

## Marx on the Relation between “Justice”, “Freedom” and “Capabilities”

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In the Critique of the Gotha Programme, Marx claims the ultimate principle of “justice”, the principle that would be actualized in an ideal community, is: “From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!” (Marx 1970, p. 49) Such a community would be the actualization of “freedom” understood, as Marx understands it, as the living of a “good” life, a life creating and appropriating beauty and truth within relations of mutual recognition. Thus “justice”, according to Marx, is the participation of everyone to the best of their ability in the provision to everyone of what each “needs” to live a life of “freedom”.

One of the most important of these “needs” is the developed “capabilities” such a life requires. For this reason, Marx identifies “the true realm of freedom” with the development of such capabilities, with “the development of human powers as an end in itself”. (Marx 1981, p. 959) These fully developed capabilities are also necessary for the instrumental activity that defines “the realm of natural necessity” to which each contributes “according to his ability”. Activity in this realm meets the “needs” of life in “the true realm of freedom”. Fully developed individual capabilities are necessary both to meet these “needs” and to minimize the time and energy spent doing this so as to maximize the time and energy available for activity in “the true realm of freedom”.

This paper elaborates these and other aspects of Marx’s account of the relation between “justice”, “freedom” and “capabilities”. It begins with an examination of Marx’s concept of “freedom”. The second section examines the relation between “freedom” in this sense and fully developed “capabilities”—the capabilities that define what Marx calls the “universally developed individual”. The third and final section makes use of these ideas to elaborate the conception of “justice” embodied in Marx’s ideal distribution principle.

### 1 Marx on “freedom”

Marx conceives “political economy” as a “moral science” in the ancient sense of a science concerned ultimately with the provision to members of the polis of the material means of a “good life”. Properly conceived and managed, the “economic” is instrumental to the end in themselves activities and relations that constitute what Marx calls “the true realm of freedom”. This conception of the relation of “economic” to non-economic interests is elaborated in the following passage from the collection of Marx’s writings that Engels published as vol. III of Capital, a passage dividing the ideal republic into a “realm of natural necessity” and a “true realm of freedom”.

"Just as the savage must wrestle with nature to satisfy his needs, to maintain and reproduce his life, so must civilized man, and he must do so in all forms of society and under all possible modes of production. This realm of natural necessity expands with his development, because his needs do too; but the productive forces to satisfy these expand at the same time. Freedom, in this sphere, can only consist in this, that socialized man, the associated producers, govern the human metabolism with

nature in a rational way, bringing it under their collective control instead of being dominated by it as a blind power; accomplishing it with the least expenditure of energy and in conditions most worthy and appropriate to their human nature. But this always remains a realm of necessity. The true realm of freedom, the development of human powers as an end in itself, begins beyond it, though it can only flourish with this realm of necessity as its basis. The reduction of the working day is the basic prerequisite.” (Marx 1981, p. 959)

### 1.1 “The true realm of freedom”

The identification of the “true realm of freedom” with “the development of human powers as an end in itself” having as “the basic prerequisite” “the reduction of the working day” follows from Marx’s conception of the activities and relations that define this realm. These are the “free activities” of creating and appropriating beauty and truth within relations of mutual recognition, i.e. they are activities filling lives with beauty, truth and love.

Marx makes evident throughout his writings that these are the activities and relations that define this realm. In the Grundrisse, he points to “composing” to illustrate both the content of “really free working” and its character as “the most damned seriousness, the most intense exertion” requiring fully developed capabilities.<sup>1</sup> In his elaboration of the essential ethical aspect of these activities as the content of relations of mutual recognition, he points to “being active scientifically”—creating “truth”—as a “fully free activity” which, when practiced fully rationally, has this ethical aspect of being “for society” as an essential aspect of its being “for self” even when it is not “directly communal”.

“Social activity and social enjoyment exist by no means only in the form of some directly communal activity and directly communal enjoyment, although communal activity and communal enjoyment—i.e., activity and enjoyment which are manifested and affirmed in actual direct association with other men—will occur wherever such a direct expression of sociability stems from the true character of the activity’s content and is appropriate to the nature of the enjoyment.

“But also when I am active scientifically, etc.—an activity which I can seldom perform in direct community with others—then my activity is social, because I perform it as a man. Not only is the material of my activity given to me as a social product (as is even the language in which the thinker is active): my own existence is social activity, and therefore that which I make of myself, I make of myself for society and with the consciousness of myself as a social being.” (Marx 1975A, p. 298)

The activity of “appropriating” beauty and truth within relations of mutual recognition is also a defining activity of the true realm of freedom. Marx distinguishes this true idea of “appropriation” from the mistaken idea of it as “possessing” or “having”.

