

Value, Cooperatives, and Class Justice

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Abstract: In this article, I argue that elimination of exploitation at the firm level is necessary to eliminate exploitation but not sufficient, in and of itself, to support class justice. I distinguish exploitation as one of several aspects in the more inclusive category of class justice developed by DeMartino (2003). I then demonstrate that when the formation and distribution of value at the more complex level of Marx's Volume 3 analysis is considered, workers may collectively appropriate surplus-value but nonetheless be subject to an unfair redistribution of labor-time. I use the example of the Mondragon co-operatives to illustrate the types of institutions that are needed to address the reallocation of labor and the class injustice it entails. I end by speculating on how the concept of value needs to be reconsidered once we move beyond thinking about market exchange as the primary means by which labor allocated beyond capitalism.

Keywords: Value, Co-operatives, Exploitation, Class Justice

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Co-ops and Class Transformation

The current economic crisis may offer the best opportunity in our lifetimes to advocate for and to build alternative class arrangements. Certainly, interest in co-operatives as a means of organizing economic activity is increasing and, at least *prima facie*, a move toward cooperatives is a move in the direction of overcoming exploitation and establishing greater class justice. So it is helpful to consider the following questions: to what extent do worker cooperatives eliminate exploitation and promote class justice? Do they instead present the danger of reinforcing a capitalist subjectivity because of their reliance on the profit motive? Do they depend too much on market exchange and thus reproduce inequality, market power, and other market failures?

I believe value theory can inform our understanding of the challenges facing co-operatives and, in particular, the question of what role cooperatives might play in class transformation. I want to defend the following claim: that Marx's value theory provides a valuable critique of how capitalism distributes social labor-time and that, if we overlook this critique, we run the risk of working to build a social formation dominated by cooperatives that may end exploitation *per se*, but continue, inadvertently, to contribute to class injustice.

In other words, value theory - by foregrounding value as socially necessary abstract labor - can help us to see how co-operative firms in a capitalist economy participate in the formation and distribution of value and thus to design institutions

necessary to ensure market exchange between co-operatives promotes rather than undermines class justice.

In order to fully utilize Marx's value theory, it is necessary to take value theory beyond the terrain of his Volume 1 analysis and to ask the difficult question of how value as a theoretical category changes as a result of introducing the more complex considerations needed to inform contemporary thinking about capitalism. How do we think of value, for example, once we introduce competition among firms in different industries, unproductive labor of workers who provide conditions necessary for the production of value, and unpaid work in the home and community? Built into the meaning of value is the idea that the labor expended by workers must be socially necessary, not just in the sense of being expended with average effort but in the sense of being expended in accordance with existing social need (Rosdolsky 1954). But in Marx's analysis, social need is determined, at least in part, by effective demand. Can we really ask the question of whether value is being distributed in a way that promotes justice if, built right into the definition of value is the idea that labor is valued according to the ability to pay? The question of class justice has to consider what alternative measure of value we may need to develop in order to move beyond an economic system based on profit and the ability to pay.

I explain, first, why the elimination of exploitation at the firm level is necessary to eliminate exploitation but not sufficient, in and of itself, to support class justice. To do support this claim I will first distinguish exploitation as one of several aspects in the more inclusive category of class justice developed by

DeMartino (2003). I will then demonstrate that once we take into consideration the formation and distribution of value at the more complex level of Marx's Volume 3 analysis, workers may collectively appropriate surplus-value but nonetheless be subject to an unfair redistribution of labor-time. I will argue that the redistribution of value through exchange is qualitatively different from exploitation and these two types of injustice ought not to be conflated. Both however, contribute to class injustice and so it follows that eliminating exploitation at the level of the firm is insufficient to eliminate class injustice.

I will then argue that value theory can inform the design and development of institutions that would be needed to counteract the unfair exchange that market competition between worker co-ops would produce. In fact, these institutions need to exist at least three levels – the micro or firm level, the meso or cooperative association level, and the macro or economy-wide level. Here I will use the example of the Mondragon co-operatives to illustrate the types of institutions that might serve these ends. I will end by speculating on how the concept of value needs to be reconsidered once we move beyond thinking about market exchange as the primary means by which labor is validated as socially necessary – how the concept of value as Marx develops it, relies upon particular assumptions concerning subjectivity, motives and what types of labors count, assumptions that may be entirely inappropriate for thinking about class justice beyond capitalism.

