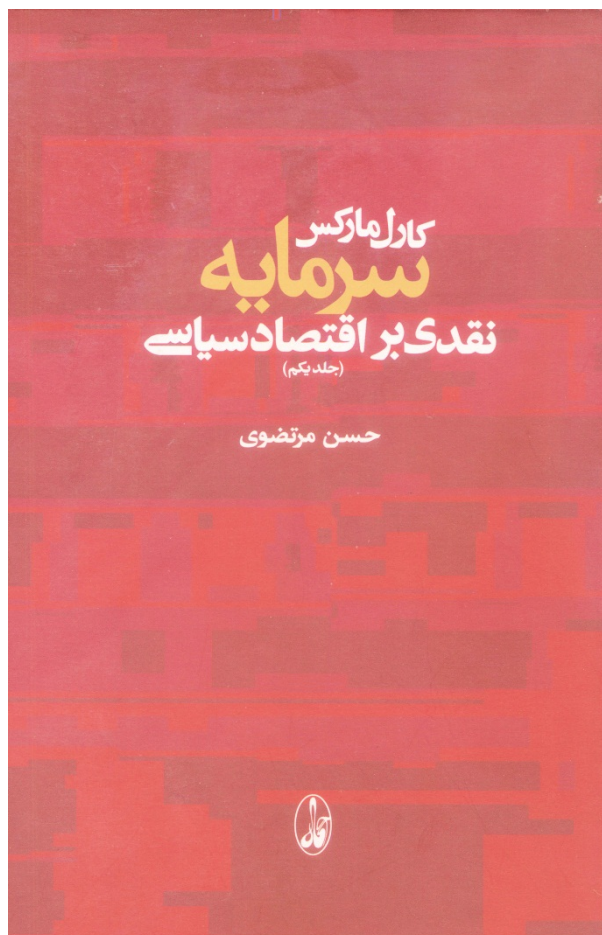


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## A New Persian Translation of *Capital*



### Introduction

Although the mass protests that followed the fraudulent 2009 Iranian presidential election were violently suppressed in the course of six months, the democratic sentiments that gave birth to them are alive and searching for ways to express themselves. The dire state of the Iranian economy, the deep dissatisfaction of the Iranian masses with the existing regime and the continuing revolts in the Arab World are making it increasingly difficult for the regime to keep a lid on the boiling pot that is Iran.

The mass protests in 2009 did not raise questions about economic justice similar to the early stages of the Winter 2011 revolts in Tunisia and

Egypt. However, the simultaneity of economic, political and social crises in Iran and the rise of a global anti-capitalist movement have put the question of economic justice on the agenda for the democratic opposition movement in Iran.

The new Persian translation of *Capital*, Volume I can provide a basis for these movements by illuminating key aspects of Marx's critique of capitalism.

### I. What Gave Birth to this Translation?

The first translation of *Capital* which was published in 1974 (and about which more details will be provided below) was marred by the Stalinist views of its translator, Iraj Eskandari, the chairman of the USSR affiliated Tudeh Party. This was no surprise, given that the versions of Marxism that were dominant

among the Iranian left before and during the 1979 Revolution were represented by the works of Josef Stalin, Georges Politzer, Mao Zedong, Regis Debray, Paul Sweezy, Harry Magdoff, Oskar Lange, Maurice Dobb and Paul Baran. These works constituted the theoretical foundations of the majority of the Iranian adherents of Marxism.<sup>1</sup>

Since the 1979 Revolution however, a new generation of Iranian leftists has arisen which is critical of the former generation for its mostly Stalinist and Maoist views and the ways in which those views led the majority of the Iranian left to lend support to Ayatollah Khomeini as an “anti-imperialist” in the early stages of the revolution.

The new generation prefers more thoughtful and theoretically based action as well as constructive alternatives. Many young intellectuals who express an interest in Marxism today are inclined to humanist, Hegelian and non-dogmatic interpretations of Marxism.<sup>2</sup> Above all, the new generation’s experiences under a religious fundamentalist regime have made it detest any kind of dogmatism, be it Islamic or Marxist or otherwise.