“the positive transcendence of private property—i.e., the perceptible appropriation for and by man of the human essence and of human life, of objective man, of human achievements should not be conceived merely in the sense of immediate, one-sided enjoyment, merely in the sense of possessing, of having. Man appropriates his comprehensive essence in a comprehensive manner, that is to say, as a whole man. Each of his human relations to the world—seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling, thinking, observing, experiencing, wanting, acting, loving—in short, all the organs of his individual being, like those organs which are directly social in their form, are in their objective orientation, or in their orientation to the object, the appropriation of the object, the appropriation of human reality. Their orientation to the object is the manifestation of the human reality, [For this reason it is just as highly varied as the determinations of human essence and activities] it is human activity and human suffering, for suffering, humanly considered, is a kind of self-enjoyment of man. ...

“The supersession of private property is therefore the complete emancipation of all human senses and attributes; but it is this emancipation precisely because these senses and attributes have become human, subjectively as well as objectively. The eye has become a human eye, just as its object has become a social, human object, made by man for man. The senses have therefore become theoreticians in their immediate praxis. They relate to the thing for its own sake, but the thing itself is an objective human relation to itself and to man, and vice versa. [Marx’s note: In practice I can only relate myself to

a thing in a human way if the thing is related in a human way to man.] Need or employment have therefore lost their egoistic nature, and nature has lost its mere utility in the sense that its use has become human use.

“Similarly, senses and enjoyment of other men have become my own appropriation. Apart from these direct organs, social organs are therefore created in the form of society; for example, activity in direct association with others, etc., has become an organ of my life expressions and a mode of appropriation of human life”. (Marx 1975A, pp. 299–301)

The “artistic” and “scientific” content of the “good life” explains why such a life requires as means “the artistic, scientific etc. development of the individuals.” (Marx 1973, pp. 705–6)

This conception of the “good” as artistic and scientific activity within relations of mutual recognition is embodied in the following description of activity in “the true realm of freedom”, of how we would produce if “we had carried out production as human beings.”

"Let us suppose that we had carried out production as human beings. Each of us would have in two ways affirmed himself and the other person. 1) In my production I would have objectified my individuality, its specific character, and therefore enjoyed not only an individual manifestation of my life during the activity, but also when looking at the object I would have the individual pleasure of knowing my personality to be objective, visible to the senses and hence a power beyond all doubt. 2) In your enjoyment or use of my product I would have the direct enjoyment both of being conscious of having satisfied a human need by my work, that is, of having objectified man's essential nature, and of having thus created an object corresponding to the need of another man's essential nature. 3) I would have been for you the mediator between you and the species, and therefore would become recognized and felt by you yourself as a completion of your own essential nature and as a necessary part of yourself, and consequently would know myself to be confirmed both in your thought and your love. 4) In the individual expression of my life I would have directly created your expression of your life, and therefore in my individual activity I would have directly confirmed and realized my true nature, my human nature, my communal nature.

"Our products would be so many mirrors in which we saw reflected our essential nature.

"This relationship would moreover be reciprocal; what occurs on my side has also to occur on yours". (Marx 1975B, pp. 227–8)<sup>2</sup>

## 1.2 The relation of “the true realm of freedom” to “the realm of necessity”

In the ideal republic, the “economic” is instrumental to these fully free non-economic activities that define “the true realm of freedom”. That activity in “the realm of necessity” is instrumental means that the time and energy devoted to it must be minimized so as to maximize the time and energy available for the fully free activities that are ends in themselves.

“Freedom, in this sphere, can only consist in this, that socialized man, the associated producers, govern the human metabolism with nature in a rational way, bringing it under their collective control instead of being dominated by it as a blind power; accomplishing it with the least expenditure of energy and in conditions most worthy and appropriate to their human nature.”

This relation of production in the realm of necessity to “social requirements” understood as the “requirements of socially developed human beings” is pointed to in another passage from vol. III of *Capital*. The passage also elaborates the meaning of “to each according to his needs”. Needs in this context mean the needs of “socially developed human beings”.<sup>3</sup> This includes “the volume of consumption” which is “required for the full development of individuality”.