Value, Exploitation and Class Justice

In capitalist firms, workers produce value for themselves (the value of their labor-power) and value for the enterprise (surplus-value). Exploitation can be defined in one of two ways. A strong definition holds that only the workers who produce surplus-value have the right to appropriate it; a weak definition maintains that workers who produce surplus-value must not be excluded from appropriating that value but does not exclude other stakeholders from participating (Cullinberg 1992, 1998; DeMartino, 2003). In either case, worker co-operatives can be understood as one means by which workers 'become their own appropriators' and thus eliminate the exploitation inherent in capitalism. While the elimination of exploitation is necessary to eliminate class injustice, it is not sufficient. When exploitation is understood to be one among several forms of class injustice it becomes apparent that market exchange between co-ops may contribute to class injustice in spite of having overcome exploitation *per se*.

Class justice necessarily takes into consideration the exploitation of workers—whether or not they are excluded from appropriating surplus-value they have produced – but it includes other considerations as well. DeMartino (2003) identifies three aspects of class justice corresponding to three moments in the class process – production, appropriation and distribution. Two of these aspects, production and distribution, correspond to Marx's famous dictum, 'From each according to his (or her) ability, to each according to his (or her) need'. Exploitation encompasses the second of these three aspects of class justice; it concerns who has the right to appropriate value. Questions of class justice thus go beyond exploitation

to ask about justice in production – are workers contributing according to their abilities, are workers alienated from the labor process, from themselves and from each other? Likewise, class justice is concerned with the distribution of surplus value – are workers needs being met and are the needs of non-workers taken into consideration as well? Using this broader category of class justice, it becomes clear how co-operatives may eliminate exploitation but nevertheless fail to promote class justice.

For example, attending to productive justice requires that each worker produce according to his or her ability. If the workplace is organized in such a way that workers' skills and abilities are underutilized; if the work is unnecessarily rote or meaningless or if workers' differing abilities and aptitudes are not taken into consideration when designing and assigning the work, then class justice is not served.¹

With respect to distributive justice – to each according to their need – the salient question is whether the surplus value is being distributed such that the needs of those who do not directly produce surplus-value are being taken into account.

Worker co-ops must make payments out of their surplus to maintain their existence (e.g., land rent, interest, taxes, retail discounts, wages of unproductive workers etc.).

¹ DeMartino (2003) uses Sen's notion of supporting 'vital human functionings' to defend the claim that workers are treated unjustly and he argues, following Nussbaum, for a non-essentialist rendering of what those 'human functionings' might be.

Given that some part of the population is unable to work, productive workers must also distribute some portion of surplus-value for non-workers. The question of fair compensation for the unproductive workers and how to provide for non-workers is not solved by the change in the class structure of the enterprise from capitalist firm to worker co-op. Worker cooperatives may recreate injustice via market relationships in spite of having overcome exploitation.

These questions necessarily overlap with the third aspect of class justice that DeMartino identifies – the question of who ought to appropriate the value produced by the enterprise. The question is this: should the appropriation of surplus-value be restricted to those workers in an enterprise who directly produce it? Should non-productive workers, those who do not directly produce surplus-value (accountants, janitors, managers), be entitled to participate in the appropriation? Excluding non-productive workers from decisions concerning the distribution of the surplus may be considered unjust on the grounds that their labor efforts are necessary for the production of the surplus. Other non-workers may also have a stake in the decisions of the enterprise and there may be compelling ethical reasons for including them among those who have a right to appropriate the surplus-value produced by the enterprise.

On the other hand one might hold that it is unjust for anyone but the workers themselves to appropriate the surplus-value since they have the first right to claim

the product of their labor (Burczak, 2006).² Other stakeholders may appeal to this group on the basis of other moral considerations, including considerations of class justice having to do with productive or distributive justice but these grounds must be seen to be distinct from the moral claim of the workers to appropriate the surplus-value. In other words, the different aspects of class justice DeMartino identifies may conflict and some criteria may be needed to adjudicate the conflicting claims of productive workers, unproductive workers and non-workers.

I do not intend here to resolve the issue concerning class justice as it pertains to appropriation. What is sufficient for the present claim is to establish that whichever approach to the question of appropriation one adheres to - a weak approach including multiple stakeholders, or a strong approach including only workers, eliminating exploitation is not sufficient to secure class justice.

