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Bio-Economics, Labour Flexibility and Cognitive Work: Why Not Basic Income?

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Contents

1. Introduction

Labour flexibility has to do with the functioning of labour market. The main economic literature, according to the General Equilibrium paradigm,[1] agrees with the fact that exchange in the labour market is free and *solvable*.[2]

In a theoretical context, in which there is individual private property and the economic activity is finalised to the maximum increase of agents' welfare, only solvable exchanges are analysed.

Definition 1: private *solvable* exchange

An exchange is defined solvable when it implies the passage of property rights of the commodity against its value (price): who offers, gives up the property rights, who demand, purchases the property rights.

It follows that the private exchange is an exchange among rival goods; otherwise there is no property rights exchange.

In fact, the value of a good and its *solvability* derives from its exclusivity in the use. Of course, public goods are not considered.

[1] Most of the manual in economics, in their first chapters, consider labour market as a normal free market, which can be analysed with the traditional tools of supply and demand analysis (see, for instance, Varian, 1992), even for the neo-keynesian thought. Notice that Keynes, instead, does not treat labour analysis in the same way, since he neglects the existence of a labour supply (see Keynes, 1936). For a heterdox interpretation on labour flexibility and its effects and social costs, see G. Standing, 1999.

[2] The type of economy here considered is a production economy with private property.

Definition 2: free private *solvable* exchange

A private solvable exchange is defined free, when the following two conditions hold:

- *The two contractors act at parity level, that is, they are not potentially discriminated in asymmetrical way, are autonomous agents with the same potential and effective decision power. Behavioural differences are due to different subjective preferences and to a different degree of uncertainty.*[3]

- *There is total price flexibility, that is, none of the two contractors is able to impose a price to the other (price-taker agents).*

2. The solvibilty of the labour market exchange

Not all the private markets deal with solvable exchanges.

The most relevant exception is the credit market. The existence of *seignorage rights* implies that money exchange has nothing to do with property rights. Money, in fact, is property of a supra-individual board (the State and the Central Bank) and money is actually "sign money", that is social convention. It is not a

[3] General Equilibrium Theory, the mother of the modern neo-liberist theory, is based on methodological individualism. Only individual agents are considered and only microeconomics analysis is relevant. But, in order to model the individual behaviour, very strict assumptions are made: the hypothesis of maximising rationality states that each agents is different because of preferences but are all equal as far as acting opportunities are considered. It follows that, despite the individualism, the agents act in the same way, since they are potentially equal and no discrimination ex-ante is possible. Only a conformist behaviour is possible, otherwise the agent is irrational. Not bad, for a theory which would like to highlight the diversity among human beings.

case that in the macroeconomic textbooks credit market is usually not considered (but only financial markets, where transfer of property rights occurs).[4]

The question of exchange solvability is relevant even in the labour market. The point is source of controversial positions. The problem is if the work availability is separated or not from the human being.

Definition 3: work availability

Work availability is defined by the working time supplied by agents in order to gain a monetary income.

Work availability is something different from the labour activity.

Definition 4: labour activity

Labour activity is defined by the different ways with which work availability is used or exploited according to the different degree of alienation.

Definition 5: alienation

Alienation is defined by the degree of separation between worker and content (object, result) of his work.

When the separation reaches the highest level, that is, when the work object or result is completely expropriated from the worker, then we talk of *total alienation*.

[4] See, for instance, O. Blanchard, 2000.

Proposition 1

Labour exchange can be defined solvable if and only if work availability and not labour activity is exchanged.

Corollary 1: labour exchange is solvable if and only if there is alienation.

In the neoclassical theory, the law of demand and supply holds and it acts in all the markets, labour market included. Hence, monetary wage is determined on the basis of the theory of scarcity. In fact, neoclassical theory states that labour supply in terms only of working hours (that is, only work availability) is the result of the agent's choice solving the trade-off between the need of an income and the lost of "leisure time" (defined as not working time **è** labour disutility).

In order to allow the solution of this allocation problem, the characteristics and the contents of labour activity does not play any role. This latter is incorporated in the preference structure of the agents. That implies that in neo-classical economy the concept of alienation does not exist.

Nevertheless, labour, as a whole, is a particular good. Differently from the other goods, the good "work availability" is not physically separable from the agent who owns it (as it can be for vehicles or potatoes).

In the labour exchange, what it happens is not an effective transfer of property rights (power) but rather of availabilities (potentialities).

If we consider the labour exchange as a whole (work availability plus labour activity), it is not possible to separate them. Thus, the solvability of labour exchange can be put in doubt. Consequently, the law of demand and supply in

determining the value of labour cannot be completely applicable to the labour market.

Proposition 2

The value of work availability (that is, the price à the monetary wage) is not only depending on its scarcity, but it should take in account the labour activity (in other word, the degree of alienation), on the basis that there is no physical separation between the object of work and the agent who offers it.

That means that the degree of alienation should enter in determining wages level

Proposition 3

The law of demand and supply is inapplicable to the labour exchange, as a whole.

Proposition 4

Labour market cannot be analysed as each other market.