“If however wages are reduced to their general basis, i.e. that portion of the product of his labour which goes into the worker’s own individual consumption; if this share is freed from its capitalist limit and expanded to the scale of consumption that is both permitted by the existing social productivity (i.e. the social productivity of his own labour as genuinely social labour) and required for the full

development of individuality; if surplus-labour and surplus-product are also reduced, to the degree needed under the given conditions of production, on the one hand to form an insurance and reserve fund, on the other hand for the constant expansion of reproduction in the degree determined by social need; if, finally, both (1) the necessary labour and (2) the surplus labour are taken to include the amount of labour that those capable of work must always perform for those members of society not yet capable, or no longer capable of working—i.e. if both wages and surplus-value are stripped of their specifically capitalist character—then nothing of these forms remains, but simply those foundations of the forms that are common to all social modes of production.” (Marx 1981, pp. 1015–6)

## 2. “Universally developed individuals”—“freedom” and fully developed “capabilities”

As several of these passages indicate, activity in both “the realm of necessity” and “the true realm of freedom” requires fully developed capabilities. The individual possessed of such capabilities is the “universally developed individual”.<sup>4</sup> “Universal” in this context means fully rational so that such capabilities are those of the fully rational individual. The “needs” and “pleasures” of such an individual are also “universal” in this sense, i.e. expressive of the universally valid “values” that constitute the content of the “universal will” defined, as in Kant and Hegel, as “a will that places reason at the basis of its actions.”<sup>5</sup> Marx identifies the true idea of “wealth” with such “universality”.<sup>6</sup> The essence of human being—what Hegel calls the “idea” of humanity—is the potential to develop this “universality” and realize the full “freedom”—the “free individuality”<sup>7</sup>—it implies.

“What is wealth other than the universality of individual needs, capacities, pleasures, productive forces etc., created through universal exchange? The full development of human mastery over the forces of nature, those of so-called nature as well as of humanity's own nature? The absolute working out of his creative potentialities, with no presupposition other than the previous historic development, which makes this totality of development, i.e. the development of all human powers as such the end in itself, not as measured on a predetermined yardstick? Where he does not reproduce himself in one specificity, but produces his totality? Strives not to remain something he has become, but is in the absolute movement of becoming? In bourgeois economics—and in the epoch of production to which it corresponds—this complete working-out of the human content appears as a complete emptying out, this universal objectification as total alienation, and the tearing-down of all limited, one-sided aims as sacrifice of the human end-in-itself to an entirely external end.” (Marx 1973, p. 488)

He contrasts this idea of “wealth and poverty” with the idea of them in classical political economy.

“It will be seen how in place of the wealth and poverty of political economy come the rich human being and the rich human need. The rich human being is simultaneously the human being in need of a totality of human manifestations of life – the man in whom his own realisation exists as an inner necessity, as need. Not only wealth, but likewise the poverty of man – under the assumption of socialism – receives in equal measure a human and therefore social significance.

“Poverty is the passive bond which causes the human being to experience the need of the greatest wealth – the other human being.” (Marx 1975A, p. 304)

That “the greatest wealth” is “the other human being” follows from the fact that “the greatest wealth” is a relation of mutual recognition.

Creating and appropriating beauty and truth require fully developed capabilities in the form of developed “senses” such as a “sense for beauty of form”, “a sense for the finest of plays”. The development of such “senses” itself requires appropriate objects, e.g. “a sense for the finest of plays” requires for its full development experience of the finest of plays. (Marx 1975A, pp. 301–2)

“As soon as consumption emerges from its initial state of natural crudity and immediacy—and, if it remained at that stage, this would be because production itself had been arrested there—it becomes

itself mediated as a drive by the object. The need which consumption feels for the object is created by the perception of it. The object of art—like every other product—creates a public which is sensitive to art and enjoys beauty. Production thus not only creates an object for the subject, but also a subject for the object.” (Marx 1973, p. 92)

Marx claims the need for mutual recognition also develops in this way.

"When communist artisans associate with one another, theory, propaganda, etc., is their first end. But at the same time, as a result of this association, they acquire a new need—the need for society—and what appears as a means becomes an end. In this practical process the most splendid results are to be observed whenever French socialist workers are seen together. Such things as smoking, drinking, eating, etc., are no longer means of contact or means that bring them together. Association, society and conversation, which again has association as its end, are enough for them; the brotherhood of man is no mere phrase with them, but a fact of life, and the nobility of man shines upon us from their work-hardened bodies.” (Marx 1975A, p. 313)

Thus, for Marx, fully developed capabilities are the true “currency”, the only means of exchange within relations of mutual recognition.

