

# **The Myth of the National and Progressive Bourgeoisie (2)**

## **A WORD WITH THE READERS**

A period of 9 months separates the first pamphlet of "The Myth" from the second pamphlet. So it is necessary that we begin this pamphlet by admitting our shortcoming and declaring the acceptance of the criticisms which are valid about us over this period. Perhaps the most important factor in this has been the difficulties and shortcomings of our internal programming and division of labour, which we believe, have now been eliminated to a large extent. Of course, we must also point out that some of the questions which, according to our initial plan, would have been dealt with in the course of this series of pamphlets have already been presented in other texts of the group. The study of the preconditions of the development of capitalism in Iran, whose fundamental pivot is the expropriation process of the 60's, and which, according to our initial plan, comprised the contents of the fourth pamphlet of the Myth, has been presented in its main points in the book "Communists and the Peasant Movement, After the Imperialist Solution of the Agrarian Question in Iran, March 1980". Likewise, some points on the conditions of production and reproduction of the total social capital in Iran, whose detailed treatment belongs to the fifth pamphlet of "The Myth...", have been put forward in the supplement to the book "The Prospect of Destitution and the Re-Escalation of the general plan of this series of pamphlets in a supplement at the end of this pamphlet.

But if we left the pamphlets of the "Myth..." to their own for a long time the realities of the class struggle did not leave alone the myth of national bourgeoisie. If a year ago, anyone, through his attachment to the workers' movement, showed "insolence" towards the national bourgeoisie, called it counter-revolutionary, considered the phrase "national" (which in the country dominated by imperialism can only be interpreted as "anti-imperialist") too much for it, predicted its treachery and warned

the workers against it, and so on, screams of the lovers of this hopeless creature would be raised to the sky and the flood of "political" labels such as "quasi-Trotskyist", "leftist" and so on, would rain upon him. Of course they may have been right. Perhaps in those ancient times (!) the mode of production in Iran was different, the stage of revolution was different, the factions within the ruling body were different, the facts were different, "Marxism" was different, etc.! But in any case today the state of things stands differently. The flood of the immaculate blood of Iran's revolutionary workers and toilers and communist militants in all corners of the country, in Kurdistan, *Baluchestan*, *Turkeman Sahra*, *Khuzestan*, *Isfahan*, *Tehran*, etc., which has Revolution, February 1980". Nevertheless, in our view, this point in no way serves to justify not publishing this Series of pamphlets regularly. And in order to emphasize our commitment in pursuing this task, and also in order that the comrades, in the event of our repeated shortcoming in future, may have a freer hand in criticism, we have included flown during the past year "thanks" to these very gentlemen of the "national bourgeoisie of Iran", has shaken loose the bases of the Menshevik illusions of a large section of the communists of our country. The "national bourgeoisie of Iran" has explicitly displayed its uncouth and putrefied nature. The "disclosed" files, telling of the showering of the American embassy with flowers by these gentlemen, complemented the experience of many of the forces on the bombardment of the toilers of Kurdistan; and the myth of the national and progressive bourgeoisie, by the verdict of the objective conditions of the class struggle was buried until further notice. Yes, it is true that reality forces the facts into the most petrified minds with greater vigour than reasoning.

But the interesting point here has been the method which a large section of the communist movement has adopted in the face of this "cognition" and change of position. We have all witnessed how the term "national bourgeoisie" dropped out of our communist movement's literature. Initially the word "national", in the form of a marginal and complementary adjective for the adjectives of "liberal", "private" and "intermediate", was skilfully driven into the parentheses and then the parentheses themselves quietly vanished within a space of two pamphlets, two leaflets or two issues of a publication. Today we must set a prize for anyone who can find the term "national bourgeoisie" in the publications of *Razmandegan*, *Peykar*, *Kar*, *Nabard* and even *Zahmat*.<sup>[7]</sup>

But has a theoretical gain been established in this however positive move, for the workers' movement? Have any of the forces who have changed their position on the

"national bourgeoisie" openly declared to the workers' and communist movement as to why they used to think as such, where their errors lay and what new cognition of the productive and class relations in society or of Marxism, forms the analytical foundation of their new position? How can the communist and workers' movement of Iran and other countries dominated by imperialism avoid these mistakes in future? Does not the elimination of the category of "national bourgeoisie" from the system of thinking of these forces, make revision in its other components necessary?,... It seems that the answers are negative. Since, presumably, the whole art of a sectarian "good theoretician" lies in that he changes position in such manner that no one catches him red-handed and that, as far as possible, he does it in a way that the present position of his favourite group or organisation "coherently" follows the previous positions. On the one hand, this method certainly has the advantage that the group's activities are not slackened, the cadres active in the various arenas do not lose confidence, they do not sense the smell of eclecticism or, God forbid, theoretical weakness and impotence, their attention is not drawn towards other groups and trends, and tens of other such "advantages"; and on the other hand, it also has the benefit that our theoretician can always return to the previous positions without difficulty, and without loosing in these to's and fro's, acrobatics and zigzags, his "coherence" and thereby his reputation; of course it is of no importance whatsoever that the workers' and communist movement remains deprived of any kind of theoretical gains, always follows on from behind events, every time starts from the point of zero, and defeat after defeat is brought upon it. Sectarianism means to give precedence to the interests of the group over the interests of the whole workers' movement; and "theoretical sectarianism" is its most plain and pure form. The revolutionary movement of the Iranian proletariat which resolutely demands and needs to "smash the wrong", cannot rest content with such a vanguard. The proletariat of Iran cannot for ever sacrifice victims, make experience out of its sweat and blood and leave it at the disposal of the communist movement to receive in return, "theoretical respectability". Theory cannot owe to practice for ever, since in the absence of revolutionary theory, revolutionary practice is doomed to stagnate.

But the other aspect of the problem, i.e. the numerous pores left open for the revival of the forgotten and unnoticed deviationist views, so far as it concerns the category of "national bourgeoisie", is of much importance. If our aim of writing this series of pamphlets were merely the elimination of this term from the communist movement's literature, we would here declare the end of the matter and consider our mission accomplished. But the essential point, as we also mentioned in the first pamphlet, is that the category of "national bourgeoisie" is the meeting point of more deep rooted

and more fundamental deviations. Deviations which find their expression in multifarious aspects and forms: and the category of "national bourgeoisie" is only one, and perhaps during the last year the most prominent one, of these. Therefore, the "change of position" in relation to the category of "national bourgeoisie", as long as it is not based on the Marxist critique of the entirety of the system of thinking, of which this category is only one aspect; so long as the critique, negation and rejection of this category is not the reflection of the establishment of the basic and principled tenets of Marxism-Leninism in the spheres of imperialism, capitalism and the characteristics of the democratic revolution in the dominated country, it will lack any kind of lasting political-theoretical value. The deviation which until yesterday appeared in the belief in the existence of "national bourgeoisie" and its "progressive" role in our revolution, today emerges in the theories on the factions within the government and on the attitude to the bourgeois demagogic state; and tomorrow will occur in Menshevik and reformist views about the communist programme in the present revolution, and especially in the formulation of the demands of the proletariat in our revolution. The logical continuation of the fundamental deviations, of which the belief in the "national bourgeoisie" was its primary manifestation, will be nothing but the acceptance of the theories of the non capitalist way of development and the Three Worlds; and this is a warning to all those forces which on the one hand demand demarcation with these theories and, on the other, have not as yet relinquished their mechanical and clichéd views in the field of the economic structure of the society and the nature and content of our revolution.

So, despite the fact that the crude pressure of experience has forced into retreat the believers in the myth of the national bourgeoisie, as yet our workers' and communist movement has not theorized and established the defeat of these views. The struggle against these deviations must inevitably continue. But what is certain is that this struggle, precisely because at this juncture the myth of national and progressive bourgeoisie has faded into the background, must be continued in another form and be focused on the rejection and refutation of another manifestation of these basic deviations. This new focal point is, in our view, in the final analysis, the question of the determination of the economic content of the victory of the democratic revolution of Iran from the viewpoint of the independent interests of the proletariat, a content whose extract must be included right now in the programme of communists, in the form of the proletariat's demands. From this viewpoint, the decisive line between Menshevism and Bolshevism in our communist movement is drawn by the belief or non-belief in the place, necessity and desirability of the

establishment of "the national and independent capitalism of Iran", as the content of the victory of the democratic revolution. The utopia of national and progressive capitalism has now merely lost its executive - i.e. the "national bourgeoisie" - and Menshevism is about to create such an executive out of the proletariat itself, and to place the task of removing the obstacles to the development of "national capitalism" on the shoulders of the proletariat. In contrast, the communists must, by smashing the utopia of national and independent capitalism in all its dimensions, define and establish in the clearest manner the demands of the proletariat in the present revolution, which spring specifically from the necessity of securing the necessary preconditions for the final move towards socialism.

So, as far as it concerns this series of pamphlets, not only has the work not ended, but in fact it must be started in the real sense of the word. These pamphlets must specifically be put at the service of the refutation of the utopia of national and independent capitalism. As we mentioned in the previous pamphlet, we begin these articles with the examination of the basic categories and concepts of Marxism on the attitude to capitalism and imperialism. Our aim in this section is not the repetition of general principles, but to lay stress on those basic categories and concepts, the lack of Marxist understanding about which, forms the fundamental basis of the prevalent deviationist views on the economic-class relations dominant in our society. In other words we initially start by making the theoretical tools, or better to say, by reminding the theoretical tools made and prepared by the great teachers of the proletariat, Marx, Engels and Lenin, and then in later pamphlets we shall employ these tools, as far as possible, as a weapon in the critique of the utopia of national and independent capitalism. At the same time we endeavour in every juncture, taking into account the facets of knowledge of the discussion that we open up, to deal at the same level of analysis with the theoretical roots of the prevailing deviations.

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The titles of the books mentioned in this pamphlet have been abbreviated as follows:

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Full name</b>
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Vol.1 (2, etc)	<a href="#">Capital, Vol.1</a> ( <a href="#">Vol.2</a> , <a href="#">Vol.3</a> ), Marx, Progress Publishers (English)
"Results"	<a href="#">"Results of the Immediate Process of Production"</a> , Marx, Supplement to Vol.1, Capital, Penguin Publications (English)
"Theories"	<a href="#">"Theories of Surplus Value"</a> , Marx, Progress Publishers (English)
"Grundrisse"	<a href="#">"Grundrisse"</a> , Marx, Penguin Publications (English) Vol. 1 (2, etc)
"Critique of Political Economy"	of <a href="#">"A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy"</a> , Marx, Progress Publishers (English)
"Development of Capitalism"	of <a href="#">"The Development of Capitalism in Russia"</a> , Lenin, in Persian.