Value Formation and Surplus-value Appropriation

When we examine the question of class justice from the perspective of value theory a second important question relating to appropriative justice arises. Workers' labor-time in any given co-operative firm gets credited to workers in other enterprises through the very process of the formation of values and prices. If we consider this implication of the theory, then there is a further reason to maintain that eliminating exploitation at the level of the firm will be insufficient to secure

² Burczak draws upon Ellerman's theory of property to argue that workers alone have the ownership right to the newly created assets that they produce.

class justice. I turn now to explain in detail how this redistribution of value occurs and how it is distinct from exploitation.

Workers in capitalist enterprises undertake concrete labor (i.e. specific types of labor) to produce commodities. This concrete labor contributes to the formation of both value and exchange-value not independently, but by taking part in the formation of abstract labor – the homogenous expenditure of labor effort. As abstract labor it counts as an aliquot portion or a particular share of the total abstract labor of the society. The value of the commodity depends not on the hours of concrete labor per unit produced but the hours of socially necessary abstract labor-time required to produce it. The exchange-value is similarly determined as a result of the amalgamation of all productive labor in a given period and its allocation according to the quantity of homogenous labor the commodity represents in equivalent exchange – what would give each industry an equal average rate of profit (Roberts 2004, 2005). Both the value and the exchange-value of the commodity thus lie outside the purview of the workers of any given enterprise.

In general, each enterprise will appropriate more or less value than it generates as a result of its relative contribution to the total social labor – the composition of its capital, its relative efficiency and size. More productive firms in an industry will enjoy super-profit – that is, they will be able to sell their output at an exchange value that exceeds the amount of value that they themselves have contributed. This extra surplus-value comes at the expense of the less efficient firms in the industry. Likewise, firms in capital-intensive industries will realize more

surplus-value than they have contributed as a result of selling their output at an exchange-value that tends to equalize the rate of profit across industries. This additional surplus-value comes at the expense of the relatively labor-intensive firms.

Furthermore, demand conditions also overdetermine the value-creating ability of an enterprise since those that expend labor in an industry with excess supply do not realize the full value creating ability of that labor. Workers in these industries expend labor that is not considered to be 'socially necessary' in the sense of having been undertaken with average skill and intensity as well as having been expended in line with existing social need as measured by effective demand. In this case, the value created by these workers again falls below that represented by the amount of value they have contributed and is credited to those firms that experience excess demand. (Kristjanson-Gural, 2003; 2005) While the lack of demand may signal that this commodity is produced in excess of society's need for it, it may be socially desirable to produce certain commodities (e.g. low income housing; vaccines) in spite of a lack of effective demand and the exchange-value of these commodities would be less than their value.

The question concerning appropriative justice is this: how can workers collectively self-appropriate something that is constituted as the result of the interaction of all production and demand conditions in the economy? This question is not an easy one. However, if one accepts that the amount of socially necessary abstract labor created by a given expenditure of concrete labor depends on its

relation to the other productive enterprises within and across industries then, even abstracting from the question of demand, the relation of any given enterprise to the whole will determine how efficacious its labor effort will be. In the case where a labor-intensive firm does not receive the full benefit of its labor, what do we say? Do we say that under the prevailing conditions additional labor must be expended in the enterprise to produce a given quantity of exchange-value? Or do we say that value is transferred from the labor-intensive firms to the capital-intensive firms via the formation of competitive prices? Does the latter amount to saying that workers in capital-intensive enterprises *exploit* workers in labor intensive co-operatives?

I argue that it makes sense to view the redistribution of value that results from exchange as a transfer among enterprises but that this type of value redistribution ought to be distinguished from exploitation *per se*. Not doing so conflates value appropriation that results from exchange with value appropriation that results the direction of workers in production. However, the existence of these transfers does imply that class injustice can occur even among worker-owned cooperative enterprises in which exploitation has been eliminated. I offer an argument in support of this position by appealing to the way I understand Marx's methodology – as a step-by-step opening of the system in which what is apparent at one moment in the analysis is subsequently problematized and reformulated in the next (Kristjanson-Gural, 2009; 2011).