"Assume man to be man and his relationship to the world to be a human one: then you can exchange love only for love, trust for trust, etc. If you want to enjoy art, you must be an artistically cultivated person; if you want to exercise influence over other people, you must be a person with a stimulating and encouraging effect on other people. Every one of your relations to man and to nature must be a specific expression, corresponding to the object of your will, of your real individual life. If you love without evoking love in return — that is, if your loving as loving does not produce reciprocal love; if through a living expression of yourself as a loving person you do not make yourself a beloved one, then your love is impotent — a misfortune." (Marx 1975A, p. 326)

The idea of “universally developed individuals” appropriates Hegel’s idea of “educated men” as those who “can do what others do.” (Hegel 1967, p. 268) Such individuals “determine their knowing, willing, and acting in a universal way.” (Hegel 1967, pp. 124–6) This contradicts the idea of specialized and divided labour as the most productive labour.<sup>8</sup> This aspect of the “universally developed individual” is implicit in the conception of an ideal republic as one enabling the individual

"to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as [she has] in mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic.” (Marx and Engels 1976B, p. 47)

It is explicitly pointed to as an essential characteristic of the “universally developed individual” of the ideal community in the following passage from Capital:

“large-scale industry, through its very catastrophes, makes the recognition of variation of labour and hence of the fitness of the worker for the maximum number of different kinds of labour into a question of life and death. This possibility of varying labour must become a general law of social production, and the existing relations must be adapted to permit its realization in practice. That monstrosity, the disposable working population held in reserve, must be replaced by the individual man who is absolutely available for the different kinds of labour required of him; the partially developed individual, who is merely the bearer of one specialized social function, must be replaced by the totally developed individual, for whom the different social functions are different modes of activity he takes up in turn.” (Marx 1976B, pp. 618–9)

Marx also identifies the true idea of “wealth” with “free time”—“free time” for “the enjoyment of the product”, for “free activity” and for the development of the capabilities such enjoyment and activity require.

"Time of labour, even if exchange value is eliminated, always remains the creative substance of wealth and the measure of the cost of its production. But free time, disposable time, is wealth itself, partly for the enjoyment of the product, partly for free activity which—unlike labour—is not determined by a compelling extraneous purpose which must be fulfilled, and the fulfillment of which is regarded as a natural necessity or a social duty, according to one's inclination." (Marx 1971, p. 257)

"As soon as labour in the direct form has ceased to be the great well-spring of wealth, labour time ceases and must cease to be its measure, and hence exchange value [must cease to be the measure] of use value. The surplus labour of the mass has ceased to be the condition for the development of general wealth, just as the non-labour of the few, for the development of the general powers of the human head. With that, production based on exchange value breaks down, and the direct, material production process is stripped of the form of penury and antithesis. The free development of individualities, and hence not the reduction of necessary labour time so as to posit surplus labour, but rather the general reduction of the necessary labour of society to a minimum, which then corresponds to the artistic, scientific etc. development of the individuals in the time set free, and with the means created, for all of them." (Marx 1973, pp. 705-6)

That time free from instrumental labour is an essential aspect of the true "freedom" made possible by the development of "forces of production" is explicitly claimed in Capital where the idea is associated with Aristotle, "the greatest thinker of antiquity".<sup>9</sup>

"If,' dreamed Aristotle, the greatest thinker of antiquity, 'if every tool, when summoned, or even of its own accord, could do the work that befits it, just as the creations of Daedalus moved of themselves, or the tripods of Hephaestos went of their own accord to their sacred work, if the weavers' shuttles were to weave of themselves, then there would be no need either of apprentices for the master workers, or of slaves for the lords.' And Antipatros, a Greek poet of the time of Cicero, hailed the invention of the water-wheel for grinding corn, an invention that is the elementary form of all machinery, as the giver of freedom to female slaves, and the bringer back of the golden age. Oh! those heathens! They understood, as the learned Bastiat, and before him the still wiser MacCulloch have discovered, nothing of Political Economy and Christianity. They did not, for example, comprehend that machinery is the surest means of lengthening the working-day. They perhaps excused the slavery of one on the ground that it was a means to the full development of another. But to preach slavery of the masses, in order that a few crude and half-educated parvenus, might become "eminent spinners", "extensive sausage-makers", and "influential shoe-black dealers", to do this, they lacked the bump of Christianity." (Marx 1976, pp. 532-3)<sup>10</sup>

"Universal" development is required both for the activities that define "the true realm of freedom" and for those that define "the realm of necessity". In the latter case, the requirement expresses the fact that created forces of production are "organs of the human brain, created by the human hand: the power of knowledge, objectified" so that they require the universal development of individuals for both their own full development and their appropriation as fully developed instruments.

