

sell, one's own labor power. Proletarianization is, therefore, a two-fold process that presupposes the availability of both sellers and buyers of labor power, simultaneously. It can be said to have a supply side and a demand side to it: the creation of labor surplus, and the absorption of this surplus in commodity production as a commodity. It is one of the peculiarities of capitalism that labor power becomes, itself, a commodity and can produce value only as a commodity that has an exchange value. Marx's statement, "the expropriation of people from the soil forms the basis of the capitalist mode of production...the prelude to the history of capital",⁵ implies, therefore, that wage-labor (conditioned by free labor, which is, in turn, the result of separation from means of production) is, itself, a condition for capital in its productive form. The latter is important. It means that proletarianization is linked to capital in production only, but not to capital in circulation. It is, thus, a feature of capitalist accumulation in the sphere of production, as distinguished from capital activity in the sphere of circulation.

That proletarianization is peculiar only to one form of capital, namely productive capital, simultaneously as an effect of it and the condition for it, is strongly emphasized in the Marxist theory:

"One of the most obvious peculiarities of the movement in the circuits of industrial capital, and therefore of capitalist production, is the fact that on the one hand the component elements of productive Capital are derived from the commodity market and must be continually renewed out of it, though, as commodities and that on the other hand the product of the labor-process emerges from it as a commodity and must be continually sold anew as a commodity. Therefore, Capitalist production cannot reach its full scope until the direct agricultural producer becomes a wage-laborer; the money relation between the buyer and the seller becomes a relation inherent in production; but has its foundation in the social character of production, not in the mode of exchange." 6 (emphasis added)