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What is the real Marxist tradition?

Part one: What is Marxism?

“As in private life one distinguishes between what a man thinks and says of himself and what he really is and does, still more in historical struggles must one distinguish the phrases and fancies of the parties from their real organism and their real interests, their conception of themselves from their reality.” - Karl Marx, The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte

“All I know,” said Marx, “is that I’m not a Marxist.” What in the 1870s was a neat dialectical joke has since been transformed into a major political problem. The one hundred years since Marx’s death have seen the emergence of innumerable divergent and conflicting “Marxisms”. The centenary of that death seems an appropriate moment to attempt to untangle this particular knot, to establish the criteria for accepting claims to the title of Marxism and thus to answer the question “What is the genuine Marxist tradition?” But first let us be clear about the dimensions of the problem.

It is not just that people who call themselves Marxists hold different views on certain questions (say “the tendency of the rate of profit to fall” or the class nature of the Soviet Union): that is something to be expected in any living democratic movement. The real problem is that frequently the “Marxists” are to be found imprisoning, killing, and making war on each other, and, more fundamentally, that in all the great social conflicts of our age self-proclaimed “Marxists” are to be found on opposing sides of the revolutionary barricades. Think of Plekhanov and Lenin in 1917, of Kautsky and Luxemburg in 1919, of the Communists and the POUM in Barcelona in 1936, of Hungary in 1956 and of Poland in 1981. It is this which compels us to pose the question of what defines Marxism.

There are, of course, some who would reject the question altogether, denying that the search for a “true” Marxism has any meaning and simply accepting as Marxist all those who claim the label. On the one hand this is a convenient response for the bourgeoisie and its cruder ideologists, in that it permits them to condemn all Marxism and Marxists by association with Stalin. On the other hand it also suits the academic Marxologists, enabling them to produce numerous profitable “guides to the Marxists”, offering cribs to every school of thought from the Austro-Marxists to the Althusserians.

Such an approach is essentially contemplative. Action, especially political action, requires decisiveness in theory as well as practice. Marxists who want to change the world, not just to make a living from interpreting it, have no choice but to face the problem and to draw a dividing line between the genuine and the false.

One way of trying to draw such a dividing line might be to identify Marxism with the works of Marx and to measure the followers simply by their faithfulness to the word of the master. Again this is a scholastic, even religious, approach. It fails to take account of the fact that if Marxism is, as Engels said, “not a dogma, but a guide to action”, then it must be a living,
developing theory, capable of continuous growth, which has to analyze and respond to an ever changing reality – a reality which has in fact changed enormously since Marx’s day. Even if, for historical reasons, we name the theory after the individual who did most to establish it, we cannot, at the price of total impotence, reduce or confine it to what that individual himself wrote. As Trotsky observed, “Marxism is above all a method of analysis – not analysis of texts but analysis of social relations.”

This quotation from Trotsky points in the direction of an alternative solution to the problem – one adopted by Hungarian Marxist George Lukacs. In *History and Class Consciousness* Lukacs asked “What is Orthodox Marxism?” and answered as follows:

Orthodox Marxism ... does not imply the uncritical acceptance of the results of Marx’s investigations. It is not the “belief” in this or that thesis, nor the exegesis of a “sacred” book. On the contrary, orthodoxy refers exclusively to method.

This is a much more serious proposal in that it takes account of the need for development, and it contains an important element of truth in that the dialectical method is without doubt central to Marxism. Nonetheless it is inadequate as a solution to our problem. It is not possible to establish such a rigid demarcation between Marx’s method and his other analyses, nor to reduce the essential contents of Marxism solely to method. This is shown by the very example Lukacs gives to illustrate his proposition.

Let us assume [writes Lukacs] for the sake of argument that recent research had disproved once and for all every one of Marx’s individual theses. Even if this were to be proved, every serious “orthodox” Marxist would still be able to accept all such modern findings without reservation and hence dismiss all of Marx’s theses *in toto* – without having to renounce his orthodoxy for a single moment.

