‘Introduction’ to the Grundrisse

A. Introduction

1. Production, consumption, distribution, exchange (circulation)

(i) PRODUCTION

Autonomous individuals. Eighteenth-century ideas.

(a) The subject at hand is, to begin with, *material production*. Individuals producing in society – hence the starting point is naturally the socially specific production [carried on] by individuals. The individual – and individuated – hunter and fisher, with which [Adam] Smith and Ricardo begin, belongs to the unimaginative conceits of eighteenth-century stories *à la Robinson Crusoe*, which in no way express, as cultural historians imagine, a simple reaction against over-refinement and a regression to a misconstrued natural life. [Those stories] no more rest on such naturalism than does Rousseau’s social contract, which brings naturally independent subjects into relation and association by means of a contract. This is the pretence, and merely the aesthetic pretence, of small- and large-scale stories *à la Robinson Crusoe*. It is rather the anticipation of ‘bourgeois society’, which had been in preparation since the sixteenth century and had made giant strides towards its maturity in the eighteenth. In that society of free competition the individual appears detached from the natural bonds, etc., which in earlier historical epochs make him into an appendage of a specific, delimited, human conglomerate. The prophets of the eighteenth century, on whose shoulders
Smith and Ricardo are standing, conceived of that eighteenth-century individual – the product, on the one hand, of the dissolution of feudal forms of society, and on the other, of the powers of production newly developed since the sixteenth century – as an ideal [conception], which may have had an existence in the past. [They did not conceive of that individual] as a historical result, but rather as the starting point of history. Because [they conceived of him] as the individual in conformity with nature in keeping with their conception of nature, [they conceived of him] not as originating historically, but as posited by nature. That fallacy has been characteristic of each new epoch up to now. [Sir James] Steuart, who in some ways is in opposition to the eighteenth century and as an aristocrat takes a more historical point of view, has escaped that gullibility.

The further back we go into history the more the individual, hence also the producing individual, appears as dependent, [and] belonging to a larger whole: at first in a still wholly natural way in the family and in the family extended into the tribe; later in the different forms of the community, which arose from the antagonisms and mergers of tribes. In the eighteenth century, in 'bourgeois society', the different forms of the social connection first confront the individual as a mere means for his private purposes, as external necessity. However, the epoch which produces that point of view, that of the individuated individual, is precisely the epoch of the most developed social relations up to now ([the most developed social relations] are general relations from that point of view). Man is in the most literal sense a zoön politikon, not only a sociable animal, but an animal which can individuate itself only in society. Production by an individuated individual outside society – a rarity which can indeed happen to a civilised man (who already possesses dynamically within himself the powers of social life), driven into the wilderness by accident – is just as absurd as the development of language without individuals living together and talking together. This need not detain us any longer. The point would not have been touched on at all had not that inanity, which had rhyme and reason for the people of the eighteenth century, been seriously reintroduced into the very middle of the most modern [political] economy by [Frédéric] Bastiat, [H.C.] Carey, Proudhon, etc. For Proudhon (and others)
it is naturally agreeable to develop historico-philosophically the source of an economic relation when he is ignorant of its historical origin, [so] that he mythologises that Adam or Prometheus fell on a ready-made idea, [and] then the idea was instituted, etc. Nothing is more tediously arid than commonplace fantasies.

Eternalisation of the historical relations of production. – Production and distribution in general. – Property

Thus if we are talking about production, we are always talking about production at a specific stage of social development – we are talking about production by social individuals. Hence it might seem that in order to speak generally about production we must either trace the historical process of development in its various phases, or declare at the outset that we are dealing with a specific historical epoch, e.g. modern bourgeois production, which is, in fact, our proper subject. However, all epochs of production have certain features in common, common definitions. Production in general is an abstraction, but a sensible abstraction, in so far as it actually picks out what is common, fixes it, and consequently spares us repetition. Nevertheless this universal, or that which is common, separated out by [a process of] comparison, is [something which is] itself many times divided, [something which] splits into different definitions. A few [of those definitions] belong to all epochs; others are common to a few epochs. The most modern epoch will have [a few] definitions in common with the oldest. One cannot conceive of production without them; however, if the most developed languages have laws and definitions in common with the least developed, then it is just what is different from this universal and common [definition] that constitutes their development, [hence] the definitions which are applicable to production generally must be precisely separated, so that the essential diversity over and above the unity – which already arises from the fact that the subject, mankind, and the object, nature, are the same – is not forgotten. For example, the whole wisdom of the modern economists who prove the eternity and harmony of the existing social relations lies in forgetting that [diversity]. For example. No production is possible without an instrument of production, even if that instrument is only the hand. No [production] is possible without past, accumulated labour, even if that labour is only the skill which is gathered and concentrated.
in the hand of a savage through repeated practice. Capital is, among other things, both an instrument of production and past, objectified labour. Therefore capital is a general, eternal, natural relation; that is, if I omit precisely the specific [thing] which makes ‘instrument of production’, [and] ‘accumulated labour’ into capital in the first place. Hence the whole history of the relations of production appears with Carey, for example, as a falsification maliciously perpetrated by the government.

If there is no production in general, then there is also no general production. Production is always a *particular* branch of production – e.g. agriculture, husbandry, manufacture, etc. – or it is the *totality* of production. However, political economy is not technology. The relation of the general definitions of production at a given stage of society to the particular forms of production is to be developed elsewhere (later). Finally, production is not merely a particular [form of production]. Rather it is always a certain social body, a social subject, which is active in a greater or lesser totality of branches of production. Likewise the relation of scientific presentation to real movement does not belong here yet. Production in general. Particular branches of production. Totality of production. [Three meaningful senses of ‘production’.]

It is the fashion to preface the [typical work of political] economy with a general section in which the *general conditions* of all production are discussed – and it is precisely that section which figures under the title ‘production’ (see, for example, J.S. Mill). That general section consists or supposedly consists in: (i) the conditions without which production is not possible. This is in fact nothing but stating the essential [conceptual] moments of all production. However, this reduces itself in fact, as we shall see, to a few very simple specifications which are drawn out into superficial tautologies; (2) the conditions which more or less advance production, as for example Adam Smith’s progressive and stagnant state[s] of society. In order to raise that [conception], which had its value in his work as an *aperçu*, to a more scientific meaning, inquiries would be necessary into the durations of the [different] *degrees of productivity* in the development of a single people – an inquiry which lies outside the proper limits of the subject [modern bourgeois production]; however, so far as it belongs in the subject, it is to be placed with the development of competition, accumulation, etc. In
the general understanding [of the subject] the answer [which is given to that inquiry] amounts to the generality that an industrial people enjoys the height of its production at the moment at which it occupies its general historical height. In fact, a people is at its industrial height so long as gain is not yet the main thing, but [the process of] gaining. So the Yankees are ahead of the English. Or else [another answer]: that, for example, certain racial dispositions, climates, natural relations like the position of the sea, the fertility of the earth, etc., are more favourable to production than others. [That answer] also amounts to the tautology that wealth is created more easily to the degree that its elements are subjectively and objectively present to a higher degree.

