaneously genetic-evolutionary and logical-systematic.¹

¹ The distinction which is frequently made in this text between Marx’s early (premature, germinal) and mature view or perception of Greek antiquity has no relation with the caesura (break, rupture, cut(ting), incision), which a portion of the studiers/researchers of Marx make (undertake) between Marx’s early and his late general orientation of his interests and examination of the problem [[at hand]] (problematisation). All those who make this caesura/break contrast (contradistinguish) the *Manuscripts of 1844* to *Capital*, whereas from the point of view of our own distinction, of significance is only the essential (substantial, substantive) – and accepted by all studiers/researchers – difference in viewpoint between Marx’s doctoral dissertation, and, all of his later (posterior) work, including the *Manuscripts of 1844* and the *German Ideology* (1845/6). It is obvious why in a work relating to Marx’s intellectual(-spiritual) relationship towards ancient Greece, his juvenile (immature) work necessarily will have to occupy in the spectrum of research a(n) area (expanse, extent, scope) much greater than whatever in a survey of his general intellectual(-spiritual) evolution, with the possible result being the creation of an optical illusion. We shall see, nonetheless, that already in the text of the dissertation, motifs exist like e.g. the Promethean element, which integrally retain (wholly retain) their significance also in Marx’s later (posterior) thought.

2. The two aspects of the classical ideal in Marx's juvenilia

Like most offspring (progeny, scions) of bourgeois families of his epoch, so too Marx came for the first time into contact with ancient Greek culture (civilisation) and its linguistic monuments in the classical gymnasium (high/secondary school, lyceum) of his birthplace (native town/region).² This contact is not known to us as to its emotional and intellectual details, however we know one of its very positive and permanent results: it provides Marx with an exceptional knowledge both of ancient Greek as well as of the Latin language, which allows him, even from the beginning of his university student years (days), to undertake serious philosophical, philological and legal studies by referring to, and going back over, classical texts without the slightest linguistic difficulty. This intense engaging (engagement) with ancient texts in those years makes plausible the conclusion that the – in all probability – hard and at least in part dry grammatical education of the gymnasium (high/secondary school, lyceum) did not at all cool or dampen the young Marx's early enthusiasm for the classical world; in (during) the whole of his life, besides, Marx never belonged to those otiose (lazy, indolent, idle) [[(types of) people]], who consider – by definition and from the very outset – being occupied (occupation) with the letter (with letters) as the opposition or antithesis to being occupied with the spirit(-intellect) – on the contrary: the possession of the letter, i.e.

² For Marx's gymnasium (high/secondary school, lyceum) studies see R. Sannwald, *Marx und die Antike*, Zürich 1957, p. 32 ff..

letters, forever remains – for that unbelievably learned (erudite, scholarly, well-read) human (person) (i.e. Marx), a self-evident presupposition and prerequisite/precondition of a substantial (substantive, essential) and not simply rhetorical contact with the spirit(-intellect). Thus, we see him already from the first semester of his university studentship (attendance) in Berlin, in the summer of 1837 – and whilst officially he is studying law – to be spending (wasting) his time (with great effort), next to many other things, in the translation of texts like the *Germania* of Tacitus, the *Tristia* of Ovid and the *Rhetoric* of Aristotle.³ After some time, that is, from the beginning of 1839, and for two consecutive years, he will go about (get involved in, fling himself into, devote himself to) the collection of the material for his dissertation, which as is known, had as its subject (theme, topic) the *Difference of/between Democritean and Epicurean natural philosophy*; from Greek letters (literature) he will use mainly Aristotle and Aristotle's commentators, Diogenes Laertius, Athenaeus, Eusebius, Clement of Alexandria, Plutarch, Sextus Empiricus and Stobaeus.⁴

Nonetheless, Marx's dissertation is not in the least equated with the sum (aggregate) of its philological sources. Its intention is philosophical, that is, it wants to constitute a contribution to the theoretical investigations (searches, research) of the Young Hegelians, to whom Marx belongs in that epoch.⁵ The intense, now, presence of the classical ideal in the juvenile/juvenilia is combative (fighting) and militant; it serves, that is, his radical philosophical aims too. The classical ideal represents here life in its sensorial (sensory, material) vigour (forcefulness), its pulsating dynamism and its impulsive state of willing/wanting, i.e. volition – at the same time, however, also in the

³ Epistle to father from 10 November 1837. See the Greek translation of the text in the volume: K. Marx, *Διαφορά τῆς δημοκρίτειας καὶ ἐπικούρειας φυσικῆς φιλοσοφίας* (= *Difference of Democritean and Epicurean natural philosophy*), εισαγωγή - μετάφραση - ὑπομνηματισμός Παναγιώτης Κονδύλης, ἐκδ. Γνώση, Ἀθήνα 1983, σ. 261 καὶ 263.

⁴ See loc. cit. the table of referred/referenced works, pp. 288-90.

⁵ For how Marx's relations appear as regards the young-Hegelian movement from within the text of Marx's dissertation, see my introduction to the Greek edition, loc. cit., esp. p. 14 ff..

harmony of its elements, in the grace of its syncretism (conflation, mixing, coalescence) of its opposites, and in the serene (tranquil, placid) certainty, which existential fulness (plenitude, repleteness, completeness) grants (gives away, donates). All of those things, again, acquire their precise philosophical and polemical meaning since they turn against Christian other-worldliness, that is, the theological subjugation of the earthly From Here (i.e. This World or Life) to a hyper-celestial(/heavenly/empyrean/ethereal) (supernal) From There (i.e. That World or Life). As Marx is convinced, this subjugation or subordination signifies the negation and shrinkage of life, and moreover the perversion and corruption of man, since he asks for and seeks in the other life, pusillanimous consolations for equally pusillanimous fears or pusillanimous remuneration(s) (payments) for good deeds/acts, which already the expectation of (a) remuneration (payment) prohibits them from being in truth good, that is, unselfish (selfless). By trampling therefore on life in regard to its tangible, sensorial dimension, religion tramples at the same time on the ethical or rational essence (substance) of man too. In its opposition towards religion, the classical ideal signifies in this epoch (period) in Marx's thought whatever precisely the pre-eminent antagonist (polemicist, disputant) of religion, verily, philosophy in general means: it signifies, that is, the full affirmation of earthly life as well as the ethos which is inspired by Reason (Logos), the life stance of the free and autonomous individual.

It is known that from the epoch of the Renaissance and thereafter, the classical ideal was frequently used with the goal (purpose) of openly striking at the ascetic Christian perception of the world (world view), or of that perception of the world being tacitly undermined – even though more recent (newer) research has shown that the Renaissance in its totality was much less paganistic than what was believed in days gone by, and that the 19th century myth regarding the – of essence – paganistic Renaissance, constitutes itself a phase in the struggle

for the imposition of the classical ideal. Particularly in Germany, where for specific (concrete) historical reasons the movement of the Enlightenment was on average less radical than that in France e.g., the impressive philosophical and aesthetical processing and elaboration of the classical ideal on the part of thinkers such as Winckelmann or Schiller, undertook to make up for the gap (vacuum, void) which the deficient radicalness of the Enlightenment left, and to give the educated (learned) sectors of the bourgeoisie points of ideological orientation in accordance with their initial friction(s) and later clashes with the still dominant Christian-feudal ideology; this historical oddity (quirk(iness), peculiarity) constituted the most significant perhaps reason for the entirely separate flourishing of classical studies in Germany. There is no doubt that when the young Marx defends the classical ideal, to a great extent he adopts and continues the not still then long tradition of bourgeois paideia (education, learning) in his country, in the way he became acquainted with it in school, but also in his wider family/familial environment. We do not know when and how much he read Schiller,⁶ however he is already studying Winckelmann in 1837 in Berlin,⁷ and this study is echoed in the text of his dissertation, (there) where he talks about the plastic Gods of Greek art, whose major characteristic is the peacefulness (serenity, placidity, calmness) of theory.⁸ It must, at any rate, be noted that from the perspective of the philosophical radicalism of the young Marx, the classical ideal acquires (obtains) a hue (tinge, tint, tone, complexion) and concept different from that which it had within the framework of bourgeois paideia; it distances itself, that is, from bourgeois moderation, which used the classical idea of measure in order to cover over/up ideologically a philosophical, political and social conciliatoriness or vacillation, and it is changed or transformed itself into the militant paganistic worship of this world (worldly

⁶ In one of his satirical poems, the young Marx opposes those who would want to reconcile Schiller with Christianity, see *Marx – Engels – Werke*, supplement(ary volume), 1st part, Berlin 1968, p. 610.

