

Neo anti-feudalism

The modern left seems to believe that, at least in advanced countries, feudalism is over. That capitalism has already firmly gripped the world and the last remnants of feudalism are third world phenomena grasping for straws as capitalism inevitably sweeps them away in the march of history. Some socialists seem to even have concluded that capitalism is already over, and that the modern economic system of the imperial core countries more so resembles a bourgeois form of socialism that simply needs to be taken over by its rightful proletarian rulers. That we essentially already live in post-capitalism just without proletarian control. Yet when examining the economies of most countries the opposite seems true. That the primary ideological struggle is not as of yet the one between capitalism and socialism but the one between feudalism and capitalism. Further, I would conclude that the task of the communist activists ought not yet to be the bringing about of socialism but the purification of capitalism. That a new wave of anti-feudalism is needed, not yet one of socialism. That people who are anti-capitalist, under the current conditions, must paradoxically be the foremost fighters for capitalism. I intend to prove this here.

Firstly, let us look at Marx's understanding of the transition between capitalism and socialism. Capitalism arises from the rise of industry, making capital for the first time a dominant factor over land in the economy. This gives rise to the bourgeois class that struggle against their feudal chains, systems forged when the land was still central to the economy. When the extraction of surplus value was still done primarily square meter for square meter on a field rather than minute by minute upon an assembly line. This new dominance of the factory owners thus created new ideas serving itself, eventually ending by bringing about a new political order in which the divine right of kings, absolutism and layers of nobility controlling people that was the most efficient way to administer feudalism was replaced by liberal democracy more favourable as an administrative system to capitalism.

Now we reach the point in history when Marx does his analysis. When these observations of the past and predictions of the future were made. In these Marx predicts that, as liberal democracies arise, these will slowly over time surgically remove the birthmarks of capitalism, the remnants of feudalism from which they were born, and will become a more refined and "pure" form of capitalism. This is most evident in Marx's critique of Henry George in which he speaks of "the hatred which the industrial capitalist dedicates to the landed proprietor" and speaks of Georgism as "an attempt, decked out with socialism, to save capitalist domination and indeed to establish it afresh on an even wider basis than its present one". He speaks of a struggle between landed proprietors and capitalists and of the land tax idea as capitalism trying to save and refresh itself. So as the landed proprietors (who are essentially remnants of the feudal lord class who extract value from the ground rather than directly doing it via the purchasing of labour power and the sale of its products) would eventually be taxed out of the economy and the money used, through decreasing taxes on capital and/or cheapening the cost of labour via implementing a basic income, to increase said industrial profits. He expected liberal democracies to purify capitalism. This purer form of capitalism would then go on. Individual companies investing their profits to become more labour efficient (a thing they must do to not be outcompeted), other companies catching up (another thing that must be done to not be outcompeted), increasing overall efficiency, which then leads to lower prices and thus smaller profit margins. This process would continue until the rates of profit have been driven so low that the

drive to generate as much unearned profit income as possible had near abolished unearned income. Then leading to again a new social order of new ideas in which the predictions Marx made about socialism/communism would then take place.

We must also note there that Marx did not believe this process would be peaceful. At some point within the struggle the working class would have to revolt and seize power to complete that process. He however never stated which one it would be and thus also held back any predictions on immediate postrevolutionary policies, even actively pushing back against the ten planks laid out in the manifesto in his later work. He made the prediction. Laid out how he thought it would happen and said at some point a revolution will be needed in that process.

