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Althusser views capitalist mode of production as the unintended and overdetermined effect of the “aleatory” and contingent “encounter” of the various historical processes. There is no necessity of the emergence of capitalism as such from the constituent elements floating in history rather it is a point of ‘radical indeterminacy’ that characterizes the existence and reproduction of a social system. Hence what follows also that existence of non-capitalist production-relations might not necessarily have to have a causal determination that is they do not necessarily be linked with capitalism for some purpose originating from the capitalist space rather they may exist as independent processes, of course having interactions with capitalism in various moments both overdetermining and being over determined in the same process. Apparently this argument seems to be allowing ‘subjectivity’ and ‘pluralism’ that makes political economic analysis too general but it actually entails analysis that is more complex and differentiated and calls for looking into how relations of intrinsic capacities are actualized differently in different situations.

In this context one important aspect of articulation between capital and non-capital is of course the asymmetric relation between the two. The non-capitalist site of production is not something auxiliary to the capitalist labour process, clinging as an appendage to the latter; rather it constitutes the wage although not recognized in value calculations. To the non-capitalist segment the articulation with the capitalist space might not be a binding in itself and even if it interacts, it might not be serving some pre-determined purpose either; rather this articulation can signify an intersection of two separate processes that have their own logic of existence. Therefore, the more important point of course is that non-capital has to express itself in terms of exchange relations in order to engage with the capitalist space, while it is also difficult for capital to intrude into all sorts of non-capitalist production processes. The household labour is a classic example of such a site of non-class process that hardly gets represented in value calculations internal to the capitalist space. The conceptual act of assuming ‘subsistence basket’ as something synonymous to wage goods required as inputs to produce that subsistence basket is a silent process of ignoring the household labour that transforms wage goods into subsistence basket (Quick, 2004). The value of the labour power which is defined by the socially necessary labour required to produce the wage goods is constituted by a separate process of production in the household which is a non-capitalist site and never enters into the value calculations in the capitalist system. The non-capitalist site exists, get reproduced and play a constitutive role to capitalist labour process but that does not imply that they existed only to serve a specific purpose in capitalism. Non-capitalist sites may exist for reasons altogether different from the cause of interacting with capitalism but capital tie them up in exchange relations, although, do not allow them to be represented in value equations. The interface between capital and non-capital

characterized by exchanges hardly happens on the basis of equivalence and suppressions are consciously ignored in capitalist discourse.

The next section focuses on the interaction between capitalist and non-capitalist space, various dimensions of their engagements both in terms of systemic articulation as well as in the realm of exchange captured in value-theoretic terms.

#### **IV. Locating Non-Wage Employment in Capitalism**

In the context of mode of production non-wage employment had traditionally been equated to petty-commodity-production where the small producer having her own means of production produces goods, exchanges with money in order to procure goods for use. Hence petty commodity production was conceived as a production process that produces no surplus and engages with capitalism only after finishing the act of production. Sanyal (2007) argues that today's self-employment in the informal sector cannot simply be equated to the concept of petty-commodity-production, instead characterized it as the 'need' economy. The producer in the latter case usually starts the circuit with money, purchases inputs, produces commodities and then sells against money. The producer in this case engages with capitalism before completing the production process and the circuit assumes the form  $M-C-C'-M'-C-C'-M'$  where  $M'$  in successive rounds is greater than initial money advanced but the difference between  $M$  and  $M'$  is spent on consumption. It is argued that in this case although the production is not primarily organized for accumulation as happens to be the case in capitalist production, nevertheless, it cannot also be equated to subsistence economy that precludes any surplus. In any case whether defined as petty-commodity-production or the need economy, the question that obviously draws attention that what relevance does this non-wage segment, an economy that is primarily destined to consumption has in reference to capitalism. In other words, how a capitalist fundamental class process of production and appropriation of surplus value is overdetermined by an array of subsumed class and non-class processes that involve non-capital in different moments.

There are arguments saying that largely the non-wage segments constitute the 'reserve army of labour' and they sustain by self-employment till they are recruited in formal sector jobs. The other implication being the informal segment helps cheapening the reproduction cost of labour power as goods and services produced in this informal segment mainly enters into the subsistence basket. Although partially true these arguments do not acknowledge the following facts: a. It is not always empirically true that a larger portion of the consumption basket of an average industrial labour originates in the informal sector and the purpose of reducing the value of the subsistence basket could be fulfilled even by producing wage goods through mass production (Schmitz, 1982); b. the reserve army of labour is relevant in capitalism in containing rise in wages in the capitalist segment but that need in any case does not explain such a vast segment of



non-wage employment who would hardly be called for wage work in the capitalist sector.