⁷ Loc. cit. ((foot)note 2), p. 261.

⁸ Loc. cit., pp. 92 and 271 (foot)note 28.

worship), into the unconditional affirmation of human existence in all its sensorial (material) dimension and texture. This interpretation of the classical ideal makes understandable the enthusiasm with which Marx embraces, in that approximate epoch, Feuerbach's anthropology, with all the emphasis which this gives to the corporeality and the tangible materiality of the being, "(hu)man".

The radicality of the classical ideal of the young Marx does not rest only on the this-world-worshipping and paganistic element, but equally on the Promethean and Titanic element. Man, who from all sides, i.e. totally and holistically, affirms worldly (mundane) life (the life of this world), who gets drunk from (on, because of) his existential fullness (repleteness), and who yearns to wholly make his own luck and take all matters into its own hands, it is not possible for him to not but come into direct conflict (clash directly) with the gods and God, as the force/power by definition which is an opponent of full human autonomy. Philosophy, as Marx perceives it during that epoch (era, in those times), constitutes precisely the programmatic opposite of every religion, and for that reason, as we read in the prologue of the (his, i.e. Marx's) dissertation, Marx embraces and espouses Prometheus's confession of faith: *ἀπλῶ λόγῳ τοὺς πάντα ἐχθαίρω θεούς* (= *in simple words, I am hostile to and hate all the gods* [C.F.'s translation] – or – *In one word, I hate all the gods* [translation by Herbert Weir Smyth, Ph. D.] [[v. 975 of *Prometheus Bound* by Aeschylus]]); Prometheus, then, Marx continues, is the most exceptional saint and martyr of the philosophical calendar.⁹ The Promethean and Titanic element in this sense belongs thus from the very beginning to the organic component elements/parts and to the consignment or stock of the Greek classical ideal. The ancient Greek philosopher, Marx believes, is a cosmos/world-moulder/maker (*δημιουργός* (= *creator*)),¹⁰ whereas whoever desires *to build with his own means the whole world and to be the cosmos/world-moulder/maker..., has*

⁹ Loc. cit., p. 61.

¹⁰ Notebooks regarding Epicurean, Stoic and sceptical philosophy, loc. cit., p. 201.

*drawn and attracted the anathema (curse, damnation) of the spirit..., he has, that is, been driven away from the temple and the eternal pleasure and enjoyment (delight) of the spirit.*¹¹ Irrespective, now, of his later change of views as to philosophy generally and to ancient-Greek philosophy more specifically, Marx will remain for all of his life faithful to that Promethean command; as we know, Aeschylus was always, together with Goethe and Shakespeare, his beloved poet, whom once a year he was in the habit of (accustomed to) reading in the original.¹² Nonetheless, here it is not so much a matter of philological preferences as a positioning vis-à-vis a capital (i.e. cardinal or major) problem of/in the philosophy of history. Because Marx, also like the other left-wing Young Hegelians around 1840, meta-interprets Hegel's teaching regarding human History as an unfolding space (room) (an area for unfolding) of God in the sense that one God who needs human History in order to unfold cannot be anyone other than Man, that is, from the human genos/genus/species/race (mankind) in the progressive succession of the generations and of his (Man's) achievements. If, therefore, the Universe is History, then the God and creator of this Universe is Man himself. In becoming conscious, in light of these ascertainments (findings), of the (his, Man's) true nature and position, Man knocks down and demolishes the old pseudo-gods and becomes God himself, yet whilst retaining the drive (urge, impulse) and the dynamism of the rebelling (insurrectionist) Titan. Even though in his later years, Marx became somewhat more prosaic, nonetheless, he did not cease to perceive and understand the relation of Man with History from the perspective of this general schema. That is why also the Promethean element and symbol held permanently for him its value and its significance.

¹¹ Loc. cit., p. 228.

¹² See P. Lafargue, «Karl Marx (Souvenirs personnels)», and D. Riazanov, «La “confession” de Karl Marx», in the volume: *Karl Marx. Homme, penseur et révolutionnaire. Recueil d'articles, discours et souvenirs collationnés* par D. Riazanov, Paris 1928, pp. 113, 175, 183/4.

The concern of the young Marx for the safeguarding of this radical version of the classical ideal in its unity is so intense, such that in 1840 he denies to recognise that an essential intellectual(-spiritual) relationship or kinship between Platonism and Christianity exists; simply, Plato taught philosophy with religious enthusiasm, Marx writes, holding, however, the autonomy of philosophical Reason (Logos) and its liberating/emancipating force (power, strength).¹³ The decline of philosophy in ancient Greece is located/posited or found to have taken place, later, and is marked precisely by the going back on (abrogation, setting aside) of the two sides (aspects) of the classical ideal, as we outlined it (in the passages) above. Thus, Plutarch and the Stoics abandon the strict distinction between philosophy and religion, and bring back (restore) philosophy, and indeed moral (ethical) philosophy, at the level of the fears and of the hopes of ignorant little old ladies; if Marx dedicates to Plutarch already in the appendix of his dissertation, a scathing (biting) critique with that spirit,¹⁴ to the Stoics, Marx –almost five years later, when in the *German Ideology* inter alia (between/amongst other things) he refutes Stirner’s views regarding ancient philosophy– imputes (apportions, ascribes), moreover, [[i.e. to the Stoics]] that they constituted one of the spiritual(-intellectual) sources of neo-Platonism, and doubts that they created notable (distinguished, worthwhile) natural science, for which, as he observes, the renewal of the Heraclitean dynamic perception regarding nature does not suffice, but rather empirical observation is needed.¹⁵ In the same text, Marx allows us to understand on what the brushing aside (dismissing or discarding) of the classical ideal on the part of the Sceptics rests: on severance from the Promethean cosmos(/world)-moulding(/making) demand. Believing, therefore, that man can get to know only appearances and pretences, and not truths, the Sceptics in practice leave things as they are, being satisfied

¹³ Loc. cit. ((foot)note 2), pp. 242/3.

¹⁴ Loc. cit., p. 123 ff.. Already in the Notebooks, loc. cit., esp. p. 211 ff..

¹⁵ *Die Deutsche Ideologie* (1845/6) = *Marx – Engels – Werke*, v. 3, Berlin 1958, pp. 130/1.

(feeling adequate) to rename sensorial (material) reality as illusory (illusory, deceitful) imagination or fantasy.¹⁶ Even earlier, nonetheless, Marx had reproached the Sceptics also as regards the other mortal/deadly sin, that is to say, that by restricting to the minimum, or by annihilating, the circle of certain knowledge, they leave the field open for religion, since faith comes to fill the gap (void) in (of) knowledge.¹⁷

Let us note now, in returning to the text of the dissertation, at whose (epi)centre, as is known, the contradistinction (contrasting) between Democritus and Epicurus is found, that a significant reason which inspires in Marx disbelief and mistrust vis-à-vis Democritus, and favour (propitiousness) vis-à-vis Epicurus, rests on the fact that the former adopts an agnostic stance, whereas the latter accepts the possibility of certain knowledge, albeit if such knowledge can be only sensorial knowledge.¹⁸ The phenomenological positioning of Democritus closes therefore to Democritus the path (road) to an ontology worthy of the name, whereupon atomic theory becomes a simple scientific hypothesis for the explanation of physical/natural phenomena.¹⁹ However, Marx awaits (expects) something further from atomic theory, that is to say, that which he thinks Epicurean theory provides regarding the deviating movement/motion of atoms: the ontological founding of human freedom.²⁰ Epicurus's physics is preferred, thus, not so much for the scientific, as for its moral/ethical-philosophical advantages, since it safeguards (entrenches, fortifies, consolidates) human felicity by releasing the soul from every metaphysical fear, whereas parallelly, the fertile role which the phenomenological individualism of Democritus in the birth (genesis, coming into being) of the newer (modern) physics during the 17th century played, is overlooked. This constitutes the

¹⁶ Loc. cit., pp. 133/4.