If concrete labor is continually expended by a number of enterprises, then it is necessary to define a period in order to conceptualize the process of value

calculation. Marx depicts the process for the enterprise by the schema $M - C \dots P \dots C' - M'$. Here M represents the money capital advanced; C the means of production and labor-power purchased as commodity inputs; P the production process; C' the final commodity and M' the expanded money capital realized by the sale of the final commodity. Unless the enterprise is considered in isolation from its participation in the whole economy, throughout these periods the value produced by a given expenditure of concrete labor can change according to the changes occurring in other parts of the economy. The M advanced purchases C in the form of labor-power and means of production whose value may change prior to P . The value created during the period P may change with changes in the output and techniques in other industries. The output C' similarly changes in value as production in this and other enterprises proceeds and the given expenditure of labor expended exceeds or falls short of the industry average and as the composition of capital in the industry changes in relation to the economy-wide average. The M' that is received may also change in value as the total amount of labor expended in the economy changes and a given amount of money comes to represent more or less value. How then do we define the amount of surplus-value 'appropriated' by the workers of a given firm?

Conceptually, we can abstract from these changes by considering the enterprise in isolation from other enterprises (as Marx does in Volume 1) and by assuming conditions remain constant in other industries throughout the period of time under consideration (as we typically do implicitly when considering questions

of exploitation). We can then proceed by systematically introducing new contingencies and considering what the implications of these new contingencies are for the meanings of the terms in our theory. The following question then arises: what does exploitation *mean* in the context of this expanded view of competition; what does it mean to appropriate surplus-value when we consider competition at the level of abstraction in which firms with varying organic compositions of capital are assumed to exist? How does that new contingency affect how we conceptualize the moment(s) of exploitation, the meaning of value as socially necessary abstract labor and the meaning of communist class processes?

Taking into account this aspect of Marx's methodology, the meaning of exploitation as the exclusion of workers from appropriation of the *entire* surplus-value must be reconsidered – this meaning is only applicable in the early stage of Marx's analysis. Later, when competition and market conditions are introduced, there is a second and third redistribution that occurs among firms. These transfers are not directed or controlled by a given capitalist at the expense of her workers but that occur as the result of the interaction of the firms as a whole – a systematic crediting of labor-effort that affects distributive justice but which is conceptually distinct from exploitation.³

³ In this volume Bruce Roberts provides an interesting argument suggesting that a different type of transfer, a payment by a worker co-op out of the surplus-value to a financial capitalist may be considered exploitation by the finance capitalist of the workers of that firm and he gives convincing textual evidence to support that claim.

Worker co-ops therefore do succeed in eliminating exploitation but, due to the transfer of value that results from the interaction among enterprises, they do not receive the full value that they contribute. To overcome class injustice we now have to consider not only the question of unpaid or surplus labor in the firm, but also the question of unequal exchange of value creating labors that results from the enterprise's interaction with other firms. Class justice therefore must require us to

I agree with his assessment that the change in the class structure of the firm does not guarantee the elimination of exploitation – that a finance capitalist could be said to exploit the workers of a co-operative in certain circumstances and that these circumstances ought not to be considered marginal or unimportant. I think Roberts would agree that in the case of lending between capitalist firms, the extraction of surplus-value by the finance capitalist would not represent exploitation but a subsumed class payment from one capitalist board of directors to another. We appear to disagree on how to characterize the formation of value and exchange-value that I am considering here. In my view, if transfers due to the process of value and price formation are labeled 'exploitation' then two distinct processes are conflated, the one that involves the right to the revenues generated by the enterprise and the other that involves how the total revenue in the economy is distributed among competing enterprises. Marx's method of examining the enterprise in isolation permits us to distinguish and analyze these distinct causes of appropriation and redistribution.

take into account both a micro component and a macro component. Firm-level interventions are insufficient to eliminate class injustice and we need to consider the creation of new institutions, informed by value theory, that would seek to reconcile the normative claims of the workers to non-exploitation with the normative claims of workers to get full credit for their labor expended. To avoid or compensate for, in other words, precisely those market transfers that are due to the effects of exchange on the formation of value and exchange-value.

Co-ops operating in the context of generalized commodity exchange may eliminate exploitation but continue inadvertently to reproduce class injustice. Value theory makes the redistribution of value visible and allows us to see what types of institutions may be needed to offset or minimize the redistributive affects of competition. Next, I use selected policies from the Mondragón cooperatives to illustrate how the undesirable effects of competition might be mitigated by the design of institutions informed by value theory.

