

JUDITH BUTLER QUESTIONS

The inorganic body in the early Marx. A limit-concept of anthropocentrism.

- How best to re-approach, today, **Marx's 1844 Manuscripts** in order to take up the **question** of whether **the young Marx is anthropocentric?**
- What prompts me to ask this question is a famous, but very enigmatic paragraph in those manuscripts that refers to **nature as man's 'inorganic body'**.
- The **question** of whether **Marx's views** were compatible with an **ecological perspective**, and which in turn prompted a series of inquiries into how best to understand **Marx's theory of nature**.
- It does raise **questions** about **how we understand labour** and the **labouring body, the human** and its **relation to nature and other living processes**.
- How we conceive of this relation has implications for answering the **question** of just **how anthropocentric** are the **early manuscripts**, or whether there is a largely unexamined **critique of anthropocentrism** to be found within their pages?
- How does that distinction inform our interpretation of what is going on with this phrase, **nature as 'inorganic body'**, and with the broader **question** of whether **Marx in his early manuscripts** proposes an **anthropocentric account of nature?**
- The **question** of whether **Marx's views** are compatible with **ecological thinking**. Some asked the **question**: **is the claim that 'nature is man's inorganic body' an ecological claim?** Is it the case that humans should act, or are naturally disposed to act, as if their own bodies were in some sense coextensive with nature?