¹⁷ Loc. cit., ((foot)note 2), pp. 195/196.

¹⁸ Loc. cit., p. 73 ff..

¹⁹ Loc. cit., p. 121; cf. *Deutsche Ideologie*, loc. cit. ((foot)note 15), pp. 132/3.

²⁰ Loc. cit. ((foot)note 2), p. 92 ff..

consequence of the fact that the young Marx formulates and puts forward his judgements and preferences from the perspective of the classical ideal, as this is enlisted and mobilised in the struggle against religion. On the other hand, nonetheless, the paradox must be pointed out that because Marx's juvenile work precisely follows this syllogistic reasoning, it reaches those two findings, which give them value as a contribution in (to) the history of philosophy: the first of these is the demonstration of the essential differences between Democritus and Epicurus, and indeed against the dominant view until then, whilst the second is the ascertainment that Epicurus's natural (physical) theories are dependent on his moral/ethical-philosophical views.

Excursus: the influence of the classical paideia (education) of Marx on his writing register (style or mode).

In this way the first side (aspect) of Marx's intellectual(-spiritual) relationship with ancient Greece is presented with every possible brevity. Before I move onto the examination of the second side (aspect), and together [[with that]] to the mature thought of this great German, I want to make a small digression on (to go on a small excursus regarding) the elements which Marx frequently draws from his classical paideia (education) in order to arrange (prepare, devise, equip) his written speech. The experienced reader of Marx knows that Marx at his best moments as a(n) author (writer) vainly feels a sense of gratification for ((coquettishly) takes pride in) a beautiful/nice register (style or mode) and is charmed (mesmerised, enraptured) himself by this, equally to the extent he knows how to charm (mesmerise, enrapture) others as well. This charmingly (mesmerisingly) meretricious (pretentious) Marxian register (style or mode) is nourished (fed) by two heterogeneous elements, that is to say, both by the scintillating pungency (sharpness, acuteness, acidity), the aggressive, attacking spike (edge, peak, tip, spearhead), and frequently (the) lethal (deadly, fatal) sarcasm, as much as by a multitude of philological remembrances (memories) and references, which are dragged up and invoked every so often, pleasantly (agreeably, congenially) surprising [[us]], by an unimaginably diverse consignment or stock of readings and of (kinds of) knowledge. As to its structure, now, this register (style or mode) rests or is based on classical

schemata, like e.g. the symmetrical development of sentences with antithetical content, the rhetorical question, the metaphor and the simile. With some examples taken [[chosen]] almost at random, I shall try to show how Marx's familiarisation with ancient-Greek philosophy, mythology and literature became the occasion (reason, trigger(ing event), motive) not only of cogitations (musings, thoughts), but of stylistic findings, similes, metaphors or lettered (scholarly) intimations (hints, insinuations). Thus, in order to say that the ancient economy was essentially agricultural (agrarian) and closed, and that the existence of trade did not overturn this basic datum (fact), Marx writes that *the ancient trading (mercantile, commercial) peoples [lived and moved] like the gods of Epicurus in the intervals (spaces) of (between) (the) worlds*, they did not have an effect, that is, determinatively (decisively), on economic life.²¹

Elsewhere again he talks about the – worn-down, suffering and scarred by the exhaustive, grueling work (labour) – workers (labourers), and says that *they are pushed and crowded forward around us with a drive (impulse) greater/more than the souls of the killed around Odysseus*:²² talk here is, of course, about Odysseus's journey to Hades, as it is described in rhapsody I (L) of the *Odyssey*. A similar allusive (suggestive) reference is contained in the phrase:

Contemporary society, which from its still childhood age pulls Pluto in order to bring him out of the bowels or depths of earth, salutes (hails) in gold the sparkling (shiny, radiant) embodiment of the biotic (living, vital) principle:²³

here Marx recalls/retraces that which Athenaeus writes, that is, that avarice and stinginess hopes that it can bring up from the bowels (depths) of earth even also

²¹ *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie* (Rohentwurf 1857-1858), Berlin 1953, p. 741 = *Das Kapital*, I = *Marx – Engels – Werke*, v. 23, Berlin 1967, pp. 93 and 342. In the third volume of *Capital* (= *Marx – Engels – Werke*, v. 25, Berlin 1969), p. 612, the phrased is paralleled as follows: “the usurer lives in the sources of production like the gods of Epicurus in the intermediate intervals (spaces) between (of) (the) worlds”.

²² *Das Kapital*, I, loc cit. ((foot)note 21), p. 268.

²³ Loc. cit., pp. 146/7. Cf. *Δειπνοσοφ.* (= *Deipnosophistés* [= a literary work by Athenaeus, an expert in affairs of the kitchen, equivalent to Greek δείπνο(n) meal + σοφιστής sophist (<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/deipnosophist>)], VI, 23: ἐλπίζουσης τῆς πλεονεξίας ἀνάξειν ἐκ τῶν μυχῶν τῆς γῆς αὐτὸν τὸν Πλούτωνα (= *hoping an advantage and gain in bringing up from the bowels of earth this Pluto*).

Pluto. And one more simile with the – beloved by Marx – Promethean symbol: *the law, which always keeps in equilibrium... the reserve industrial army with the extent and the dynamism of accumulation, ties/binds the worker to capital even more tightly than Hephaestus's hooks tie Prometheus to the rock/cliff.*²⁴ Finally, in connection with Marx's habit of adducing gnomic/aphoristic phrases (mottoes) of ancient authors (writers) in order to reinforce one of his views – which was also a general habit of the epoch when classical paideia (education) was flourishing– it suffices if we refer as an example the fact that the corrosive influence of money on human mores (morals and manners), he clarifies and explains with verses of Sophocles, with mentions of (references to) *Wealth* by Aristophanes, and with a phrase by Athenaeus, which indicates (implies) that a wealthy/rich man has no other family and fatherland than that which his wealth imposes: Ἔστιν δὲ ποδαπὸς τὸ γένος οὗτος; πλούσιος (= Of which country is this man born/descended? A wealthy country/Wealth).²⁵ And in order to remind [[us]] that some [[people]], next to everything else, fall in love with money also from an aesthetic point of view, as something beautiful in itself, Marx refers to Pindar: ὁ δὲ χρυσὸς αἰθόμενον πῦρ (= *gold like a fiery (burning, shining, hot) fire/flame*).²⁶

²⁴ Loc. cit., p. 675.

²⁵ *Grundrisse*, loc. cit. ((foot)note 21), pp. 894/5. Cf. *Das Kapital*, I, loc. cit. ((foot)note 21), pp. 146/7.

²⁶ *Grundrisse*, loc. cit. ((foot)note 21), p. 871 (foot)note.