**Unity of Communist Militants  
March 1980**

## **The Myth of the National and Progressive Bourgeoisie (2)**

## **1- Basic Categories and Concepts: Capitalism (part one)**

We said in the first pamphlet that the myth of national and progressive bourgeoisie and the utopia of national and independent capitalism (and consequently the right-wing compromising policies based on them) thrive on the dominance of two basic deviationist perceptions in our communist movement: firstly, the categories of capital and capitalist system are viewed and perceived not from a Marxist viewpoint, but from a completely bourgeois angle; secondly, and on this basis, nationalist views and notions which introduce imperialism as the foreign policy of superpowers or as an extra-territorial mechanism of plunder and pillage, have taken the place of the Leninist analysis of imperialism, as the highest stage of capitalism. Therefore it is evident that our discussion, if we want it to be as comprehensive as possible, before dealing with the analysis of the ins and outs of the relations of production in Iran, the assessment of the material bases of movement of the different classes in this system and finally with the analysis of the nature and content of the present revolution and the utopia of national and independent capitalism, must settle accounts with the fundamental categories whose non-Marxist cognition is the basis of the prevailing deviations. So, we too, must begin with capital, capitalism and imperialism and before anything else remind the main points of the Marxist-Leninist cognition of these categories; especially since, in our view, the emptiness of the views of the "national bourgeoisie" supporters (or the eclecticism of those who do not resolutely demarcate themselves from this bourgeois outlook) can be revealed to a large extent, at this theoretical level, and through exposing the complete alienation of the analytical system and tools of these views from Marxism.

Therefore the first question, the reminder of the answer to which we set as our task is this: "what is capital and what is the capitalist system?" It is obvious that the answer to this question is available right now to the communist movement of Iran in the clearest and most comprehensive manner in the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin, and our task is not its repetition. What specifically is our task is that firstly, we arm ourselves with these gains and secondly, show how the prevailing deviationist views have stood on their feet only by distorting, violating and covering up the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism.

## **1- Capitalist Production as the Unity of the Production Process and the Process of Expansion of Value (Production of Surplus-Value)**

What is capitalism and on what basis is it distinguished from other production systems? Marx defines capitalist production as "the unity of the production process and the process of expansion of value (production of surplus-value)". To understand the essence of the capitalist system we should take a closer look at this definition:

Social production is the precondition for the existence of every society and its essential foundation. The common feature of all modes of production in the course of man's history is the physical process of labour; a process in which man with the aid of his instruments influences Nature, changes its form and appropriates his needed things from within it. "Labour is, in the first place, a process in which both man and Nature participate, and in which man of his own accord starts, regulates, and controls the material re-actions between himself and Nature." (Vol.1 p.173) The labour-process, precisely on account of it being the common feature of all modes of social production, is independent of the specific forms of productive relations in any specific stage of development of man's history. In other words, in the womb of every social system the labour-process goes on with common dimensions. "(Some) determinations will be shared by the most modern epoch and the most ancient. No production will be thinkable without them." ([Grundrisse](#), p.85) The fundamental factors and elements of the labour process which irrespective of the form of the relations of production and the degree of development of the productive forces in any society, constitute the basis of social production, are: 1- labour, 2- the thing or subject of labour, and 3- instruments of labour. "In the labour-process, therefore, man's activity, with the help of the instruments of labour, effects an alteration, designed from the commencement, in the material worked upon. The process disappears in the product; the latter is a use-value, Nature's material adapted by a change of form to the wants of man" (Vol.1, p.176) "If we examine the whole process from the point of view of its result, the product, it is plain that both the instruments and the subject of labour are means of production and that the labour itself is productive labour." (Ibid. p.176)

Let us sum up: the labour-process, and the production of use-value through it, is the precondition for the existence of man and every social system. From the viewpoint of its scale and practical form in the different stages of the historical evolution of societies, this process can have different dimensions. However, beyond these



various dimensions and forms, the existence of two essential factors, i.e. labour and the means of labour, is a necessary and undeniable condition. Labour-process and the confrontation of its internal factors (labour and means of labour) are the physical and material bases of every system of production and Marx calls them the "general preconditions" of every type of production (and hence the essential condition for the existence of any society).

But awareness of the existence of these "general preconditions", i.e. understanding the necessity for the existence of the labour process and its pivotal position in every social system, whilst itself the most principled point of departure in the cognition of the laws of movement of societies, does not provide this cognition. The sketch of the evolutionary course of history and the internal dynamism of its movement and the emphasis that social relations assume different forms in this evolutionary course and acquire independent laws of movement in every specific period, is one of the basic achievements of historical materialism. Marxism, unlike the variety of bourgeois ideologies which conceive of capitalist relations as eternal and permanent, lays stress precisely on the historical limitation of these relations and on the conditions of their appearance, movement and demise, and subjects them to analysis. Naturally, such analysis cannot be based merely on the cognition of the "general preconditions of production", since the issue is over the independent laws of movement of societies in definite historical periods, and "the so-called general preconditions of all production are nothing more than these abstract moments with which no real historical stage of production can be grasped." ([Grundrisse](#) p.88, Marx's emphasis) Then, "whenever we speak of production... what is meant is always production at a definite stage of social development... production in general is an abstraction, but a rational abstraction in so far as it really brings out and fixes the common element and thus saves us repetition." (Ibid. p.85) What we want to know are the laws of movement of the capitalist system of production, as a definite system of production and a specific historical period, and it is natural that for this purpose we cannot rely on the analysis of the "general preconditions of production" (the labour-process), i.e. the common feature of the capitalist system and other social systems. Quite the opposite, we must precisely go after the cognition and analysis of those relations of production which distinguish the capitalist mode of production from other modes of social production, all having in common the existence of labour-process and production of use-value, What are the elements and the particular relations of capitalist production?

We saw that treatment of production as a thing-in-itself and in abstraction of

definite relations of production does not by itself contain the answer to our question, however much we scrutinize the details of the relation of labour and means of labour. In the same way, examination of the category of "exploitation" in an abstract manner is to go astray. Just as the labour-process is the general precondition of any system of production, so too is the existence of surplus product (surplus to the consumptive necessities of the producers and to the re-building of the means of production) the necessary condition for the existence of all class societies. The development of productive forces within the primitive commune societies and production of surplus are the necessary condition for the appearance of social classes, since without the existence of this surplus product there can be no mention of the appropriation of a part of the production of one class in society by the other class (exploitation). Therefore the existence of surplus product can merely be one of the basic elements for distinguishing class societies from the primitive commune, and again, precisely for the reason that this is the common feature of all class societies, it cannot itself become expressive of the state of the economic and political relations of classes in the definite and different periods of historical development of societies, or distinguish the independent economic laws of movement of every period from other periods. That which distinguishes different class systems from one another is not the existence of exploitation in general (the appropriation of the surplus product of producers by dominant class or classes). The victorious khan who takes tribute, the Mullah who lives on tribute and tithe, the landlord who takes a share of the crop, the capitalist who profits, and the usurer who takes interest, all take a share of the products of social labour in whose production process they have played no part. Likewise, the slave who labours to death for his owner, the serf who does corvée, and the worker who "freely" sells his labour-power to the capitalist in the market, all, despite being the producers of society's wealth, enjoy the minimum, and no more, of the subsistence which is recognised implicitly or openly, in every definite juncture. The distinguishing feature, then, of the various social periods in the history of class societies, is not the existence or non-existence of exploitation and parasitism, but those particular economic relations and laws within whose definite and independent framework, exploitation and parasitism take shape in every definite period. Marx sums up the principal element for distinguishing different class societies such: "The essential difference between the various economic forms of society... lies only in the mode in which this surplus-labour is in each case extracted from the actual producer, the labourer" (Vol.1 p.209). Hence, that which makes capitalism what it is, is not that this system is a system of production and in which man, with the help of the means of production, produces use-values, for, this is the feature belonging to all human societies; in the

same way, capitalism is not distinguished by the element that in this system, surplus-labour is extracted from the producers - workers (in the general sense) – and that the surplus-product is appropriated by the owners of the means of production, for, again, this is the general feature of all class social systems. What gives to capitalism a distinct nature and independent laws, is the unique mode, on the basis of which the surplus-product in this system is appropriated by the owners of the means of production. This mode and form, is nothing but the production of surplus-value. Capitalist production is a system in which "capital-relation" i.e. "the process of producing surplus-value" becomes dominant over social production, and the social process of labour becomes confined within the framework of the expansion of capital (production of surplus-value). Before dealing with the conditions for the domination of capital over social production, it is necessary to take a closer look, for a while at the "capital-relation" itself i.e. at the process of production of surplus-value:

That surplus-products are manifested in the form of surplus-value, necessitates, before anything, that the products of the labour-process ( production process ) possess value in addition to use-value; in other words they need to have become commodities. Thus, from both the analytical point of view and the point of view of historical evolution of economic categories, phenomena and relations, commodity precedes capital<sup>[8]</sup>. Capitalist production is the developed and generalized form of commodity production. The commodity production, in which independent producers, who are the owners of their own instruments of labour (or merchants), exchange in the market their produce (or the surplus-product of other producers), itself has a historical root. This mode of production grows in the margin of pre-capitalist systems of production and gradually produces the embryos of those economic institutions and relations - such as money, market, separation of manufacture from agriculture, expansion of trade, etc. – which later on in the capitalist system become the fundamental pivot of the dominant relations. It is initially in the framework of commodity production that the products of the labour process acquire the element of value in addition to use-value. Commodity is the unity of use-value and value, and the production of commodities is "the unity of the labour-process and the process of creating value". However, there is a long way from the production of commodities to capitalist production, both from the analytical viewpoint and from the viewpoint of historical evolution. From the analytical viewpoint, Marx sums up this difference as such: "The process of production, considered on the one hand as the unity of the labour-process and the process of creating value is production of commodities; considered on the other

hand as the unity of the labour process and the process of producing surplus value, it is the capitalist process of production, or capitalist production of commodities" (Vol.1, p.191). In commodity production the talk is over the production of value and in capitalist production over the production of surplus-value. What is the significance of this difference? 1) Is not the process of producing surplus-value the same process of producing value which has been extended beyond a definite point? 2) Thus, is not the difference between commodity production and capitalist production merely a quantitative difference?

About the first question it should be said that in the capitalist system it is undoubtedly so<sup>[9]</sup>. The process of producing surplus-value is the same process of producing value which has been continued beyond a definite "limit" but where we compare the production of value in the commodity system with the production of surplus-value, which is peculiar to the capitalist system, we see that for the realization of this second one (the production of surplus-value) the existence of certain objective conditions is necessary, which are basically absent in the system of commodity production. The principal axis of these objective conditions is labour-power becoming a commodity. In order that surplus product manifests as surplus-value, it is not sufficient merely that the products of the labour-process are value as well as use-value (become commodities), but that the "general preconditions of production" (labour and means of production) also become a commodity, so that in this way the labour-process becomes transformed into a process of confrontation and mutual reactions between two kinds of commodities and that through this the primary elements of the labour process are able to find value expression. Even in the commodity production, the means of labour have the capacity of becoming transformed into a commodity, to a considerable extent. However, for labour (or more precisely, labour-power) to become a commodity and its reproduction as a commodity is precisely the process which is the necessary condition for the production of surplus value and the particular essence of the capitalist system. Now we realize the significance of defining capitalism as "generalized commodity production", for, so long as "becoming a commodity" is not extended to labour-power, commodity production is not transformed into capitalist production. In this way the answer to the second question is now clear. The difference between commodity production and capitalist production, from the analytical viewpoint, is by no means a quantitative difference. The capitalist system is not merely a system in which commodity production has become more extensive or for example in which more commodities are produced. The issue is over the most important economic phenomenon - labour-power - becoming a commodity and over the theory

of surplus-value production. From the historical viewpoint too, as we said, there is a long way from commodity production to capitalist production and now it is obvious why. The transformation of commodity production into capitalist production depends upon those social and historical developments and changes which prepare the grounds for labour power to become a commodity and realize it. The history of the emergence of capital is the history of the emergence of wage-labour from the heart of enslaving feudal relations. It is the history of the expropriation of immediate producers and the separation of tillers from land; the history which, as Marx says, "is written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire" (Vol.1, p.669).