Quite the contrary is the case. If, for example, in defiance of Marx's whole analysis of the dynamic of capitalist development, capitalism were to evolve into a new form of world bureaucratic society without internal competition and contradictions, which precluded the possibility of either socialism or barbarism, then Marxism would clearly be refuted, and the proponents of such a perspective – Max Weber, Bruno Rizzi and James Burnham – would be vindicated. As Trotsky concluded when considering this hypothetical perspective, “nothing else would remain except only to recognize that the socialist program, based on the internal contradictions of capitalist society, ended as a Utopia.”

What the foregoing argument might seem to suggest is that Marxism should be defined as a method *combined with* certain essential analyses and propositions. But this apparent solution in reality only pushes the problem one stage back. By what criterion can it be decided which analyses and propositions are fundamental and which are secondary? Moreover such an approach bears with it the danger of theoretical sectarianism, of defining Marxism as “the correct line on everything”, and so arriving at the position that Luxemburg was not a Marxist when she disagreed with Lenin about the party, that Lenin was not a Marxist when he maintained the bourgeois nature of the Russian Revolution, and so on.

How then can we break out of this circle? Not by first seeking to extract from Marx’s work certain theses, but by using Marxist theory to view Marxism as a totality.
The class basis of Marxism

For Marx “It is not social consciousness that determines social being, but social being that determines social consciousness.” Consequently the understanding and definition of any philosophy, theory, or ideology is first and foremost a matter of disclosing the “social being” that constitutes its foundation.

Thus Marx treats religion in general as “the self-consciousness and self-awareness of man who either has not yet attained to himself or has already lost himself again. This state, this society,” he writes, “produces religion’s inverted attitude to the world, because they are an inverted world themselves.” He reveals the earthly family as the secret of the Holy Family. Similarly Engels analyses early Christianity as “the religion of slaves and emancipated slaves ... of peoples subjugated or dispersed by Rome.”

In the Communist Manifesto Marx defines the various existing schools of “socialism” directly by reference to the class interests they represent, giving us in turn feudal socialism, petty-bourgeois socialism, bourgeois socialism and so on. And, at a later date, Trotsky showed that the key to fascist ideology as well as the fascist movement lay in the class position of the petty-bourgeois crushed between capital and labor. These examples can be multiplied indefinitely; the point is that the same method of analysis must be applied to Marxism itself – and this of course was the procedure of Marx and Engels themselves.

Engels begins Anti-Dühring with the assertion that “Modern socialism is, in its content, primarily the product of the recognition, on the one hand, of the class antagonisms prevailing in modern society between proprietors and non-proprietors, between capitalists and wage-workers, and on the other, of the anarchy ruling in production.” We can complete Engels’ formulation by adding that Marxism is the recognition of these contradictions from the point of view of the proletariat, the industrial working class. As Marx puts it in The Poverty of Philosophy: “Just as the economists are the scientific representatives of the bourgeois class, so the Socialists and Communists are the theoreticians of the proletarian class.” And in the Communist Manifesto: “The theoretical conclusions of the Communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer. They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from an historical movement going on under our very eyes.”

Also in the Communist Manifesto is the following immensely important passage:

The Communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by this only: 1. In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality. 2. In the various stages of the development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole.

This amplifies and clarifies the definition of Marxism as the theory of the working class, establishing that what is involved is the articulation of the interests not of this or that section of the class but of the working class as a whole regardless of nationality – and today we might add of race or of sex. It thereby serves as the starting point for the
identification and criticism of opportunism, at the root of which lies the sacrifice of the overall interests of the class to the temporary interests of particular national, local or craft groups within it.

What we have proposed is not only a social but also an historical definition. Such a definition also explains why Marxism arose when it did. Exploitation and oppression existed for thousands of years and capitalism in its early forms for centuries, but Marxism could not emerge until capitalism had developed the productive forces, and therewith the proletariat, to the point where the latter’s potential to overthrow capitalism could be perceived. We should note that Marx arrived at Marxism only on the basis of his contact with revolutionary workers’ circles in Paris in late 1843. It was then that Marx discovered “the formation of a class with radical chains”, and first declared his allegiance to the proletariat. When the proletariat “proclaims the dissolution of the hitherto existing world order,” wrote Marx at the time, “it merely declares the secret of its own existence, since it is in fact the dissolution of this order.”