3. The texture of ancient Greek society and thought in light of Marxian teachings about ideology and industrial society.

We now move onto the description of the position which ancient Greece possesses (occupies) in Marx's mature thought. A precondition/prerequisite in order to proceed to this description is for us to define which are those elements of Marx's mature thought, which play a decisive role in the new – essentially different to the initial – interpretation and evaluation (appraisal) of the ancient-Greek phenomenon. These elements are two: the Marxian teaching regarding ideology, and the Marxian appraisal (assessment) of the historical role of industry. We said previously that for the young-Hegelian Marx, the classical ideal fulfils functions analogous with/to the functions of philosophy generally, with which the said classical ideal is connected as to its content, and with which this classical ideal jointly fights against the no. 1 foe: religion, which, again, constitutes the intellectual(-spiritual) footing or basis, and intellectual(-spiritual) expression, of an irrational and ethically unacceptable social-political reality. For the young Marx, therefore, *philosophy* is one and only [[one philosophy]], it is the Rational and the Ethical in its cosmos/world-moulding/making and cosmos/world-corrective claim and function; it is not determined by the bad/evil reality, rather it stands uncompromisingly opposite such bad reality, and seeks to determine the said reality and transform it; consequently, theory is not the ideological aftereffect (corollary) of an incomplete and imperfect empirical reality, rather theory itself constitutes the autonomous embodiment of rational

reality. It is obvious that this idealistic way of looking at (consideration of) philosophy is not reconciled with Marx's fundamental perception regarding the priority (precedence) of social being vis-à-vis social consciousness. As a form of social consciousness, philosophy constitutes the aftereffect of a social being, and since this social being remains incomplete and imperfect – otherwise, society would not project (come up with) commands, nor would it seek the fulfilment of desires in the sphere of ideas – philosophy necessarily is also itself incomplete and imperfect, that is to say, it is made up of (constituted by) many forms often clashing with one another, every one of which expresses a certain subjective perspective, a certain “false consciousness”, which rationalises in various ways, specific/concrete pursuits and specific/concrete interests. If we see things in that way, then the old unbridgeable opposition between philosophy and religion is lost, since and the two (philosophy and religion) equally constitute ideological forms; Marx ends up in (comes to) this perception/view already in 1844,²⁷ whereas one–one-and-a-half year(s) later, Marx reproaches Stirner because Stirner deduces material history from ideational history, and presents the history of ancient philosophy in such a way that interest is concentrated not on the real, but the philosophical relationship of the ancients towards/with their world, whereupon the history of ancient philosophy substitutes (i.e. is a substitute for and replaces) ancient history in its totality.²⁸ Marx's priorities are here obvious and unmistakable (not open to accepting any divergent views). Philosophy – and philosophy's history – constitutes a part of a history much more encompassing, or, also, constitutes simply the ideational, that is to say, subjective and ideological side (aspect) of a real social process – that is why it (philosophy/philosophy's history) also cannot on its own give us the key to the comprehension of this latter (real social process). Philosophy, and

²⁷ «Ökonomisch – philosophische Manuskripte» (= “Economic – philosophical manuscripts”) = *Marx – Engels – Werke*, Ergänzungsband (= supplement(ary volume)), 1st Part, Berlin 1968, p. 569.

²⁸ *Die Deutsche Ideologie*, loc. cit. ((foot)note 15), p. 129.

indeed ancient philosophy, is (are) relativised by being incorporated within a certain schema of the historical evolution of humanity. Thus, however, ancient philosophy and ancient thought, more generally, are comprehended and evaluated from a double point of view, that is, with the criteria of their own epoch/era, and with the criteria of that, or of the other subsequent(-in-time), and according to the evidence, higher, superior stage of historical evolution. Their appraisal, therefore, is the function of a way of looking at, and consideration of, the course of history. For that reason, also, (the) how the course of history is analysed in its totality, and (the) how such course of history in its totality is demarcated, has primary significance.

We thus come to the second of the elements which determine the mature Marx's stance vis-à-vis the ancient-Greek phenomenon, that is to say, his general way of looking at, and consideration of, the course of history, where the centre of gravity (i.e. importance and focus of attention) falls on the industrial revolution and on the appearance of industry in the historical foreground. Marx's work is exceptionally multilateral and can be comprehended –or not be comprehended!– with a starting point of one of its different sides (aspects) on each and every respective occasion. Here, it does not interest us which side (aspect) ensures the exclusively correct approach, if such an approach exists, rather only that – one way or another – Marx belongs to those who from the very beginning bring into their consciousness the significance of the industrial phenomenon at a world-historical level, and rethink or contemplate again world history and its driving (motive) forces in light of this phenomenon: this explains the interpretive primacy (paramountcy) which magnitudes like “productive forces” or, if we translate the same thing into anthropological categories, “the struggle of man with nature”, possess in Marx's historical way of looking at things (consideration). With the appearance of industry, the development/ evolution of productive forces, or the struggle of man with nature, enters into a

radically new stage, and this fact cannot but have serious theoretical consequences for the comprehension of history focused on precisely these magnitudes. The question is concretely/specifically posed as follows: how must history be periodised, when its course knows such a radical turning point (bend, critical juncture)? I cannot here go (enter/slip) into the problem of the Marxian periodisation of history, which presents many more aspects, difficulties and contradictions than all those which – the perceptions which predominate in relation to that – permit us to imagine. The comprehension of the relations of the mature Marx with ancient-Greek society and thought imposes, nonetheless, that we point out the following: from the point of view of capitalistic – that is, the first industrial – society, all the previous (anterior, earlier) social formations can be reduced to one and only social formation, which varies of course according to loci/place(s) and according to times/era(s), however, it maintains everywhere the same decisive feature: it rests and is based on the agricultural/agrarian economy and property. This way of looking at things has two adjuncts: *and* it demonstrates in all its radicality (radicalness) the turn, which industry gave to the totality of previous history, *and* it allows pre-capitalistic social formations – which on an initial view appeared to be completely irrelevant as between one another – to approach (and come closer to) one another within the framework of a wider/broader structural classification. Thus, ancient Greek and Roman society for Marx belong to the same broad historical category, as the Asiatic or the proto-Germanic agrarian/agricultural community, *if* of course, their distance from industrial society's features is taken to be the criterion [[of measurement and judgement]].²⁹ This nexus (pertinence, relevance) is not negated (refuted, negated) by the fact that the Greco-Roman type of pre-industrial society develops the polis (city, large town), the city, to a degree unknown to the two other types which we previously referred to (i.e. the Asiatic

²⁹ *Grundrisse*, loc. cit. ((foot)note 21), p. 375 ff..

and proto-Germanic agrarian community): because also this city (polis), Marx says, of its essence was the centre for the distribution of small and large owners of land, whose lots (allotments) were found outside of the city itself; and he invokes the fact that still in the epoch of the fall of the Thirty Tyrants, less than 5.000 Athenians without land ownership (ownership of land) existed. Ancient Greek society remains, therefore, agricultural, and its ideal, both in the area of theory, as well as in the sector of production, is self-sufficiency (autarky), which runs counter and goes against the division of labour in the contemporary/modern sense.³⁰ Trade (commerce), as much as it flourished (bloomed), did not overturn this basic reality; previously, incidentally, we referred to Marx's simile, according to which trade did not exercise on the ancient economy an effect greater than (whatever) Epicurus's gods (exercised) on the world.

That (These things) had to be said, because it would truly be incongruous if in talking about the relation(ship) of a sociologist and historian par excellence, like Marx, with ancient Greece, we left out explaining (an explanation of) the manner (way) with which he perceived the general character of ancient-Greek *society*. However, the above is indispensable also for the comprehension of the mature Marx's relation(ship) towards/with ancient-Greek *thought*. Because precisely the combination of the two theses above –that is to say, that philosophy is an ideological form amongst other ideological forms *and* that industrial society is something radically new in relation to all other previous societies without exception– is, therefore, Marx's mature positioning vis-à-vis ancient Greek thought. Verily: ancient Greek thought is the ideological aftereffect (upshot, result) of a pre-industrial society; that is why it is subjected to the historical restrictions (limitations) of the latter. From this point of view, Marx discusses the economic-social perceptions of the ancient Greek philosophers, and particularly Aristotle, for whom – in other respects – Marx

³⁰ *Das Kapital*, I, loc. cit. ((foot-)note 21), p. 387 note 79.