However, this is not all that is actually discussed by economists in that general section. Rather, production is supposedly represented – see, for example, J.S. Mill – in distinction from distribution, etc., as framed in eternal natural laws independent of history; this is the occasion for passing off, in an underhand way, bourgeois relations as irrevocable natural laws of society in the abstract. This is the more or less conscious purpose of the whole proceeding. With distribution, on the other hand, men are said to have been allowed, in fact, all kinds of arbitrary action. Quite apart from the crude sundering of production and distribution and their actual relation, it must be made clear at the outset that, however heterogeneous distribution may be at different stages of society, it must be just as possible [with distribution] as well as with production to pick out common definitions and just as possible to confound or extinguish all historical differences in general human laws. For example, the slave, the serf, the wage-labourer all retain a ration of food which makes it possible for them to exist as slave, as serf, as wage labourer. The conqueror who lives by tribute, or the official who lives by taxes, or the landowner who lives by rents, or the monk who lives by alms, or the Levite who lives by tithes, all retain a share of social production, which is specified according to laws other than that [law which specifies the ration] of the slaves, etc. The two main points which all economists place under that rubric are: (1) property; (2) safeguarding of property by the judiciary, the police, etc. Those points can be answered very briefly:

On 1. All production is the appropriation of nature on the part of the individual within and by means of a specific form of society. In that sense it is a tautology to say that property (appropriation) is a
condition of production. However, it is ludicrous to leap from that [tautology] to a specific form of property, e.g. private property. (What is more, [private property] is an antithetical form which implies as a condition non-property as well as [property].) Rather history shows that common property is the more original form [of property] (e.g. in India, among the Slavs and ancient Celts, etc.), a form which still plays a significant role under the shape of communal property. We have not yet come to the question whether wealth develops better under this or that form of property. However, that there can be no talk of production, hence no talk of society, where no form of property exists, is a tautology. An appropriation which does not appropriate anything is a contradiction in the thing spoken of.

On 2. Safe-keeping of acquisitions, etc. If those trivialities are reduced to their real content, they express more than their preachers realise. Namely, that each form of production produces its own legal relations, form of government, etc. The [economists’] crudeness and the simple-minded character of their thought lie in haphazardly relating to one another things which belong together organically, [and] in bringing [them] into a simple connection based on reflection. The bourgeois economists have in mind that a modern police force lets us produce better than, for example, the law of the jungle. They simply forget that the law of the jungle is also a law, and that the law of the stronger persists under another form even in their ‘Rechtsstaat’.

If the social conditions corresponding to a specific level of production are just originating, or if they are already disappearing, breakdowns of production naturally occur, although in different degrees and with different effects.

To summarise: there are definitions, common to all stages of production, which are fixed by thinking as universal; however, the so-called general conditions of all production are nothing [other] than those abstract [conceptual] moments, with which no actual historical stage of production is grasped.

2. The General Relation of Production to Distribution, Exchange, Consumption

Before entering into a further analysis of production, it is necessary to consider the different rubrics which the economists set alongside it.
The [economists'] conception is as plain as can be: in production, the members of society appropriate (bring forth, form) natural products to human needs; distribution specifies the proportion in which the individual shares in those products; exchange supplies him with the particular products into which he wants to translate the quota coming to him through distribution; finally, in consumption the products become objects of enjoyment, of individual appropriation. Production brings forth the objects corresponding to needs; distribution divides them according to social laws; exchange again divides, according to the individual need, that which has already been divided; finally, in consumption the product emerges from that social movement, becomes directly the object and servant of the individual need, and satisfies it in enjoyment. Thus production appears as the starting point, consumption as the endpoint, distribution and exchange as the middle term, a term which is itself twofold, since distribution is defined as the [conceptual] moment deriving from society, exchange as the [conceptual] moment deriving from individuals. In production, the person is objectified, [and] in consumption the thing is subjectified; in distribution, society in the form of general, dominating specifications takes over the mediation between production and consumption; in exchange, production and consumption are mediated through the contingent specificity of individuals.

Distribution specifies the proportion (the ration) in which products fall to individuals; exchange specifies the production in which the individual commands the share assigned to him by distribution.

Production, distribution, exchange, [and] consumption thus form a regular syllogism; production, the universality; distribution and exchange the particularity; consumption, the individuality in which the whole is contained. This is indeed a connection, but a superficial one. Production is [in that view] defined by general natural laws; distribution, by social chance, and distribution can therefore promote production more or less effectively; exchange lies between the two as a formal social movement, and the concluding act of consumption, which is understood not only as ultimate goal, but also as ultimate purpose, lies properly outside [political] economy, except in so far as it reacts back on the starting point and begins the whole operation anew.
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The opponents of the political economists — whether they are opponents inside or outside their circle — who reproach the political economists with the barbarous sundering of something which belongs together, take either the same point of view as the political economists, or an inferior one. Nothing is more familiar than the objection that the political economists consider production too exclusively as an end in itself. It might just as well depend on distribution. At the basis of that objection lies the economic conception that distribution dwells next to production as an autonomous, independent sphere. Or the [conceptual] moments were not understood in their unity. As if that sundering [e.g. of production and distribution] had not sprung from real life into the textbooks, but on the contrary had sprung from the textbooks into real life, and as if it were a matter of a dialectical equation of concepts and not the apprehension of real relations!

Consumption and production

(α) Production is immediately also consumption. Consumption is twofold, subjective and objective: [First:] the individual, who develops his capabilities in producing, expends them as well; he consumes them in the act of production just as natural reproduction is a consumption of life-forces. Secondly: consumption of the means of production, which are used and worn out and decomposed into the common elements again (as for example in fuel). It is the same with the consumption of raw material, which does not remain in its natural form and condition, rather the natural form and condition are consumed. Hence the act of production is itself in all its [conceptual] moments also an act of consumption. But the [political] economists admit this. Production as directly identical with consumption, [and] consumption as directly coincident with production, they call productive consumption. That identity of production and consumption is tantamount to Spinoza’s proposition: definition is negation.