This approach to the origins of Marxism differs markedly from that offered by Kautsky and taken up by Lenin in What Is To Be Done? as part of his argument that socialism must be introduced into the working class “from without”. Kautsky wrote that “socialism and the class struggle arise side by side and not one out of the other ... the vehicle of science is not the proletariat but the bourgeois intelligentsia” and Lenin argued that “in Russia, the theoretical doctrine of social democracy arose altogether independently of the spontaneous growth of the working class movement; it arose as a natural and inevitable outcome of the development of thought among the revolutionary socialist intelligentsia.” I have attempted elsewhere to refute this position, to show its harmful consequences, and to demonstrate that it was characteristic of Lenin’s thought only up to his experience of the revolutionary working class in 1905. Suffice it to say here that the Kautsky-Lenin theory is an example of the contemplative materialism criticized by Marx in the Theses on Feuerbach, and that, in the Communist Manifesto, Marx offers his own explanation of the role of the socialist intelligentsia. A section of the ruling class, “in particular a portion of the bourgeois ideologists who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole”, cuts itself adrift and “goes over to the proletariat”. Clearly one cannot “go over” to a class which is not in existence and which has not yet made its presence felt in the battle – as was the case with the Russian working class at the time Kautsky and Lenin were considering.

Finally, when considering the class basis of Marxism, it is necessary to emphasize that Marxism is not just the theory of the proletariat’s resistance to capitalism and its struggle against capitalism; it is also, and above all, the theory of its victory. This point was made by Marx himself when he disclaimed all credit for discovering classes and class struggle:

Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this class struggle and bourgeois economists the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to prove: (1) that the existence of classes is only bound up with particular historical phases in the development, (2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat, (3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society.
And the same point is made with even greater force by Lenin when, in *The State and Revolution*, he insists that “A Marxist is solely someone who extends the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat ... This is the touchstone on which the real understanding and recognition of Marxism should be tested”. This passage retains all its relevance today when there is no shortage of intellectuals “interested in”, or even adhering to, Marxism as a method of interpreting society but who show no interest at all in the theory, still less the practice, of the struggle for workers’ power.

Thus far, analysis of Marxism as the theory of the proletariat has shown that this conception contains three elements; Marxism as the theory of the common interests of the entire class internationally; Marxism as the product of the birth of the modern proletariat and the developments of its struggle against capitalism; Marxism as the theory of the victory of that class. The definition that most succinctly summarizes these elements is that Marxism is *the theory of the international proletarian revolution*.

**From practice to theory**

To complete the argument that the essence of Marxism is that it is the theoretical expression of the proletarian revolution, it is necessary to demonstrate the connections leading from the conditions of existence of the proletariat and the tasks confronting it in the struggle (the social practice that *is* the proletariat) to the main propositions of Marxist theory. To do this comprehensively and rigorously is beyond the reach of this small book, all we can do is to trace the outline of some of the most important of these connections.

Let us begin with those aspects of Marxism that might be called its political principles and program. Firstly, internationalism. There can be no doubt as to the central role played by internationalism in the thought of Marx, but Marxist internationalism owes nothing to an abstract moral (in reality bourgeois liberal) commitment to “the international brotherhood of peoples”. Rather it is grounded in the existence of the proletariat as an international class, created by the capitalist world market, and engaged in an international struggle against that system.