expresses himself most warmly, calling Aristotle the “greatest thinker (cogitator) of antiquity”.³¹ Marx reminds us that cognitive branches, like political economy in its systematic and processed (elaborated, carved/worked out) form, appear only just in the New Times, and indeed in the period (at the time) of manufacture/manufacturing, that is, of a relatively large scale of organised handicraft (handiwork, arts and crafts); but also, as many statements as the ancients make on matters of economic theory –and they make many (such statements), often indeed significant (ones)– as well as the social models, which they outline (sketch) in these social models’ nexus with such statements of theirs, they express the reality of the closed agrarian/agricultural economy, whose paramount (supreme, uppermost) goal and purpose is autarky (self-sufficiency). This appears first and foremost in the addressing and treatment of the problem of the division of labour. Whereas the newer (more modern) political economy sees the division of labour from the perspective of the commercial(-mercantile-trade)-industrial process, as the means for the derivation (drawing, getting) of a greater quantity of goods, that is to say, of a greater exchange value and a larger/greater accumulation, the classical authors insist not on the quantity, but on the specific/concrete quality of the product, which allows it to constitute a direct and tangible use value. Regarding Plato, e.g., Marx observes that the division of labour is carried out not to achieve accumulation or for the purposes/goals of economic extension and expansion within the dynamic framework of a commercial (mercantile, trade) economy, but, on the one hand, because from the inside (within the bosom/womb) of a community – looked at and considered as an independent, autonomous whole –

³¹ Loc. cit., p. 430. It seems that the mature Marx’s admiration for Aristotle is perceptibly greater than that of the author of the dissertation. Already in 1845/46, Stirner is criticised/censured because he mistakes (misunderstands, misconstrues) Aristotle’s significance in the evolution of ancient Greek philosophy. See *Die Deutsche Ideologie*, loc. cit. ((foot)note 15), pp. 130, 134/5. Naturally, the mature Marx does not at all show himself anymore to be disposed to defending the philosophical genuineness (authenticity) of Platonism, as he did in 1840. On the contrary, in the first volume of *Capital*, loc. cit. ((foot)note 21), p. 388 (foot)note, an ironic clue (hint, indication, implication, insinuation) exists, which probably lets it be understood that from Platonism, for good or ill, arguments could be derived (drawn) for (in favour of) the inhuman(e) disciplining of workers (labourers).

multiple needs exist, and on the other hand, because every worker is unilaterally endowed; he has at his disposal, therefore, only certain (pieces of) knowledge and skills (aptitudes), which must be supplemented with (pieces of) knowledge and the skills of others. Plato's social ideal is correspondingly static: *Plato's Republic... constitutes simply the Athenian idealisation of Egyptian organisation in castes; as to the organisation of labour/work, incidentally, Egypt was the model for his (Plato's) other contemporaries, e.g. Isocrates.*³²

From the narrow point of view of the closed economy, the classical authors judge (adjudicate) also the economic function(ing) of money, whilst not being able to be reconciled with the idea that money becomes something over and above the simple means of the exchange of goods, with the goal (purpose) of acquiring the necessary use values – money becomes, therefore, an autonomous, independent power/force, which is automatically reborn and self-increases, i.e. it increases itself by means of itself, it becomes, in a word, capital. The ancients see this phenomenon, of which, incidentally, they were only aware of the elementary forms, as the abuse/misuse of money; money's conversion from an organ to being dominant (ruling, a ruler), and at the same time as the humiliation and debasement of true wealth, which from the point of view of the closed economy cannot but be comprised or consist of natural goods and (or) use values. *And* Plato wants to restrict (confine, limit) money to the role of the simple assisting (helping, facilitating) means in respect of the exchange of products, *and* Aristotle considers as natural and rational the simple circulation of goods (C/G (commodity/good) – M (money) – C/G), where money is a simple means, whilst condemning the circulation of money as capital (M – C/G – M), and the autonomisation (i.e. making autonomous) of exchange values as such.³³ Marx cites (quotes) in extenso the passage from *Politics*, where Aristotle distinguishes between (the) Economic and (the) Monetary/Financial/

³² *Das Kapital*, I, loc. cit ((foot)note 21), pp. 386-88.

³³ *Grundrisse*, loc. cit. ((foot)note 21), pp. 928/9.

Pecuniary,³⁴ which equate with the two forms of circulation above. If the Monetary/etc. is criticised here with acridity and severity, the reason is that it has as its aim the unlimited (unrestricted) widening (expansion) of wealth, that is, a ceaseless extension of human activity irreconcilable with the economic and the ethical/moral principle of autarky (self-sufficiency); and if the Economic is praised and extolled, the reason is that, as Aristotle elucidates, true wealth rests on use values – in other words, such true wealth becomes perceived on the basis of the closed economy's criteria. The intensity of Aristotle's conscious opposition to the open commercial/trade/mercantile economy becomes more apparent (obvious) from the fact that he knows, as Marx himself notes elsewhere,³⁵ of the double (dual) value of every commodity/good, that is, use value and exchange value. As we have already observed, the Aristotelian condemnation of the Monetary/etc. is tantamount to the denial of every autonomisation, i.e. becoming autonomous, of exchange value as such. Equally however, also the condemnation of usury, – which according to Aristotle, as Marx³⁶ notes also again, is not but the Monetary/Financial/Pecuniary applied to the circulation of money and only [[that (circulation of money)]] –, interrelates (is connected) with the Aristotelian ethical(moral)-economic condemnation of the Monetary/etc.. As is known, the condemnation of usury lasts with the same intensity in the whole of the medieval political-theological philology/literature, and this shows how correctly Marx stresses the economic and ideological continuity of pre-capitalistic social formations.

Finally, persistence (obsession) with the realities of the closed economy and with qualitative consideration, [[persistence]] with that reality, therefore, which gives primacy (first place) to tangible and – qualitatively different between them – use values, without [[going]] up to the general element being cancelled –

³⁴ *Das Kapital*, I, loc. cit. ((foot)note 21), p. 167 (foot)note 6.

³⁵ Loc. cit., p. 100 (foot)note 39.

³⁶ Loc. cit., p. 179.

which constitutes every value – , irrespective of its (every value’s) qualitative manifestation (appearance), and which consequently can only abstractly be comprehended – this persistence (obsession), therefore, obstructs, according to Marx, Aristotle from comprehending the law of value, that is to say, human labour (work) as such, in its general and abstract hypostasis (existence), as the ultimate measure in respect of the determination of the value of every product produced. This abstract labour (work) does not come to the surface and show up (manifest itself, appear) (is not revealed) of course in itself, but rather through its opposite, through therefore, on each and every respective occasion, the specific/concrete labour which is expended for the production of a good; and also, even though it (this abstract labour) has a social texture, since precisely the quantity of the abstract labour which is hidden in a commodity gives it value, and thus makes possible its exchange with another commodity and the entering into (of) social relations of labour; nonetheless, it (the said abstract labour) is realised through (a) personal and private labour (or: through labour [[which is]] personal and private). Behind, therefore, every quantitatively specific and personal labour, stands abstract and general labour, labour in itself. This constitutes the magnitude, which in the final analysis, permits the reduction of qualitatively dissimilar things to a common denominator, so that their value is calculated and their exchange becomes possible. Aristotle, now, understands that this reduction to a certain third element is necessary in order for an exchange equivalence to be defined, however, he cannot say which this element is, and even less does it cross his mind that it can be labour in itself, in its abstract hypostasis (existence) and comprehension. This is (or: See here) how Marx gives the causes of/reasons for (justifies, accounts for) this weakness of Aristotle: *...Greek society was based on slavery and consequently had for (as) its natural basis, the inequality of humans and their labour potential (force, strength, power, potency). The secret of the expression of value, the equality and the equivalent [[dimension, element]] of all labours, because and since*

*these constitute human labour in general, can be decoded and deciphered only then, where the concept (meaning) of human equality will be equally established as much as a popular superstition (prejudice). However, this is only possible in a society where the form of the commodity became the general form of the product of labour, where consequently the relation of people considered as possessors of commodities became the dominant social relation.*³⁷ As we see, Marx here contrasts the model of economic-political liberalism – which in its mature form was outlined or sketched out by Locke, Mandeville and classical political economy, and which constitutes, in terms of theory, society with the starting point(,) [[being]] the (re)presentation of a market where the distinct, separate individuals appear as in principle equals and equivalent individual producers in order to exchange their products –, with the model of ancient society, where the, also from the very beginning, given inequality of people goes hand in hand with the closed economy, and consequently with the primacy (paramountcy) of use values vis-à-vis exchange values.