Given these interests, a wave of new translations of works by Marx and independent Marxist thinkers began to appear mostly during what became known as the Reform Period (1997–2005). These translations included Marx’s *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, Georg Lukacs’s *History and Class Consciousness*, Horkheimer and Adorno’s *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Istvan Meszaros’s *Beyond Capital*, Rosa Luxemburg’s *Selected Writings*, Isaak Illich Rubin’s *Marx’s Theory of Value*, Mikhail Lifshitz’s *Marx’s Philosophy of Art*, Raya Dunayevskaya’s *Philosophy and Revolution*, Stephen Eric Bronner’s *Reclaiming the Enlightenment*, Negri and Hardt’s *Empire*, Marc Poster’s *Foucault, Marxism and History*, Alex Callinicos’s *Marxism and Philosophy*, and David Schweickart et al’s *Market Socialism: A Debate Among Socialists*.

In addition to these translations, many websites, weblogs and online magazines devoted to discussing a variety of socialist ideas came into existence in this period. Most were banned or forced to cease publication after the suppression of the 2009 upheaval however.

Although the new translations of works by Marx and independent Marxists have greatly expanded the horizons of the Iranian Left, there is still a dearth

<sup>1</sup> Sohrab Behdad has provided a list of the translations of works by Sweezy, Lange, Baran, Dobb and others which were published by him and Farhad Nomani prior to the 1979 Revolution. He has also addressed how censorship under Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi’s regime led to a paucity of translations of Marxist works. See Behdad 1998.

<sup>2</sup> The recently banned online youth journal, Sarpich, was an important forum for young socialist intellectuals who expressed the above interests.

of discussion on the actual content of Marx's *Capital* and its significance for Iran today.

In the 1920s, the Iranian Armenian Marxist economist, Avetis Sultanzadeh (1890–1938) had advocated a non-capitalistic road of development through an alliance between the budding worker and peasant movements in Iran and the proletariat of industrially advanced lands. By 1931, his opposition to the Stalinist USSR leadership's backing of the Iranian nationalist army leader and new king, Reza Shah, led to his imprisonment in the USSR. In 1938, he was executed.<sup>3</sup>

During the first year of the Iranian revolution, the Marxist thinker, Mansoor Hekmat (1951–2002) had published several essays which were based on a serious study of Marx's *Capital*, Lenin's *Imperialism*, the Highest Stage of Capitalism, and economic facts concerning the mass migration of peasants from the rural areas to the cities after the introduction of a state-directed land reform program in the early 1960's. Hekmat challenged those on the left who claimed that Iran had a semi-feudal economy. Instead he argued that Iran had a dependent capitalist economy which was part of the division of labor imposed by the global stage of monopoly capitalism or imperialism.<sup>4</sup>

More recently, some leftist Iranian economists have used certain interpretations of Marx's *Capital* in their analyses of the Iranian economy. For instance, Farhad Nomani and Sohrab Behdad's *Class and Labor in Iran* which is the most comprehensive analysis of the Iranian economy in the period after the 1979 Revolution, equates Marx's concept of capitalist production relations with property relations and defines capitalism strictly as the private ownership of the means of production. Hence they argue that during the first ten years after the Iranian Revolution, which witnessed the consolidation of large landholdings and enterprises in the hands of the state and "parastatal" organizations known as Bonyad (Foundations), there was a "shriveling" of the capitalist relations of production, an expansion of "petty commodity production" and a decline in the accumulation or concentration of capital. They further argue that it was only in the period after the end of the Iran-Iraq War in 1988 that a

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<sup>3</sup> Chaqueri 1983. Sultanzadeh had also developed an important critique of Rudolf Hilferding's *Finance Capital*, by arguing that finance capital could not dominate industrial capital. Instead, industrial capital was the determinant. Sultanzadeh preferred Lenin's analysis in *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*. See "Is There an Age of Finance Capital?" in Sultanzadeh, 1984.