Rosa Luxemburg (1951) was among the first to theorize the need for non-capitalist markets and argued that in the case of expanded reproduction a 'closed' capitalist system can never get rid of the realization crisis without a non-capitalist 'external market' that is used to absorb part of the surplus. While acknowledging the requirement of external stimuli Kalecki (1971) argued that in a balanced trade between capitalist and non-capitalist segment that is if net exports is zero then non-capitalist segment plays no role in absorbing the unrealised surplus. This argument was also being advanced by Sweezy (1942) in his critique to Luxemburg's thesis. However Patnaik (1997) refuted the need for export surplus to stimulate investment in the capitalist sector. This is precisely because expansion of exports and contraction of import competing activities have asymmetrical effects upon domestic investment and the positive effects of the former would be larger than the negative effects of the latter. Second, balanced trade between two economies might imply export surpluses from capitalist to pre-capitalist sector if the imports from under-developed economies are used to replace domestic pre-capitalist producers within the developed capitalist economy. Kalecki's principal point however was that in the absence of specific exogenous stimuli a capitalist economy would settle down at a state of simple reproduction and innovations do play the role of such stimuli introducing a positive trend into the system. Patnaik's theorizing of engagement with pre-capitalist sector although bears resemblance to Luxemburg's argument of the theoretical impossibility of capitalism existing in isolation but it is different in the sense that the necessity of engagement does not arise in order to realize the entire unconsumed surplus of the core as argued by the former rather it provides a 'reserve market' that stimulates investment. The central argument runs as follows: capitalism being a demand-constrained system has a tendency to move away further from the central position and there is obviously no spontaneous mechanism that ensures the functioning of the system within upper bounds of inflationary barrier and lower bounds of activity related to the minimum acceptable rate of profit to the capitalists. The coherence and the viability of capitalism can only be explained when the capitalist sector is ensconced with a pre-capitalist setting, when the distant reserve army consisting of a vast pauperizing mass created within the pre-capitalist sector and geographically separated from the reserve army at the core plays the role not only of containing real wages but also stabilizing the wage-unit and hence the value of money (Patnaik, 2008). The basic difference between Kalecki's analysis and that of Patnaik's lies in the fact that Kalecki implicitly assumes that a capitalist economy is viable at any rate of profit, while in Patnaik's scheme there is a minimum to the rate of profit and hence to the level of activity, slipping below which would make the system unviable. However what is common to all of the above analysis is the necessity of creating hegemony over the existing non-capitalist segment because only then the capitalists would be induced to the required level of investment.

The political and economic dimension of continuously creating the 'other', non-capitalist sectors is further captured in Harvey's notion of accumulation through dispossession (Harvey, 2003; Sharryn and Carbonella, 2008). The interaction between the capitalist and the non-capitalist segment especially in the neoliberal era is explained in terms of the inside/outside dialectics that comes into play depending on the cyclic search for new sources of capital. The neoliberal era signifies the restoration of capital's power over labour after two decades of working class empowerment attained through labour and urban social movements. At the same time it is also the period of capitalists' attempt to appropriate, co-opt, confront and supersede the manifold achievements of the working class. Hence the inclusion/exclusion dynamics in economic relations is mediated by the dialectic of force and persuasion in the realm of politics. However the mode of accumulation in the neoliberal period represents a major departure from the expanded reproduction of the post-War Keynesian epoch. At that time the realization of excess capital was facilitated by mass consumption and large expenditures of the welfare state on account of public utilities and infrastructure. In the neoliberal era, on the contrary dispossession takes various forms of loss of entitlements. In the advanced countries the workers lost their pensions, welfare, national health care and jobs; elsewhere in indigenous and peasant communities people lost their natural rights on land, water, forests and plants and many of the public utilities are privatized. In a sense the intrusion of capital on the non-capitalist segment creates new avenues for accumulation through dispossession.

The above analysis is very much related to the non-temporal interpretation of Marx's paradigmatic formulation of the 'primitive accumulation of capital'. The idea of separation of producers from their means of production applies to both capitalist accumulation and the primitive accumulation of capital. It flows from the alienation of labour from the object of production and accumulation in capitalism reproduces the separation at an ever increasing scale. However the difference between the two being: in the process of capitalist accumulation it takes place by the silent compulsion of the economic relations while in primitive accumulation of capital the separation is imposed primarily through extra-economic force. And this use of extra-economic force did not subside with the establishment of capitalist relations rather called for any time when the capitalist class and the state deems a threat to the stability of the system, that is when the silent economic forces could not ensure the required minimum rate of profit.