The confrontation of wage-labour and capital and production of surplus-value on the basis of this is the essence of the "capital-relation". With the labour-power becoming a commodity on a wide scale in society, capital-relation becomes dominant over social production. With the establishment of the domination of capital over social production, the economic laws of movement of society too acquire a specifically capitalistic character. Categories and relations such as production process, commodity, money, market, etc, which were, from the analytical and historical viewpoints, the presupposition and grounds of the emergence of capital and capitalist production now find entity and are established, by reliance on capital and on the basis of its laws of movement. "... even economic categories appropriate to earlier modes of production acquire a new and specific historical character under the impact of capitalist production" (Results, p.950). Capital makes its imprint on the whole of the labour-process. The relation between man and the means of production manifests itself in "a relation between the things the capitalist has bought, and the things that belong to him", and the labour-process, this presupposition of the existence and survival of human society, is merely transformed into a necessary substratum for the production, reproduction and accumulation of capital, and its scale, expansion and manner of operation conform to the requirements of the movement of capital. The product of the labour-process, i.e. a use-value which satisfies social and human needs, acquires significance and is produced on account of being the physical substratum of value and not only value but surplus-value. "Use-value is, by no means, the thing 'qu'on aime pour lui-même' in the production of commodities. Use-values are only produced by capitalists, because, and in so far as, they are the material substratum, the depositories of exchange-value. Our capitalist has two objects in view: in the first place, he wants to produce a use-value that has a value in exchange, that is to say, an article destined to be sold, a commodity; and secondly, he desires to produce a commodity whose

value shall be greater than the sum of the values of the commodities used in its production, that is, of the means of production and the labour-power, that he purchased with his good money in the open market. His aim is to produce not only a use-value, but a commodity also; not only use-value, but value; not only value, but at the same time surplus-value" (Vol. 1, p.181). Thus the labour-process acquires a completely capitalistic character from the viewpoint of [its] motive (profit-making), conditions (the elements of production becoming a commodity) and laws of growth (the laws of capital accumulation).

Capitalist production gives a new content "even [to] economic categories appropriate to earlier modes of production". Division of labour, commodity, market, money and trade - themselves the ground works of the emergence of the capitalist system- are not spared of this internal metamorphosis either. Commodity, the manifestation of the exchange of the products of independent producers in the margin of pre-capitalist systems of production or the surplus-product of these systems themselves, is transformed into the general and primary form of all the products of social labour, and "The capitalist epoch is therefore characterised by this, that labour power takes in the eyes of the labourer himself the form of a commodity which is his property; his labour consequently becomes wage-labour. On the other hand, it is only from this moment that the produce of labour universally becomes a commodity. (Vol.1, p.167) This generalization of the commodity-form to all the products of the labour-process, also, necessitates that capital establishes its specific division of labour over production: "For the commodity as the necessary form of the product, and hence the alienation of the product as the necessary means of appropriating it, entail a fully developed division of social labour. While, conversely, it is only on the basis of capitalist production, and hence of the capitalist division of labour within the workshop, that all produce necessarily assumes the form of the commodity and hence all producers are necessarily commodity producers. Therefore, it is only with the emergence of capitalist production that use value is universally mediated by exchange value" ("[Results](#)", p.951, Marx's emphasis).

Market and trade, which up to this stage had expanded around the axis and on account of the circulation of commodities, are transformed, by the establishment of the domination of capital, into institutions and relations in the framework of which, surplus-value is realized. The circulation of commodity becomes a function of [both] the circulation of capital and its transformation from the commodity-form into the money-form and vice versa. Money, which had emerged in the course of the

growth and extension of commodity production and exchange, and directly in connection with the circulation of commodities, and had assumed, as the independent and external expression of value, the role of the mediator in exchange, the measure of value and the means of payment, acquires a completely new role with the establishment of the domination of capital. Now, money is one of the specific forms of capital and is "potentially capital". "The transformation of money, itself only a different form of the commodity, into capital occurs only when a worker's labour-power has been converted into a commodity for him" ("[Results](#)", p.950).

Thus, with the labour-power becoming a commodity, commodity production is inexorably transformed into capitalist production and the capitalist production in turn establishes the production of commodities in all its dimensions on a basis completely distinct from simple commodity production and in accordance with its own specific laws and peculiarities:

"These three points are crucial:

(1) Capitalist production is the first to make the commodity into the general form of all produce.

(2) The production of commodities leads inexorably to capitalist production, once the worker has ceased to be a part of the conditions of production... In short, from the moment when labour-power in general becomes a commodity.

(3) Capitalist production destroys the basis of commodity production in so far as the latter involves independent individual production and the exchange of commodities between owners or the exchange of equivalents, The formal exchange of capital and labour-power becomes general" ("[Results](#)", p.951).

Let us sum up: the capitalist system is distinguished by two fundamental, general and specific features. At the general level, firstly, it is a system of production; i.e., like any other social system, it necessarily embraces within itself the social process of labour and the production of use-value.

Secondly, it is a class system, in the sense that in it like other class systems, a

surplus product, in excess of the quantity necessary for satisfying the needs of the reproduction of the general preconditions of labour (labour and means of labour), is produced and this surplus-product is appropriated by a class other than the immediate producers. Thirdly, it is a commodity system; i.e., in addition to use-value, the products of the labour process also possess the element of value and the form of exchange-value. Capitalism is not unique from this viewpoint either, since the existence of value and exchange-value is the result of commodity production as well. The specific element and the particular essence of the capitalist system is the production of surplus-value, which acquires existence on the basis of labour-power becoming a commodity and the confrontation of wage labour and capital. "Here then the immediate process of production is always an indissoluble union of labour-process and valorisation process, just as the product is a whole composed of use-value and exchange-value, i.e. the commodity." ("[Results](#)", p.952, Marx's emphases). Thus, capitalist production is a system in which, with the labour-power becoming a commodity and the continuous reproduction of this "commodity", and with the labour-process entering the circuit of capital reproduction, the surplus-product of the production-process is appropriated in the form of surplus-value by the main exploiter class in society (the capitalist class).

The production of surplus-value on the basis of the exploitation of wage-labour is the foundation and the essence of any capitalist system, whether in the metropolitan country or in the dominated country. It may seem that the reminding of this basic tenet of Marxism did not need so much pen-pushing. But if we review the current interpretations of the question of "dependence" (i.e. the type of capitalism in the dominated country), which we mentioned briefly in the first pamphlet, we realize that the repetition and emphasis of this elementary principle is not all that superfluous, since, in the first place, it is precisely this elementary principle of Marxism which has been forgotten in these interpretations.

We said in the first pamphlet that the current interpretations explain dependence on the basis of its concrete form of manifestation in the Iran of today. More precisely, in these views the dependence of the capitalism in Iran is defined by referring to observations such as technical dependence (dependence on foreign means of production) monetary dependence (dependence on foreign monetary and credit sources) market dependence (dependence on foreign market), etc. The system of production also is defined as "dependent" because "dependent capitalists" dominate over the economy and politics. The movement of this system is [considered to be] towards: ever greater dependence, the plunder of national riches, the "uneven"



growth of the social division of labour, the non-production of "needed" articles and the import or production of useless and junk commodities, the lack of heavy industries, and, on the whole, non-"industrialisation", the decline of agriculture and, in short, the absence of self sufficiency and the independent dynamism of growth. The "national" bourgeoisie too is "extracted" by inverting these components: a stratum of capitalists who are less and less dependent on abroad, with regards to money, technique and market, and if imperialism had not selfishly prevented them, they would have created a flourishing, independent, even and self-sufficient Iran, flowing with "useful" commodities. We see that what is totally absent is the very dependence of the relation of surplus-value production (the mutual relation between wage-labour and capital) on the operation of monopoly capital. We have all accepted the production of surplus-value as the essence of the capitalist system, but we forget it in the analysis of the dependence of Iranian capitalism and explain the dependence of Iranian capitalism in isolation from this essence and in a way that seems we have intentionally abstracted it from the capitalist nature of Iran. We speak of the dependence of the labour-process (technological dependence) of the geographical movement of surplus-product (plunder of "national riches"), of the dependence of commodity production and of use-value (the question of the production and import of "junk" commodities), but we do not talk of the process of surplus-value production. So it is necessary to stress that if we do not speak of this latter, we basically have not spoken of the dependence of capitalism in Iran. "Hence, if we want to speak of the dependence of capital we must explain this dependence specifically on the basis of the dependence of capital-relation (i.e. the confrontation of wage-labour and capital – i.e. the relation between exploitation and the production of surplus-value) on imperialism. In other words, in the first instance this point must be explained that how the production of surplus-value in Iran is dependent on imperialism and after understanding the essence of this dependence - and only after that – ask ourselves how the dependence of the nature of capital explains the concrete economic forms around us." ("The Myth", First pamphlet, p.23)[\[1\]](#)

Right from the beginning, two fundamental criticisms may be levelled against our method of approach to the question: in the first place, it may be said that the essence and basis of dependence cannot exist independent of its concrete form of appearance and hence a comprehensive analysis of the concrete forms of the dependence of Iranian capitalism will automatically include the explanation of its essence and basis. In other words, the dependence of the relation of surplus-value production inexorably manifests itself in concrete forms such as monetary, technical and

market dependence and in the specific form of the social division of labour in the domestic market, and consequently the cognition of these forms will too provide the cognition of the essence of the relation too; An empiricist inference from a dialectical axiom. It is true that the inner essence of a social relation (for instance the production of surplus-value) inexorably manifests itself in definite concrete forms and relations and does not bring to light and establish its existence except through these concrete forms. However, this on no account means that the inner essence of a social relation can be understood and defined merely on the basis of the summation of its concrete forms of manifestation. Marx's theory of value itself is a manifest refutation of such a method of approach. Value is the immanence of price and price is the concrete and inexorable form of manifestation of value. However, the explanation of the existence and changes of the value of a commodity is not acquired by the study of price, or the course of movement of prices; but value must itself be explained on the basis of the category of socially necessary abstract labour. The political consequence of empiricism is nothing but tail-ism and passivity and the loss of the power of analysis and prediction, since, the internal laws of movement of every phenomenon manifest themselves in the transformation of the [phenomenon] from one concrete form into another, and whoever has based his cognition of the social relations upon the forms of manifestation of these relations becomes confused with every change, doubts his initial views and until the clarification of the "new facts" that the new forms have brought along, waits passively. If one has identified dependent capitalism with lack of heavy industries (this being one of the notions dominant in our communist movement), that day when imperialism, acting on the basis of its exigencies, resorts to the industrialisation of the dominated country, he becomes disarmed theoretically and is drawn, in the sphere of politics, to supporting the indigenous executives of this industrialization, as "independent and national" forces. Or if one has taken dependence as equivalent to the "plunder" of mineral resources and "national wealth" at a low price, he would be astonished by the declamations of the mercenary Shah about the price of oil and its rapid increase (the Shah might have become anti-imperialist!), would lose his tactics along with his theories and with his silence and confusion would leave the way open for the growth of the Three Worlds thesis or himself would take it up. In the absence of the cognition of the essence and basis of a reality, the explanation of the forms of its reflection and appearance, and more importantly, the cognition of its necessity and the manner of its transformation from one form into another is not possible. Anyone who to stop water leaking from the ceiling, shovels the snow off the rooftop, vindicates this point, i.e. the justification of the dialectical method of approach to the concrete forms of a phenomenon.