But this definition of productive consumption is only set up in order to segregate the consumption which is identical with production from consumption proper, which is understood rather as the nullifying antithesis of production. Let us consider consumption proper.

Consumption is immediately also production, as in nature the
consumption of elements and chemical materials is the production of the plant. For example, it is clear that in nourishment, a form of consumption, man produces his own body. But this is the case with any other type of consumption which in one way or another produces man in some aspect. Consumptive production. However, says [political] economy, that production which is identical with consumption is a second [form of production] arising out of the nullification of the first product. In the first [form of production] the producer materialises himself; in the second [form of production] the thing created by the producer personifies itself [i.e. becomes part of a person]. Therefore this consumptive production – although it is an immediate unity between production and consumption – differs essentially from production proper. The immediate unity, in which production coincides with consumption and consumption with production, lets their immediate duality persist.

Therefore production is immediately consumption, [and] consumption is immediately production. Each is immediately its opposite. At the same time, however, a mediating movement takes place between the two. Production mediates consumption, whose material it creates; without production, consumption lacks an object. However, consumption also mediates production, since it creates first the subject for the products, the subject for which they are products. The product only receives its last finish in consumption. A railway on which no one rides, which is therefore not worn out, which is not consumed, is only a railway virtually, not a railway in actuality. Without production there is no consumption; however, without consumption there is no production, since production [without consumption] would be purposeless. Consumption produces production in two ways, (1) since only in consumption does the product become a real product. For example, a dress actually becomes a dress only in the act of wearing [it]; a house which is not lived in, is in fact not a real house; therefore [a product], in distinction from a mere natural object, only proves itself as a product, only becomes a product, in consumption. Consumption, by decomposing the product, only gives it the finishing stroke, for the product is a product not as a materialised activity, but only as an object for the active subject; (2) since consumption creates the need for new production, [and] therefore the ideal, inner, impelling reason for
production, a reason which is a presupposition of production. Consumption creates the impetus to produce; it also creates the object which is active in production as a purpose-defining object. If it is clear that production presents the object of consumption externally, then it is just as clear that consumption 

positions the object of production 

ideally, as an inner image, as a need, as an impetus, and as a purpose. It creates the objects of production in a form which is still subjective. Without need there is no production. But consumption reproduces the need.

There are corresponding points on the side of production: (1) it supplies the material, the object for consumption. Consumption without an object is not consumption; therefore production creates in this respect, [or] produces, consumption. (2) But it is not only the object which production creates for consumption. Production also gives to consumption its specificity, its character, its finish. Just as consumption gave the product its finish as a product, production gives consumption its finish. For one thing, the object is not an object generally but a specific object which must be consumed in a specific way, a way [to be] mediated again by production itself. Hunger is hunger, but hunger which is satisfied with cooked meat eaten with knife and fork is a hunger different from that which devours raw meat with the help of hand, nail and tooth. Hence not only the object of consumption but also the mode of consumption is produced by production, not only objectively but also subjectively. Therefore production creates the consumer. (3) Production not only supplies the need with a material, but also supplies the material with a need. If consumption has emerged from its first natural crudeness and immediacy – and lingering in that [state] would itself be the result of a [mode of] production stuck in [a state of] crudeness – then production as an impetus is itself mediated by the object. The need which consumption feels according to the object is created through the perception of the object. An objet d'art – just like any other product – creates a public sensitive to art and capable of enjoying beauty. Hence production produces not only an object for the subject but also a subject for the object. Hence production produces consumption, (1) since production creates the material for consumption, (2) since production specifies the mode of consumption, (3) since production produces the products which are posited by it first as an object [then] as a need in the consumer. Hence
production produces the object of consumption, the mode of con-
sumption, [and] the impetus of consumption. In the same way con-
sumption produces the disposition of the producer, since consump-
tion requires him to define a need purposefully.

Therefore the identities between consumption and production
appear threefold:

(1) **Immediate identity**: production is consumption; consumption
is production. Consumptive production. Productive consumption.
The political economists call both productive consumption. But
they still make a distinction. The first figures as reproduction; the
second as productive consumption. All inquiries into the first are
inquiries into productive or unproductive labour; inquiries into the
second are inquiries into productive or non-productive con-
sumption.

(2) That each appears as a means to the other; each is mediated
by the other; [a mediation] which is expressed as their mutual
dependence; a [mediating] movement through which they are
related to one another and appear mutually indispensable, but still
remain external [to each other]. Production creates the material as
an external object for consumption; consumption creates the need
as an inner object, as the purpose of production. Without pro-
duction there is no consumption; without consumption there is no
production. This figures in [political] economy in many forms.

(3) Production is not only immediately consumption and con-
sumption immediately production; yet production is only a means
for consumption and consumption a purpose for production, i.e.
that each supplies the object for the other, production externally for
consumption, consumption conceptually for production; but each of
them is not only immediately the other, each is still only mediating
the other – but each of the two creates the other as it is carried
out; each is carried out as the other. Consumption only carries out
the act of production, since consumption completes the product as
product, since consumption decomposes the product, since con-
sumption consumes the autonomous material form of the product,
since consumption, by means of the need for repetition, raises to a
skill the disposition developed in the first act of production; con-
sumption is therefore not only the concluding act through which
the product becomes a product, but also the act through which
the producer becomes a producer. On the other hand, production
produces consumption, since it creates the specific mode of con-
sumption, and further, since it creates the stimulus to consume,
[and] the capacity itself to consume, as a need. That last identity,
specified under (3), is illustrated many times in [political] economy
in the relation of supply and demand, of objects and needs, of needs
created by society and natural needs.