The statement in the *Communist Manifesto* that “The working men have no country”, and that “national differences and antagonisms between people are daily more and more vanishing, owing to the development of the bourgeoisie, to freedom of commerce, to the world market, to uniformity in the modes of production and to the conditions of life corresponding thereto”, has often been criticized as an exaggeration or an outright error, in the light of the continuing hold of nationalist ideology over the proletariat. Nonetheless it remains true at two levels. First as a statement of tendency rather than accomplished fact. Secondly as a statement about the proletariat relative to other social classes. The modes of production (and the cultures) of Japan, Brazil and Britain have infinitely more in common today than they did a century ago. In relation to the peasantry it was not even possible to speak seriously of international consciousness or organization. The internationalism of the bourgeoisie, despite its creation of the world economy and its plethora of international organizations, remains qualitatively inferior to the international potential of the proletariat. The highest level it can rise to is the international bloc or alliance set against rival international blocs and even these are continually disrupted by national antagonisms.
The basic characteristic of Marxist internationalism is, as we have noted, the priority of the whole (the interests of the world working class) over the part. To make this more concrete: a revolutionary worker who has never left his home town, speaks only his native language, and yet opposes his “own” government in time of war is far more of an internationalist than the learned professor who has travelled the world, speaks half a dozen languages, is steeped in the knowledge of different cultures, and yet in time of war supports his own government. Again, because of the priority of the whole, Marxist internationalism is perfectly compatible with recognition of the right to national self-determination and support for national liberation struggles, if the interests of the international class demand it.

Secondly, take the principle of state ownership of the means of production. To many (especially the bourgeoisie, but also many would-be Marxists) this has been seen as the fundamental principle of Marxism and of socialism in general. Usually, when those who take this view are socialists, they reason as follows. Capitalism, which equals private ownership, is irrational and unjust, it causes economic crises, poverty, war etc. If production were state-owned and there was state planning of the economy, it would be an altogether better, more rational, arrangement and these evils would be ended. The struggle of the proletariat is then seen as a means by which this end can be achieved. Should an alternative means to this end present itself, say peasant guerrilla war or parliamentary legislation, then that makes no real difference.

Marxist reasoning is quite different. The proletariat is locked in class struggle against the bourgeoisie which exploits and oppresses it. The only way it can win that battle and emancipate itself is to defeat the bourgeoisie politically and take possession of the means of production. This it can do only by creating its own state. This is how the question is presented in the Communist Manifesto:

We have seen above, that the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle of democracy. The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e. of the proletariat organized as the ruling class; and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible.

For the state socialists state ownership is the end, the working class the means. For Marxism the emancipation of the class is the end, state ownership the means. This difference – the “two souls of socialism” as Hal Draper has called it – has been of immense significance in the past hundred years and we shall return to it repeatedly.

The ultimate aim of Marxism – the classless society – has of course been an age-old human aspiration. What distinguishes Marxism is that it derives the classless society, as a realistic possibility, from the development of the proletariat, “a class which owing to its whole position in society, can only free itself by abolishing altogether all class rule, all servitude and all exploitation.” To cite the Communist Manifesto again:

All preceding classes that got the upper hand, sought to fortify their already acquired status by subjecting society at large to their conditions of appropriation. The proletarians cannot become masters of the productive forces of society except by abolishing their own previous mode of appropriation and thereby also every other previous mode of appropriation. They have nothing of their own to secure
and to fortify; their mission is to destroy all previous securities for, and insurances of, individual property.

In terms of theory the transition from capitalism to communism – the dictatorship of the proletariat – was considered to be (as we have noted) merely the extension of the proletarian class struggle to the point of victory. However, the specific form of this dictatorship was discovered neither by Marx nor any other Marxist theorist, but by revolutionary workers themselves. First by the Parisian workers in the Commune of 1871, whose actions indicated the first principles of workers’ democracy – payment of all officials at workers’ wages, election and recall of all delegates, replacement of the standing army by the armed workers, etc. Second by the workers of Petrograd (and then all Russia) who created the organizational form uniquely suited to the expression of workers’ power – the soviet or workers’ council. The great merit of the soviet, it should be noted, is that it is based not on the worker as individual citizen in a geographical area, but on the worker as part of a collective in the workplace, the unit of production, and that it arises within capitalism as a natural development of the workers’ struggle against capitalism – its historical point of departure was an enlarged strike committee. It should also be noted that Marxist theory on this question (Marx’s The Civil War in France, Lenin’s The State and Revolution, Gramsci’s articles in Ordine Nuovo) is a direct generalization of the most advanced experience of the class.