Thus the first probable criticism of our method of approach which potentially has been theorized in the current attitudes on the question of dependence, is itself expressive of an empiricist outlook; an outlook which with its internal inconsistency and passivity paves the way for a variety and all kinds of revisionist views and compromising policies and can itself in the final analysis be placed at the service of the above.

But the second criticism: One may explicitly say his last word at the very beginning and claim that dependence is a relation which is basically present at the level, of the form of the capitalist relations in Iran and has no connection with the production of surplus-value and the confrontation of wage-labour and capital in the domestic market of the country. More specifically, "dependence is what we see: technological, monetary, market dependence and so on, and 'our' aim (of course at this 'stage') is the destruction of these relations. And the destruction of these relations neither requires the change and transformation of the relation of wage-labour and capital, nor affects it." In brief, and imitating the current methods of expressing it: "the struggle against dependence (and therefore imperialism) is a struggle which is based on the antagonism between 'people and imperialism' and not on the antagonism between labour and capital; the turn of the latter's solution has yet to come".

If in the case of the first criticism we were talking of a tendency towards revisionism and compromise, in the case of this second one we are faced with pure revisionism in its special uniform. The prospect that this outlook draws for the Iranian revolution is this: "the victory of the present revolution finds expression in the abolition of the relations of dependence, and on the basis of this victory the national and independent capitalism starts its movement towards the development of the productive forces of the country (which as though imperialism has prevented so far) and Iran is transformed into a flourishing land, etc. Then comes the time for the solution of the antagonism between labour and capital." If we multiply this position by a turban we arrive at the famous position that "imperialism (America) is the great Satan" which presumably has possessed the body of the bourgeoisie and our task is defined as the very establishment of the "legitimate and conditional" ownership of the bourgeoisie over the means of production, and the creation of the preconditions for the "legitimate and conditional" exploitation of the working class! Let's destroy imperialism but keep capital!?! Yes, the utopia of national, independent and democratic (and of course legitimate) capitalism in the epoch of imperialism, has an inevitable link with the mechanical and bourgeois cognition of the question of

dependence. This is not even a socialist utopia, but a capitalistic utopia of the feeble-minded and romantic children of the large family of the bourgeoisie. It is a utopia, since, in the epoch of imperialism, in the highest stage of capitalism, it essentially has no material basis for its realization. It is capitalistic, since, despite its absurdity in the economic sense, it endorses in theory and practice the political views, slogans and guidelines of the liberal bourgeoisie and its advisers, and endeavours to once again mobilize the toiling masses under the banner and in the service of the bourgeoisie. The theories of the "Three Worlds" and the "non-capitalist way of development" are in reality nothing but this utopian capitalism under the guise of quasi socialist phrases and precisely on this account they are a very effective weapon in the hands of the bourgeoisie in the present revolution. These treacherous theories, by taking advantage of the potential tendency of the working class towards the camp of socialism, give a "socialist" colouring to and palm off on the workers' movement the demagogic claims of a section of the Iranian bourgeoisie, claims which that stratum itself does not believe in, and which are merely its politico-ideological instruments in driving our revolution to compromise. Defence of the category of "national and independent bourgeoisie" in conditions where the "national and independent" bourgeoisie itself has declared its absurdity in a thousand ways, will yield nothing but leading to the abattoir our country's workers and communist movement.

Thus, departure from a profound analysis of dependent capitalism in Iran, i.e. departure from the cognition of the dependence of the process of surplus-value production and its necessities in this system (or in the current language, from the contradiction between labour and capital) is in our view the pivotal point in the cognition of the nature of the present revolution, the demarcation of the forces of revolution and counter-revolution, the basis of the unity of independent proletarian policies and the rejection of deviationist and revisionist views.

Now, if we have agreed that in the analysis of Iranian capitalism and its dependence we must start from the mutual relation of wage-labour and capital at the level of surplus-value production, one fundamental question arises which the movement towards answering it forms the framework of the rest of the subject matter of, this pamphlet and the next two pamphlets. This fundamental question is this: if we ought to start from the essence of "capital-relation" in the system of production of Iran and then explain the concrete forms of its manifestation, which economic concepts, categories and relations must we use as the theoretical instruments of our analysis? For the re-discovery of these theoretical instruments we must resume our discussion

from where we left off:

We said that it is the process of surplus-value production that must be subjected to analysis for understanding the particular laws of the capitalist system. This is precisely what Marx does in *Capital*. Marx initially begins with the observation that commodity is the primary form and the constituent element of wealth in bourgeois society (*Capital*, first paragraph). The internal two-foldedness of the commodity (use-value and exchange-value) is expressive of this reality that commodity is on the one hand the result of the labour-process (it is a use value) and on the other hand and at the same time the result of the process of creating value (it is an exchange-value). However, as we said, the production of commodities is not the same as capitalist production, since in capitalist production not only value but surplus-value is also produced. Therefore Marx goes beyond commodity and poses this fundamental question: how, in the capitalist system, does the production; and equivalent exchange of commodities lead to the expansion of value (the production of surplus value)? To explain this question, Marx begins from the general form of the concrete metamorphosis of capital. In the most general form in the course of its circulation, capital appears as "money-commodity-money" (**M-C-M**). The expansion of value in this formula is expressed as the final money being more than the initial money. In other words, the general formula of capital is this:

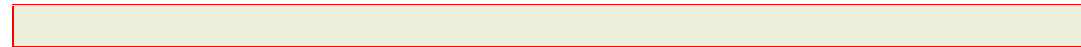


However, this general formula does not explain how surplus-value is produced, i.e. the fact that final money (**M'**) is greater than initial money (**M**). This is how Marx sum up the problem:

"The conversion of money into capital has to be explained on the basis of the laws that regulate the exchange of commodities, in such a way that the starting-point is the exchange of equivalents. Our friend, Moneybags, who as yet is only an embryo capitalist, must buy his commodities at their value, must sell them at their value, and yet at the end of the process must withdraw more value from circulation than he threw into it at starting. His development into a full-grown capitalist must take place, both within the sphere of circulation and without it. These are the condition of the problem. *Hic Rhodus, hic salta!*" (Vol.1 p.163)

If we examine the above formula carefully, we see this contradiction clearly. The formula **(M-C-M')** is composed of the two circuits (**M-C**: Purchase) and (**C-M'**: Sale). And in the exchange of commodities, which capital is to be extracted on its basis, in both circuits, equivalent exchanges have taken place<sup>[10]</sup>. Thus, the origin of surplus value is not in exchange. The analysis is logically drawn into the sphere of production (Refer to [Vol.1, Part II Chapter VI](#)). However, the above formula basically does not provide a picture of the production process. The process of production must take place in the interval between the two circuits of exchange, and the above formula sums up the whole of this process merely as stage C. If we present the process of production (the labour-process) in the above formula, in a more precise way, the formula is converted into the following form:<sup>[11]</sup>

(1)



In other words, the commodities that the capitalist buys are divided into two parts: means of production and labour-power. The labour-process, i.e. the material exchange of labour-power and means of production, is carried out and a third commodity (**C'**) is produced which is sold in the market to yield the final money (**M'**). From the point of view of exchange of equivalents in the different circuits, the above expanded formula does not differ from the previous formula. In the circuit (**M-C**) the capitalist still buys the commodities at their values. This exchange has now been formulated more precisely: in the circuit of purchase the capitalist in fact performs two exchanges: he buys means of production (**M-MP**) and labour-power (**M-L**). In the first exchange, the equivalent of the value of the means of production has been, by definition, paid to their owners. Likewise, assuming standard conditions for the operation of capitalism (non-crisis condition), the value of the labour-power too has been paid to its owner (the labourer), in the form of wages<sup>[12]</sup>. In the circuit of purchase (**C'-M'**) also, as with the previous formula, the finished commodity has been sold at its value. There is no doubt that to understand the cause and the manner of expansion of value (production of surplus-value) in the above formula, we must inquire into stage P, i.e. into the labour-process. But here too the fundamental problem of this formula (so far as the purpose is the explanation of the origin of surplus-value) shows itself up. This formula, despite giving a clearer picture of the labour-process in comparison with the more general formula of **(M-C-M')**, is limited as before to the level of expression of the

external metamorphosis of capital - i.e. the transformation of capital from the money-form into the productive form and then to the commodity-form and once again to the money form. From the analytical point of view this formula is at the same level of abstraction as the formula **(M-CM')**. The second expanded formula, specifies the position of the labour process in the course of circulation and reproduction of capital, but presents it merely in its material and physical form, i.e. at the level we mentioned at the beginning of this section. The labour-process in this formula only shows that workers by using the instruments of production and raw-materials produce other commodities and does not at all explain the point as how the values of the commodities obtained are greater than the sum of values of the commodities used in their production. Here labour-process is presented in its general sense, as a process common to all social systems as a process during which use-value is produced. Whereas, as we said previously, to explain how value is expanded (production of surplus-value), labour-process must be examined from the viewpoint of production of value and not of use-value. It is the particular character of the labour-process in the capitalist system that "the general preconditions of production" (labour and means of labour) find value expression and hence to explain how surplus-value is produced we must precisely look for a formula or relation which shows the mutual relation of labour and means of labour not as a relation between different things with different qualities, but as a relation between different quantities of one thing (value).