In this context one might note that expansion of the non-capitalist segment in India and in many other developing economies includes to a large extent activities related to the services sector. These activities in most of the cases lie outside the realm of fundamental class process and hence the essentialist interpretation of capitalist mode of production would fail to acknowledge their role in constituting the capitalist class process. In other words the question simply is whether these activities do in any case play a role in the augmentation of surplus value or not. The underlying issue is of course pegged with the

conceptual boundaries between productive and non-productive labour. Productive labour is labour which creates surplus value and unproductive labour is that which is exchanged with money not in the form of capital but of revenue. Many of the activities related to commerce and finance are unproductive according to this definition. Marx however used the term 'indirectly productive' referring to activities related to the sphere of circulation. This is because the speed of circulation determines the turnover of capital and that further influences the mass of surplus value created. Hence although the activities in the sphere of circulation do not create value in themselves but play a significant role in realizing the values already created in the sphere of production. On the question of services in general Marx argued that commodity is a social mode of existence of a good that possesses some use value. The form in which labour materialized itself in the 'commodity' is absolutely irrelevant for this relation (Marginson, 1998). Hence, according to this argument commodities do not have to take a tangible or durable form. On the other hand for instance, the merchant or the trader although does not add any new value to the produced commodities nevertheless s/he plays the role of productive capital in its own right by outlays of capital on employment of labour and hence creating surplus value. Thus the expansion of the services sector does not necessarily imply a deduction from rather than an addition to the pool of surplus value. Therefore, the current trend in the rise of non-wage employment in the services sector is neither alien to the Marxian scheme of analysis nor is it incompatible with the broader framework which we use to capture the articulation between capitalist and non-capitalist segments.

Besides the broader politico-economic reasoning that addresses issues related to interaction between capitalist sector and the non-wage segment viz. self-employment, one needs to focus also on the interface between the two segments that takes place through the act of exchange. One of the major differences between the wage worker and a self-employed worker is that in the case of the former, wages are supposed to be paid independent of the act of sale of the produced goods; while the self-employed person can realize the return of his/her labour only after being able to sell the produce. The asymmetry between wage income and non-wage income actually reflects the inherent asymmetry between capital and non-capital where in the non-capitalist segment the self-employed is more vulnerable to cyclical fluctuations compared to the wage worker.

The asymmetry in exchange could further be captured at the conceptual level. Labour in capitalism assumes a dual character: one concrete, that signifies the particular dimension and specifics of labour that produces commodities as use values and the other abstract, that is universal, social and general producing exchange values of commodities. Differences of nationality, linguistic identity, gender, sexuality and so on are relevant only in the domain of concrete labour, they are actualized in producing differing use values but through the abstractions of social labour and labour time, heterogeneity is forcefully demolished into a system of structural coherence through the act of exchange. The law of value maintains the social division of labour in a commodity producing

society and commodities exchange on the basis of equivalence of simple labour time only when all labour could be put to equivalence by the notion of 'abstract labour'. The reduction of the varied concrete forms of labour to abstract labour requires a forcible act of making everything being represented in terms of a labour measured in terms of 'average/normal' intensity. The concept of 'abstract labour' is interior to capitalism and that requires both mobility of capital and labour. In selling their commodities the capitalists of the various spheres of production realize the value of the capital consumed in their production. However, Marx argued in Capital III in analyzing the general rate of profit, that capitalists do not secure the surplus and related amount of profit created in their own sphere. 'What they secure is only as much surplus value and hence profit, as falls, when uniformly distributed, to the share of every aliquot part of the total social capital from the total social surplus value, or profit, produced in a given time by the social capital in all spheres of production. (Marx, 1959; Capital III, Ch.IX)

Furthermore the cost of production in each sphere is specific but the profit added to them is independent of the particular sphere of production. The general rate of profit is determined by two factors which are as follows: a. the organic composition of capital in different spheres of production and the related rates of profit in the individual spheres of production; b. the distribution of the social capital in these different spheres. Hence what follows, if the organic composition of capital in a specific sphere of production is less than the average social capital, then the price of the product in that sphere of production would be less than the value of the product. If we assume for the time being that the self-employed producer engages with the capitalist sector to realize her returns on the basis of some equivalence it is likely that the shadow rate of profit that s/he could realize would not be enough to secure the value of the product because in most of the cases the organic composition of capital would be less than the social average. Secondly the general rate of profit in the capitalist sector is constituted by an equal rate of exploitation and that is ensured by competition of labour that works through labour mobility. In the sphere of self-employment there is no reason to believe that this uniform rate of exploitation would be established in the act of exchange between capitalist and non-capitalist segment. The terms of trade between capitalist sector and the self-employed producer is completely arbitrary and accidental as it is impossible to establish a relation of equivalence in value theoretic terms. The capital advanced in self-employment is not 'capital' in the general sense, as these are hardly transferable to alternative sites of investments. It has to be applied in a way to valorize the family labour. In these situations, the markets for capital and labour are not separate and independent. They are both segmented markets, as the family labour cannot always have recourse to alternative occupations. However, the return to labour in self-employment, once entering into exchange with the capitalist segment, should be at least not more than the wage in the capitalist sector and that requires only the existence of a 'reserve army of labour' that is a supply of sufficient number of people looking for subsistence income. Hence, return in self-employment and wages in capitalist sector are mutually constitutive, one

