

“The Complete Works of Rosa Luxemburg, Volume 2.” Chapter 26 [Excerpts]:

“the realization of surplus value requires a circle of purchasers beyond capitalist society as its first condition.” (253)

“if it is assumed that the surplus value is realized outside capitalist production, then this implies that its material form has nothing to do with the requirements of capitalist production itself. Its material form corresponds to the requirements of those noncapitalist spheres that help to realize it. Capitalist surplus value can thus come into existence in the form of means of consumption (e.g. as cotton fabrics) or in the form of means of production (e.g. construction materials for “form of means of production (e.g. construction materials for railways). This surplus value, which is realized in the form of the products of one department, thus also helps to realize the surplus value of the other department in the ensuing expansion of production; however, this circumstance in no way alters the fact that the total social surplus value has been realized in part directly, and in part indirectly, outside both departments. An analogy can be drawn here with the fact that the individual capitalist can realize his surplus value even if his entire commodity-product merely goes to replace the variable or the constant capital of another capitalist.” (255)

“for the productive employment of realized surplus value, it is necessary for capital to dispose ever more fully over the whole globe in order to have available to it a quantitatively and qualitatively unrestricted range of means of production.” (258)

“*at the very least*, the surplus value that is to be capitalized and the corresponding part of the capitalist mass of products cannot possibly be realized within the capitalist sphere, and must therefore at all costs find purchasers outside this sphere, in social strata and formations not engaged in capitalist production.” (259)

“capitalist production is not feasible without labor-power from other social formations.” (262)

“even in its full maturity, capitalism depends in all of its relations on the simultaneous existence of noncapitalist strata and societies. This relation of dependence is not exhausted by the bare question of the market for the “excess product,” as the problem was posed by Sismondi and the later critics and skeptics of capitalist accumulation. The accumulation process of capital is tied to noncapitalist forms of production in all of its value relations and material relations—i.e. with regard to constant capital, variable capital, and surplus value. These noncapitalist forms of production form the given historical setting for this process. The accumulation of capital cannot adequately be presented under the presupposition of the exclusive and absolute dominance of the capitalist mode of production—in fact it is inconceivable in every respect without the noncapitalist spheres that form its milieu. Sismondi and his followers did in fact reveal a correct instinct for the conditions of existence of accumulation even if they reduced its difficulties to that of the realization of surplus value alone. There is a crucial difference between the conditions that determine this latter process and those that govern the expansion of constant and variable capital in their material form: capital cannot do without the means of production and labor-power

of the entire planet—it requires the natural resources and labor-power of all territories for its movement of accumulation to proceed unimpeded. Since these are in actual fact overwhelmingly bound by the precapitalist forms of production that constitute the historical milieu of capital accumulation, capital is characterized by a powerful drive to conquer these territories and societies. In itself, capitalist production would be just as well served by rubber plantations operating on capitalist lines, for example, as have already been established in India. However, the actual predominance of noncapitalist social relations in the countries of these branches of production spurs capital to strive to bring these countries and societies under its dominion; indeed, in so doing, the primitive relations facilitate such extraordinarily rapid and violent surges in accumulation as would be unthinkable under purely capitalist social relations. The same cannot be said of the realization of surplus value. This is a priori bound up with noncapitalist producers and consumers. The existence of non-capitalist purchasers of surplus value is thus an immediate, vital condition for capital and its accumulation, and is as such the decisive factor in the problem of capital accumulation.

Be that as it may, the fact of the matter is that the accumulation of capital as a historical process, in all its relations, is contingent upon noncapitalist social strata and forms.” (262-3)

“the portion of surplus value that has been determined as being for capitalization must be realized ‘externally’.” (264)