So it is clear why Marx, in order to explain the essence and nature of capital (expansion of value), does not limit himself to the framework of the above formula and the explanation of the course of metamorphosis of capital (we shall show later on how the deviationist interpretations of the question of dependence start from this formal understanding of capital and the categories and concepts concerning the course of circulation). In order to explain how surplus-value is produced and how money is converted into capital, Marx presents another formula which is the compact expression of the outlines of his theory of exploitation and basic inferences about the laws of economic movement of capitalism and the internal contradictions of the course of capital accumulation. This formula presents capital not on the basis of the different forms it assumes in the course of its circulation, in its external motion (money, commodity, means of production), but on the basis of its internal division into constant and variable capital. By discovering the two-fold character of labour-power (as a commodity), Marx shows that it is in fact the variable part of capital, i.e. the capital used to buy labour-power that expands. Labour-power is the only commodity whose "use produces new value". The instruments of production

and raw-materials merely transfer the value of their depreciated and used parts to the final commodity. Whereas the consumption of labour-power in production yields more value than the value embodied in the labour-power being used. The basis of the production of surplus-value is the exploitation of labour. The formula which Marx presents to express the nature and essence of capital is the following familiar formula[13]:

(2)

In contrast to the previous formula which was a description of the different forms and qualities which capital assumes in the course of circulation, the above formula presents capital in terms of the quantity of value. The different components of the formula (constant capital, variable capital and surplus-value) all appear merely as different quantities of a single immanence, i.e. value, in the formula. In the form of what use-values these components materialize themselves has no effect on the relations existing between these components (It suffices to know that means of production and means of subsistence, respectively, constitute the material elements of constant and variable capital; surplus-value may be materialized in any kind of commodity). This abstraction from the concrete form of the means of production and consumption and of the products of the labour-process is an objective and real abstraction which takes place in practice in capitalist society and the explanation of the way value expands is not possible without recognising this particular character of the capitalist society. Capital is a value that expands, this is the essence of capital. In the transformation of money into capital, the starting-point of this process of valorisation is money, but:

"In itself this sum of money may only be defined as capital if it is employed, spent, with the aim of increasing it, if it is spent expressly in order to increase it. Thus in this originally simple expression of capital (or of the capital to be) as money or value, every link with use-value has been broken and entirely destroyed. But even more striking is the elimination of every unwelcome sign, all potentially confusing evidence of the actual process of production (production of commodities, etc.). It is for this reason that the character, the specific nature of capitalist production, appears to be so simple and abstract. If the original capital is a quantum

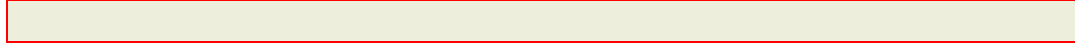


of value=x, it becomes capital and fulfils its purpose by changing into  $x+\Delta x$ , i.e. into a quantum of money or value = the original sum + a balance over the original sum. In other words, it is transformed into the given amount of money + additional money, into the given value + surplus value. The production of surplus-value - which includes the preservation of the value originally advanced - appears therefore as the determining purpose, the driving force and the final result of the capitalist process of production." ("[Results](#)" p.976, Marx's emphases)

In this way, Marx bases the essence of capitalist production and the capital-relation on its quantitative element, on the process of augmentation of value, in distinction to the first formula which was the description of the qualitative transformation of capital. And formula 2, which is the extract of the description of the way value expands, is precisely the formula which must form our point of departure in the cognition of course of movement of capital. Marx then asks himself how  $x$  is converted into  $x+\Delta x$ ? How does capital expand? And it is in reply to this question that Marx, step by step, by explaining the place of variable capital in the internal division of the total capital and by explaining the two-fold character of labour power, presents the general framework of  $x+\Delta x$  as formula 2, i.e.  $C+V+S$ . Having extracted this formula, Marx concludes:

"Thus the actual function specific to capital as such is the production of surplus-value which, as will be shown later, is nothing but the production of surplus-labour, the appropriation of unpaid labour in the course of the actual process of production. This labour manifests itself, objectifies itself, as surplus-value." ("[Results](#)", p.978, Marx's emphases)

Thus, whenever we speak of the necessity of starting from the essence of capital relation and then explaining the various form of the concrete operation of capital and the capitalist system, we are stressing precisely the necessity of departure from the second formula. This is the formula from which Marx extracts the basic concepts of his economic critique of the capitalist system; concepts which must be, in the first step, learnt and employed by Marxists as the sharpest theoretical and analytical tools. On the categories of constant capital, variable capital and surplus-value, we gave some explanations previously. We now mention in brief and list-wise, other basic categories and concepts which can be immediately built up on the above categories:



In the same way Marx also presents and explains the basic laws and relations of capital's movement, at the most profound level, on the basis of the same formula: the law of centralisation and concentration of capital, the law of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall, the division of total social capital into different parts (means of production, means of consumption - necessary and luxurious), reproduction on an extended scale and accumulation, the prices of production and equalisation of the rate of profit, productive and unproductive labour, etc, in brief, the analysis of the genera: laws of accumulation and movement of capital and *its* internal contradiction, are all before *anything* else based on the above formula which is nothing but the condensed expression of how surplus-value is produced, how value is expanded through the exploitation of wage-labour.

Now before we enter the discussion about the place of these two formulas in the analysis of the question of dependence, it is necessary that we once again present the two together:

1) The first formula expresses the course of external metamorphosis of capital and its transformation from one form into another.

(1)



As we said this formula is the external appearance of capital and expresses the different moments of its manifestation. And precisely on this account, it cannot by itself explain the essence and basis of capital which is valorisation through exploitation. The second formula deals precisely with the explanation of the essence and immanence of capital:

(2)



Understanding the relation between these two formula and the place that each occupies at the different levels of the analysis of capitalist society is the necessary condition for the cognition of the laws and contradictions of the movement of capital and also the concrete forms of its manifestation. Now if we bear in mind these two formula and remind ourselves of the current elements of the interpretation of the question of dependence which we enumerated in the first pamphlet and also briefly referred to above, we will clearly distinguish the superficiality and the bourgeois outlook prevailing over these interpretations. Which formula forms the point of departure and movement, and the skeleton of these interpretations? From which formula does the categories and concepts, forming the basis of the current interpretations in the explanation of dependent capitalism, originate? Undoubtedly, the first formula. When it comes to explaining the question of dependent capitalism, the current interpretations' cognition of the categories of capital and capitalist production is limited to the level of the external appearance of capital, its tangible and empirical level, i.e., to the level of the first formula. This is because in these interpretations there is basically no mention of the relation of labour and capital which is the essential content of the second formula and the question of distinguishing between "national" and "dependent" capital is patched up by factors such as monetary dependence, technical dependence, the geography of the sale market and the quality of the produced commodities (in terms of their use-values):

**1) Monetary dependence:** More precisely this means that in formula 1 the owner of the initial money is not Iranian (or that the owners are, for instance, foreign monopolies, which is itself an improvement in the formulation). This formulation of dependent capital, even in its most precise expression, does not go further than the level of the first formula, since the legal ownership of the initial money does not in any way express how it is divided into constant and variable components, how exploitation is carried out on its basis, etc, and does not have any effect on the initial money. Engineer Mehdi Bazargan<sup>[2]</sup> (who last year this time was the darling of the supporters of the "national" bourgeoisie) can sell his foundry to a foreign capitalist (or easier, he can become an American citizen, or, easier still, his "American citizenship" is revealed) without there occurring the slightest reactions at the level of formula 2.

**2) Technical dependence:** Again the more precise expression of this kind of dependence would be that in formula 1 in the circuit (means of production - money) the seller of the means of production is a foreign company. Still it is confined

to formula 1, since in formula 2 there is no sign of where, and under the control and appropriation of which legal and real person the commodities bought by constant capital have been produced or come from.

**3) The geography of the sale market:** Meaning more precisely that in the sale circuit (final money-commodity) in formula 1 the buyer is "foreign". Again none of the categories which Marx expresses in formula 2 in relation to how surplus-value is produced have been involved. That to whom the capitalist sells his articles or where he sells them, does not influence the mutual relations between constant capital, variable capital the whole working day, the degree of exploitation, etc, which, by definition, have been realized before sale.

**4) Moral (salesman-like) judgement on the use-value of the produced commodity:** That the dependent capitalist produces "bad" and "useless"(!), "junk", non-essential, etc, commodities and, for instance, the "national" capitalist produces "good, essential, useful and high quality (!)" commodities, also stems from confinement to formula 1. This element of the definition of dependence puts to scrutiny the finished commodity (C') in the first formula, from the viewpoint of a definite task and consuming need (or an above class liking for the development of productive forces). Whatever the use-value produced during the labour-process may be and whatever use it may serve, whether it is bubble-gum or a nuclear reactor, the Islamic Revolution newspaper or a flick-knife, etc, in no way expresses the relation of labour and capital in its production, or all of those fundamental relations and categories which we mentioned above. This criterion of dependence, also, fails to open a way to the explanation of the dependence of capital, whose particular essence is the production of surplus-value.

In this way the different elements of the current interpretations of the question of dependent capitalism, stop at the sphere of the formal division of capital, the legal relations which rest over the forms of manifestation of capital, the physical features of the produced objects, the geography of the sale market, etc, and in short at the superficial cognition of capital and its dependence, and unfortunately fall short even of this level. The circuit of exchange of labour-power - money (M-L), too, belongs to formula 1. An exchange which stresses the necessity of transition from the first formula to the second:

"The only act within the sphere of circulation on which we have dwelt was

the purchase and sale of labour-power as the fundamental condition of capitalist production." (Vol. 2, p.357)

So, those who have such affection for the sphere of exchange and circulation and the forms of manifestation of capital in this sphere, ought to have taken a look at this definite exchange too. But no! It seems that our "Marxist" investigators intentionally avoid mentioning the name of worker and labour-power, for it would have been proper to also provide an interpretation of dependence on the basis of the way labour-power is purchased, and so on. Or it might be that the "national" bourgeoisie which has sold "economic" theory to our communist movement is, from force of its age-old habit, an under-seller as well!

But now to dependence, as the characteristic of the whole system of production in Iran. We said in the first pamphlet that: "The definitions of the dependent capitalist system which are presented are mainly based on the mechanical generalization of the economic movements of the dependent bourgeoisie; and dependent capitalism is in fact regarded as 'the system of production under the rule of dependent capitalists'." (p.16)<sup>[3]</sup> We also said that in these interpretations the dependence of the whole capitalist system is explained without the slightest reference to the category of total social capital and the general laws of its movement. In actual fact anyone who, in a completely atomistic manner, has based his cognition of capital on formula 1, i.e. the formula of the manifestation of capital in circulation, will have no alternative but to rely on the mechanical generalization of observations. Now this point can be clearly seen. According to the current interpretations, the dependence of the whole capitalist system of Iran on Foreign monetary and credit sources is the reflection of the monetary dependence of a main section of capitalists on these sources; same with technological and market dependence. In brief, whenever a main section of the capitalists, devote the main part of the country's capitals, by mainly buying the means of production from abroad, to the production of products which have been mainly produced for the foreign market and not for meeting the needs of the "people of Iran", we are faced with a dependent capitalist system! In other words, according to these interpretations, whenever we consider in formula 1 the movement of all the capitalists, the "dependent" exchange circuits outweigh the "independent" ones; capitalists, whose money-capital is dependent, who purchase means of production from abroad and sell these in the foreign market, dominate; and as a result the whole system of production is defined dependent by virtue of the domination of these capitalists. Defining the dependence of the whole system of production by comparing the number and magnitude of "dependent

atoms" with "non-dependent atoms"; this is the essence of the definition of dependent capitalism in the bourgeois interpretations current in our communist movement.

The consequences and effects that this dependence imparts to the economy of the domestic market, also, are explained from the same thing: the domination of the dependent atoms means the creation of the necessary conditions for the preservation and reproduction of this domination. The social division of labour is shaped towards the interests of dependent capitalists; main and heavy industries (expressive and symbol of technical independence), "national" banks (independent money and credit), balanced and extensive domestic market (the realization of the values of commodities in an "independent" manner) are not formed, etc.