A case can be made that the failures of Marxist revolutions so far can be attributed to a false analysis Lenin made of the situation. This can be seen in his idea that imperialism was the “highest” stage of capitalism, and that fascism was “capitalism in decay. He thought that imperialism was capitalism grasping for straws already and that fascism was capitalism going into self-defence mode. Yet if we look back at Lenin’s time many liberal democracies were established/enhanced. Perhaps more rapidly than at any other point in history. It was not capitalism coming to a climax before and end, but it becomes the dominant mode of production for the first time. Imperialism is thus not the highest stage of capitalism ever but just the highest one yet that it reached in Lenin’s time. It was capitalism reaching maturity, not the deathbed. So, we can also recontextualise as fascism not being simply capitalism retaliating, but the feudal remnants within capitalism retaliating against their abolition in particular. This led to the view that a brief period of a NEP would suffice before coming to socialism and thus to the terrible consequences of forced collectivisations and the great leap forward. Certainly, they, in their land reform programs have done away with feudal remnants more effectively than anyone else, but their attempts at creating socialism were merely capitalism in which the bourgeoisie picked the ironic name of “communist party.” The effectiveness of their anti-feudal policies can be seen in the fact that every country to this day that was ever subject to a successful revolution claiming to be socialist has more strict regulations on finance, more public land and/or a land value tax. Policies containing the feudal remnants. So, in short, we can say that all socialist revolutions so far have only ever brought about purer capitalism and could only ever have brought that about, as it was the time for capitalism to replace feudalism. Nothing more, nothing less. It is also notable that every instance of revisionism and every case of a supposedly socialist government falling has liberalised industry before all else. Even Russia, perhaps the country in which the achievements made by the revolution were rolled back the most, there is still a land value tax, substantial portions of public land, and a heavily restricted financial market to this day. The majority of post-socialist liberalisations seem to have been little more than trustbusting but with state monopolies as the target. (Except for those countries of course that were quickly integrated into liberal organisations such as the EU where the integration required heavier setbacks in the mode of production). So, while the revolutions that called themselves socialist may have hideously failed at bringing about socialism, they were by far the most successful anti-feudal revolutions.

Now let us see what prediction Marx made was where he created the basis of the fault in many revolutions calling themselves Marxist. It seems to lie within the belief that capital will wish to properly replace feudalism. That the struggle between the financial class, the landowners and the capitalists would result in a capitalist victory that attempts to maximise the total profits of the ownership of industrial capital. Meanwhile capitalists have instead made these feudal remnants their own. Capitalism has replaced feudalism, certainly. Liberal democracies become increasingly common.

All exploitation becomes industrial extraction primarily before all other types of exploitation take their share. Yet these other types of exploitation still exist. Businesses in a particularly advantageous location do not pay a land tax to bolster general profit in the economy. They use the advantageous location to have greater profits that remain untaxed. They have merged instead of one struggling the other out of existence. Same with finance. Of course, profit comes first, it is capitalism after all, yet instead of a strictly controlled finance sector to unburden capital finance now uses these profits to artificially bolster the profits on the stock market. Profits are made and stocks sold. Stocks sell at price x . Profits are used to buy stocks back and/or pay dividends, increasing the stock price. The stock becomes more popular and thus the price greater. More stocks are created and sold, increasing profits. If the stock ever becomes less popular, the profits are simply once again used to artificially inflate the price. The only thing distinguishing the stock market from cryptocurrency in the level of fraud is that on the stock market companies are willing to pay money to artificially keep stock prices up. Thus, the finance sector is also simply another increaser of profit instead of it being struggled against to make borrowing less expensive among other things. Privatized land rent is a feudal remnant. Analogous to the primary form of exploitation under feudalism in which the lord charged use for his land to the serfs. Finance and debt have also been in the hands of nobility during the feudal period. These elements of capital are, in fact, feudal remnants. And here exactly Marx is wrong. To increase profits these have not been superseded in liberal capitalism but integrated into it. Capitalists now extract profits plus what the feudal lords would have extracted, not instead. And these are not susceptible to the falling rate of profit. Both theoretically, as the FROP only occurs in wage labour directly and not in other types of exploitation as well as empirically, all the increase in profit from Thomas Piketty's "Capital in the 21st century" can be attributed to real estate, the rest of profits actively falling. Real estate is, in a sense, a particular union between finance and land in which debt money is used to prop up property prices. So, the capital share in the economy increases. This increase is due to that sector that merges the two major feudal remnants in the economy. All other profit falls as predicted. Therefore, the feudal remnants have in a sense immunised capitalism against one of its most dooming contradictions. Capitalism replaced feudalism, certainly. Yet it did it by integrating instead of replacing feudal forms of extraction. And these feudal forms of extraction keep it alive against all the odds in the face of widespread automation and abundance.