After this, nothing is easier for a Hegelian than to posit pro-
duction and consumption [as] identical. And that has been done
not only by socialist bellettrists, but also by prosaic economists, e.g.
[Jean-Baptiste] Say; [it has been done] in the form, that if one con-
sider a people, [then] its production is its consumption. Or even
humanity in the abstract. [H.F.] Storch has proved that Say is
wrong, since a people, for example, does not purely consume its
product, but also creates the means of production, etc., fixed capital,
etc. Besides, to consider society as one subject is to consider it
falsely, speculatively. With one subject, production and consump-
tion appear as [conceptual] moments of one act. The important
point to be emphasised here is that if production and consumption
are considered as activities of one subject or of many individuals,
they appear, in any case, as [conceptual] moments of a process in
which production is the real starting point and of which it is also
the transcending [conceptual] moment. Consumption as a want, as
a need, is itself an inner [conceptual] moment of productive activity.
But productive activity is the starting point of realisation, and hence
also its transcending [conceptual] moment, the act in which the
whole process is dispersed again [in its conceptual moments, as at
the starting point]. The individual produces an object, and through
the consumption of the object returns again as himself, but as a
productive individual and a self-reproducing individual. Thus con-
sumption appears as a [conceptual] moment of production.

In society, however, the relation of the producer to the product,
as soon as the product is finished, is an external relation, and the
return of the product to the subject depends on his relationships
with other individuals. The product is not immediately obtainable
[by the producer]. Also, the immediate appropriation of the product
is not its purpose, if the product is produced in society. Distribution,
which specifies through social laws the share of the producer in the
world of products, steps between the producer and the product,
[and] therefore between production and consumption.
Is distribution an autonomous sphere alongside and outside production?

_Distribution and production_

(b.) If one considers the usual [works on political] economy, one must be struck above all by the fact that everything in them is posited twice over. For example, ground rent, wages, interest and profit figure in distribution while land, labour, [and] capital figure in production as agents of production. With capital it is obvious from the beginning that it is posited twice over, (1) as an agent of production; (2) as a source of income, as defining the specific forms of distribution. Hence interest and profit also figure as such in production, in so far as they are forms in which capital augments itself, increases, [and] therefore they are [conceptual] moments of the production itself of capital. Interest and profit, as forms of distribution, imply capital as an agent of production. They are modes of distribution which have, for their presupposition, capital as an agent of production. In the same way, they are modes of reproduction of capital.

In the same way, wages are wage-labour considered under another rubric: the specificity which labour has here as an agent of production appears as a specification of distribution. If labour were not specified as wage-labour, then the way in which it shares in the products would not appear as wages, as, for example, in slavery. Finally – to take the most developed form of distribution in which landed property shares in the products – ground rent implies large-scale landed property (properly large-scale agriculture) as an agent of production, not land pure and simple, any more than salary [implies] labour pure and simple. Hence the relations and modes of distribution appear only as reverse sides of the agents of production. An individual who shares in production in the form of wage-labour shares in the products (the results of production) in the form of wages. The arrangement of distribution is completely specified by the arrangement of production. Distribution is itself a product of production, not only with respect to the object, [i.e.] that only the results of production can be distributed, but also with respect to the form, [i.e.] that the specific way of sharing in production specifies the particular forms of distribution, the form in which sharing takes place in distribution. It is an out and out
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illusion to posit earth in production, ground rent in distribution, etc.

Economists like Ricardo, who are mostly reproached with considering only production, have defined distribution as the exclusive object of [political] economy because they instinctively understand the forms of distribution as the most specific expression in which the agents of production are fixed in a given society.

Distribution naturally appears opposed to the single individual as a social law which conditions his place within production, the place within which he produces, the place which therefore precedes production. The individual has from the start no capital, no landed property. He is assigned from birth to wage-labour through social distribution. But that assignment itself is the result [of the fact] that capital [and] landed property exist as autonomous agents of production.

If whole societies are considered, distribution appears in still another respect to precede production and to define it; distribution appears, so to speak, as a pre-economic fact. A conquering people divides the land among the conquerors and thus imposes a specific division and form of landed property; hence [it appears that] the conquering people defines production. Or the conquerors make the conquered into slaves and thus make slavery into the basis of production. Or a people, by means of revolution, breaks up large-scale landed property into parcels; therefore [a revolutionary people] gives production a new character through that new distribution. Or legislation perpetuates landed property in certain families, or divides labour [as] hereditary privilege and thus fixes labour into a caste-system. In all those cases, and they are all historical, distribution appears to be arranged and defined not by production, but, on the contrary, production appears to be arranged and defined by distribution.

Distribution, in the most superficial view, appears as the distribution of products, and thus further removed from production and quasi-autonomous against it. But before distribution is the distribution of products it is: (1) the distribution of instruments of production, and (2) (which is a further specification of the same relation) the distribution of members of society among the different types of production. (Subsumption of individuals under specific relations of production.) The distribution of products is obviously
only the result of that distribution which is comprised within the production process itself, and which specifies the arrangement of production. To consider production apart from the distribution included in it is obviously empty abstraction, while on the contrary the distribution of the product is [already] given, [in and] of itself, with that distribution which originally forms a [conceptual] moment of production. Ricardo, whose object was to apprehend modern production in its specific social arrangement, and who is the economist of production par excellence, accordingly does not declare production to be the proper subject of modern [political] economy, but distribution. Another consequence of this is the absurdity of the economists who develop production as an eternal truth, while they banish history to the realm of distribution.

What relation this distribution, which defines production itself, bears to production, is obviously a question which falls within [the sphere of] production itself. If it should be said that at least distribution, in that meaning of distribution, precedes production [and] forms its presupposition, since production must proceed from a certain distribution of the instruments of production — then it can be answered that production in fact has its conditions and presuppositions which form its [conceptual] moments. Those may, in the beginning, appear as spontaneous. Through the process of production itself they are transformed from spontaneous into historical [conditions and presuppositions], and if they appear as a natural presupposition of production for one period they are, for another period, the historical result of production. They are continuously altered within production itself. For example, the employment of machinery altered the distribution of instruments of production as well as the distribution of products. Modern large-scale landed property itself is the result of modern trade and modern industry as well as the result of the employment of industry on agriculture.

The questions posed above resolve themselves in the last instance into questions [of] how general historical relations play a part in production, and questions [of] the relation of production to historical movement generally. Obviously the question belongs in the discussion and development of production itself.

Nevertheless in the trivial form in which the questions have been posed above, they can likewise be briefly dispatched. With all conquests there are three different possibilities. The conquering people
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subjects the conquered to its own mode of production (e.g. the English in Ireland in this century, [and] to some extent in India); or the conquering people lets the old mode of production persist and satisfies itself with tribute (e.g. the Turks and Romans); or there arises a reciprocal effect through which something new originates, a synthesis (to some extent [this was the case] in the Germanic conquests). In all cases the mode of production, whether that of the conquering people, whether that of the conquered, whether that proceeding from the merger of the two, is defining for the new distribution which arises. Although that [distribution] appears as a presupposition for the new period of production, it is itself a product of production, not only of historical production in general, but of specific historical production.