The logical political result of such an "economic attitude", too, is conceivable: If, in its economic content, the democratic revolution of Iran is to overthrow dependent capitalism, then, naturally, on the basis of these interpretations, it should overthrow the rule of dependent capitalists (these atoms of dependence which have imposed their character on the total social capital, by virtue of their large numbers). The "national" capitalists (the independent atoms) are not to blame in this scene and their coming to power can even develop the productive forces, create the needed industries, produce the necessary and useful commodities, secure independence in production, give a balanced coherence and pattern to the social division of labour and the branches of production inside the country, and in this way place the work of realization of the produced commodities in the domestic market on a completely independent footing, without any need for foreign trade; and so on. If the matter ended here, we would be faced with a pure bourgeois economic theory and an explicit bourgeois-liberal political policy which on the basis of its economic analysis identified the "national" bourgeoisie as the motive force and the natural leader of this revolution. But the point is that the above economic interpretations, are the dominant interpretations in our communist movement and hence the fact that the necessity of participation and leadership of the working class in democratic revolution has by no means been deduced from its relevant economic analysis, must be covered up in some way. Hence the remark that the "national" bourgeoisie is "vacillating" in our revolution, is added quite arbitrarily. And the policy of the proletariat towards "this stratum" is reduced from a hostile policy and one based on the understanding of the fundamental interests of the different classes in this revolution, from a policy based on the Marxist theory of class struggle, to a compromising policy relying on the empirical observation and judgement of the

daily movements of this stratum; to a policy of "conditional support".

Reliance on the observation of the appearance of capital in the course of circulation (first formula) inexorably leads to reliance on the observation of the appearances of the movement of the bourgeoisie in the sphere of politics. Economic superficiality leads to political credulity and theoretical empiricism leads to practical tail-ism. The liberal bourgeoisie, in its historical role in surviving the death-trap of revolution, comes out honourably, with the aid of the "national bourgeoisie" thesis!

From the theoretical point of view the whole art of bourgeois economic "science" is to conceal formula 2 and to hide the origin of surplus-value and profits of the capitalist class which is none other than the exploitation of the working class. Our superficial "Marxists", the supporters of the national bourgeoisie, take part in this concealment willingly or unwillingly. They thoroughly lose hold of Marxism and its theoretical gains and by accepting bourgeois methods of thinking and bourgeois analysis, inevitably also accept the economic preoccupations of the bourgeoisie. Whether monetary, technical, etc, independence is necessary for the development of Iranian capitalism, is understood much better by the capitalist himself, whose profit-seeking movement (this is the definition of capitalist)" is supposed" to form the basis of development of Iranian capitalism. And if Marx's books had been intended to serve this development, they would have been taught by the bourgeoisie itself as "economic" textbooks in schools and universities.

The acme of radicalism of our superficial observers boils down to utterances about unequal exchanges, departure of this or that money and commodity from the country, plunder of this or that national wealth as a result of unequal exchanges, in formula 1. This is precisely the radicalism of that bourgeois that attributes his economic backwardness to the fraudulence of the opposite party, to the lack of influential backers, to the unfairness of market relations, to corruption in state institutions, etc. Whatever difficulty our "radical" Moneybags may have, he has no difficulty in the circuit of purchase of labour-power (M-L) in formula 1, since thanks to those same fraudulent and unkind competitors he has access to an immense source of labour-power which is "reproduced" by bread and cheese and tin huts; and its price (wages), despite the decline of agriculture (itself a consequent result of the expropriation process and the creation of an immense source of cheap labour-power in Iran), has been fixed at a low level through the policy of open-gates and the flood of imports of agricultural products and through the limitless exploitation of the rural of the country; he is making profit under the shelter of an

"authoritative" government which, despite the lack of direct participation of our "radical" capitalist in that government (the government of the mercenary Shah), has denied from the whole of the working class the right of any kind of protest and strike; has dragged the militants of this class to execution squares, prisons and torture-chambers, lest the legitimate struggles of the workers may reduce slightly the buying-capacity of the variable capitals of all the capitalists, etc. Our "radical" capitalist either knows all these realities from the very outset or when, thanks to this "radicalism" (read: telling beads and being holier than thou) he is called upon, like *Bazargans*, *Bakhtiars* and *Bani-Sadrs*, to find remedies, he realizes the great dimensions of the "problem" of preserving the rule of the total capital, gives up his "radicalism" and rises with all his might to justify the acts and measures of his predecessors, begs the forgiveness of imperialism for his pre-revolution nagging and sincerely undertakes to revive the same previous relations. But our superficial comrade who had found, at the level of the same first formula, his "ally" in the revolution – the "national bourgeoisie" - now, bewildered, finds himself alone in the field; at first, in the same manner as before, warns the revolutionary workers against weakening his "national" ally's government, then he gets to know certain things through experience, advises the promise-breaking "national" bourgeoisie and warns it against associating with the "monopolists", threatens it with "dual attitude" and even when it finds out the hideousness of character of its past ally - at the expense of the blood of Kurdish, Turkeman and Arab peoples, and of the unemployed workers of Isfahan; and the imprisonment and torture of militant oil-workers of the South, of *Hammad Sheibanis* and *Saadatis* and hundreds of other instances at the very first few months after the Uprising – he realizes the gravity of the situation and helplessly starts to seek a new "ally". But alas! Instead of recognising his theoretical weaknesses, formulating them, and declaring them in the most explicit manner for the sake of education of the new generation of revolutionaries who will take to the field after him, he not only recriminates those who had initially warned him, but, seeking to save face, he invents a new "theoretical" method and device. Yes, our comrade is a thousand miles away from becoming a vanguard of the working class.

In order not to fall into this swamp we must start in our economic analysis with Marx and continue with Marx. On the cognition of capital this necessitates that we move with Marx from formula 1 to formula 2. This is the first theoretical tool that Marx has prepared for us in the critique and analysis of the capitalist system. The understanding of the social, economic and political conditions of the domination of "capital-relation" (which the formula  $C + V + S$  is the compact expression of) over the social production in the country dominated by imperialism, is the starting-point



of the analysis of the laws of movement of the dependent capitalist system. Thus, before explaining the concrete forms of dependence, the dependence of the process of surplus-value production in the domestic market of the dominated country on the imperialist conditions of production in this market and also in the world market, must be perceived. Only after having understood the essence of dependence at the level of formula 2 can we explain the necessity of manifestation of this dependence in definite concrete forms (at the level of formula 1), and then as a result (and not as a point of departure) of the analysis.

## **2-The Historic Presuppositions and the Contemporary Conditions of Capitalist Production**

Marx divides the conditions for the establishment and expansion of capitalist production and domination of "capital-relation" over social production, into two categories:

- a) The historic presuppositions of the development of capitalism;
- b) The contemporary conditions of production and reproduction of capitalist relations.

The distinction between these two categories of conditions is one of the striking examples of the dialectical method of approach to the historical development of societies. Bourgeois economists, whether those before Marx or after, have interpreted history through the eye of a capitalist and with the assumption of the eternal domination of capital; whilst, from the viewpoint of Marxism, capitalism as one of the links in the evolution of the history of human society, is a definite and limited phenomenon; passes from non-being to being, conceives its embryo in the womb of another system and on the basis of other laws, then stands up on its own feet and establishes its laws of movement over society and thereafter within itself and on the basis of its laws of movement provides the preconditions of a new system - socialism. In other words, according to Marx, capitalism before "being" must "become"; and the conditions of the "being" of capital are completely different from its conditions of "becoming":

**"The conditions and presuppositions of the becoming, of the arising, of**

capital presuppose precisely that it is not yet in being but merely in becoming; they therefore disappear as real capital arises, capital which itself, on the basis of its own reality, posits the conditions for its realization." ([Grundrisse](#), p.459)

The dialectical relation between being and becoming is the philosophical basis of historical materialism and it is natural that if we do not have in mind the distinction existing between the historic presuppositions (i.e. the conditions of becoming) of capital, and the contemporary conditions of its production and reproduction (i.e. its conditions of being) we will have no escape from falling into the bourgeois method of analysis and as a result, presenting bourgeois deductions from the development of capitalism in Iran.

But how does this deviation manifest itself in the analysis of Iranian capitalism? The lack of understanding of the difference existing between these two categories of conditions, i.e. the historical conditions of the arising of capital, on the one hand, and the contemporary conditions of its production and reproduction (both from the philosophical viewpoint and from the viewpoint of economic critique), leads to this, that firstly where we are talking about the analysis of "the development of capitalism in Iran", the mention of the history of its growth, before anything else, is conjured up and we begin, for example, from the reforms carried out by *Amir Kabir* and *Sepahsalar*"[4](#)}; from the growth of carpet and match-making industries from the activities of the Loan Bank and Imperial Bank[5](#)}, etc; and we follow this history, step by step, in all its various dimensions, up to present day. And secondly, also, where we are looking for an explanation of the peculiarities of the dependence of the system of production in the present conditions of Iran, we attempt to explain dependence on the basis of its "historical roots". The "technological" or "technical" (and in general mechanical) outlook on the question of dependence, an outlook which in reality is not trying to explain the dependence of capitalism, but trying to cite the factors of the dependence of "industries, trade and state" in Iran, is precisely based on this deviationist perception of "the development of capitalism". The dependence of Iranian capitalism - i.e. the peculiarities of the capitalism in Iran as a country dominated by imperialism - is a dependence which must be explained not on the basis of the historical conditions of the arising of capitalism in Iran, but on the basis of the already present and specific laws of capitalism; laws which capitalism itself establishes over the system of production, after its arising. The dependence of Iranian capitalism on imperialism is produced and reproduced on the basis of the contemporary laws of movement of the capitalism of the epoch of

imperialism, and hence it must be explained precisely on the basis of the analysis of these same laws; and anyone who like "*Rah-e-Kargar*"<sup>[6]</sup> gives the ruling that: "Dependent capitalism is the result of an imposed division of labour at the international level. In this connection it is of decisive significance to consider the fact that usually in the dominated countries dependence, from the viewpoint of time, precedes capitalism." (our emphases); i.e. anyone who in an abstract manner, separates in such a way, dependence from the definite relations which confer upon this dependence a specific content and meaning (historically) and even regards it as taking "precedence" over capitalism, will have no alternative but to explain dependence on the basis of categories and concepts which are themselves above-historical; categories and concepts which can easily be common to all systems of production; categories and concepts which can have presence and existence "prior to capitalism", which will consequently express nothing in connection with the dependence of Iranian capitalism and inevitably will provide no cognition in the sphere of the specific struggle which the proletariat of Iran must follow, on the context of the laws of movement of Iranian capitalism. Such a person will be compelled to explain the production of surplus-value in the country dominated by imperialism - i.e. capitalism at its highest stage - only by the concept of "plunder", this above-historical category. To say that "dependence, from the viewpoint of time, precedes capitalism" takes our comrade as far as believing that this dependence is "the result of an imposed division of labour" (Yes, "division of labour" and "imposition" both precede capitalism!) and also regarding the result of this dependence as the "plunder of natural resources" ("plunder" and "natural resources" too, precisely precede capitalism!). Does not such a method of approach "promise" the prospect of the negation of the theory of imperialism of Lenin and its substitution by a criticism of the *Golestan* and *Turkemanchai* treaties<sup>[7]</sup>; the negation of the necessity of explaining political reaction on the basis of the laws of movement of monopoly capital and its substitution by an analysis of the bases of "democracy and dictatorship in Islam" and its different sects; the negation of the necessity of analysing the relations of labour and capital in Iran on the basis of the scientific gains of Marx and its substitution by the examination of the conditions of *Haji Mirza Aghasi*<sup>[8]</sup>, etc? The "critique and research" of the comrades of "*Zahmat*"<sup>[9]</sup> has already engaged itself to opening this new horizon for the workers' movement!<sup>[14]</sup>

But Marx's method is quite different: he firstly stresses the distinction between the historic presuppositions and the contemporary conditions of a system of production; and, secondly, believes that the necessary condition for understanding the history of

formation of a phenomenon, is the cognition of this phenomenon itself as the most perfect and the most complex outcome of its historical evolutionary path. If one does not realize that "the capitalist system is the unity of the labour-process and the process of producing surplus-value"; if one does not know that the production of surplus-value is based upon the existence and reproduction of labour-power as a commodity; then that person can never write the history of the development of capitalism, since he basically does not know which historical relations, elements, phenomena and events he must look for. If one has identified capitalism with "industrialization", then, in the sphere of historiography, he will write the history of "industrialization".