<sup>4</sup> See Hekmat 1979. Unfortunately, Hekmat had very strong Leninist views on organization.

policy of economic liberalization “reinvigorate[d] the capitalist relations of production” (p. 36) although “very slowly and timidly” (p. 61).<sup>5</sup>

Another leftist Iranian economist, Mohammad Maljoo, however, argues that capitalist production relations are not limited to the private ownership of the means of production and can take place in an economy owned by the state. He has pointed to the fact that in Iran, an increase in the rate of accumulation of capital has gone hand in hand with greater state control and state ownership of the means of production. His research on labor in Iran’s state-controlled oil and petrochemical industry further points out the lowering of wages and benefits, the prevalent use of temporary workers and the elimination of safety equipment as the basis for the accumulation of capital.<sup>6</sup>

Clearly, leftist Iranian economists are not in agreement concerning the definition of capitalist production relations and the nature of the Iranian economy.

In this essay, I would like to argue that the new Persian translation of *Capital*, Volume I, can address the above questions in important ways by shedding illumination on key concepts in Marx’s critique of capitalism. First, I will enumerate this edition’s new features. Then I will discuss how it has been received inside Iran. Finally, I will address some ways in which this edition can illuminate current debates concerning the Iranian economy.

## II. The Unique features of the new Persian translation of *Capital*, Vol. 1

Marx’s *Capital*, Volume 1 was first translated into Persian during the years 1966–1970 by Iraj Eskandari, a leader of the Tudeh Party who had been educated in France as an economist. Eskandari published Volume I as a single book in 1974,<sup>7</sup> and Volume II in 1981.<sup>8</sup> He had begun his translation from the 1872–75 French edition of *Capital*, Volume 1, an edition translated by Joseph Roy and supervised by Marx. However, later he decided to base his translation on the 1890 German edition which was edited by Friedrich Engels. This choice was made despite the fact that Marx himself had considered the French edition to have “a scientific value independent of the [German] original”.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Iranian economist Ahmad Seyf also argues that only an economy characterized by the private ownership of the means of production can be characterized as capitalist. He writes: “The outer shell of our economy is capitalist but when the outer shell is peeled, there appears a concoction that does not fit any previously known paradigm.” See Seyf 2009.

<sup>6</sup> See Mohammad Maljoo 2006 and 2011.

<sup>7</sup> Marx 1974.

<sup>8</sup> Marx 1981.

<sup>9</sup> Marx 2008, p. 45 and 1976, p. 105.

In 2007, an Iranian activist in exile, Jamshid Hadian, published another translation of *Capital*, Volume 1, based on Ben Fowkes's English translation which was almost entirely based on the 1890 German edition produced by Engels.<sup>10</sup> Hadian's translation was published in Sweden.<sup>11</sup>

In the Spring of 2008, Hassan Mortazavi, a prominent Iranian translator who is known for his translation of Marx's Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts,<sup>12</sup> and other Marxist works, published a new translation of *Capital*, Volume 1.<sup>13</sup> It offered readers the opportunity to see the differences between the 1890 German edition,<sup>14</sup> and the 1872–75 French edition.<sup>15</sup>

Mortazavi first began by translating Ben Fowkes's English translation into Persian. He also asked Kaveh Boveiri, a young Iranian scholar to compare his Persian translation with an old edition of the French translation by Joseph Roy.<sup>16</sup>

Mortazavi then compared his Persian translation with Jean-Pierre Lefebvre's French translation of the 1890 German edition.<sup>17</sup> Next, he obtained two volumes of the Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe (MEGA<sup>2</sup>) which greatly assisted him with his project. MEGA<sup>2</sup> II/7<sup>18</sup> contains the full text of the French translation by Joseph Roy and an apparatus which compares the French text with the 1867 and the 1873 German editions. MEGA<sup>2</sup> II/10<sup>19</sup> contains the full text of the 1890 German edition and an apparatus which singles out many passages that were in the French text but were not included in the 1883 and the 1890 German editions. He carefully compared his Persian translation with MEGA<sup>2</sup> II/10 and then with MEGA<sup>2</sup> II/7. Next, he translated all the passages that were added to or changed in the 1872–75 French edition but were not included in the 1890 German edition or Ben Fowkes's English translation or Lefebvre's French translation. He also received assistance from Kamal Khosravi, an Iranian scholar of philosophy in Germany, who translated "The Fet-

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<sup>10</sup> Marx 1991.