conditioning the other of course not on the same footing but on the basis of asymmetry what Chaudhury *et al* (2000) termed as 'mimicry of overdetermination'. The general tendencies however in any case do not preclude the possibilities and instances of earning relatively more in self-employment than wage-employment in a specific sector depending on the organic composition capital of the self-employed enterprise and degree of availability and mobility of the labour force in the specific segment, just as there is no need to believe that the worker's wage in capitalism has always to be equal to the minimum subsistence level. The final outcome is constituted by elements of political and historical specificities that act and interact upon the underlying economic tendencies.

Finally, if we assume a situation when 'Department I' producing capital goods and 'Department II' producing consumer goods support each other in appropriate proportion such that no possibilities of crisis because of under-consumption exists, then also there would be interaction between the capitalist and non-capitalist sector and that is precisely because of non-economic reasons. The 'reserve army of labour' as it is conceived is a relative over supply of labour power created primarily by increasing organic composition of capital. This reserve has further increased because of the dismantling of trade barriers between states. As Rodrik (1997) argued, increased trade resulted in a rise in international competition that translated into greater elasticity of the domestic demand for the labor. This means that a worker is now competing with a much larger labor supply, that reduces its bargaining position and the first-order effect of trade appears to have been a redistribution of the enterprise surplus toward employers rather than the enlargement of the surplus itself. But beyond this 'reserve army' there is a simultaneous process of creating the 'wasteland'<sup>1</sup>, in the sense, those dispossessed were separated from the means of production but hardly been absorbed in the rank of capitalist labor force. This segment comprises of those unfortunate ones who are permanently denied of the 'privilege' of being exploited in the capitalist sector as wage labour. Sanyal (2007) argues that this is different from the conventional notion of the 'reserve army of labour'. The patronage of the capitalist state by occasionally providing subsidised credits and inputs to this segment is not at all prompted by the economic necessity of maintaining a relative excess supply of labour that helps pushing down wages in the capitalist sector, but only driven by the political purpose of legitimizing the hegemony of the ruling class. Given the fact of the devastating nature of the present state of expanded reproduction together with the erosion of the welfare state, even if we ignore possibilities of realization crisis and assume capital to be self-subsistent, then also it requires to institute a surrogate safety net that takes care of the dispossessed by making provisions for the minimum level of subsistence. In other words, the engagement of capital with the non-capital in this context might be because of reasons that do not directly account for necessities related to surplus production or appropriation rather constitutes a subsumed class process serving a political purpose altogether.

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<sup>1</sup> A term used by Amit Bhaduri (2008).

## V. Conclusion

Capitalism never existed in isolation in 'pure' and pristine form and has been overdetermined by all other elements of social life that includes separate processes of non-capitalist production relations. This does not however preclude the attempts to specify theoretically the essential characteristics of capitalism. But at the same time the non-essentialist framework refuses to limit the analysis based on a linear progression of history that finds non-capital as a subsidiary class process. On the contrary, capitalism engages with its exterior in domains of politics, economics and ideology and in the process both the segments get overdetermined by each other. No centrality is to be attached to the capitalist fundamental class process and therefore non-capitalist class processes are also to be conceived as constitutive to the capital system. Therefore co-existence of large non-wage segment with wage employment should not be viewed as a paradox in capitalist development.

The relation between capitalist and non-capitalist segment is a complex process and such interaction could not be captured by any simplistic one-dimensional causality. Non-capitalist segment exists primarily with its own causal historical determinations not necessarily to serve some purpose for capitalism. And the engagement does not necessarily originate from a priori systemic necessity but at the same time does not signify an intersection between isolated systems. The engagement in this case is a process of mutual constitutivity although based on asymmetric relations. The interaction might be because of economic reasons, for instance: recurrent need of recruiting labour in the active labour force; pushing down the cost of production of the subsistence basket and using the compressible wage segment to attain stability in the capitalist system and so on or might flow from the political purpose of establishing hegemony over the non-capitalist segment although trade between the two might not necessarily follow. In sum intrusion of capital in the non-capitalist space refers to situations when silent compulsions of capitalist laws could not take care of the minimum rate of profit required for the existence and stability of capitalism. But otherwise also the interaction might be multi-dimensional involving non-class processes that directly contribute to the act of producing or appropriating surplus as well as those related to subsumed class processes that ensures the political stability of the capitalist fundamental class process. Therefore, the articulation entails a complex dialectics of force and persuasion that determines the interactive space mutually constituted by economic, political and ideological determinations.

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