Precisely this intense sense of the opposition between the capitalistic-liberal and the ancient Greek model – an opposition which, incidentally, closely (narrowly) interrelates with the basic historical opposition between industrial and pre-industrial society – allows Marx to avoid a very widespread mistake, to deduce, that is to say, the democracy of the New Times from ancient democracy. Marx knows, of course, that the ideological invocation of idealised democratic models drawn from antiquity played a not negligible role in the social disputes (quarrels) of the newer epoch/times ((more) modern era), particularly in the Romance countries around (about) the epoch of the Revolution of 1789;³⁸ on the other hand, nonetheless, he (Marx) does not take the ideological positions at (their) face value, and dilates (enlarges, extends, expands) the comprehension of the historical past, precisely as a or b

³⁷ Loc. cit., p. 74.

³⁸ See the first pages of the work *Der 18. Brumaire von Louis-Bonaparte* (1852).

ideological positions impose it, from the specific, concrete structure of authority as dominance in a given society which no longer exists. The revival of antiquity and of ancient democratic models appears in this way as a gigantic masquerade, since indeed, as Marx writes very nicely (beautifully), history is repeated only as (a) comedy (farce). Such resurrections of antiquity took place in order to attach prestige and grandeur to whatever later was proven as a prosaic bourgeois perception and a specific, concrete form of dominance; that is why they died out (off) (disappeared, vanished) as soon as the latter (concrete form of dominance) found its own language, its own, autonomous historical style. Seeing both antiquity, as well as the newer (more modern) democratic antiquity-worship from this sober standpoint, Marx does not encounter any difficulty in incorporating or classifying the Athenaeon (i.e. of Athenaeus) καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθόν (= the beautiful(, noble) and good) – from the point of view of the exploitation of hyper-labour (over(-)work) – in the same category as the Etruscan priesthood (clergy), the civem romanum, the Norman baron or the American slave-owner of the 19th century.³⁹

³⁹ *Das Kapital*, I, loc. cit., ((foot)note 21), p. 249.

Excursus: the use of ancient authors as sources of social history.

Before I move onto the third and final part of this analysis, I desire to make also again a small digression, in order to focus [[the reader's]] attention on the way in which the historian and sociologist Marx uses the texts of the ancient writers, and indeed historians, as sources of social history. This use is varied/diverse and scattered, and an author can be used in multiple ways, or a problem (can be) illuminated with statements by different authors. In Diodorus Siculus e.g. Marx has recourse to various nexus(es) in order to explain how the ancients extracted (drew) gold from ore (minerals, metal), to what extent (point) the exploitation of the labour of slaves could reach, how the castes in Egypt were useful, or how the diet (sustenance) and reproduction of Egyptians confirms the principle that the biotic minimum constitutes a function of the natural environment.⁴⁰ There again where he speaks of the division of labour, Plato and Aristotle do not suffice, as we saw, but he cites/quotes the first oration (to the Demos) by Pericles from Thucydides, where it is said that the *αὐτουργοὶ* (= the self-working, i.e. (work)men (working for themselves)) use different means in war, that is, those who have at their disposal a closed economy with a rudimentary (substandard) division of labour; and different means, those who have at their disposal an economy more open, with a greater variety of professions and skills;

⁴⁰ Loc. cit., pp. 157 (foot)note 108, 250, 360 (foot)note 29, 535/6.

only the latter (i.e. those of the more open economy) can deploy a notable (significant) naval force, that is, men specialised (i.e. who are specialists) in that kind of undertaking (venture).⁴¹ A number of times, of course, recourse to ancient authors is not direct, rather the (interesting) excerpts (of interest) are taken second hand, from various, therefore, historical and philosophical works. Thus, e.g. Herodotus's and Hesiod's (pieces of) information in relation to the use of metals and metal coins or currency (currencies) in antiquity is/are referred to (attributed/ascribed [[to e.g. Herodotus and Hesiod]]) in accordance with the work of G. Garnier, *Histoire de la Monnaie*, Paris 1819, whilst from the two-volume book of W. Jacob, *An historical Inquiry into the Production and Consumption of the Precious Metals*, London 1831, all things that Homer and Hesiod say about the use of sheep and oxen (cattle) instead of money, are lifted (i.e. copied).⁴² In F. Lassalle's book, *Die Philosophie Herakleitos des Dunkeln von Ephesos*, Berlin 1858, Marx still finds that famous (renowned) excerpt which says that fire becomes everything and everything becomes fire, the same as gold is transformed into all goods and all goods into gold; Marx uses that excerpt (there) where he talks about the two inter-supplementing metamorphoses inside of the exchange process, the metamorphosis of the commodity into money, and of money into a commodity.⁴³ In order to discourage the malicious and spiteful [[amongst you/any readers]], I add that Marx, in contrast to most of the older and youngest (latest, most recent) authors, mentions himself, his source, when he takes something second hand [[i.e. via a third party author]].

⁴¹ Loc. cit., p. 387 (foot)notes 79 and 80.

⁴² *Grundrisse*, loc. cit. ((foot)note 21), pp. 96/8 and 107 (cf. p. 679). Cf. *Das Kapital*, I, loc. cit. ((foot)note 21), p. 76.

⁴³ Loc. cit., p. 120. In the edition of the pre-Socratics by Diels, Heraclitus's excerpt bears no. 90 (= *πυρός τε ἀνταμοιβή τὰ πάντα καὶ πῦρ ἀπάντων ὅκωσπερ χρυσοῦ χρήματα καὶ χρημάτων χρυσός*).

4. The problem of ancient Greek art and the concept of the viability and the sustainability of ancient civilisation (culture) from the point of view of the Hegelian and Marxian philosophy of history.

Until now, we have seen that Marx, the young philosopher, glorifies (praises, honours) the classical ideal, connecting it with his perception at that time regarding the texture and the function of philosophy as such, whereas, conversely, Marx the mature sociologist and historian relativises, and considers from a critical distance, ancient Greek thought, despite the admiration he feels for Aristotle, for instance. It is a matter of two positions *prima vista* opposite and or irreconcilable. Is it really thus? Does Marx definitively renounce (abnegate) his youthful love for classical antiquity? And if not, how are the two theses above reconciled? Marx gives the answer to this question in a small text written around 1857/8 amongst the other preparatory, preliminary works/drafts (sketches) of *Capital*.⁴⁴ It is a nice/beautiful sample of writing and thought, and hence I shall translate it all in order to comment on it thereafter:

⁴⁴ *Grundrisse*, loc. cit. ((foot)note 21), pp. 30/1.

In the area of art, it is known that certain epochs of artistic blossoming do not at all correspond with the general evolution (development) of society and consequently of its material base, which constitutes in some kind of way its (society's) skeleton. Take the Greeks as an example, if we compare them with [[our = Marx's]] contemporary epoch and or with Shakespeare. Indeed, it has been recognised that certain kinds of art, e.g. the epic, can never be produced with (in) their classical form, with which they created an epoch, as soon as their per se (ipso facto) production as artworks (works/pieces of art) begins; that is to say, that in the realm of art itself, certain of its significant constructs are possible only at an undeveloped tier (stage, level or grade) of artistic evolution (development). If this takes place inside the same area of art as to the relation(ship) of the various artistic kinds (sorts, types, genres) between themselves, the fact that the same happens as to the relation(ship) of the area of art in its totality with the general development (evolution) of society occasions/engenders a lesser (smaller) impression. The difficulty rests only on the general comprehension of these contradictions. Once we locate/pinpoint on what their peculiarity (oddity, mannerism) rests, we have already explained them.