The Mongols, with their ravages in Russia, for example, acted in accordance with their [mode of] production, with pasturage, for which uninhabited stretches [of land] are a main condition. The German barbarians, for whom cultivation of the land with serfs was the traditional [mode of] production and [for whom there was an] isolated life on the land, could subject the Roman provinces more easily to those conditions, since the concentration of landed property which had taken place there had already completely overthrown the older agricultural relations.

It is a well-established conception that in certain periods people lived only by stealing. But in order to be able to steal, there must be something there to be stolen; therefore there was production. And the type of stealing is itself defined by the type of production. A stock-jobbing nation, for example, cannot be robbed [in the same way] as a nation of cowherds.

In the slave the instrument of production is stolen directly. But then production in the country for which the slave is stolen must be so arranged as to permit slave-labour, or (as in South America, etc.) a mode of production corresponding to the slave must be created.

Laws can perpetuate an instrument of production, e.g. land, in certain families. Those laws only receive an economic meaning if large-scale landed property is in harmony with social production, as for example in England. In France small-scale agriculture was carried on in spite of large-scale landed property, hence large-scale landed property was broken up by the revolution. But the
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perpetuation of the parcelling out [of land] by laws, for example? In spite of those laws, property again concentrates itself. The influence of laws towards retention of the relations of distribution, and thereby their effect on production, is to be specified in particular cases.

\[ (c_i) \] Exchange, finally, and circulation

Exchange and production

Circulation itself is only a specific [conceptual] moment of exchange or of exchange considered in its totality.

Thus far exchange is only a mediating [conceptual] moment between production and the distribution (with consumption) which is defined by production; however, in so far as consumption itself appears as a [conceptual] moment of production, exchange is obviously also comprised in production as a [conceptual] moment.

First, it is clear that the exchange of activities and capabilities, which takes place in production itself, belongs directly to production and constitutes it essentially. Secondly, the same applies to the exchange of products as far as exchange is a means for the preparation of the finished product, for the immediate consumption of a specific product. Thus far exchange itself is an act comprised in production. Thirdly, the so-called exchange between dealers and dealers, both with respect to its organisation and as a producing activity itself, is wholly defined by production. Only in its last stage does exchange appear independent alongside, indifferent towards production, the stage where the product is immediately exchanged for consumption. However, (1) there is no exchange without division of labour, whether the division of labour is spontaneous or is itself already a historical result; (2) private exchange presupposes private production; (3) the intensiveness of exchange, like its extension, like its type, is defined by the development and arrangement of production. For example, exchange between town and country, exchange in the country, in the town, etc. Thus exchange appears in all its [conceptual] moments either directly comprised in production or defined by it.

The result which we have reached is not that production, distribution, exchange, [and] consumption are identical, but that they all form members of a totality, differences within a unity. Production transcends not only over [sic] itself in the antithetical definition of production [i.e. consumptive production] but also over [sic] the
other [conceptual] moments [i.e. distribution, exchange and consumption]. The process always begins anew from production. It is clear [in and] of itself that exchange and consumption cannot be the transcending [conceptual moment]. In the same way [this is true] of distribution as the distribution of products. As distribution of the agents of production, however, distribution is itself a [conceptual] moment of production. Therefore a specific [form of] production defines a specific [form of] consumption, distribution, exchange, and the specific relations of those different [conceptual] moments to one another. Of course, production in its one-sided form is also defined for its part by the other [conceptual] moments. For example, if the market, i.e. the sphere of exchange, expands, [then] production grows in extent and is more thoroughly compartmentalised. Production varies with variations in distribution; for example, with the concentration of capital, with a different distribution of population in town and country, etc. Finally, the needs of consumption define production. A reciprocal effect takes place between the different [conceptual] moments. This is the case with any organic whole.

3. The method of political economy

If we consider a given country in the manner of political economy, then we begin with its population, division of the population into classes, town, country, sea, different branches of production, export and import, yearly production and consumption, commodity prices, etc.

It appears to be correct to begin with the real and concrete, the actual presupposition, therefore, e.g. in [political] economy, with the population, which is the basis and the subject of the whole social act of production. Nevertheless this is shown, upon closer consideration, to be false. Population is an abstraction, if I omit the classes, for example, of which it consists. Those classes are once again an empty word if I do not know the elements on which they are based. For example, wage-labour, capital, etc. These imply exchange, division of labour, prices, etc. Capital, for example, is nothing without wage-labour, without value, money, price, etc. Therefore if I began with population, then that would be a chaotic conception of the whole, and through closer definition I would come
analytically to increasingly simpler concepts; from the conceptualised concrete to more and more tenuous abstractions, until I arrived at the simplest definitions. From there the journey would be taken up again in reverse until I finally arrived again at population, this time, however, not [with population] as a chaotic conception of a whole, but as a rich totality of many definitions and relationships. The first way [of proceeding] is one which [political] economy has taken up historically in its formation. The economists of the seventeenth century, for example, always begin with the living whole, the population, the nation, the state, more states, etc.; they always end, however, in such a way that they discover a few defining, abstract, universal relationships, like division of labour, money, value, etc., through analysis. As soon as those individual [conceptual] moments were more or less fixed and abstracted, the economic systems which ascend from the simple [conceptual moment], such as labour, division of labour, need, [and] exchange-value, up to the state, exchange among nations and the world market, began [to be formulated]. The latter is obviously the scientifically correct method. The concrete is concrete, because it is the sum of many definitions, [and] therefore a unity of diversity. Hence the concrete appears in thinking as a process of summarisation, as a result rather than a starting point, although the concrete is the actual starting point and hence also the starting point of perception and conceptualisation. In the first way [of proceeding] the full conception was broken down to the abstract definition; in the second, the abstract definitions lead to the reproduction of the concrete by means of thinking. Hence Hegel falls into the illusion of understanding the real as the result of self-summarising, self-engrossing, self-motivating thinking, whereas the method of ascending from the abstract to the concrete is merely the way for thinking to appropriate the concrete, to reproduce it as a mental concrete. However, this is in no way the process of origination of the concrete itself. For example, the simplest economic category, say for example exchange-value, implies population, population producing in specific relations; also, exchange-value implies certain sorts of familial or communal or political existence etc. Exchange-value can never exist as an abstract, one-sided relationship outside a given, concrete, living whole. On the other hand, exchange-value as a category leads an antediluvian existence. Hence for consciousness –
and philosophical consciousness is defined in this [following] way –
for philosophical consciousness conceptual thinking is the actual
man and hence the conceived world as such is the only actuality –
hence the movement of categories appears as the actual act of pro-
duction (which alas keeps merely an initial impulse from outside),
the result of which is the world; and this – however, this is again
a tautology – is correct so far as the concrete totality as a thought-
totality, as a concrete thought-object, is in fact a product of think-
ing, of conceiving; however, the concrete totality is in no way a
product of the self-delivering concept, of the concept thinking out-
side or above perception and conception, but of the working up of
perception and conception into concepts. The whole, as it appears
in the head as a thought-whole, is a product of the thinking head
which appropriates the world in the only mode possible for it, a
mode which is different from the artistic, religious, [and] practical-
mental appropriation of that world. The real subject, after as before,
remains outside the head in autonomous existence; so long, that is,
as the head acts, only speculatively, only theoretically. Hence with
the theoretical method the subject, society, must always be borne
in mind as the presupposition of [any] conception.