<sup>11</sup> Marx 2007.

<sup>12</sup> Marx 1999.

<sup>13</sup> Marx 2008.

<sup>14</sup> Marx 1991.

<sup>15</sup> Marx 1989.

<sup>16</sup> Marx 1971.

<sup>17</sup> Marx 1983.

<sup>18</sup> Marx 1989.

<sup>19</sup> Marx 1991.

ishism of the Commodity and Its Secret”, the last section of the first chapter of *Capital*, Volume 1, from the 1873 German edition into Persian.<sup>20</sup>

The final product contains the following: 1) The 1890 German edition as presented by Ben Fowkes and Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, 2) The changes and additions from the 1872–75 French edition provided in the margins of each page, 3) The translator’s preface, 4) A preface which contains the translation of two essays by Kevin Anderson on the differences between the 1872–75 French edition and the 1890 German edition,<sup>21</sup> 4) A name index, 5) A subject index, 6) A general index.

The work as a whole reflects a great deal of scholarship, and an ability to express complex subjects in beautiful Persian prose.

### III. Translator’s Preface, Interviews and Reviews

Between its publication in March 2008 and the outbreak of the mass protest movement that exploded after the June 2009 election, this new translation was reprinted once. It also received reviews and discussions in important reformist daily newspapers, *Kargozaran* and *Shargh* as well as the Persian language BBC website. Over 3000 copies have been sold. However, since June 2009 censorship has prevented new reprints and further reviews inside Iran.

Mortazavi is greatly influenced by Marx’s *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* and Marx’s *Grundrisse*, works which in his opinion “do away with the myth that there is a contradiction between the young Hegelian Marx who is not quite familiar with material and economic realities, and the old economist who has been emancipated from the Hegelian dialectic.”<sup>22</sup>

In an interview with Mortazavi which was published by the now banned Iranian daily *Kargozaran*, the questions centered on the philosophical foundations of Marx’s *Capital*, the differences between Marx and Engels, and whether there was a break between the young and the old Marx. Mortazavi’s responses further expanded themes from his preface:

“I believe that a single thread connects the Marx of the 1844 *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* to the mature Marx of *Capital*. To me the significant issue is that we are facing both a continuity of thought and a discontinuity at various points. . . not two people who are separated from each other from an epistemological standpoint.”<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> In his correspondence, Marx had stressed that chapters one through six should also be consulted in German, although he saw the 1872-75 French edition as the most definitive version . See Anderson 2010, pp. 175-76, n. 21.

<sup>21</sup> Anderson 1997, and 1983.

<sup>22</sup> Marx 2008, p. 10, Mortazavi 2009.

<sup>23</sup> Mortazavi 2008.

An interest in a non-deterministic interpretation of Marx's *Capital* is also evident in a review by Babak Ahmadi,<sup>24</sup> prominent writer, translator and author of *The Philosophical Glossary of Marxian Terms*.

Ahmadi urges Iranian readers to study *Capital*, Volume 1 in conjunction with Marx's *Grundrisse*<sup>25</sup> in order to learn about "the enormous research on which *Capital* stands and the deep roots which Marx had in the humus of Western philosophical thought." He also expresses his appreciation for Antonio Negri's view of the multi-dimensionality of Marx's economic studies, of which *Capital* was only one dimension.

Mohsen Hakimi,<sup>26</sup> labor activist and the translator of Georg Lukacs's *Young Hegel* cites two passages from the French edition of *Capital*, Volume I which Kevin Anderson had singled out as manifestations of Marx's openness to rethinking previously held positions. The first passage concerns the relationship of industrialized to non-industrialized lands. In the preface to the 1867 German edition, Marx states: "The country that is more developed industrially only shows, to the less developed, the image of its own future."<sup>27</sup> In the French edition however, Marx changes this sentence: "The country that is more developed industrially only shows, to those that follow it on the industrial path, the image of its own future."<sup>28</sup> Hakimi emphasizes that this passage reveals Marx's opposition to the view that all societies inevitably have to follow one path of development.

