

class of wage-workers which is what we mean by proletarianization. Proletarianization, therefore, goes beyond the separation of producers from their means of subsistence. It further involves the separation of laborers from their own labor power, the exchange of that labor power against capital, resulting in class formation and struggle. This involves the emergence of a bourgeoisie and a proletariat as distinct social forces with distinct class interests that are intrinsically antagonistic. Such class formation is indispensable to capitalist accumulation, and its outcome.

As Marx explains, for capitalist accumulation to work two different kinds of commodity possessors must come face to face: on the one hand, owners of money, means of production, who are eager to increase their capital by buying other people's labor; on the other hand, "free" laborers, the sellers of their ability to work, their labor power. Free laborers in the sense of being neither part and parcel of the means of property as in the case of slaves, nor owning or possessing any means of production as the source of their exploitation, as in the case of the peasant proprietor. They are therefore "free" and unencumbered by any means of production of their own. This "freedom", however, is coercive. Generally, the emergence of "free" laborers has been the outcome of a cruel and violent process throughout the history of capitalism.³ Historically, free labor constituted one of the prerequisites for wage labor, which is, in turn, the condition for capital. As Marx states in his Pre-capitalist Economic Formations:

"One of the prerequisites of wage labor and one of the historical conditions for capital is free labor and the exchange of free labor against money....Another prerequisite is the separation of free labor from the objective conditions of its realization - from the means and material of labor. This means above all that the worker must be separated from the land, which functions as his natural laboratory...." 4

In this sense, wage-labor implies freedom to own, and also freedom to