However, do these simple categories not have an independent
historical or natural existence before the more concrete categories?
That depends. For example, Hegel begins the Philosophy of Right
correctly with possession as the subject’s simplest relationship to
do with rights. However, possession does not exist before the family
or before relations of domination and servitude, which are much
more concrete relations. On the other hand, it would be correct to
say that families, [and] whole tribes exist which only just possess
[but] do not have property. The simpler category [possession]
appears, therefore as a relation of simple familial or tribal association
in regard to property. In the higher [forms of] society the simpler
category [possession] appears as the simpler relation of a developed
organisation. The concrete substratum, whose relationship [to man]
is possession, is however always presupposed. One can conceive of
an individual savage possessing [things]. However, possession is
then not a relation of right. It is not correct [to say] that possession
develops historically into the family. Rather possession always
implies that ‘more concrete category of right’ [the family]. Yet
this much always remained the case, that the simple categories
[e.g. possession] are expressions of relations in which the less developed concrete [i.e. familial or tribal association] may have been realised, without the many-sided relationship or relation [property rights] which is mentally expressed in the more concrete category [property] having been posited; while the more developed concrete [e.g. bourgeois society] retains that same category [property] as a sub-ordinate relation. Money can exist, and it has existed historically, before capital existed, before banks existed, before wage-labour existed, etc. In that respect it can be said that the simpler category [money] can express the dominating relations of a less developed whole [e.g. a pre-bourgeois society] or the subordinate relations of a more developed whole [e.g. bourgeois society], relations which already had a historical existence before the whole [i.e. society] was developed with respect to an aspect of a more concrete category [e.g. capital, wage-labour, etc.]. Thus far the path of abstract thinking, which ascends from that which is simplest towards that which has been combined, corresponds to the actual historical process.

In another respect it can be said that there are very developed but still historically less mature forms of society in which the highest forms of economy, e.g. cooperation, developed division of labour, etc., have a place, without the existence of any kind of money, e.g. Peru. As in the Slavic commune, money (and the exchange conditioning it) does not emerge, or does so [very] little, inside the individual commune, but does emerge at its boundaries in commerce with others, so it is then generally false to posit exchange in the midst of the commune as the original constituting element. Rather exchange, to begin with, emerges earlier in the relationship of different communes to one another than for members within one and the same commune. Further: although money plays a role very early and all-round, it is assigned in antiquity as a dominating element only one-sidedly to specific nations, trading nations. And in the most advanced [period of] antiquity itself, with the Greeks and Romans, the complete development of money, which is presupposed in modern bourgeois society, appears only in the period of their dissolution. Therefore that wholly simple category does not appear historically in its intensiveness as it appears in the most developed states of society. By no means [is that simple category] wading through all economic relations. For example, in the Roman empire at its greatest development the [economic] basis
stayed taxes and payments in kind. The existence of money [in the]
proper [sense of the term] was only completely developed there in
the army. Also, money never got a grip on the whole of labour.
Thus, although the simpler category [money] may have existed his-
torically before the more concrete category [e.g. capital], it [money]
can belong in its complete intensive and extensive development to
a combined form of society [e.g. bourgeois society], while [on the
other hand] the more concrete category [cooperation] was more
completely developed in a less developed form of society [e.g. Peru,
the Slavic commune].

Labour appears to be a quite simple category. Also, the concep-
tion of it in that universality – as labour generally – is very old.
Nevertheless, understood economically in that simple way ‘labour’
is a modern category in the same way as the relations which produce
that simple abstraction. The monetary system, for example, still
posits wealth quite objectively as a thing outside itself in money. It
was a great advance against that standpoint [i.e. the doctrines of
the monetary system] when the manufacturing or commercial
system put the source of wealth out of the object into the subjective
activity – commercial and manufacturing labour – but that activity
itself was always simply viewed in a limited way as money-making.
Opposed to that system is the physiocratic system, which posits a
specific form of labour – agriculture – as that which creates wealth,
and posits the object itself no longer in the guise of money, but as
the product generally, as the universal result of labour. That prod-
uct is still [posited], in conformity with the limitation on the
activity, as a naturally defined product – an agricultural product,
an earth-product par excellence.