Let us take as an example the relation(ship) of Greek art, and later-on the relation(ship) of Shakespeare, towards the present. It is known that Greek mythology did not exist only as the armoury (arsenal) of Greek art, but also as its soil or terrain (ground). However, is that way of looking at nature and at social relations possible, which supports Greek imagination or fantasy and consequently Greek [mythology] as well, when we have automotive (self-moving/propelling) machines, railways and electrical telegraphs? What does Hephaestus (Vulcan) become vis-à-vis Roberts & Co.,⁴⁵ Zeus (Jupiter) vis-à-vis

⁴⁵ Richard Roberts (1787 or 1789-1859 or 1864) was the inventor of various machines. In 1828 he founded (instituted) together with Thomas Sharp the tool and steam-engine factory Sharp, Roberts & Co., which in 1843, after the death of his partner, took the name Roberts & Co.

*the lightning rod (conductor) and Hermes (Mercury) vis-à-vis Crédit mobilier?*⁴⁶ Every mythology surpasses and tames and forms natural forces inside of imagination or fantasy and through imagination or fantasy; for that reason, [mythology] also vanishes when they [natural forces] are (really, actually) dominated and ruled over (in reality). What becomes of the goddess PHEME [= Fame]] before Printing House Square?⁴⁷ Greek art presupposes Greek mythology, that is, the processing and elaborating of nature and of social forms by popular imagination in a manner which is unconsciously artistic. This is its material – and not any mythology whatsoever, that is, not any unconsciously artistic processing of nature (in the concept of nature whatever is an object is included here, consequently society too). Egyptian mythology could never have been the soil, terrain (ground) or the maternal vagina (bay) [[womb]] of Greek art. Whatever the case may be, at any rate, some kind of mythology is needed, and not a social evolution/development, which excludes every mythological and mythologising relation(ship) towards nature, demanding in this way [[something]] from artistic imagination (fantasy), regardless of mythology.

On the other hand: is an Achilles strong with gunpowder and lead? Or The Iliad with the printing press or the printing machine? Does not song, narration and the muse necessarily cease with the lever of the press ((printing) press lever), and do not indispensable conditions/terms of epic poetry thus disappear?

Nonetheless, the difficulty does not rest on comprehending that Greek art and the epic are connected with certain forms of social development (evolution). The difficulty is that they continue to provide us with aesthetic pleasure, and from a

⁴⁶ The Société générale de crédit mobilier was founded in 1852 with the main aim(,) [[being]] the provision (supplying) of (forms of) credit (overdrafts) for the foundation (establishment, institution) of industries. Quickly did its businesses (undertakings) take (on) an international character.

⁴⁷ In this square, in Marx's epoch/era, the offices of the *Times* were found/located.

certain point of view, they apply as norms/rules and as unreachable (unattainable) models.

A man cannot become also a child again, except if he behaves like a childish twit. However, does not the naivety of the child give him joy, and ought not he pursue again the reproduction of his truth at a higher tier (stage, level or grade)? Inside of childish nature, does not in every epoch, the childish nature's character live again as (a) natural truth? Why also should not the infantile (juvenile, childish) age of human history, (there) where it blossomed more beautifully, exercise eternal charm as a tier (stage, level, grade) which will never come back again any more? Children exist who are churlish (impolite, uncivil), and children who act like grown-ups (adults). Many of the ancient peoples belong to this category. The Greeks were natural (physiological, normal) children. The charm and allurements of their art for us does not live in opposition to the undeveloped social tier (stage, level or grade), upon which it was formed. Rather it (the charm/allurement of Greek art) is its (the said undeveloped social tier's) result, and it probably – in an unbreaking manner and lastingly – interrelates with the fact that the immature social conditions, inside of which the said charm/allurement of Greek art was born, and only in which it could be born, cannot come back.

This significant text gives cause for various (diverse) thoughts on central problems of Marxian theory. These, however, we have to skip (pass) over, and confine (restrict) ourselves to whatever concerns the relationship of Marx with ancient Greece. I observe first and foremost that also here, the starting point of his cogitations is the opposition between pre-industrial and industrial society as two essentially different levels of man's fight and struggle with nature. At the pre-industrial stage, when this fight and struggle is still to a great extent ineffective, the real weaknesses as to the domineering or domination of natural

forces are overcompensated for (hyper-replenished) (with the psychological meaning of the term) by mythological creations, where in the field of the imagination (fantasy), whatever is not able to be put under real control, is tamed. Let it be noted that Marx makes a distinction between that particular kind of imagination (fantasy) which creates mythology, and other kinds which can thrive also in epochs alien (foreign) to (wards) mythology in itself (per se, ipso facto); this means, naturally, that artistic development (evolution) does not at all end with antiquity, and also neither does human nature suffer irreparable losses after the eclipse of that phase of history, which is characterised by the dominant presence of mythologies in the area of ideology: because if such losses were fatal, then it is clear that also our stance vis-à-vis antiquity would be predetermined, it would be the in part scared-stiff, and in part envious stance of the amputated vis-à-vis the able-bodied. However, precisely this stance is rejected by Marx.

When now Marx considers mythology as the terrain (ground) where ancient Greek art germinated and sprouted (grew), he undoubtedly remembers all that he read decades earlier in Wickelmann, and in part thereafter also in Hegel, entwining in this manner perhaps inside of himself philological memories with experiential memories. Parallely, however, Marx now comprehends the term “mythology” not simply aesthetically or religiously, but sociologically, he gives the term, that is to say, that meaning which he himself calls “ideological forms”, as these are moulded (fashioned, formed) in man’s related fight with man. The particularity of Greek art has to do with the particularity of the ideological forms of ancient Greek society in opposition e.g. to the ideological forms of Egyptian society, even though, as Marx stresses, the ideologies of all pre-industrial societies have certain most general common features, that is, the structures which every mythology presents as mythology, irrespective of its each and every respective content. If, therefore, in light of Marx’s mature

teaching regarding ideology, that is to say, as regards the dependence of the forms of the spirit(-intellect) on the texture of the social being, ancient Greek art is presented interrelated with time without breaks (or as being unbreakable in interrelation with time), space and the conditions of its genesis, why should it exercise charm (allurement, fascination) in epochs radically different? As we can see, this question is not posed to Marx by chance (accidentally, coincidentally) or from the outside, but rather springs (stems) from the same logic as the Marxian teaching as regards ideology. Can, however, an aporia or query, which emerges from the fundamental principles of the teaching regarding ideology, be solved with the help of the same teaching which begot it? Marx does not offer a direct answer to this question. Of course, the answer which he offers is given with the theoretical means of Marxism, if we take Marxism in its totality, not, however, with those things (all that) which come(s) from (the) exclusively Marxian sociology, rather with those things (all that) which come(s) from Marxian – and at the same time the Hegelian – philosophy of history. In other words: if Marx wanted to answer a question which emerges from his teaching regarding ideology, which according to my opinion constitutes one of his most significant discoveries, then he would have to argue similarly (in a similar fashion) with our contemporary sociology of knowledge and say the following: “antiquity, as thought and as art, came back to life (was revived) in the New Times, and indeed, became perceived as a cultural model, because a specific (concrete) group of historical subjects considered this ideological weapon effectual in the social fight or battle (tussle, bout, struggle) against the said group’s opponents; naturally, the image (picture) of antiquity, which was used ideologically in this fight or battle, did not have any necessary relationship with ancient reality, rather it was idealised and conformed to (compliant with) the needs of the fight/battle; and since the ideological constructs, in order to effectually exercise their social function, must be construed from their bearers as objective social, ethical or aesthetic truths, that is why also the ideological

idealisation of antiquity was regarded an objective truth to the degree that their social bearers imposed themselves (were imposed), in such a way that the model (standard) character of ancient art and of ancient culture (civilisation) became generally accepted. See now/here why ancient art e.g. appears to be also today beautiful.* Nevertheless, the socially and historically determined character of this perception (view) is brought to mind (recollected) always by the fact that even also in the epochs of their greatest dissemination, the ancient models were not in the least recognised as such by everyone – and they were especially not recognised as such by all those who socially and ideologically combatted the ideological proponents of precisely the ancient models.”