Now we must turn from the program of Marxism to its theoretical foundations: the materialist conception of history and the critical analysis of capitalism.

What is the basis of historical materialism? This question can be approached analytically (by considering the concepts and propositions of this theory) or historically (by tracing its genesis and development in the works of Marx). Of these the analytic approach is more important as the historical genesis of a theory might include all sorts of accidental factors and detours.

Let us begin with the question of materialism versus idealism.

Idealism – belief in the priority of mind ("spirit", "ideals", "God", etc.) over matter – and the idealist conception of history (history as determined by the development of ideas, consciousness, etc.) has, itself, a material basis. It lies in the division between mental and manual labor and the emergence of a ruling class freed from manual labor, in other words living off the labor of others.

Division of labor only becomes truly such from the moment when a division of material and mental labor appears. (The first form of ideologists, priests, is concurrent.) From this moment onwards consciousness can really flatter itself that it is something other than consciousness of existing practice, that it really represents something without representing something real; from now on consciousness is in a position to emancipate itself from the world and to proceed in the formation of “pure” theory, theology, philosophy, ethics, etc.

By contrast materialism is the “natural” theory of a producing class struggling for its emancipation. But of course we cannot simply identify historical materialism with materialism. Materialism preceded Marxism by more than two thousand years and in the eighteenth century materialism was the standpoint of the rising bourgeoisie. What distinguishes Marxist materialism from this bourgeois materialism? Marx expressed it thus:
The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism (that of Feuerbach included) is that the thing, reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the object of contemplation, but not as sensuous human activity, practice, not subjectively.

In other words bourgeois materialism is mechanical. It treats human beings as passive, as mere products or effects of material circumstances – as objects. In doing so it reflects the actual position of men and women in capitalist society – the worker as an appendage of the machine, labor as a “factor” of production equivalent to other factors (land, machines, etc.), living labor as subordinate to and a “part” of dead labor. Mechanical materialism, however, is incapable of complete consistency; in consistent form it would be a total determinism and fatalism and it is impossible to act in the world on this basis. Therefore it always contains a more or less hidden exemption clause for itself whereby idealism re-enters through the back door, as the “knowledge”, “science”, or sometimes “will” of the elite:

The materialist doctrine concerning the changing of circumstances and upbringing forgets that circumstances are changed by men and that it is essential to educate the educator himself. This doctrine must, therefore, divide society into two parts, one of which is superior to society.

Marx overcame this antinomy through the concept of practice. “The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity or self-changing can be conceived and rationally understood only as revolutionary practice.” The model for this concept of practice was human labor, the means whereby humanity shapes and changes nature, and creates itself. Hegel's outstanding achievement, Marx writes:

... is, first, that Hegel grasps the self-creation of man as a process ... and that he therefore grasps the nature of labor, and conceives objective man (true because real man) as the result of his own labor.

But, Marx goes on, “Labor as Hegel understands and recognizes it is abstract mental labor.” Marx was able to go beyond Hegel, to stand him on his feet and recognize labor as concrete practical activity as the basis of man and history (“this simple fact hitherto concealed by an overgrowth of ideology”) because, and only because, he had before him in the proletariat the first class of immediate producers able to transform society and become its master. It is this conception of the role of labor, of production, that constitutes the methodological and empirical point of departure of the Marxist theory of history. From it are developed the key concepts of “forces of production”, “relations of production” and “mode of production” which in turn culminate in the theory of the social revolution:

In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness ... At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or –what is but a legal expression for the same thing – with the property relations within which they have been at work hitherto.
From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution.

At this point one important confusion must be cleared up. Historical materialism has frequently been subject to a mechanical materialist distortion in which the dialectic of forces and relations of production is interpreted simply as an antagonism between the technical instruments of production ("forces") and the system of property ownership ("relations") which operates independently of human activity, thus arriving at a theory of technological determinism. In this interpretation both Marx’s key concepts undergo a reduction in their meaning. For Marx the forces of production signify not only the instruments in the sense of tools, machines etc., but the total productive capacity of society including the productive activity of the working class. “Of all the instruments of production, the greatest productive power is the revolutionary class itself.” Property ownership, on the other hand, is “but a legal expression of relations of production.” Thus the contradiction between the forces and relations of production is not separate from the class struggle but is the very ground on which the latter arises.

