

Reading guide for *Capital (vol. 1)*
Liberation School
Chapter 15

Ch. 15: Machinery and modern industry

Section 1. The development of machinery

- 1) Under capitalism, what is machinery's purpose?
- 2) How did manufacture change into modern industry?
- 3) What does the fully developed machine consist of?
- 4) What are machines?
- 5) What's the difference between the cooperation of machines and a complex system of machinery? Why is it important?
- 6) What impact does a revolution in machinery have for other realms of production?
- 7) Can you think of a current example of this?

Section 2: The value transferred by machinery to the product

- 1) How does the machine transfer value to the finished commodity?
- 2) How are the values of machines and of tools different?
- 3) What is the requirement for a capitalist to purchase machinery? Under what condition would it make sense to them?

Section 3: The proximate effects of machinery on the workman

- 1) How does machinery impact supplementary labor-power (women and children)?
- 2) How does machinery lengthen the working day?
- 3) How does machinery speed up labor?
- 4) What two ways can machinery produce *relative* surplus-value?

Section 4: The factory

- 1) Marx begins by citing Ure's definitions of factories. Which one defines the capitalist factory system?
- 2) In what ways does the machine deskill the worker? What are the effects of this?

Section 5: The strife between workman and machine

- 1) How does machinery alter the struggle between capital and labor?
- 2) After machinery is introduced, how does the struggle develop? What two stages does it go through?
- 3) What was necessary for the struggle to progress?
- 4) How does machinery replace workers and drive down the value of labor power?
- 5) How do capitalists use machinery to discipline the workers' movement?
- 6) How does machinery further concentrate wealth?

Section 6: The theory of compensation as regards the workpeople displaced by machinery

- 1) What's wrong with the bourgeois economist argument that machinery that displaces workers sets enough capital free to employ the same number of workers?
- 2) When workers are displaced by machinery, what are their future labor prospects like?
- 3) How could the introduction of machinery in one industry throw workers out of work in that industry, and also potentially increase the need for labor-power in other industries?
- 4) How does machinery produce markets for luxury items?

Section 7: Repulsion and attraction of workpeople by the factory system

- 1) Bourgeois political economists say that machinery increases number of workers employed. What does Marx say in response?
- 2) How does machinery intensify colonialism?
- 3) In this section, what succinct summary of capitalist economic cycles (booms and busts) provide?
- 4) How do these cycles relate to the employment of labor-power?
- 5) Why can periods of crisis be beneficial to capitalists? What does it allow them to do?

Section 8: Revolution effected in manufacture, handicrafts, and domestic industry by modern industry

- 1) How does machinery increase the exploitation and oppression of labor-power on domestic industries and manufacture?
- 2) How do the Factory Acts, when they are applied to other industries, propel the industrial revolution?

Section 9: The factory acts

- 1) What realities of machine factories are revealed in this section?
- 2) What arguments about education show up here?
- 3) Read the paragraph that begins with "Modern industry never views or treats the existing form of a production process as the definitive one" (Online PDF: 318-19; IP: 457-8; Penguin: 617-8.
 - a. Why is Modern Industry revolutionary?
 - b. How does it turn economic progress into a social calamity?
 - c. What does this calamity compel us to produce in response?
- 4) How does capitalism increase the exploitation of children by parents?
- 5) How do the contradictions matured by machinery create the elements to "explode" it and form a new society? (note: this is in the last paragraph before the next section).

Section 10: Modern industry under agriculture

- 1) How does modern industry revolutionize agriculture?
- 2) What's the significance of capitalism concentrating populations in cities?

3) How does machinery disperse agricultural workers?