
**TRANSNATIONALISM CONFLICTS OF PROLETARIATS IN MICHAEL TAUSSIG'S
THE DEVIL AND COMMODITY FETISHISM IN SOUTH AMERICA**

M. Kanagasabhapathi,

M. Phil Scholar in English Bishop Heber College,

Tiruchirappalli.

Abstract

In 1381 peasants revolted against their government of England because of high taxation, black death and prolonged war between France and England. On that day the working class peoples had direct contact with consumers, the labor who produces the product will determine the prize but now in this capitalistic society, there is no connection between the labor and the consumer. According to Karl Marx the value of commodity has two values one is use value and other is exchange value but in this capitalistic society a product becomes a commodity and the labor's work, unity of production and human life that is spent to produce the product didn't have any value, this is one of the aspects of commodity fetishism to make labors to believe that they have less value in producing the products. Working class peoples face conflicts beyond nations because of commodity fetishism.

Keywords: *black death, capitalistic society, commodity, fetishism*

The term "Peasant" denotes poor agricultural labor and this word also seems to have historical significance. In middle age peasants are more in their population, they are working class who remains a slave to their masters. Peasants revolted against the upper class for many reasons in 1381 they revolted against the government of England because of high taxation and the continuous war against France. As working class peasants faced lots of economic struggles but now these peasants face two problems that are proletarianization of peasants and commoditization of products as an economic and capitalistic urge to change society to be a better one which Karl Marx opposes.

Marx says that there is no consequence for them in the society when they remain as peasants but when they are proletarianized, not only them but also peoples who are consumers, buyers they also face consequences when peasants are proletarianized. What is meant by proletarianized of peasants? How can it be done? What are the problems faced by society while doing it? It can be done by the commoditization of peasants. Like the worker in peasant form he is allowed to produce his own product by his own capital and he has direct conduct over the buyer and consumer there is no mediation between the producer and consumer there is no use value exchange value basis of production, profit aiming production, but when peasants convert as proletarians by the capitalistic society, the product becomes a commodity, so when it becomes

a commodity a mediation emerges, there will be alienation between the producer and the consumer, the producer doesn't know the face of the consumer and consumer doesn't know the face of the producer. A wealthy mediator will buy a product from the producer at a low cost and sell it at a very high cost to both of the consumer and producer suffers.

Time, space, matter, cause, relation, human nature, and society are social products created by man since the dawn of human life. But now all cultures tend to present these categories as elemental and immutable things, not as the social products but as natural products and the social reading of the natural things is a peculiar character of abstractions and it is associated with the market organizations of human affairs because of this attitude labor time is abstracted into commodity of the labor time. According to the capitalistic culture, labor time is a commodity that can be bought and sold and it is deeply mystical because these abstractions are projected as real objects akin to inert things and they are thought as animate entities with a life force of their own akin to spirits or gods. The peoples belong to Nuer of the Upper Nile, they don't know the meaning of time they aren't racing against time for the time is a word they don't know that time is a thing that can be wasted that can be spent. Time, cause, relation space are social but in a capitalistic society, these things can be changed as a commodity. We are forced to kill naturalness in the process of social development, obscuring the one feature that distinguishes it from the process of natural development, the involvement of human consciousness. George W Stockings sees cultural phenomena imposes conventional meaning on the flux of experience and sees as a historically conditioned learning process and determinants of our very perception of the external world. Perception depends upon the perceiver and the antecedent that causes perception when the mind sees the world with this historically conditioned perception the world should be explained not merely as physical and biological facts but as social facts. It is not just that our perception is historically conditioned but history also informs our understanding of seeing and of history itself, modern history shapes our experience and therefore our conceptual tools is the alienated relations of person to nature, of subjectivity to its object undoubtedly and the relations that are formed by social class by commodity production and market exchange. Through these ways, the peasants are made as proletarians.

Karl Polanyi berates the market mentality and the market way of seeing the world in his concept of commodity fiction. He states that land and labor are things produced for sale, but labor is another name for human activity and land is nature which cannot be produced by man yet in this market organized society and in this mentality the fiction becomes reality with these abstractions we are forced to operate and comprehend the world this is called as reification. In reification the objects are transformed into subjects and subjects are transformed into objects, objects work actively, as reification the reified appearance of social products is considered as symbolic of social relations for such society symbol acquires peculiar properties and the social relations signified are far from being transparent. To overcome the reification it is not enough to realize that the reified appearance of social products is symbolic of social relations but also we have to realize that social relations symbolized in things are self-concealing ideological constructs that is all we have to realize that what is achieved is the substitution of a naïve materialism by an equally naïve objective idealism.

In peasant mode of production the product remains as a product but when there is proletariat mode of production products becomes a commodity. Under capitalism, the proletariat

lacks control over the means of production that peasants exercise. The peasants use cash, not capital, and sell in order to buy, whereas the proletariat uses cash as capital to sell at a profit. Peasant producers aim to fulfill the qualitative needs but proletariats aim to fulfill limitless capital accumulations to do this it aims to secure surplus value, to gain surplus value the commodity should be sold in a profit, to gain profit proletariats distinguishes the use value and exchange value of a commodity. A person normally wants to gain maximum utility of product as a consumer and also wants to gain maximum profit as a producer. Every capitalistic producer face the problem in the face of commodity that is whether to fulfill the more abundant satisfaction of wants or to gain accumulation of money finally they gains what they desired through commodity fetishism, Karl Marx created this, borrowed the notion of fetish, where it refers to the sacred objects which have supernatural powers according to the worshippers. To create use value for a product the capitalistic producers produces a fiction that this product is better than that, through advertising a product they creates use value for example a football player introduces a shoe brand to audience it is considered that they are selling the capacity of the football player that capacity becomes commodity and also he gains use value for the product as a commodity that she has a properties of providing comfort, ease of walking and pleasure to eye and in exchange value the capitalistic producers already produces an equivalent that is money the universal equivalent. Use values and exchange values are the parts of commodity fetishism.

As commodity labor becomes the source of profit to the employer when labor is considered as having use value and exchange value as a commodity. When capitalistic producers buy the commodity of labor power as the exchange value they gain the right to deploy the use value of the labor as the intelligent and creative capacity of the labor to produce more use values. Labor as use value is the source of profit, the capitalist incorporates labor as a use value into the lifeless constituents of the commodity produced by purchasing a commodity of labor power. Marx sarcastically says that we have fetish form of capital that capital is nothing but money because in our society money generates its value but it is a fiction and the commodity produced in order to gain money. Money generates its value for commodity and commodity is produced in order to generate value for money.

Commodity becomes a thing and a social relation in a capitalistic society. The problem begins when a product becomes a commodity and peasant becomes proletariats. It defines labor land and money. Commodity uses inanimate objects or a thing to generate its value, it creates alienation between the product and the producer, consumer and producer. If there is no social relation and society there is no commodity. So the product becomes a commodity to create a problem the problem is nothing but the rich become richer and poor become poorer.

Works Cited

- Buchanan, Ian. *A Dictionary of Critical Theory*. New York: Oxford University Press. 2010. Print.
- Felluga, Dino. Modules on Marx: On Fetishism. "Introductory Guide to Critical Theory". www.cla.purdue.edu accessed on 16 March 2019.

Taussig, Michael, T. *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*. United States of America: University of North Carolina Press. 2010. Print.