Class Justice in Mondragón

The Mondragón co-operatives provide an interesting example of the type of micro and meso-level institutions that can help both the viability of co-ops in the context of a capitalist social formation, institutions that work to support class justice. Here, I want to use two examples of the types of policies that have been used, one at the micro level of individual firms and one at the meso level that

involves a relationship between firms, to illustrate how co-operatives might offset the class injustice that results from generalized commodity exchange.

The micro level constraint is that the distribution of surplus-value is not left to the individual workers of the firm but is performed according to an agreement reached and voted on at the general assembly. This agreement limits the size and distribution of the surplus-value – the subsumed class payments – in the following way: distributions to the workers in the form of profit must be held as stock in the co-operatives and cannot be withdrawn or sold until the worker leaves the firm. Two associated constraints include the distribution of 10 percent of net profit to charity and 20 percent as retained earnings. In total 90 percent of the firm's profit is thus held as retained earnings. This rule has the effect of reducing the firm's dependence on borrowed capital, thus reducing the dispersion of surplus-value in the form of interest payments on borrowed capital. It also prevents workers from letting short-run decisions to maintain or increase their individual consumption lead to a long-term weakening of the firm's competitive viability. Finally, it inserts in the underlying value framework governing the co-operatives the idea that part of the surplus-value ought to be used to benefit those who are unable to work.

The meso-level constraint concerns the relationship of the first degree co-ops that produce goods and services and the second-degree co-ops that produce conditions of existence for the first degree co-ops. The second-degree co-ops include the bank, the insurance company, the university, the retail co-op, the school and the daycare. The institutional rule concerns the representation of workers from

first-degree co-ops on the boards of the second-degree co-ops. In effect, workers in the first degree co-ops help to decide what the bank's policies should be.

Furthermore, in the case of the bank, the general assembly limits the amount of interest the bank can charge by tying the rate of interest on loans by first-degree co-ops to the rates of profit of those co-ops. This rule provides an incentive for the bank to insure the profitability of the cooperatives and it does this, in part, by providing support for research and development, market analysis and monitoring of co-operative expenses (Morrison, 1991; Whyte and Whyte, 1988).

From a value perspective, these institutional arrangements subordinate the decisions concerning the distribution of surplus-value by the boards of directors of individual co-operatives to the democratic decision-making of the general assembly. The first policy limits the disposition of surplus-value by the individual firm to ensure sufficient capital is retained and available to meet the demands of the other subsumed class payments; the second policy places a constraint on the amount of surplus that is devoted to interest payments on borrowed capital. Both function to ensure workers retain wealth in the form of capital holdings and thus limit the extent to which competition can undermine worker ownership or impoverish workers at the expense of finance capital. ⁴

⁴ These institutional rules thus prevent the type of second-degree exploitation of workers by the bank that Roberts analyzes in his contribution to this volume.

In each case, these institutions have been adopted at the level of the general assembly, itself a type of association of co-operatives. In effect, the individual co-operatives agree to abide by the rules adopted by all the co-operatives that are voted on at the general assembly. As Gibson-Graham (2006) argues, these meso-level institutional agreements provide incentives for each co-operative that differ from those of individual independent co-operatives and provide much of the reason that the Mondragón co-operatives have managed to avoid the problems identified in the early analysis of cooperatives by Webb and Webb (1923) as being fatal to the co-operative structure. As Healy argues in this volume, these agreements represent a decision by the workers to relegate part of their control over surplus-value to an institutional arrangement that then takes a life of its own and serves to structure and constrain further decisions by the workers. In each case, the workers appropriate the surplus-value collectively, they are not exploited, yet these further institutions have proven necessary to ensure that, within the framework of a communist class process, class justice is promoted.

Value and Socially Necessary Labor-time

All these considerations so far presume that the category 'socially necessary abstract labor-time' is both normatively unproblematic and ahistorical. What capitalism deems 'socially necessary' most certainly needs to be questioned. How labor-time is distributed as a result of profit seeking subject to competitive profit rate equalization does not correspond to how we might decide that it ought to be

distributed or how a society dominated by collective appropriation of the surplus would seek to distribute it. Let me point out a few of the obvious problems with the way labor is validated as being socially necessary in capitalism. Then I will show how the idea of socially necessary abstract labor can help us think about how labor-time might be distributed differently in a social formation dominated by co-operatives.