Marx explicitly endorses the thesis he associates with Hodgskin and Galiani that

"accumulation is nothing but the amassing of the productive powers of social labour, so that the accumulation of the skill and knowledge (scientific power) of the workers themselves is the chief form of accumulation, and infinitely more important than the accumulation—which goes hand in hand with it and merely represents it—of the existing objective conditions of this accumulated activity. These objective conditions are only nominally accumulated and must be constantly produced anew and consumed anew". (Marx 1971, pp. 266-7)

He opposes this "idealism" to "the crude, material fetishism into which the Ricardian theory develops in the writings 'of this incredible cobbler', McCulloch" and to the mistaken interpretations of his own "materialism".

"The whole objective world, the 'world of commodities', vanishes here as a mere aspect, as the merely passing activity, constantly performed anew, of socially producing men. Compare this 'idealism' with the crude, material fetishism into which the Ricardian theory develops in the writings 'of this incredible cobbler', McCulloch, where not only the difference between man and animal disappears but even the difference between a living organism and an inanimate object. And then let them say that as against the lofty idealism of bourgeois political economy, the proletarian opposition has been preaching a crude materialism directed exclusively towards the satisfaction of coarse appetites." (Marx 1971, p. 267)

"Nature builds no machines, no locomotives, railways, electric telegraphs, self-acting mules etc. These are products of human industry; natural material transformed into organs of the human will over nature, or of human participation in nature. They are organs of the human brain, created by the human hand; the power of knowledge, objectified. The development of fixed capital indicates to what degree general social knowledge has become a direct force of production, and to what degree, hence, the conditions of the process of social life itself have come under the control of the general intellect and been transformed in accordance with it. To what degree the powers of social production have been produced, not only in the form of knowledge, but also as immediate organs of social practice, of the real life process." (Marx 1973, pp. 705-6)

As with the creation and appropriation of beauty and truth, the creation and appropriation of fully developed forces of production requires fully developed subjects. The end determines the means with "the rigidity of a law"<sup>11</sup>.

"Thus things have now come to such a pass that the individuals must appropriate the existing totality of productive forces, not only to achieve self-activity, but, also, merely to safeguard their very existence. This appropriation is first determined by the object to be appropriated, the productive forces, which have been developed to a totality and which only exist within a universal intercourse. From this aspect alone, therefore, this appropriation must have a universal character corresponding to the productive forces and the intercourse.

"The appropriation of these forces is itself nothing more than the development of the individual capacities corresponding to the material instruments of production. The appropriation of a totality of instruments of production is, for this very reason, the development of a totality of capacities in the individuals themselves. ...

"Only at this stage does self-activity coincide with material life, which corresponds to the development of individuals into complete individuals and the casting-off of all natural limitations. The transformation of labour into self-activity corresponds to the transformation of the earlier limited intercourse into the intercourse of individuals as such." (Marx and Engels 1976B, pp. 87-8)

The result is that labour in the realm of necessity of an ideal community is much more productive and efficient than it is in preceding production arrangements all of which ultimately "fetter" the development of forces of production by fettering the development of individuals. Marx treats social relations as "internal relations".

"Only in community [with others has each] individual the means of cultivating his gifts in all directions; only in the community, therefore, is personal freedom possible." (Marx and Engels 1976B, p. 78)

The social relations of the ideal republic make possible universal development and this reacts back on the nature of labour and production in the realm of necessity.

"It is self-evident that if time of labour is reduced to a normal length and, furthermore, labour is no longer performed for someone else, but for myself, and, at the same time, the social contradictions between master and men, etc., being abolished, it acquires a quite different, a free character, it becomes real social labour, and finally the basis of disposable time—the time of labour of a man who has also disposable time, must be of a much higher quality than that of the beast of burden." (Marx 1971, p. 257)

“Labour cannot become play, as Fourier would like, although it remains his great contribution to have expressed the suspension not of distribution, but of the mode of production itself, in a higher form, as the ultimate object. Free time—which is both idle time and time for higher activity—has naturally transformed its possessor into a different subject, and he then enters into the direct production process as this different subject. This process is then both discipline, as regards the human being in the process of becoming; and, at the same time, practice [*Ausübung*], experimental science, materially creative and objectifying science, as regards the human being who has become, in whose head exists the accumulated knowledge of society.” (Marx 1973, pp. 711–2)

Because “labour” (a word usually used by Marx to mean the instrumental activity that defines the realm of necessity) in the realm of necessity of an ideal community, like fully free activity in the true realm of freedom, requires the fully developed capabilities that define “universally developed individuals”, it is much more attractive than the “alienated” labour of capitalism. It fully utilizes universal capabilities and is carried on within relations of mutual recognition.

