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The Proletariat as a Commodity: An Explicit Analysis of Labor Power as an Integral Dimension of Capitalist Accumulation



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Abstract: *This research work provides clear information about the dynamics which are closely related to the labor power in the capitalistic system, questioning its commodification and its archetypical role in the process of capitalistic accumulation. This is based on the proletariat, as a type, who sells its labor power to survive. Through the mechanics of the research through the labor power is commodified and exploited. The main objective of the research is to shed some light on the structures that underlie capitalist accumulation. The study itself is based on the qualitative approach, with Marxism theory as its foundation. The critical discourse analysis (CDA) of the current body literature covering the aspects of labor power, capitalist accumulation, and the proletariat is carried out to identify the subtle manner in which labor power is being commoditized. The main aim of this research is to have an all-rounder feeling of the commodification of labor power and its use in the capitalist system to enable accumulation. The results of the study emphasize the fact that labor power is a very important commodity in the capitalist system and one of the primary factors of capitalist accumulation. The studies reflect the way in which the commodification of labor power is enabled by different mechanisms including, wage suppression, labor flexibilization and destruction of organizational rights of the worker. This research study shows that the proletariat lack of control over its own labor means to live reduces it to a form of exploitation, thus increasing the capitalist mode of production.*

Keywords: Proletariat, commodity, labor-power, capitalism, accumulation, exploitation, commodity fetishism, thinking body' fractal panopticon'

Introduction

The Marxists can be interpreted to mean that the role of the peasantry in the larger social, political, economic set up is determined by the relation of the peasantry to the means of production. Peasants as a group are frequently in a paradoxical situation: they are the source of value because of their work, and they are at the same time exploited by the powerful classes of capitalists or feudalists. Because the peasantry cannot voice their class interests and challenge the ruling ideologies that legitimize their

exploitation, the problem of articulation arises. Similarly, the expression of interest by the peasantry is usually plagued by internal splits and the lack of access to resources and the dominance of the ideology that is mostly forced by the ruling party (Roseberry, 1978)

The proletariat of Marxist is considered to be one of the commodities, and the idea of giving up thinking or giving up the thinking is linked to the sense of alienation and commodity fetishism. In such a state, it technically means alienation whereby workers turn to be nothing more than

commodities, in other words, makes the workers more of a commodity in their need to sell their labor power just to live and struggle. In this case, the thinking body refers to the power of the human being to think decisively, express himself or herself as well as act intentionally.

These proletariats have influenced and created a lot of anti-capitalists narratives and discourses strengthening their position on social inequality.

The slogan is: We, Are, the proletariat. [We are the 99%.

The incidence occurred during the General strike of November 2, 2011, which was an Anti-Capitalist march.

Contextually, in the Communist Party, Marx is categorical:

The proletariat is the layer of the contemporary wage-laborer who due to lack of his own means of production are driven to the sale of his labor-power to live.

Wage laborer is a person who produces and romanticizes capital, but is discarded on the street after he is no longer useful in the valorization of capital. This simply shows that the proletariats are a transgressional class.

We are nothing, we have to be something (Brown, 2013).

One of the main concepts of the Marxist theory is the idea of the living dead which refers to the notions of alienation and the commodity fetishism. This environment creates an effect of alienation where spiritual and emotional deprivation arise where the proletariat lose touch with their existence and possibilities.

The conceptualized framework by Richard has been utilized to show that labor is not given its full right. The fractal panopticon serves as a means of taking labor out of the whole society. The Proletariat literally exists in a veil of ignorance, which makes it easier to control them and bring them into submission. The initial Marxist faction, which was established, was called the Liberation of Labor. (Dinerstein, 2002).

Materialistic optic

It suggests the view that investigates social phenomena through material conditions. Consider the following: when you know how to make people earn their living, you can know much more about how the society goes (Ghadry, 2002).

In the Marxist language, the proletariat refer to the working class that owns nothing but their labor-power as a commodity. In the capitalist mode of production, the proletariat develops wealth through providing their labor, but benefits very little in terms of rewards compared to the amount of value that they produce hence they become exploited. This economic association is what supports the premise of the struggle of classes in which the goal of the proletariat is to reverse the capitalist system and create a society without classes. In simple terms, they are commonly used as a tool in capitalism, they generate wealth yet barely get anything in terms of returns (Russel, 2010).

In general, in The Communist Manifesto (1848), Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels refer to the fact that the proletariat is treated like a commodity because, under capitalism, workers (proletariat) are being limited to the role of a commodity, sold and bought in the labor market. They argue that such commodification of labor prompts exploitation, and alienation as well as dehumanization of the proletariats (Marx & Engels, 1848).

Proletariat has to be liberated or de-alienated so that they develop their potentials, and work. This is a Marxist-inspired notion that the working people (proletariat) must.

and overcome alienation (the sense of being non-identified with their work, products and with actual human potential) to achieve their full potential. This literally proposes that the working class can only realize its full human, creative and productive capacities through elimination of exploitation and alienation (Anderson, 1997)

The bourgeoisie also takes advantage of the labor of the proletariats without compensating them. The workers are paid to work yet they do not get a commensurate value of the product they produce; the extra value is given to the

bourgeoisie (the owning class) who get to make money out of the labor of the workers yet does not compensate them with fair value (Mackron, 2005).