Firstly, in capitalism only market labor is recognized as being socially necessary and so we are encouraged to overlook and marginalize all sorts of non-market labor that is crucial and valuable but that does not create value according to capitalist calculus; homemaking, raising and nurturing children and the in-home care of elders are just a few examples. Second, the social necessity of labor-time is determined by effective demand and thus the provision of commodities, both goods and services, is skewed toward providing for the rich and overlooking the needs of the poor. Homelessness, lack of access to medical care and food, and crime are some consequences. Third, capitalist value does not take into account the social costs associated with production that take the form of pollution and other negative externalities and that result in either increased “unnecessary labor” to remedy or that result in disease, ecological damage. Fourth, capitalist competition values economic bads so that the increased paid labor-time associated with such things as war and environmental destruction generates ‘value.’ Fifth, capitalism calls forth the efforts to create what I will call misbegotten desire – the mistaken effort to improve quality of life by the ever-increasing consumption of things rather than

through efforts to find value in work, connection with nature or in human relationships.

All I have done is to catalogue what others, Marxists and non-Marxists alike, have identified as a misplaced system of value but you can see how central this is to the problem. If exploitation is defined as the appropriation of surplus-value by non-producers and class injustice as the unfair distribution of value, we have to ask whether value is something desirable and ethically defensible in the first place. Clearly the kind of value produced as the result of capitalist competition is neither.

These observations raise the question of what socially-necessary abstract labor might mean in the context of a communist social formation – a society in which the communist class process is predominant. Would a communist society be devoted to the pursuit of profit and subject thus to the equalization of profit? Perhaps. If so, it would seem that all sorts of micro, meso and macro rules would need to be implemented to mitigate the social injustices and ecological damage entailed by unregulated competition between worker co-operatives. We would then need to redefine value as ‘socially necessary’ abstract labor in the context of what would be considered an equivalent exchange subject to these new rules governing competition between worker and perhaps non-worker appropriation in co-operatives. Market competition and profit rate equalization would affect the allocation of labor-time and thus the value and exchange-value of commodities in an economy dominated by communist class processes. We could begin to think about a new historically contingent concept of value and exchange-value pertaining to this

'market socialism', a concept that may be more ethically defensible. But certainly obtaining class justice in this manner would require more than the participation by workers on the boards of directors of enterprises.

I would like to go a bit further and introduce a second possibility for defining communist class processes. Rather than define communist class processes as collective appropriation by the workers, we could think of it as existing when workers no longer produce a surplus, so that all labor is immediately necessary labor and no exploitation exists (Resnick and Wolff 2002, 2006). For this type of communism to occur, either no conditions are needed for this type of class process to exist (and hence no unproductive labor needs to be paid out of a surplus) or those conditions are achieved without payments out of a surplus – a system of voluntary gift exchange perhaps in which workers exchange use-values for services they cannot perform and/or voluntarily provide for those who cannot engage in productive labor. This possibility may seem far-fetched but we should not overlook the possibility that we can gain a deeper understanding of class relations by thinking of relationships that are not mediated by class.

Suppose we were to imagine a society in which money is advanced for the purpose of ensuring everyone's needs are met. What alternative would we use to gauge 'abstract labor' and the 'social necessity' of labor-time expended in production? Would the elimination of profit as a motive also render obsolete the distinction between necessary and surplus labor, as Resnick and Wolff suggest it might?

I do not yet have answers to these questions but what is clear from raising them is that simply altering the class structure at the level of the firm is necessary but also certainly insufficient to attain class justice. What will be needed at the minimum is a set of institutions that help to structure communist production to encourage the expenditure of social labor effort in socially beneficial ways.³ Beyond this minimum lies the possibility of reimagining our social relationships in ways that encourage subjectivities directed toward the provision of need rather than the quest for profit. Market exchange can be situated in an institutional setting that encourages conservation rather than growth and reinforces subjectivities that foster cooperation rather than competition and individual gain. I would hope that Marxists would act along with workers and other stakeholders to imagine and create the kinds of meso-level institutional arrangements like those the Mondragón co-ops have pioneered, institutions that attempt to address both exploitation and other forms of class injustice associated with capitalist production, appropriation and distribution. In my view, thinking about the social formation in value terms is indispensable in this regard.

³Albert and Haunel (1999) go some distance to imagining alternatives to capitalist class relations and how labor-time could be directed to the satisfaction of social need without recourse to markets.

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