So, what is to be done now? The purification of capitalism! Surgically removing the birthmarks that have stained it since its beginning. We must create a truly industrial capitalism. One in which the ways to make money are reduced to those unique about capitalism. We must create an economy in which one gains money either by labouring to generate a product or by owning the machinery that was used for production. All other ways must be eliminated, and the bounty used to add to our overall wealth, particularly by investing it in production and innovation. Wages are the most legitimate form of income as it comes directly from adding onto the total use values in the world. And in order to transition to socialism we certainly will need many use values to use in restructuring the economy. Automation, abundance, and infrastructure are extremely useful when creating an economy in which ruling classes no longer rule us. Those are all products of labour. Until then we must also still have profits as a reward for supervising labour in order for the industrial ruling class to lead the people towards these conditions in which we can transform our economy into socialism. Profit drives people to lead them towards making them drive others towards maximum productivity, a useful mechanism.

Hence, we must attempt to build a united front against the feudal remnants in our economy. Many liberal/libertarian capitalist ideologies already work towards parts of that. We must unite those with

us Marxists to create a pure capitalism that will develop itself out of existence. We Marxists must be the foremost fighters for capitalism. This may sound ridiculous at first but remember we Marxists are not utopians who want to mould the world into shapes out of our imagination. We want a quick and seamless end of history. We wish to complete the sequence of systems that humanity must go through. And currently capitalism is being dragged back by its elements of feudalism. And these must be removed if we wish for progress. Hence, we Marxists must become the first and foremost fighters of capitalism! We must be the leaders of a broad front alongside Georgists, Socdems and other anti-rent and anti-finance movements to advance our system. In this situation a full revolution is not even fully necessary yet. We must of course be loud. Protest, strike, build dual power and vote for candidates who will fulfil our agenda. Yet we live under capitalism, and we wish to merely purify it. This is very well possible within systems created by capitalism. Worry about socialist revolution once the time is ripe. For now, we must create a pure capitalism that will get us so far in the first place. Perhaps some non-Marxists will become Marxist in the process of participating in the united neo anti-feudal front. This will gain us both allies for once the revolution comes and the conditions from which to even build a revolution. It is a win, win. The progressive liberals win in that they get the pure capitalism they have always wanted. We win allies and the conditions necessary for revolution.

Also, now we are far more advanced in our knowledge of the happenings around historical progress. We can now concretely state the policies we support to bring about change. At least for the change towards pure capitalism. We need policies that remove any and all income not related to production and an economic policy that creates ideal conditions for innovation and growth. Singapore would for example be a great model of a purely capitalist economy. Regulated financial markets, land value tax and a social safety net created to aid the real industry in the country by giving them well off, productive workers. In essence our agenda must be eliminating private land rent, eliminating real interest on financial assets, breaking up/preventing monopolies and a government providing excellent infrastructure and social services, not for some idealist notion of “equality” Marx already despised in “Critique of the Gotha programme” but for the simple purpose that workers with good healthcare, education and so on are more productive. Essentially the American progressive era but meaning it. Completing it and thinking it through to the end.

Some concrete policies to support:

- Free education
- Free healthcare
- Job guarantee
- All-public housing
- Trustbusting
- Maximum possible land value tax
- Nationalising insurances and banks
- Nationalising natural monopolies
- Abolishing intellectual property laws
- Public option in industries very susceptible to monopolies
- Free trade
- Free travel
- Large infrastructure programs
- Vast amounts of investment in any and all R&D

So, stand up Comrades! Marxists and progressive capitalists! Stand hand in hand as siblings in arms!
The fight against feudalism is not over yet and to pretend it is only serving our ruling classes!