This theoretical demonstration that historical materialism is history viewed from the standpoint of the proletariat is, as we have noted, more important than the question of how Marx happened to develop the theory but, in fact, its historical genesis parallels the theoretical logic almost exactly. The first comprehensive statement of historical materialism was The German Ideology of 1845. This work was immediately preceded by two major texts, The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, and the Introduction to a Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right. The 1844 Manuscripts begin not with "philosophy" or with "alienation" but with the class struggle. The opening sentence reads: “Wages are determined by the bitter struggle between capitalist and worker.” The economic analysis that follows is, by Marx’s later standards, primitive but it is carried out explicitly from the point of view of the worker. It aims to show “from political economy itself, in its own words” that:

the worker sinks to the level of a commodity, and to a most miserable commodity; that the misery of the worker increases with the power and volume of his production; that the necessary result of competition is the accumulation of capital in a few hands, and thus a restoration of monopoly in a more terrible form; and finally that the distinction between capitalist and landlord, and between agricultural laborer and industrial worker, must disappear, and the whole of society divide into the two classes of property owners and the propertyless workers.

In seeking to explain this state of affairs Marx is led to an analysis of the nature of workers’ labor. Workers produce the wealth of the capitalists and their own misery because their labor is alienated. Thus Marx arrives at the conception of the dual role of labor: labor as the means by which people create their life and their world, and alienated labor as the means by which they vitiate their life and create a world which stands over and against them – a dual role which implies the potential for human liberation with the abolition of alienated labor, and which thus anticipates both the starting point and conclusion of the materialist conception of history.

However, if we move back one stage further to the Introduction to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right (early 1844) we find already present what later appears as the result of the analysis of alienated labor and the result of historical materialism, namely the
revolutionary role of the proletariat. “When the proletariat announces the dissolution of existing social order, it only declares the secret of its own existence, for it is the effective dissolution of this order.” And, as we have already seen, Marx’s recognition of this role was itself the product of his own experience of revolutionary workers’ circles in Paris. Thus both theoretically and biographically Marx’s general conception of history and society can be traced back to its material basis – the proletarian struggle.

The Marxist analysis of capitalism (usually referred to as “Marxist economics” though really it is a “critique of political economy”) was designed to provide a firm scientific foundation for the workers’ movement by revealing the law of motion of the capitalist mode of production. That the entire analysis is conducted from the standpoint of the revolutionary working class should be obvious, after all its major themes include: an explanation of how workers are exploited; a demonstration that the whole system is founded on that exploitation; a prediction that because it is founded on exploitation this system must inevitably break down. Since however this aspect of Marxism has, more than any other, been presented as “objective”, “value-free”, “class-free”, a few observations on the genesis and logic of Marx’s critique of political economy seem justified.

Marx’s critique is, of course, an application of the theory of historical materialism to the capitalist mode of production, and like historical materialism itself, is rooted in an analysis of labor – an analysis of labor as alienated. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that basically Marx’s theory of alienation is not a theory of how the worker “feels” about work, or of the general state of human consciousness, but a theory of alienated labor – in other words of that labor which the worker is compelled to make over to a not her, to sell. Alienated labor is wage labor, not just a state of mind but “an economic fact”. However, it is also an economic fact that can only be perceived by looking at labor from the point of view of the worker. Indeed Marx was the first “philosopher” and the first “economist” in the history of the world to analyze the labor process from the standpoint of the worker. Just how central the theory of alienated labor is to the Marxist analysis of capitalism can be seen from two of Marx’s propositions. First that “although private property appears to be the basis and cause of alienated labor, it is rather a consequence of the latter”. Second that the differentia specifica of capitalism is that under it labor power becomes a commodity.