"Bourgeois society is the most advanced and complex historical organisation of production. The categories which express its relations, and an understanding of its structure, therefore, provide an insight into the structure and the relations of production of all formerly existing social formations the wins and component elements of which were used in the creation of bourgeois society. Some of these unassimilated remains are still carried on within bourgeois society, others, however, which previously existed only in rudimentary form, have been further developed and have attained their full significance, etc. The anatomy of man is a key to the anatomy of the ape. On the other hand, rudiments of more advanced forms in the lower species of animals can only be understood when the more advanced forms are already known. Bourgeois economy thus provides a key to the economy of antiquity, etc. But it is quite impossible (to gain this insight) in the manner of those economists who obliterate all historical differences and who see in all social phenomena only bourgeois phenomena. If one knows rent, it is possible to understand tribute, tithe, etc, but they do not have to be treated as identical." (Marx, ["The Method of Political Economy"](#), ducted from ["A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy"](#), English pp.210-211). And also "Similarly only when the self-criticism of bourgeois society had begun, was bourgeois political economy able to understand the feudal, ancient and oriental economies." (Ibid. p.211)

In different texts and especially in the first pamphlet of "The Myth" we have reiterated in various ways the assertion that "after the establishment of the dependent capitalist system in Iran, there can be no talk of the national bourgeoisie". Our emphasis on the phrase "the establishment of the capitalist system" is based

precisely on the above distinction. In the distinction between the historic presuppositions and the contemporary conditions of capitalist production, Marx has prepared the necessary theoretical key for answering two fundamental questions of ours: firstly, from what definite historical juncture and on the basis of the existence of what conditions do we call a definite system of production capitalist? In other words, how is the establishment of capitalism realized? And secondly, what are the laws of movement of the society after the establishment of capitalism? Or, in other words, what are the independent economic laws of movement of the capitalist system?

Marx's answer to the above two questions is clear. We leave the examination of the second question to later pamphlets and finish off this pamphlet with a brief answer to the first question.

1) Capitalist production is established when its historic presuppositions have been realized. These presuppositions are those necessary economic and social changes which are required for the transformation of the system of production from feudalism into capitalism. Here the discussion is on those economic and social transformations which take place not on the basis of the internal laws of the capitalist system but on the basis of the fundamental transformations of the feudal society. The laws of these periods are the laws of the extinction of feudalism, conditions in which the productive forces which have developed within this system break up the restrictive relations of feudal economy and the grounds for the domination of capital over social production, up to the point where the new system stands up on the basis of its own independent laws of motion, are provided (Marx has explained in detail the historic presuppositions of the growth and establishment of capitalism in various works including, and especially, the "Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations", the chapter on "So-Called Primitive Accumulation" in Capital Vol.1, and [Grundrisse](#), in particular pp. 459-471. Lenin too has enumerated the basic elements of these conditions in the beginning of the book "The Development of Capitalism in Russia"). The analysis Marx gives of the historic presuppositions of capitalist production is by itself a confirmation of his dialectical definition of capital as the unity of the labour process and the process of producing surplus value. Since these presuppositions are defined precisely as those social and economic transformations which impart, initially to the products of the labour-process (use values), and then, to the constituent factors of this process (labour and means of labour) a commodity character, and link in this way the labour-process not only with the process of producing value but also with the process of producing

surplus-value. The development of social division of labour, the extension of exchange and the appearance of exchange value, commodity and money, the separation of manufacture from agriculture and the relative diminution of the agricultural population, etc, are the necessary conditions of the development of commodity production as the embryonic form of capitalist production. However, as we said previously, that which promotes commodity production to capitalist production, is the labour-power becoming a commodity through the separation of direct producers from the means of production. "The separation of the direct producer from the means of production, i.e., his expropriation, signifying the transition from simple commodity production to capitalist production (and constituting the necessary condition for this transition), creates the home market." (Lenin, "[The Development of Capitalism...](#)" p.68). Thus, to explain how capitalist production is established, Marx begins from the essence of capital (i.e. the dialectical confrontation of wage-labour and capital) and defines and treats the historical process of the labour-power becoming a commodity on a wide scale in society, as the fundamental historical precondition of the domination of capitalist production. Money and commodity come to being in the course of appearance and growth of commodity production in the margin of pre-capitalist systems, but:

"In themselves money and commodities are no more capital than are the means of production and of subsistence. They want transforming into capital. But this transformation itself can only take place under certain circumstances that centre in this, viz., that two very different kinds of commodity-possessors must come face to face and into contact; on the one hand, the owners of money, means of production, means of subsistence, who are eager to increase the sum of values they possess, by buying other people's labour the sellers of their own labour-power, and therefore the sellers of labour."[\[15\]](#) (Vol.1 p.668)

As we also previously said the condition for the realization of this precondition of the establishment of capitalism is, from the historical viewpoint, the very separation of immediate producers from means of production, the separation of the subjective conditions of production from its objective conditions:

"The process, therefore, that clears the way for the capitalist system, can be none other than the process which takes away from the labourer the possession of his means of production, a process that transforms, on the one hand, the social means of subsistence and of production into capital,

on the other, the immediate producers into wage-labourers. The so-called primitive accumulation, therefore, is nothing else than the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production." (Vol.1, p.668)

Let us sum up: The development of simple commodity production in the margin of different systems of production develops the basic grounds, categories and phenomena of capitalist economy, but that definite historical juncture at which capitalist production declares its undeniable establishment is nothing but the conclusion and realization of the expropriation process and the creation of the army of wage-labourers. From the analytical viewpoint, this definite juncture is truly the moment of birth of capitalist production and the start of its independent movement. But from the historical viewpoint this "definite juncture" is not distinguished by days hours or minutes. "The history of this expropriation, in different countries, assumes different aspects, and runs through its various phases in different orders of succession and at different periods." (Vol.1, p.670). In England, which Marx studied as the classical example, the process of expropriation began from the late Fifteenth century and reached final conclusion at the end of the Eighteenth century. Nevertheless, the expropriation of the immediate producers and the birth of the proletariat as the main exploited class, which is expressive of the birth of the bourgeoisie as the main exploiting class and the domination of capital-relation and surplus-value production over the labour-process, is not something that can fade and become concealed from view even in the course of three centuries; and where this process reaches its final conclusion it is recorded in the history of oppression of toilers clearly. Since, as Marx says "If money, according to Augier, 'comes into the world with a congenital blood-stain on one cheek', capital comes dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt." (Vol.1, pp. 711-12)

It is therefore clear what Marx regards as the indicator of the arising and establishment of the capitalist system. From the midst of numerous categories, relations and phenomena, each of which holds an undeniable place in the historical development of societies and in the history of appearance of capitalism, Marx lays stress on the embryos of the emergence of the antagonism between labour and capital. Marx knows the "anatomy" of the capitalist system and hence in the pursuit of its historical course of evolution, he is precisely aware of what he is looking for. In order to determine whether a system is capitalist or not, Marx does not look for "heavy industries", "balanced home market", "advanced level of technology",

"useful commodities", skyscrapers and under-ground railways, etc. He has defined capitalism, in contradistinction to all previous modes of production, as the "unity of the labour-process and the process of producing surplus-value", and hence he stresses that the establishment of the capitalist system is distinguished, before anything else, by the objectification and materialization of the inner essence of this unity, i.e. the confrontation of the wage-labour of the propertyless labourer with the money-capital of the propertied bourgeois. In the determination of the type of the economic laws of movement of society, i.e. the type of the mode of social production, Marx leads us, in the first place, to the examination of the expropriation process, where the crude memories of landless villagers and the rural accent of the town proletariat, has far greater theoretical and analytical value than the comparison of the number of chimneys of the factories in Iran with those of the "advanced industrialized countries"; and that supporter of the "national bourgeoisie" who through stereotyping refuses to budge and denies the domination of capitalist relations in Iran and to this end calls to witness the industrial backwardness of the country, must make his position clear towards Marx and history: has expropriation taken place or not? This is the fundamental question, we will count the chimneys later:

The understanding of the process of expropriation in the historical development of capitalism automatically drives every Marxist, in the analysis of the cognition of the dominant relations of production in society, to look for the manner of realization (or basically the realization or non-realization) of this process in Iran. The question presents itself, in the first place, as whether the expropriation of peasants and urban craftsmen has widely taken place in the country or not. Here we are confronted with the most striking manifestation of the theoretical eclecticism of the supporters of the Semi Feudal Semi-Colonial hypothesis. Such forces deny, on the one hand, the domination of capitalist production in the country and, on the other hand, where the "exposure" of Shah's regime is on the agenda, they do not fail to voice the ruin of the villagers and their abandoning of their homelands in the course of the Land Reforms of the years 1963-68. Double standards! The separation of immediate producers in their millions from means of production, and the persistence of feudal production! In later pamphlets, where we are dealing with the expropriation process in Iran and in particular with its final conclusion in the years 63-68, we shall specifically confront these bourgeois views. The outline of our views on this score has been discussed in relative detail in the book "Communists and the Peasant Movement, After the Imperialist Solution of the Agrarian Question in Iran" and also in the introduction to "Seven Articles on the Agrarian Question, Lenin" [{10}](#). It is



sufficient here to remark that to regard the system of production in Iran as feudal and to keep the Iranian working class in waiting for the "Messianic" rise of the "national" bourgeoisie (this absent Imam of Iranian Menshevism), under conditions where all the strata of the bourgeoisie in the country, thanks to the expropriation of millions of villagers and thanks to the ruin of large masses of peasants, have had access to the cheapest labour-power in the world for more than fifteen years, is nothing but covering up the savage exploitation of the capitalist system and, in the political sphere, nothing but washing one's hands of the already present saviour of the people of Iran, the working class. To be continued...

**Mansoor Hekmat**  
**April 1980**

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## FOOT NOTES

{1} See "[The Myth of the National and Progressive Bourgeoisie \(1\)](#)", English edition (No. 5 of the present translation series), pp. 36-37 -Ed.

{2} The first Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic regime -Ed.

{3} See pp.25-26 of the English Edition (Translation Series No.5) -Ed.

{4} The chancellor and the premier, respectively, of the Shahs in the Qajar dynasty (1752-1925) -Ed.

{5} The banks that were instituted in Iran by the Tsarist Russia and British imperialism during the reign of Qajar dynasty -Ed.