The second passage singled out by Hakimi from Anderson's preface, concerns the relationship of human beings to nature:

In the 1867 German edition, Marx writes: "Labor is first of all, a process between man and nature. . . She/He sets in motion the natural forces which belong to her/his own body. . . in order to appropriate the materials of nature in a form adapted to her/his own needs. Through this movement she/he acts upon external nature and changes it, and in this way she/he simultaneously changes her/his own nature. She/he develops the potentialities slumbering within nature, and subjects the play of its forces to her/his own sovereign power."<sup>29</sup>

In the French edition, Marx alters part of this passage: "While through this movement she/he acts upon external nature and modifies it, she/he also also

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<sup>24</sup> Ahmadi, Babak 2008.

<sup>25</sup> Marx's *Grundrisse* was translated by Baqer Parham and Ahmad Tadayyon, and published in Tehran in 1985.

<sup>26</sup> Farhadi Babadi 2010.

<sup>27</sup> Marx 2008, p. 30, and Marx 1976, p. 91.

<sup>28</sup> Marx 2008, p. 30, addition #17 and Marx 1989, p. 12.

<sup>29</sup> Marx 2008, p. 209, Marx 1976, p. 283.

modifies her/his own nature and develops the potentialities slumbering within it.”<sup>30</sup>

Hakimi comments: “This slight change reveals that in the French edition Marx emphasizes the interaction between humans and nature instead of the domination of human beings over nature (a view which has been correctly critiqued by environmental activists).”<sup>31</sup>

Although almost all the reviews<sup>32</sup> reflect an interest in a philosophical and non-deterministic Marx, none have specifically related the content of Marx’s *Capital* to the current debates on the Iranian economy. This new edition of *Capital*, however, can address current debates among leftist Iranian economists in some important ways.

#### **IV. Approaching this Translation from the Vantage Point of Current Debates Among Leftist Iranian Economists**

Although the most recent economic sanctions imposed by the U.S. and Europe have greatly damaged the Iranian economy and the lives of ordinary Iranian citizens, Iran’s economic problems preceded these sanctions. Hence, my focus here will be on the debates concerning the nature of the Iranian economy itself.

As we saw earlier, Farhad Nomani and Sohrab Behdad’s recent work, *Class and Labor in Iran* argues that post-revolutionary Iran saw a “shriveling” of the capitalist relations of production because the economy became state-owned. In their opinion, this trend was only partially reversed with a limited reintroduction of private enterprise in the period after the end of the Iran-Iraq War in 1988.

Maryam Panah’s *The Islamic Republic and the World: Global Dimensions of the Iranian Revolution*, has characterized the Iranian economy in the 1980s as a “managed war economy” which “sat uncomfortably between state ownership... and a capitalist market” (p. 121).

Mohammad Maljoo, on the other hand argues that capitalist production relations can also exist in a state-owned economy such as the Iranian economy.<sup>33</sup> In his opinion, the problem with Nomani and Behdad’s analysis is the following:

<sup>30</sup> Marx 2008, p. 209, addition #6, Marx 1989, p. 145.

<sup>31</sup> Farhadi Babadi 2010.

<sup>32</sup> Based on my research, so far only one review has attacked this translation. In his website, Iraj Farzad claims that any attempt to separate Marx’s contributions from those of Engels is “more aimed at questioning Marx’s *Capital* itself.” See Farzad 2009.

<sup>33</sup> Maljoo, 2007, pp. 3-4.



