

+ 3 + 4 + 5 + 6. This is a perfectly logical conclusion from the fundamental assumptions of the theory of marginal utility; yet it is entirely fallacious. The blame lies with the point of departure of the Böhm-Bawerk theory, its ignoring the social-historical character of economic phenomena. As a matter of fact, no one concerned in present-day production and exchange, either as a buyer or a seller, calculates the value of the "supply", *i.e.*, the aggregate of commodities, according to the Böhm-Bawerk method. Not only does the theoretical mirror manipulated by the head of the new school distort the "practice of life", but its image presents no corresponding facts at all. Every seller of n units regards the sum of these units as n times as much as a single unit. The same may be said of the purchaser. "A manufacturer regards the fiftieth spinning machine in his factory as having the same importance and the same value as the first, and the whole value of all fifty is not $50 + 49 + 48 \dots + 2 + 1 = 1275$; but, quite simply, $50 \times 50 = 2500$." ⁸²

This contradiction between Böhm-Bawerk's "theory" and actual "practice" is so striking that even Böhm-Bawerk was unable to ignore the difficulty. He has this to say on the subject: "In our ordinary practical economic life, we do not frequently have occasion to observe the above-described casuistic phenomenon [*i.e.*, the absence of a proportional relation between the value of the sum and that of the unit.—*N.B.*]. This is due to the fact that under the system of production of division of labour, commercial sales are drawn chiefly [!] from a surplus [!!] which was originally not intended for the personal needs of the owner. . . ." (Böhm-Bawerk: *Grundzüge, etc.*, p. 35). This is very well, but the question is precisely this: if this "casuistic phenomenon" cannot be ascertained in the present-day economic life, it is obvious that the theory of marginal utility may be whatever you like, but it cannot be a law of capitalist reality, because precisely this "phenomenon" is a logical consequence of the theory of marginal utility in which it takes its logical birth and with which it falls.

We thus see that the absence of proportion between the value of the sum, and the number of added units is, as far as