{6} "Worker's Path" -Ed.

{7} Treaties signed between Iran and the Tsarist Russia at the time of *Qajar* dynasty -Ed.

{8} A chancellor of one of the Shahs of *Qajar* dynasty -Ed.

{9} The organ of the "Revolutionary Union for the Emancipation of Labour" -Ed.

{10} i.e. Seven articles by Lenin on the *agrarian* question, translated into Persian by the UCM and published as a pamphlet. See volumes 8,9 and 15 of the Collected Works -Ed.

[7] One must ask explicitly in which written or unwritten theoretical document has "*Razmandegan-e-Azadi-e-Tabaghe-ye Kargar*" {"Fighters for the Emancipation of the Working Class" (Razmandegan) -Ed.} criticized the positions declared in the pamphlets "The Consideration of the Impending Situation" and "The Political Situation and Our Tasks", and the liberal order that these comrades expected of the government of the "national bourgeoisie" and promised in these pamphlets, and reached their present positions. One must ask on the basis of which Marxist analysis and which theoretical revision, "*Sazeman-e-Peykar Dar Rah-e-Azadi-e Tabaghe-ye Kargar*" {"Organisation of Struggle on the Path to Emancipate the Working Class" (Peykar) -Ed.} has crossed out the name of "national bourgeoisie" from the "class list" in Peykar no. 14. One must ask specifically to which analyses is it referring when "*Goroooh-e-Nabard Baray-e-Rahai-e Tabaghe-ye Kargar*" {"Group of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class" (Nabard) -Ed.} in Nabard no. 4, in a brief notice, asks its supporters to cross out the phrase "national" before the word bourgeoisie, since presumably the Group no longer believes in such a category and phenomena, on the basis of its analyses. And, of course with much less expectation, one must ask how and on the basis of which theoretical and recorded cognition, "*Sazeman-e Chereekhayee Fadaiee Khalgh-e-Iran*" {"The Organisation of Iranian People's Fedaiee Guerillas" (O.I.P.F.G.) -Ed.} who in "*Kar*" {Labour} no. 2, in the open letter to the favourite Prime Minister of reaction and imperialism, places itself at the "head of the critics" of the government and praises *Bazargan's* government for its "fundamental difference" with the government of *Hoveyda* and *Sharif Emami* {Prime Ministers under the regime of the Shah -Ed.} and asks of the public (in particular the Imam's Committees) not to put any spokes into the wheels of the government, assesses the national and progressive bourgeoisie, in Kar no. 24, as a "myth" which is at the service of imperialism?

The example of the present positions of "*Sazeman-e-Chereekhayee Fadaiee Khalgh*" is a warning to all those forces which shirk from the Marxist criticism of their own theoretical errors and view and understand their theory as instruments for the justification of action, an action which is passively dragging at the tail of the course of experience and events of the sphere of politics.

"To determine its conduct from case to case, to adapt itself to the events of

the day and to the chopping and changing of petty politics, to forget the primary interests of the proletariat and the basic features of the whole capitalist system, of all capitalist evolution, to sacrifice these primary interests for the real or assumed advantages of the moment - such is the policy of revisionism. And it patently follows from the very nature of this policy that it may assume an infinite variety of forms, and that every more or less 'new' question, every more or less unexpected and unforeseen turn of events, even though it changes the basic line of development only to an insignificant degree and only for the briefest period, will always inevitably give rise to one variety of revisionism or another." ([Lenin, Marxism and Revisionism](#), Collected Works, Vol. 15 pp. 31-39)

The change of position of forces which previously believed in the existence of the "national bourgeoisie" and its progressive role in our revolution, and the attempt of these forces in keeping quiet about and passing off these changes of positions, has been carried out so clumsily that finally the bourgeoisie itself has started to voice its protest. In a pamphlet entitled "The End of Line 3" [\[\\*\]](#), written by the "Marxist Leninist Circle on the Path to Form the Communist Party (!) of Iran", the theoreticians of "The Office of Falsification of Marxism-Leninism of the Islamic Republic Government of Iran" have entered the scene to "restitute the violated rights of the national bourgeoisie" and warn the communist movement against its "promise-breaking". A mention of an example of the "criticisms" of these gentlemen would be very useful:

"Is there any room to doubt that the present propaganda of the Unity Conference [\[\\*\\*\]](#) has been totally changed from what they were acknowledging just a few months ago? Is it not a fact that the same strata and classes, the same political trends and the same individuals and figures (they mean the "national bourgeoisie" and its politicians whom line 3 previously regarded as progressive) form the present government? So why does not the Unity Conference any longer speak of the nationalism of the present government? Have the forces which for nearly 30 years, despite all class deficiencies and deprivations, insisted on their independent stands, changed nature over 6 months? Or is it the Unity Conference which has, in the political struggle, changed position by 180 degrees to suit the expediencies of the day? The answer is quite clear; it is the Unity Conference which has trampled on its views through desperation. The absurdity in this matter has gone so far that they not only stay silent on the nationalism of the present government, which is the decisive factor in adopting proletarian policy and tactics towards it, but they also insert the

element of government's "dependence on imperialism" into the centre of their propaganda about the state and the present government." (p.10)

For our part, we are extremely happy that the course of experience, at least so far as it relates to the category of "national bourgeoisie", is driving "Line 3" towards Leninism and especially for the fact that these forces "insert" the "element of the government's dependence on imperialism" in their propaganda about the state and the government. But the trash of "The End of Line 3" has one basic lesson for all communists, and that is that if we do not criticize our weak points from a proletarian viewpoint and for the consciousness of the proletariat and the escalation of its struggles, then we have left the bourgeoisie's hands free in grabbing these weaknesses and turning them into a weapon for discrediting and suppressing the workers' and communist movement.

{\*} "Line 3" was the name given to the forces in the left movement of Iran who shared certain positions in common, such as the rejection of guerrilla warfare, the belief in the Social-imperialist nature of Russia, etc. -Ed.

{\*\*} Unity Conference was a loose association among most of the organisations of Line 3. It was formed during the first few months after the February Uprising in 1979 and collapsed soon afterwards -Ed.

[8] In Capital, Marx begins the explanation and analysis of the laws of movement of bourgeois society, with the category and phenomenon of commodity and by analysing the fundamental contradiction within it - exchange-value and use-value - he step by step extracts categories and relations such as value, socially necessary abstract labour, money, and, finally, "capital-relation" as a whole.

[9] "If we now compare the two processes of producing value and of creating surplus-value, we see that the latter is nothing but the continuation of the former beyond a definite point. If on the other hand the process be not carried beyond the point, where the value paid by the capitalist for the labour-power is replaced by an exact equivalent, it is simply a process of producing value; if on the other hand, it be continued beyond that point, it becomes a process of creating surplus-value." (Vol.1, pp. 189-90)

[10] It is obvious that unequal exchange does not explain how surplus-value exists,

since in such a case the profit of one of the parties in the exchange would mean the loss of the other party and these opposing profits and losses at the level of the total capital in society would neutralize one another. Thus, the production of surplus-value at the level of the total capital in society cannot be attributed to the unequal exchange of the owners of commodities. For the precise explanation of this question see Capital [Vol.1, Chapter 5](#), "Contradictions in the General Formula of capital". In this chapter Marx clearly shows that basically the origin of surplus-value must not be sought in the sphere of circulation and sums up the contradiction of the general formula of capital thus: "It is therefore impossible for capital to be produced by circulation, and it is equally impossible for it to originate apart from circulation. It must have its origin both in circulation and yet not in circulation. We have, therefore, got a double result." (Vol.1, p.163)

[11] For the explanation of the expanded form of the general formula of capital (the first formula in our discussion) and the study of the different aspects of the exchange circuits and also the circulation of the different factors and constituents of this formula, refer to [Capital Vol. 2, chapters one to four](#).

[12] In capitalist society "the value of labour-power is determined, as in the case of every other commodity, by the labour-time necessary for the production, and consequently also the reproduction, of this special article... Given the individual, the production of labour-power consists in his reproduction of himself or his maintenance. For his maintenance he requires a given quantity of the means of subsistence. Therefore the labour-time requisite for the production of labour-power reduces itself to that necessary for the production of those means of subsistence; in other words, the value of labour-power is the value of the means of subsistence necessary for the maintenance of the labour." (Vol.1, p.167) For the explanation of the relation between wages (the price of the labour power used up in a certain time) and the value of labour-power, see [Vol.1, chapter 19](#), "The Transformation of the Value (and Respectively the Price) of Labour-Power into Wages".

[13] For the explanation of how this formula has been extracted, refer to [Capital Vol.1, chapters 8 and 9](#) and also the "Results of the Immediate Process of Production".

[14] If you think we are exaggerating, listen to this: "The confrontation of the clergy and *Marjaiiat* {Highest ranking Ayatollahs -Ed.} with the dictatorial regime was

more fatal than before for the government of the coup d'état. The regime tried to weaken the influence of the clergy through capitalising the social relations, but did not succeed". (*Rah-e-Kargar*, Fascism: Nightmare or Reality No.1, p.25) Having transformed Lenin's theory of imperialism into the theory of "plunder", *Rah-e-Kargar* is intending "to go beyond" Marx's theory of historical materialism "*Marjaiiat*" and "regime" are two more supra-historical categories which are added to the categories of "plunder", "imposed division of labour", etc. These supra-historical "super-phenomena" acquire mythical powers at the hands of *Rah-e-Kargar*. Super-phenomena which not only, from the viewpoint of time, precede capitalism, but also encompass the historical evolution of societies. The change of social relations, the appearance of capitalism, etc, in Iran are only tiny manifestations of the consequences of the conflict between them: Here, the question is no longer merely over the inversion of the material laws of movement of societies and of regarding the changes in the superstructure, as the factor and motive force of the changes in the substructure; here, the question is about permanent and eternal phenomena which easily transform both the superstructure and substructure (the social relations) in order to "weaken" one another, and, what's more, they also possess such mightiness that this transformation does not even affect their mutual fight: The explanation of how (the necessity, possibility and the course) Iran became capitalist, on the basis of the struggle between the "*Marjaiiat*" and the "dictatorial regime" (which presumably in spite of the change of social relations, are still, and always of identical nature, on the political scene) is precisely an example of that type of "historical" analyses whose perspective we depicted.

[15] In order to make it clear what Marx means by "free labourers", the following quotation may be useful:

"For the conversion of his money into capital, therefore, the owner of money must meet in the market with the free labourer, free in the double sense, that as a free man he can dispose of his labour-power as his own commodity, and that on the other hand he has no other commodity for sale, is short of everything necessary for the realisation of his labour-power." *Capital*, Vol. 1, p.166.

## TRANSLATORS' NOTES

1. The "Student Supporters of the 'Unity of Communist Militants'-Britain" accepts full responsibility for the translation of the works of the Unity of Communist Militants.
2. The Program of the U.C.M., published in English in March 1982, is issue No. 2 of the present translation series. Unfortunately this fact was not indicated on the cover of the work at the time of publication.
3. We request our readers to send us their comments on the quality of the translations and thus help us to correct the mistakes that may have occurred.
4. Our previous address is no longer usable. Please use the following address without any other mention.

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