Such a sociological answer to Marx’s question would make obvious (or strongly imply) that belief in the objective beauty of ancient art e.g. is also itself subjective and ideological, a – that is to say – further form of socially determined “false consciousness”. However, Marx does not doubt the objective beautifulness of ancient art, nor does he say that the charm (allurement, fascination), which this ancient art exercises on us, has an ideological character; indeed, on the contrary. In this way, therefore, we repeat, he does not answer his own question by using the conceptual tools of his own teaching regarding ideology, from whose processing (elaborating) – incidentally – today’s sociology of knowledge came, rather he has recourse to the Hegelian side of his

• [[The translator would like to add that what P.K. wrote regarding ancient art and beauty was or might have still been generally the case in the West in Marx’s day and even in 1984, when the Greek booklet on Marx was written, but in 2018, things have definitely changed with the constant anti-white-European propaganda, indoctrination and brainwashing by the Mass Media and Mass Entertainment centred in the USA and the UK, France, Germany, etc. including all the GROSSLY DISPROPORTIONATE Jewish (ZIO) input. However, as this paragraph progresses, it becomes clear that Marx would not take the further step of viewing all art from all historical epochs as ultimately relativised by sociological-historical knowledge, i.e. as being ultimately a subjective matter of Taste (when we do a theoretical comparative abstraction from all known real, historical, empirical evidence), – as are all social forms of human existence for which humans (can) express a like or dislike.]]

own thought in order to solve his aporia and query from the perspective of the Hegelian philosophy of history, that is, of a theory which explains the partial with the general; the function and the potential (possible, probable) survival of the part with the course and each and every respective higher developmental (evolutionary) tier (stage, level, grade) of the Whole. As is known, Hegel's philosophy, both logic, as well as the philosophy of nature and of history, posits as a methodological, but also as its ontological demand, the harmonisation of the idea of the Whole and of the idea of evolution or development at the end (terminus) of a dialectical course, so that the Whole, which appears only at the end (terminus) of evolution (development) in all the richness (wealth) of its determinations, does not constitute the simple denial of its prior stages, but the synopsis or aggregation and condensation of their truth, that is to say, that which is diagnosed as truly rational meaning, and their (the said prior stages') function from the perspective of the thus formed Whole. In relation to the history of mankind (humanity, humankind), this means that its individual chronologically and locally determined manifestations are classified in the Whole, as this arises finally, and are evaluated by their higher perspective. If the subject of History, that is to say, the human genus (species, race), inside its historical metamorphoses, remains basically united, and if evolution (development) is united and united is its end (terminus), then its lowest phases are contained in the highest phases, [[just]] the same as a seed and the bud are contained inside the blossom or flower, or the child is contained in a man/male – even though the blossom/flower is the denial of the germ, and man the denial of the child. And if, as we said, in the final Whole, every constituent element (part) of the tiers (stages or phases) of evolution (development) is not contained distinctly and equivalently (equally), rather only that which Hegel and Marx call their “truth”, then in the Whole of the male (manly) age of mankind/humanity, whatever mankind's childhood gave [[which is]] more or most beautiful, is

dialectically encompassed: and this precisely, says Marx, is ancient Greek thought and art.

This syllogistic reasoning, which Marx condenses in the text that we read, had already pushed Hegel to compare *the Greek world with the youthful age of mankind (humanity)*, with which he means *the cool breeze (cool(ness), dew) of the spirit(-intellect)* which in Greece *emerges from inside the sensorial and material (sensory, sensual, perceptible) present as the incarnated spirit(-intellect) and as spiritualised(-intellectualised) sensoriality*. *The uppermost (paramount) form which Greek imagination (fantasy) moulded*, adds Hegel, *is Achilles, the poet's child, the Homeric sapling (young man, youth)* (as we see, the mentioning of Achilles in Marx's text is not coincidental (accidental, (by) chance); ...*Greek life is true youthful praxis (action)*. *Achilles started it, the poetical sapling, and Alexander brought it to its end (terminus), the real sapling*.⁴⁸ The newer (more recent) research has shown how much Hegel owes, as a philosopher generally, and as a philosopher of history in particular, to Hölderlin, from the epoch of their close friendship and cooperation (collaboration).⁴⁹ It is not therefore also so paradoxical that in Hölderlin we find phrases which remind us of – no only as to meaning, but even also verbally – Marx's writings in the text that we read. Thus, in a passage by Hölderlin published in 1797, the excerpt below exists: *the presentiments (premonitions, foreboding(s)) of childhood age will go or blow out (be extinguished) in order to be resurrected also again as truths inside the spirit(-intellect) of man. The beautiful cool myrtle of the former (sometime, other) world, Homer's poems and the poems of his epoch, the prophesies and the revelations, wither (wilt), however the sperm, which they (en)closed in them, spurts (darts) (out) in autumn as (a) ripe fruit. The naivety and the innocence of the first (period of)*

⁴⁸ *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, Stuttgart (Reclam), 1961, pp. 320/1.

⁴⁹ See in greater detail on this point: P. Kondylis, *Die Entstehung der Dialektik. Eine Analyse der geistigen Entwicklung von Hölderlin, Schelling und Hegel bis 1802*, Stuttgart 1979.

*time dies, in order to come back (full circle) inside complete education (learning), and the holy peace of paradise is lost in order for whatever was only a gift of nature to bloom and flourish also again, [this time] as the possession (property, estate) of mankind (humanity) won with struggles.*⁵⁰

When, therefore, Marx call us to enjoy (take pleasure in) ancient Greek art he does not call (upon) us to glorify something historically superior (higher), but rather for us to bow (stoop) with love and emotion towards the historically inferior. Because Marx relativises thrice that which he himself carefully calls *from a certain point of view insuperable (unbeatable) models*: one time he relativises it with his own teaching regarding ideology, a second time he relativises it with the Hegelian evolutionary philosophy of history, and finally he relativises it even one more time, when he says that also the charm (allurement) which ancient art exercises on us is not understood separately from the undeveloped social tier (stage, level, phase, grade) of its creation; and a part again of this same charm (allurement), Marx tells us, is due precisely to the knowledge of how whatever became then, cannot happen again – not, however, because human forces then reached a culmination (where, [[which]]) they cannot reach again, but because, on the contrary, the – at that time – immaturity, had been overcome irrevocably. Man, that is, mature mankind (humanity), in enjoying ancient art is called (upon) to be baptised in the delicious distillate of a previous stage of his life. This can be experiential enrichment or revivification (revitalisation) – in any case, it does not have the character of the singularly and exclusively binding intellectual(-spiritual) debt. If mature mankind (humanity) cannot annul (wipe out) and forget ancient Greece, the reason is that inside the formed Whole, the “truth” of the Whole’s evolutionary (developmental) tiers (stages, phases, levels, grades) survives as a/the dialectical moment, whatever, that is to say, from time to time constituted the transient (blooming) florescence

⁵⁰ «Hyperion – Fragment» = Sämtliche Werke, hg. v. Fr. Beissner, Stuttgart 1946 ff., v. III, 1, p. 180.

and propelling force of progressive movement (motion) towards the formation of the Whole. Ancient Greece possesses a choice (select) position inside these dialectical moments, and exists as such, not, however, as the evermore given norm or rule of life or (norm or rule) of consideration of the world. The schema pertaining to the history of ideas permits, and indeed imposes, the active survival of the classical ideal, but with the condition that this constitutes one only of the constitutive elements (parts) of developed culture (civilisation). The memory and love for antiquity, as regards whatever is viable, is maintained and secured in perpetuity; the worship of antiquity, and the various classicisms or Hellenocentrism, are considered to be regressions. This of course means that in order for someone to see the ancients as children, he himself must be a (grown-up) man [[an adult]]. Conversely, peoples who see the ancients as unexcelled men, have themselves remained children. This, by the way, the history of modern (newer, more recent) Hellenism has shown most vividly (graphically).