

PRODUCTION

example, temple building in Egypt, India, Mexico; and the product of that effort belonged to the gods. But the gods were never the lords of labor. Neither was nature ever man's task-master. What a contradiction it would be if man—as he more and more subjugated nature by this labor, rendering divine miracles superfluous by the wonders of industry—if man were then to renounce his pleasure in producing and his enjoyment of the product merely in order to continue serving the gods.

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Hence, the alien being to whom labor and the product of labor belong, in whose service labor is performed and for whose enjoyment the product of labor serves—this being can only be man himself. So, if the product of labor does not belong to the worker, if it confronts him as an alien power, this must mean that it belongs to a man other than the worker. If the worker's activity is a torment to him, it must be a source of enjoyment and pleasure to another man. Neither the gods nor nature but only man himself

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can be this alien power over men.

Let us consider our earlier statement that man's relation to himself first becomes objectified, embodied and real through his relation to other men. Therefore, if he is related to the product of his objectified labor as to an alien, hostile, powerful and independent object, then he is related in such a way that someone else is master of this object—someone who is alien, hostile, powerful and independent of him. If his own activity is not free, then he is related to it as an activity in the service, and under the domination, coercion and yoke of another man.

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The alienation of man from himself and from nature appears in his relationship with other men. Thus religious self-alienation necessarily appears in the relationship between laymen and priest or, since we are here dealing with the spiritual world, between laymen and intercessor. In the everyday, practical world, however, self-alienation manifests itself only through real, practical relationships between men. The medium through which alienation occurs is itself a practical one. As alienated laborer, man not only establishes a certain relationship to the object and process of production as to alien and hostile powers; he also fixes the relationship of other men to his production and to his product; and the relationship between himself and other men. Just as he turns his own production into a real loss, a punishment, and his own product into something not belonging to him, so he brings about the domination of the non-producer over production and its product. In becoming alienated from his own activity, he surrenders power over the activity to a stranger.

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So far we have considered this alienated relationship only from the worker's standpoint. Later we shall also

consider it from the standpoint of the non-worker, since through the process of alienating his labor the worker brings forth another man who stands outside the work process. The relationship of the worker to work also determines the relationship of the capitalist—or whatever one chooses to call the master of labor—to work. Private property thus is essentially the result, the necessary consequences of alienated labor and of the extraneous relationship of the worker to nature and to himself. Hence private property results from the phenomenon of alienated labor—that is, alienated labor, alienated life and alienated man.

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We took the concept of alienated labor and alienated life from political economy and from an analysis of the movement of private property. But analysis of this movement shows that although private property appears to be the source and cause of labor's alienation, it is really the consequence—just as the gods are originally not the cause but the effect of man's intellectual confusion. Later on however, this relationship becomes reciprocal.

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This development illuminates several unresolved conflicts. Political economy starts with labor as the real soul of production, yet attributes nothing to labor and everything to private property. Faced with this contradiction, Proudhon decided in favor of labor and against private property. We suggest, however, that this apparent contradiction is really a contradiction within alienated labor itself, and that political economy has merely formulated the laws of alienated labor.

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We also suggest that wages and private property are identical; when the product or object of labor pays for labor itself, wages are only a necessary consequence of labor's alienation. In the wage system labor does not appear as an end in itself but as the servant of wages. We shall develop this point later on. Meanwhile, what are the consequences?

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An enforced rise in wages—disregarding all other difficulties, especially the fact that such an anomaly could only be maintained by force—would therefore be nothing but a better payment of slaves and would not restore, either for the worker or for work, human significance and dignity. Indeed, even the equality of wages demanded by Proudhon would only transform the relationship of the present day worker to his labor into the relationship of

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all men to labor. Society then would be conceived as an abstract capitalist. Wages are an immediate consequence of the alienation of labor, and alienated labor is the immediate cause of private property. The downfall of one means the downfall of the other.

From the relationship of alienated labor to private property it also follows that the emancipation of society from private property and hence from servitude takes the political form of the emancipation of the workers. This is not because the emancipation of workers alone is at stake, but because their liberation means the emancipation of all humanity. All human servitude is involved in the relationship of the worker to production, and all forms of servitude are only modifications and consequences of this relationship.

Just as we have derived the concept of private property from our analysis of alienated labor, so every category 20 of political economy can be developed with the help of these two factors; and in each of these categories—trade, competition, capital, money—we find only a particular expression of these basic factors.

Before considering this framework, however, let us try 30 to solve two problems. First, we wish to ascertain the general nature of private property as it has resulted from alienated labor and as it relates to truly human, social property. Second, we have taken as a fact and analyzed the alienation of labor. We now ask, how does man come to alienate his labor? How is this estrangement rooted in the nature of human development? We moved toward solving this problem when we transformed our question about the origin of private property into a question about the relation of alienated labor to the course of human development. For in speaking of private property, one may think he is dealing with something external to man. But in speaking of labor, one is directly concerned with man himself. This new formulation of the question contains its own solution.

As to the first problem—the general nature of private property and its relation to truly human property—we have divided estranged labor into two elements which condition each other, or rather constitute different expressions of the same relationship. Appropriation appears as

alienation, or as estrangement; and estrangement appears to be appropriation, the adoption of one's product by someone else for his own use exclusively.

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We have considered one aspect—alienated labor in relation to the worker himself, that is, estranged labor as it affects the working man. And we found that the necessary consequence of this relation was the property relation of the non-worker to the worker and to work. Private property as the concrete, condensed expression of estranged labor includes both relations—the relationship of the worker to work, to his product, and to the non-worker; and the relationship of the non-worker to the worker and to the worker's product.

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We saw that to the worker who appropriates nature by his labor, this appropriation appears as alienation, his own spontaneous activity belongs to another man, vitality becomes a sacrifice of life, and production of the object becomes loss of the object to an alien power or person. Let us now consider the relation of this alien man to the worker, to labor, and to the object of labor.

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First, it must be noted that everything which for the worker becomes an alienated activity, for the non-worker becomes an alienated state of mind. Second, what for the worker is a highly practical attitude toward production and the product of labor becomes for the non-worker a mere theoretical attitude. Third, the non-worker does everything against the worker which the latter does against himself, but the non-worker does not do against himself what he does against the worker. . . . [The manuscript breaks off, unfinished]

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QUESTIONS

1. According to Marx, what is the sole motivation recognized by economics?
2. What are objectification and alienation of labor?
3. According to Marx, what is the role of work in human life?
4. What does Marx mean when he says that human beings create "in accordance with the laws of beauty"?

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