“[T]he form of ownership of the means of production plays the main role in determining the mode of production . . . On this basis, as a rule, the expansion of government ownership of the means of production is considered an impediment to the expansion of the capitalist system...The duality, ‘state/market’ also seems to be especially important in this school of thought.”<sup>34</sup>

Maljoo has specifically examined the ways in which Iran’s state-owned oil and petrochemical industry has increased the rate of accumulation of capital by firing its permanent employees and hiring them as well as others as temporary employees at much lower wages and without benefits through state owned “private” contractors.<sup>35</sup>

Another leftist economist, Ahmad Seyf, points to the weakness of Iran’s non-petroleum production, the destruction of its agricultural sector and its extreme reliance on imports.<sup>36</sup> Seyf, Nomani and Behdad argue that a capitalist economy with full protection for private property would be the first step toward encouraging investment in production and stopping the flight of capital.<sup>37</sup> Only then, they argue, will the conditions be created for a civil society and democratic openings that can allow for labor organizing and changing the balance of power in favor of the dispossessed.<sup>38</sup>

I would argue that the new Persian translation of *Capital* can shed illumination on these debates in three important ways. 1. It emphasizes the critical importance of Marx’s concept of abstract labor in his analysis of capitalist relations of production 2. It offers ground for analyzing monopoly capitalism 3. It anticipates aspects of what we now know as globalization.

1. In the first section of the first chapter, “The Commodity,” Marx claims that abstract labour is the substance of value. He writes:

“If then we disregard the use-value of commodities, only one property remains, that of being products of labour. . . congealed quantities of homogeneous human labour i.e. of human labour-power expended without regard to the form of its expenditure. . . As crystals of this social substance, which is common to them all, they [products of labour] are values—commodity values.”<sup>39</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Fariborz Mas’udi also critiques Nomani and Behdad’s *Class and Labor in Iran* by stating that “The problem begins when the authors equate production relations with property relations, despite the definition of production relations.” See Mas’udi 1990 [2011].

<sup>35</sup> See Maljoo 2011.

<sup>36</sup> Seyf 2009 and 2012. Maryam Panah points out “the concentration of capital in the defense industry.”(pp. 123-124).

<sup>37</sup> Seyf 2009.

<sup>38</sup> Nomani and Behdad 2011.

<sup>39</sup> Marx 2008, p. 68, Marx 1976, p. 128.

The German original for “congealed quantities of homogeneous human labour” is “eine bloße Gallerte unterschiedsloser menschlicher Arbeit”.<sup>40</sup> The Persian translation can be rendered as “a plain lump of undifferentiated human labour.” Through this choice of words, Mortazavi has attempted to illustrate the way in which individual labor under capitalism is denuded of its particularity.

Furthermore, in chapter one, “The Commodity,” Marx’s additions on the concept of abstract labor can help illuminate what he meant by “the dual character of labor” under capitalism. In the last and most famous section, “The Fetishism of the Commodity and its Secret,” the translation based on the 1890 German edition states the following about the pre-capitalist modes of production in which labour did not have a dual character: “The natural form of labour, its particularity—and not, as in a society based on commodity production; its universality—is here its immediate social form.”<sup>41</sup>

The French translation states: “The natural form of labour, its particularity—and not, as in a society based on commodity production; its universality, its abstract character—is here its immediate social form.”<sup>42</sup>

Marx’s relating of the phrase “its abstract character” to “the form of labour” under capitalism is one among many instances in chapter one where commodity production is identified by the mode of labor and not merely by the act of exchange. This distinction is important, given that many Marxists attribute the abstract character of labour only to the abstraction that results from equating different kinds of labour in the process of exchange.<sup>43</sup> Marx however, seems to emphasize the abstraction that arises from how labour itself is performed. Marx’s critique of abstract or alienated labor is much further developed in the chapters on “Co-operation,” “Division of Labor and Manufacture” and “Machinery and Large-Scale Industry,” as well as in his earlier works, *The Grundrisse*, and the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*.

2. Some of the additions to the French edition of Volume I also reveal that Marx did not simply see capitalism as limited to one form, i.e. free market competition between individual private capitalists within each country. Rather, he laid the ground for analyzing monopoly capitalism and how it arose from within competitive capitalism.

<sup>40</sup> Marx 1991, p. 40.

<sup>41</sup> Marx 2008, p. 106, Marx 1976, p. 170.

<sup>42</sup> Marx 2008, p. 106, addition #60, Marx 1989, p. 58.

<sup>43</sup> See Arthur 2004, pp. 13, 41-55.

