‘To be or not to be’ a commodity: ‘that is the question’. Marx’s ‘theory of the money commodity’ is clearly distinct from other commodity theories of money. However, he did not elaborate on money clearly enough to avoid even Marxian challenges to its internal logic. Therefore the question is not whether Marx’s money needs to be a produced commodity: there are so many reasons to suggest that it doesn’t. The question is why Marx was so adamant that a money commodity existed at the base of the monetary system. This paper addresses this question by way of a textual review that points to the context within which Marx’s thoughts developed. It is a history of economic thought approach rather than economic analysis.