"It seems quite far from Smith's mind that the individual, 'in his normal state of health, strength, activity, skill, facility', also needs a normal portion of work, and of the suspension of tranquility. Certainly, labour obtains its measure from the outside, through the aim to be attained and the obstacles to be overcome in attaining it. But Smith has no inkling whatever that this overcoming of obstacles is in itself a liberating activity—and that, further, the external aims become stripped of the semblance of merely external natural urgencies, and become posited as aims which the individual himself posits—hence as self-realization, objectification of the subject, hence real freedom, whose action is, precisely, labour.” (Marx 1973, p. 661)

### **3. “Justice” as “from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!”**

Because “interest” on Marx’s premises is ultimately an ethical interest (the “good” life for each is constituted by relations of mutual recognition with others), the ideal community is characterized by a complete harmony of “interests”. This appears in the ideal distribution principle proclaimed in the Critique of the Gotha Programme.

"In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labor, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labor, has vanished; after labor has become not only a means of life but life's prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-around development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!"<sup>12</sup> (Marx 1970B, p. 49)

This predicates the practicability of the principle on “the all-round development of the individual”, i.e. on “universally developed individuals”. Such individuals will voluntarily organize their activities so as to provide each with what each “needs” for a good life. Given the ethical character of a good life, such provision to all is necessary for a good life for each.

The activity of providing means defines the realm of necessity. Each contributes to this activity in accordance with her ability (which will normally be very high since the most fundamental of the needs requiring to be met is the need for those things necessary for “all-around development”). The activity is no longer alienated labour; it is labour utilizing fully developed capabilities and, hence, “not only a means of life but life's prime want”. It is “a liberating activity” whose “external aims become stripped of the semblance of merely external natural urgencies, and become posited as aims which the individual himself posits—hence as self-realization, objectification of the subject, hence real freedom, whose action is, precisely, labour.” Because it is instrumental activity, the time and energy devoted to it must be minimized. However, though “determined by a compelling extraneous purpose which must be

fulfilled, ... the fulfillment ... is regarded as a natural necessity or a social duty, according to one's inclination."

Here "socialized man, the associated producers, govern the human metabolism with nature in a rational way, bringing it under their collective control instead of being dominated by it as a blind power; accomplishing it with the least expenditure of energy and in conditions most worthy and appropriate to their human nature." It is "production by freely associated men and stands under their conscious and planned control". (Marx 1976A, p. 173)

On Marx's ontological and anthropological premises, the ethically ideal organization of production is also the most "efficient" organization. It fully develops and utilizes individual capabilities.

Activity in "the true realm of freedom" is activity within relations of mutual recognition and therefore requires for its existence the full development of individual capabilities. Each individual's "interest" therefore is in the full development of all others since this is a prerequisite for each individual's actualization of the "good" in their own activity. This requires that each be provided with what each needs for the full development and utilization of their capabilities. The ideal community is "an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all." (Marx 1976C, pp. 505–6) Consequently, Marx's ultimate principle of "justice" is a particular embodiment of the idea that "correctly understood interest is the principle of all morality". Marx and Engels make this point in a comment about "crime".

"If man draws all his knowledge, sensation, etc., from the world of the senses and the experience gained in it, then what has to be done is to arrange the empirical world in such a way that man experiences and becomes accustomed to what is truly human in it and that he becomes aware of himself as man. If correctly understood interest is the principle of all morality, man's private interest must be made to coincide with the interest of humanity. If man is unfree in the materialistic sense, i.e., is free not through the negative power to avoid this or that, but through the positive power to assert his true individuality, crime must not be punished in the individual, but the anti-social sources of crime must be destroyed, and each man must be given social scope for the vital manifestation of his being. If man is shaped by environment, his environment must be made human." (Marx and Engels 1975C, p. 131)

## Conclusion

Economists working within the relatively new field of "behavioral economics" have recently made the economics of "happiness" a research focus (see, for example, Layard 2005 and Oswald 1997). This is not a new concern. Aristotle originally conceived "political economy" as a "moral science" in the sense of the art of meeting the material needs of a "good" life, of "happiness" as "eudaimonia". Marx's economics is "political economy" in this sense. The conception of "happiness" involved is, however, very different from the one on which recent work in economics is based, a difference deriving from very different ontological and anthropological premises.