It was a prodigious advance of Adam Smith to throw away any
specificity in wealth-producing activity – labour pure and simple,
neither manufacturing nor commercial nor agricultural labour, but
the one as much as the other. With the abstract generality of wealth-
creating activity [there is] also the generality of the object defined
as wealth, as the product generally or, again, labour generally, but
as past, objectified labour. How immense and difficult that tran-
sition was, emerges from the fact that Adam Smith himself still
lapses from time to time into the physiocratic system. It might
appear thereby as if only the abstract expression for the simplest
and oldest relationship has been discovered, the relationship in
which men – in whatever form of society – emerge as producing. This is correct in one way, [but] not in another. The indifference towards a specific form of labour presupposes a very developed totality of actual types of labour, of which one is no longer dominating [over] the others. Thus the most general abstractions generally develop only with the richest concrete development, where one [abstraction] appears common to many, common to all. Then one ceases to be able to think only [in terms] of a particular form. On the other hand, this abstraction of labour generally is not merely the mental result of [abstracting from] a concrete totality of labours. The indifference towards the specific type of labour corresponds to a form of society in which individuals transfer with ease from one type of labour into another and the specific type of labour is contingent to them, hence indifferent. Here labour has become not only in the category but in actuality a means to the creation of wealth generally and has ceased being attached to individuals as a specification in a particular situation. Such a condition is at its highest development in the most modern form of existence of bourgeois society – the United States. Therefore the abstraction [consisting] of the category ‘labour’, ‘labour generally’, labour sans phrase, the starting point of modern [political] economy, only here becomes truly practical. Therefore the simplest abstraction, which modern [political] economy puts at its head and which expresses a very old relationship, a relationship valid for all forms of society, appears truly practical in that [degree of] abstraction only as a category of the most modern society. One could say [that] that which appears in the United States as a historical product – that indifference towards the specific [form of] labour – appears, for example, with the Russians, as a spontaneous disposition. Only it makes a fiendish difference whether barbarians have the disposition to be applied to anything, or whether civilised men apply themselves to everything. And then with the Russians the traditional doggedness in an utterly specific [form of] labour – from which they can be shaken only by an outside influence – corresponds practically to that indifference towards the specificity of labour.

That example of labour shows strikingly how the most abstract categories themselves are, in the specificity of that abstraction itself – in spite of their validity for all epochs – their validity just on account of being abstractions, just as much the product of historical
relations, and how they possess their full validity only for and within those relations.

Bourgeois society is the most developed and most diverse historical organisation of production. The categories which express its relations [and] the essence of its arrangement, allow at the same time an insight into the arrangement of production and the relations of production of all extinct forms of society with whose fragments and elements bourgeois society is constructed, whose remains, still not yet entirely obsolete, persist in bourgeois society, [and what were] mere indications [in extinct forms of society] have been developed to a specialised significance. In the anatomy of man there is a key to the anatomy of the ape. The indications of the higher types in the subordinate types of animal life can only be understood, on the other hand, if the higher type itself is already well known. Thus bourgeois economy offers the key to [the economy of] antiquity. However, by no means [is this revealed] by the approach of economists who obliterate all historical differences and see in all forms of society the bourgeois forms. One can understand tribute, tithes, etc., if one is acquainted with ground rent. However, one must not identify them [with each other]. Furthermore, since bourgeois society itself is only an antithetical form of development, relations of earlier forms will often be found in it only in a completely stunted form, or quite travestied. For example, communal property. Hence, if it is true that the categories of bourgeois economy possess a truth for all other forms of society, then it is to be taken with a grain of salt. They could contain them [in a] developed, stunted, caricatured [form], etc., always different in [an] essential respect. So-called historical development is generally based on [the fact] that the last form considers the past as stages [in the development] of itself, and, since the last form is seldom capable of criticising itself, and [then] only under wholly specific conditions, it always views itself one-sidedly – we are here naturally not discussing those historical periods which present themselves as a time of decay. The Christian religion was only capable of starting on the objective understanding of earlier mythologies as soon as its self-criticism was at a certain stage of completion, [as soon as it was there] virtually, so to speak. Thus bourgeois [political] economy only came to an understanding of feudal, ancient, [and] oriental society as soon as the self-criticism of bourgeois society had begun. To the extent that bourgeois
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[political] economy does not purely identify itself with the past in a mythologising way, its critique resembles earlier critiques, namely the feudal critique [of bourgeois society] with which it had to battle directly, [or] the critique which Christianity practised on paganism, or the critique by Protestantism of Catholicism.

As with any historical social science generally, one must always bear in mind with the progress of economic categories that, as in actuality, so in the head, the subject, here modern bourgeois society, is given, and that the categories express forms of being, specifications of existence, often only single sides of that specific society, of that subject, and hence that it [social science] does not really begin scientifically where it is first talked about as such. This is to be borne in mind because there is something that is immediately to hand that is decisive for the classification [of categories]. For example, nothing appears more in accord with nature than to begin with ground rent, with landed property, since it is bound up with the earth, the source of all production and all existence, and with the first form of production of all societies which are established to some extent – agriculture. However, nothing would be more false. In all forms of society there is a specific [form of] production which directs all the others, and whose relations therefore direct all the other relations, [and their] position and influence. There is a general illumination in which all other colours are submerged and [which] modifies them in their particularity. There is a particular ether which defines the specific gravity of everything in it. For example, with herdsmen (peoples who merely hunt and fish lie outside the point where actual development begins). With them a certain form of cultivation of the earth comes to the fore, a sporadic form. Landed property is thereby defined. It is common [property] and that form is retained more or less as those people more or less cling to their tradition, e.g. the communal property of the Slavs. With peoples [who have reached the stage] of settled cultivation of the land – that settling is already an important step – where that form predominates, as in antiquity and the feudal [epoch], industry itself (and its organisation and the forms of property which correspond to it) has more or less the character of landed property; industry is either wholly dependent on landed property, as with the ancient Romans, or, as in the middle ages, industry, in the town and according to its relations, imitates the country. So far as it is not pure money-capital, capital itself in the middle ages, as the traditional tool, etc., has the charac-
ter of landed property. In bourgeois society this is reversed. Agriculture becomes more and more a simple branch of industry and is wholly dominated by capital. It is the same with ground rent. In all forms in which ground rent dominates, the natural relationship is still predominating. In those [forms] where capital dominates, the socially, historically created element [predominates]. Ground rent cannot be understood without capital. However, capital [can] indeed [be understood] without ground rent. Capital is the economic power of bourgeois society, the power ruling over everything. It must form the starting point as [well as] the terminal point and must be developed before landed property. After both are considered particularly, their reciprocal relationship must be considered.

Therefore it would be impracticable and false to let the economic categories succeed one another in the sequence in which they were the defining categories historically. Rather, their order of succession is specified by the relationship which they have to one another in modern bourgeois society, and that relationship is exactly the reverse of that which appears as their succession in accordance with nature or that which corresponds to the order of their historical development. We are not dealing with the relation [to each other] which the economic relations take up historically in the sequence of different forms of society. Still less [are we dealing with] their order of succession 'in the idea' (Proudhon) (a hallucinatory conception of historical movement). Rather [we are dealing] with their arrangement within modern bourgeois society.

The purity (abstract specificity) in which the trading peoples – Phoenicians, Carthaginians – appear in the ancient world is given through the predominance of the agricultural peoples themselves. Where capital is not yet the ruling element of society, capital as trading or money capital appears in that very abstraction. Lombards [and] Jews take the same place in opposition to the agricultural societies of the middle ages.