In the chapter on “The General Law of Capitalist Accumulation” Marx argues that competitive capitalism’s drive to increase the rate of accumulation of capital can lead to greater and greater centralization of the means of production. In a passage that was later addressed by Lenin’s *Imperialism*,<sup>44</sup> Marx writes:

“The battle of competition is fought by the cheapening of commodities. The cheapness of commodities depends... on the productivity of labour, and this depends in turn on the scale of production. Therefore the larger capitals beat the smaller. . . with the development of the capitalist mode of production, there is an increase in the minimum amount of individual capital necessary to carry on a business under its normal conditions.”<sup>45</sup>

Marx adds the following to the French edition:

“In any given branch of industry centralization would reach its extreme limit if all the individual capitals invested there were fused into a single capital. In a given society this limit would be reached only when the entire social capital was united in the hands of either a single capitalist or a single capitalist company. . . Centralization intensifies and accelerates the effects of accumulation, it simultaneously extends and speeds up those revolutions in the technical composition of capital which raise its constant portion at the expense of its variable portion, thus diminishing the relative demand for labour.”<sup>46</sup>

The above passage is one of the few additions which Engels did include in the 1890 German edition. This passage has also been cited by some Marxists as a basis for a theory of state capitalism.<sup>47</sup> More discussion concerning its content is needed in relationship to analyzing the various forms of capitalism in our contemporary world.

3. In the chapter on “The transformation of Surplus-Value into Capital” where Marx has made an addition concerning “the many sided competition in which the development of capitalist production has involved workers from the entire world,” he writes:

“The issue is no longer the reduction of the wages of the English to the level of continental Europe. Rather, in the near future the wages of the Europeans will be reduced to the level of the Chinese. This is the perspective that Mr. Stapleton, a member of the British parliament, has shared with his constituency in a speech about the price of labor in the future. He says: ‘If China becomes a large producing nation, I do not know how the industrial popula-

<sup>44</sup> See Lenin 1961, pp. 205-24.

<sup>45</sup> Marx 2008, p. 673, Marx 1976, p. 777.

<sup>46</sup> Marx 2008, pp. 674-675, Marx 1976, pp. 779-780, Marx 1989, p. 548.

<sup>47</sup> See Dunayevskaya 1981, p. 148, Binns 2003, p. 80.

tion of Europe will be able to continue the struggle without reducing its wages to the level of its competitors.’”<sup>48</sup>

Clearly, Iran’s full integration into the global capitalist market requires a labor force that would compete with Chinese or Indian workers in lowering the cost of production. An effort to intensify this competition is already taking place with the current regime’s Plan for Targeted Monetary Subsidies which has removed state subsidies on basic food items and petroleum, and a recent agreement between the Iranian and the Chinese labor ministers which allows for the use of Chinese day laborers in the construction of a highway from Tehran to the Caspian Sea.

The passages which I have singled out are only a few of many thought-provoking alternate texts in the French edition which deserve study and discussion. They also pinpoint some of the concepts which Marx thought were particularly important and needed expansion and further exploration.

## Conclusion

I began this essay by discussing the environment in which a new translation of *Capital*, Volume 1 appeared in Iran: On the one hand, deep mass dissatisfaction with the economic, social and political crises that confront Iran: On the other hand, the rise of a new generation of youth which is interested in philosophical ideas and eschews dogmatism.

The issues and concerns which Iranians bring to Marx’s *Capital* can raise important questions not only for Iranians but for the global anti-capitalist movement.

It is very significant that, in his translation, Hassan Mortazavi chose to include the additions to the French edition which Marx thought had “a scientific value independent of the [German] original”.<sup>49</sup> Those additions can give readers a deeper understanding of Marx’s dialectical process of thinking.

Although the current repressive regime in Iran makes it extremely difficult to have open and free debates on the content of Marx’s *Capital*, this new edition has offered a critical foundation for those on the left who are aiming to develop a constructive alternative to capitalism.

<sup>48</sup> Marx 2008, p. 647, Marx 1989, pp. 522-523.

<sup>49</sup> Marx 2008, p. 45 and 1976, p. 105.

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