Discussion and Analysis

The theory that was proposed by Karl Marx is one of the most powerful critiques of capitalistic production. Nonetheless, modern researchers have come back and reviewed the arguments posed by Marx about the commodification of the labor force and its focal point in capitalistic accumulation; and it has been performed especially in response to changes in technology, globalization and the outlay of the modern economy.

One of the most heated arguments deals with the origin of value in modern capitalism. In *Das Kapital*, the labor theory of value developed by Marx holds that the labor power is the ultimate source of the surplus value. This theory explains that capitalists make a profit by ensuring that they pay workers less than they create in the process of labor.

However, in the modern economies defined by automation, AI, and a significantly financialized economy, other scholars suggest that value creation now has less to do with manual labor and more to do with technological innovation, intellectual property and financial speculation.

As an example, in very automated industries, machines seem to do a lot of productive work that used to be done by human beings. The opponents of classical Marxism thus doubt the possibility of considering human labor as exclusive in terms of value. Nevertheless, numerous Marxist economists reply that even machines are products of previous labor and that their value eventually comes to be based on the labor that is contained in their design, manufacturing, and repair.

The other significant aspect of modern criticism is in the reorganization of the labor markets in the world arena. Capitalism in the modernized mode is a massive system of international supply chains whereby production is decentralized geographically in terms of location to regions with varying wage rates and regulatory

conditions. This division of labor all over the world enables multinational corporations to get maximum surplus value by shifting production to areas where labor is less and less organized. The resultant system exacerbates the commodification of the labor power in the global economy and creates new types of inequality between the developed and developing economies.

Those who adhere to world-systems theory and global political economy claim that this reorganization has brought the so-called stratified global proletariat, where workers are synchronized in various levels of a hierarchical global labor market. The workers of highly skilled economies are living with precarious industrial and service workers in developing regions, but still both of them are engaged into the overall process of capitalistic accumulation.

Moreover, new kinds of labor commodification were produced with the emergence of the digital and platform economy. Firms that are working using digital platforms are increasingly viewing labor as an on-demand resource that can be brought to bear using algorithms and data systems. Employees in these systems are usually considered an independent contractor but not a worker, and this lowers the labor safety and removes the risk of a company to an individual. This metamorphosis is an indication of a progressive phase of commodification of labor power, whereby workers have been turned into flexible units of labor that are governed by digital structures.

Meanwhile, the critical theorists say that nowadays, not only labor time but also human attention, creative, and social interaction are sold in the marketplace by capitalism. Online communication, content creation and information generation are only some of the activities in the digital world, which gives a contribution to the accumulation of capitalistic power in the form of valuable information and user interaction. These processes strip work and non-work of their borders, extending the realm of labor-like processes which can be seized by capital.

The other important stream of criticism is related

to the social reproduction of labor power. According to the feminist political economists, the conventional Marxist understanding focussed on unpaid labor of sustaining the working population and reproduction of that labor force. Childcare, household work and emotional care are activities, which maintain workers, but are often overlooked in official economic data. By bringing these forms of labor to the fore, these scholars maintain that accumulation of capitalist accumulation is not just based on commodified labor power, but is also founded on a massive sphere of unpaid reproductive labor, which is not very visible in the market transactions.

Moreover, modern sociologists and critical theorists involve the role of ideology and culture in maintaining the commodification of labor. The public is urged to become entrepreneurial subjects who should further enhance their own market value, through the educational institutions, corporate culture, and media narratives. This ideological change turns the workers into self-managed commodities who have to invest in skills, credentials, and personal branding continuously to keep up with the competition in the labor market.

Nevertheless, regardless of these critiques and changes in the theory, the basic point of the analysis made by Marx, the systemic impact of capitalism on human labor turning it into a commodity in order to achieve profit, still rings out. The so-called continuation of wage labor and a rise in precarious jobs, as well as the further radicalization of the inequalities between the capital and the proletariat, all tend to imply that the commodification of the labor force will remain a characteristic attribute of the contemporary capitalism.

Thus, instead of making the Marxian framework irrelevant, the current changes could be more adequately considered as prolongations and alterations of the processes that he first discovered. Capitalism has been changed in terms of its institutional forms and technological capabilities, but continues to be based on the commodification of human.

productivity capacity, be it physical, cognitive,

affective, is still the centre of accumulation.

In this respect, the idea of the proletariat as commodity remains a strong analytical tool which allows theorists to analyze the current interdependence of labor and capital and social power in the contemporary global economy.

Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated that labor-power is not a mere background factor but rather a commodity molded, exchanged and bought at each level of accumulation by capital. We have shown how cycles of investment, crisis and restructuring are produced by the same processes as reproduced the proletariat as a market good: i.e. by the same process that produces the labourer machine and that produces the raw material. That is, the capitalist development is dependent on the ongoing process of re-composing of labor-power: to derive surplus value, to control bodies, and to re-absorb surplus workers into novel sectors. In the realization of labor-power within this explicit commodity-sense, the vision of exploitation is reversed once more to the entire process of worker production and reproduction. According to it, any attempt to challenge accumulation has to face not merely the allocation of profits but also the institutional practices education, welfare, the control of migration, etc., which transform the human capability into a marketable asset. One way in which future research can develop on this is by the empirical mapping of such mechanisms across various regimes of accumulation, and by how new types of platform and gig work re-established the commodity status of labor-power in the twenty-first century.

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