As a further example of the different place which the same categories take in different stages of society: one of the latest forms of bourgeois society: joint-stock companies. However, they also appear in the beginning of bourgeois society in the great privileged trading companies, which were provided with monopolies.

The concept of national wealth itself creeps in with the economists of the seventeenth century – a conception which continues to some extent in the economists of the eighteenth century – that
wealth is created merely for the state, but [at the same time] the power of the state stands in proportion to that wealth. It was this still unconsciously hypocritical form in which wealth itself, and the production of it, was proclaimed as the purpose of the modern state, and the modern state is considered [in this view] only as a means to the production of wealth.

Thus the classification to be made is obviously, (1) the general abstract definitions which more or less belong to all forms of society, but in the sense elucidated above. (2) The categories which constitute the inner arrangement of bourgeois society and on which the fundamental classes are based. Capital, wage-labour, landed property. Their relationship to one another. Town and country. The three great social classes. Exchange between them. Circulation. Credit in general (private). (3) Summary of bourgeois society in the form of the state. [The state] considered in relationship to itself. The ‘unproductive’ classes. Taxes. National debt. Public credit. Population. Colonies. Emigration. (4) International relation of production. International division of labour. International exchange. Export and import. Rate of exchange. (5) The world market and crises.

4. Production, means of production and relations of production, relations of production and relations of commerce. Forms of the state and forms of consciousness in relation to the relations of production and commerce.

Legal relations. Family relations.

NB in regard to points which are to be mentioned here and must not be forgotten:

(1) In the past war has developed, like peace; [that is the] way, as through war and in the army, etc., [that] certain economic relations, like wage labour, machinery, etc., are developed earlier than in the interior of bourgeois society. Also the relation of productive force and the relations of commerce are particularly clear in the army.

(2) Relation of historiography, hitherto ideal, to real historiography, namely [the relation] of so-called cultural history, which [includes] all history of religion and political history, [to real historiography]. (On this occasion something can also be said about the different
types of historiography up to now. The so-called objective [type]. The subjective [type]. (The moral [type], among others.) The philosophical [type].)

(3) Secondary [relation] and tertiary [relation], generally derivative, transmitted, relations of production, which are not original. Here relations play a role internationally.

(4) Objections concerning the materialism of this view. Relation to naturalistic materialism.

(5) Dialectic of the concept productive force (means of production) and relations of production, a dialectic whose limits are to be specified and which does not abolish the real difference.

(6) The unequal relation of the development of material production, for example, to artistic production. Generally the concept of progress is not to be understood in its familiar abstraction. Modern art, etc. That disproportion is still not so important and difficult to understand as a disproportion within practical-social relations themselves. For example, education. The relation of the United States to Europe. But the really difficult point to be examined here is how the relations of production enter as legal relations into unequal development. Therefore, for example, the relation of Roman civil law (in criminal law and public law it is less the case) to modern production.

(7) This view appears as [a view of] necessary development. However, justification of the contingent [as opposed to the necessary]. How [to do this?]. (Freedom, among other [subjects], also.) (Operation of the means of communication. World history did not always exist; history as world history is a result.)

(8) The starting point is naturally that of natural specificity; subjectively and objectively. Tribes, races, etc.

(1) It is known in the case of art that specific times of artistic flowering by no means stand in a proportional relation to the general development of society, therefore [they do not stand in a proportional relation] to the general development of the material basis, to the general development, as it were, of the bone-structure of its organisation. For example, the Greeks compared with the moderns or Shakespeare. It is recognised of certain forms of art, e.g. the epic, that they can never be produced in their epoch-making classical form as soon as there arises the production of art as such; therefore [it is the case] that within the compass of art itself certain
meaningful forms of it are only possible at an undeveloped stage of artistic development. If this is the case in the relation of the different types of art within the realm of art itself, [then] it is already less striking that it is the case in the relation of the whole realm of art to the general development of society. The difficulty consists only in the general understanding of those contradictions. As soon as they have been specified, they are already clarified.

Let us take, for example, the relation of Greek art and then Shakespeare’s art to the present. It is known that Greek mythology is not only the arsenal of Greek art but [also] its ground. Is the perception of nature and of social relations which lies at the basis of the Greek imagination, and hence of Greek [mythology], possible with self-actors [in spinning factories] and trains and locomotives and electrical telegraphs? What has become of Vulcan against Roberts and Co. [manufacturers of ‘self-actors’], Jupiter against the lightning conductor, and Hermes against the [financial practices of the] crédit mobilier? All mythology controls and rules and forms the powers of nature in the imagination and through the imagination; therefore mythology disappears with actual domination over natural powers. What has become of Fama beside [The Times newspaper in] Printing House Square? Greek art presupposes Greek mythology, that is, nature and social forms themselves are already worked up in an unconsciously artistic mode by the folk imagination. That is its material. Not just any mythology, that is, not just any unconsciously artistic working-up of nature (here under nature everything has the character of an object [for mythology], hence society is included [among the objects for mythology]). Egyptian mythology could never be the seed bed or the womb of Greek art. However, in any case there must be a mythology. Therefore in no case is there a development of society which excludes all mythological relation to it; [it] demands of the artist an imagination independent of mythology.

From another side: is Achilles possible with powder and shot? Or, generally, the Iliad with the printing press, and, specifically, with the printing machine? Do not singing and recitation and the muse cease being necessary with the press-bar [in mechanical printing], therefore do not the necessary conditions of epic poetry disappear?
However, the difficulty does not lie in understanding that Greek art and epic are tied up with a certain social form of development. The difficulty is that they still give us artistic enjoyment and serve in a certain relationship as the norm and unreachable standard.

A man cannot become a child again, or he becomes childish. But does not the naivety of a child delight him, and must he not himself strive to reproduce its truth again at a higher level? Does not the character of every epoch revive true to its nature in the nature of the child? Why should not the historical childhood of mankind, where mankind is displayed at its most beautiful, exercise an eternal charm as a never-recurring stage? There are naughty children and precocious children. Many of the ancient peoples belong in that category. The Greeks were normal children. The charm of their art for us is not in contradiction with the undeveloped stage of society on which it grew. Rather, [the charm] is the result of the art and is inseparably connected with the fact that the immature social conditions under which it originated, and alone could originate, can never recur.