That conception associates true happiness with living a good life, a "fulfilled life". Marx identifies such a life with creating and appropriating beauty and truth with relations of mutual recognition. This is "the true realm of freedom". As we have seen, its actualization requires fully developed "capabilities", the capabilities that define the "universally developed individual". It also requires the provision to each of the means both for this development and for living the life for which the development is a prerequisite. To make such a life possible for each, all must be provided with the required means, and all must contribute in accordance with their ability to the activity that creates these means, the activity that defines "the realm of natural necessity". So the true idea of "justice" is "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!" Only a fully just community can be a fully free community. It is "an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “He [Adam Smith] is right, of course, that, in its historic forms as slave-labour, serf-labour, and wage-labour, labour always appears as repulsive, always as external forced labour; and not-labour, by contrast, as 'freedom, and happiness'. This holds doubly: for this contradictory labour; and, relatedly, for labour which has not yet created the subjective and objective conditions for itself (or also, in contrast to the pastoral etc. state, which it has lost), in which labour becomes attractive work, the individual's self-realization, which in no way means that it becomes mere fun, mere amusement, as Fourier, with grisette-like naiveté, conceives it. Really free working, e.g. composing, is at the same time precisely the most damned seriousness, the most intense exertion. The work of material production can achieve this character only (1) when its social character is posited, (2) when it is of a scientific and at the same time general character, not merely human exertion as a specifically harnessed natural force, but exertion as subject, which appears in the production process not in a merely natural, spontaneous form, but as an activity regulating all the forces of nature.” (Marx 1973, p. 611)

<sup>2</sup> This is repeated in the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts with the addition that both the “material” and the “subjective” requirements for this ideally “good” activity require for their existence a process of historical development through “necessary” (in the sense of “internally related”) stages, one of which is “private property”. The claim that “the social character is the general character of the whole movement” is both an ontological claim that relations are “internal relations” and an ethical claim that fully free activity is “social activity and social enjoyment”. “Social man” is elaborated as the “universally developed individual” with the capabilities required for this activity. Such individuals have, through their fully free activity, humanized “nature,” i.e. constituted it in the form required by such truly “human” activity.

“We have seen how on the assumption of positively annulled private property man produces man-himself and the other man; how the object, being the direct manifestation of his individuality, is simultaneously his own existence for the other man, the existence of the other man, and that existence for him. Likewise, however, both the material of labour and man as the subject, are the point of departure as well as the result of the movement (and precisely in this fact, that they must constitute the point of departure, lies the historical necessity of private property). Thus the social character is the general character of the whole movement: just as society itself produces man as man, so is society produced by him. Activity and enjoyment, both in their content and in their mode of existence, are social: social activity and social enjoyment. The human aspect of nature exists only for social man; for only then does nature exist for him as a bond with man — as his existence for the other and the other's existence for him — and as the life-element of human reality. Only then does nature exist as the foundation of his own human existence. Only here has what is to him his natural existence become his human existence, and nature become man for him. Thus society is the complete unity of man with nature — the true resurrection of nature — the consistent naturalism of man and the consistent humanism of nature.” (Marx 1975A, pp. 297–8)

<sup>3</sup> According to Marx, one of “the limitations of the capitalist mode of production” is “that the expansion or contraction of production are determined by the appropriation of unpaid labour and the proportion of this unpaid labour to materialised labour in general, or, to speak the language of the capitalists, by profit and the proportion of this profit to the employed capital, thus by a definite rate of profit, rather than the relation of production to social requirements, i.e., to the requirements of socially developed human beings. It is for this reason that the capitalist mode of production meets with barriers at a certain expanded stage of production which, if viewed from the other premise, would reversely have been altogether inadequate. It comes to a standstill at a point fixed by the production and realisation of profit, and not the satisfaction of requirements.” (Marx 1981, p. 367)

<sup>4</sup> “Universally developed individuals, whose social relations, as their own communal [gemeinschaftlich] relations, are hence also subordinated to their own communal control, are no product of nature, but of history. The degree and the universality of the development of wealth where this individuality becomes possible supposes production on the basis of exchange values as a prior condition, whose universality

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produces not only the alienation of the individual from himself and from others, but also the universality and the comprehensiveness of his relations and capacities.” (Marx 1973, p. 162)

“Capital's ceaseless striving towards the general form of wealth drives labour beyond the limits of its natural paltriness [Naturbedürftigkeit], and thus creates the material elements for the development of the rich individuality which is as all-sided in its production as in its consumption, and whose labour also therefore appears no longer as labour, but as the full development of activity itself, in which natural necessity in its direct form has disappeared; because a historically created need has taken the place of the natural one. This is why capital is productive; i.e. an essential relation for the development of the social productive forces. It ceases to exist as such only where the development of these productive forces themselves encounters its barrier in capital itself.” (Marx 1973, p. 325)

<sup>5</sup> "By right we ought only to describe as art, production through freedom, i.e. through a will that places reason at the basis of its actions. For although we like to call the product of bees (regularly built cells of wax) a work of art, this is only by way of analogy; as soon as we feel that this work of theirs is based on no proper rational deliberation, we say that it is a product of nature (of instinct)." (Kant 1961, pp. 145–6)

<sup>6</sup> This sublates Aristotle:

“What affirmation and negation are in thinking, pursuit and avoidance are in desire; so that since moral virtue is a state of character concerned with choice, and choice is deliberate desire, therefore both the reasoning must be true and the desire right, if the choice is to be good, and the latter must pursue just what the former asserts, Now this kind of intellect and of truth is practical; of the intellect which is contemplative, not practical nor productive, the good and the bad state are truth and falsity respectively (for this is the work of everything intellectual); while of the part which is practical and intellectual the good state is truth in agreement with right desire.

“The origin of action—its efficient, not its final cause—is choice, and that of choice is desire and reasoning with a view to an end, This is why choice cannot exist either without reason and intellect or without a moral state; for good action and its opposite cannot exist without a combination of intellect and character, Intellect itself, however, moves nothing, but only the intellect which aims at an end and is practical; for this rules the productive intellect, as well, since every one who makes makes for an end, and that which is made is not an end in the unqualified sense (but only an end in a particular relation, and the end of a particular operation)—only that which is done is that; for good action is an end, and desire aims at this, Hence choice is either desiderative reason or ratiocinative desire, and such an origin of action is a man.” (Aristotle 1984, pp. 1798–9)

<sup>7</sup> “Relations of personal dependence (entirely spontaneous at the outset) are the first social forms, in which human productive capacity develops only to a slight extent and at isolated points. Personal independence founded on *objective [sachlicher]* dependence is the second great form, in which a system of general social metabolism, of universal relations, of all-round needs and universal capacities is formed for the first time. Free individuality, based on the universal development of individuals and on their subordination of their communal, social productivity as their social wealth, is the third stage.” (Marx 1973, p. 158)

<sup>8</sup> Hegel on the “educated man” is cited by Marx in Capital to show Hegel's (and his own) “very heretical views” on the specialization and division of labor. (Marx 1976A, p. 485)

<sup>9</sup> A.N. Whitehead insightfully identifies the “economic interpretation of history” with this idea of the relation of “freedom” to the development of “forces of production”, the essence of “freedom” being, he claims, “practicability of purpose”. (Whitehead 1933, p. 66)

<sup>10</sup> Alfred Marshall shares Marx's view of “freedom”. This derives primarily from belonging to the same tradition in Western thought as Marx. He was, however, also an astute reader of Marx. He favorably

mentions (e.g. Marshall 1919, p. 774, note 1) Marx's quotation of Anitpatros in this passage as making a true point about the relation between the development of "forces of production" and "freedom". A more general (and Hegelian) treatment of the relation of "water" to "wealth" in Marx's sense is found in Marshall's article "Water as an Element of National Wealth". Marshall looked forward to a time when, with the full development of "human nature" and the internally related development of "forces of production", every day would be a "Sunday"

"suppose you had told an intelligent man 100 years ago, that all manual labour would thus be dispensed with, he would have looked forward to a time of perfect freedom, a perpetual Sunday, when work would be so entirely subordinated to what was important, to the growth of man and of his character, that it would almost have been forgotten." (Marshall 1995, p. 92)

Finding and ameliorating the causes of lack of progress in this direction constituted one of the main motivations behind his study of political economy.

"I claim then to have shown what pressing reason there is for showing why the development of our arts of production has done so little to prevent the sacrifices of man to production. And it is not easy to see why the hopeful prophecy we imagined a man of a hundred years ago to have uttered has not yet come true. Why every day is not a Sunday, devoted to culture, with just so much work perhaps, as is necessary for the health of the body, with time to learn and to think, to be educated for science, and art." (Marshall 1995, p. 95)

<sup>11</sup> "We presuppose labour in a form in which it is an exclusively human characteristic. A spider conducts operations which resemble those of the weaver, and a bee would put many a human architect to shame by the construction of its honeycomb cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is that the architect builds the cell in his mind before he constructs it in wax. At the end of every labour process, a result emerges which had already been conceived by the worker at the beginning, hence already existed ideally. Man not only effects a change of form in the materials of nature; he also realizes his own purpose in those materials. And this is a purpose he is conscious of, it determines the mode of his activity with the rigidity of a law, and he must subordinate his will to it." (Marx 1976A, pp. 283-4)

<sup>12</sup> As a passage quoted earlier indicates, "from each according to his ability" includes wholly voluntary participation in "the realm of necessity". Fulfillment of the requirement for such "labour" is "regarded as a natural necessity or a social duty, according to one's inclination."

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