Hence, most of the dominant labour economics can be thrown away.

3. Is labour market a free market?

We verify now the existence in the labour market of the free markets two conditions: the lack of discrimination between the two contractors and the price flexibility, according to the law of demand and supply. As far as the second condition is concerned, we just argued that it is not valid for the labour market. We discussed now the second condition.

Definition 6: labour supply

Labour supply id defined from work availability. It depends on the trade-off between the marginal disutility of labour (loss of leisure time) and the monetary income, which the agent is able to gain from labour activity (monetary wage).

It follows that labour supply is subject to a *budget constraint*.

Definition 7: labour demand

Labour is requested from entrepreneurs and it consists both in work availability and labour activity.

Since in the manufacturing activity labour and machinery (physical capital) are separated (first is property by workers, second by entrepreneurs), they need to be joint in order to start production. This decision is taken from entrepreneurs, not by workers. That is why are entrepreneurs who demand labour.

Labour demand depends on two principal factors:

- investment decisions, on the basis of expected demand and profit;
- labour productivity, according to the existing technology.

Thus, labour demand is subject to a technological constraint and to an expectation constraint, not to budget constraints.

The diversity of the two constraints is determinant in defining behavioural ex-ante discrimination between the two contractors in the labour market. The labour exchange does not imply equal opportunities for the agents. Budget constraints, in fact, is more relevant that the technological one. In a monetary economics, it is possible to live without technical change, but not without money. Actually, the discrimination between workers and entrepreneurs depends on the

fact that entrepreneurs have the property (or the control) of the means of production whilst workers do not.

Proposition 5

In the labour market, by definition, there is no free, solvable exchange. Labour market is a particular market, which is structurally subject to constraints. It cannot be "flexible".

4. Rivalry in the labour market exchange

The separation between the worker and his work availability implies that labour, as a product separated by the producer, is a rival good. If work availability is offered to an entrepreneur, it cannot be simultaneously offered to another. Thus, rivalry in the labour market exchange implies total alienation.

The level of alienation varies according to principal parameters:

- the degree of orders on duties, which depends on the type of labour activity;
- the degree of routinized behaviour in the labour activity.

Definition 8: corporeal work

Manual work is defined by the prevalence of body energy intensity activity over brain activity, due to the net separation between labour activity and labour contents. Manual work is different from artisan work.

Corporeal work is characterized by a *formal subsumption*[5] of labour under capital, based on the separation between labour activity and work availability. It presents high level of alienation.

Definition 9: cognitive work

Cognitive work is based on the constant use of all the brain faculties such as relation, mnemonic, cognitive, learning activities and so on.

Cognitive work is characterized by a *real subsumption*[6] of labour under capital both in the work availability and labour activity (what it is called today, *adaptability)*[7], till to eliminate the separation between them and to reduce to the minimum the degree of alienation.

In a hypothetic ranking from corporeal to cognitive work, it is reasonable to assume a reduction of the degree of orders and routinized work. Consequently, the level of alienation decreases, too.

Given these definitions and coming back to the question of rivalry in the labour exchange, the point is the following:

[5] The concept of formal subsumption is a Marxian concept. Marx uses the term "formal subsumption" to name processes whereby capital incorporates under its own relations of production labouring practises that originated outside its domain. The processes of formal subsumption are thus intrinsically related to the extension of the domain of capitalist production and capitalist markets. Ion the formal (and real, see note 6) subsumption in Marx, see primarily K. Marx, 1976, vol. 1, pp. 1019-1038.

[6] The concept of "real subsumption" is the result, in the Marxian thought, of the growth of capitalist economy. As capitalisat expansion reaches its limit, the processes of formal subsumption cab no longer play the central role. The processes of the "real subsumption" of labour under capital

[7] One of the four pillars of the European Employment Strategy as result of Luxembourg Summit of 1997 is just called "*adaptability*". It refers both to workers and to firms and, as far as workers are concerned, it means for worker to encounter the necessities of firms to better mismatch labour supply and demand.

Proposition 6

In corporeal work, labour exchange implies rivalry. In case of cognitive work, rivalry tends to become inexistent.

To better discuss the qualitative changes introduced by the diffusion of cognitive work, it is necessary to highlight the structural and deep transformations of the labour market in the last twenty years.

We start from the declining of the so-called Fordist-Taylorist-Keynesian paradigm. According to the several analyses about the passage to post-Fordism (or, better, "flexible accumulation paradigm"), some stylised facts become evident, as far as western rich countries are concerned:

- Added value production is no more based only on material, energy intensive inputs but more and more on immaterial inputs, such as intangible factors, which are not easily measured and whose production depends on brain intensity labour.[8]

- Added value is no more based on a homogenous and standardized way of production and labour organization, independently on the type of output. Production activity can use different and several ways of organization, characterized by a network structure, thanks to information and communication technologies (Ict) and transport technical change. It follows the decline of a unique production unit (large enterprise) in favour of the diffusion of different intra-firms chains based both on subcontractor and cooperative *filiéres*.

[8] See C .Marazzi (1997).

- Labour activity structurally changes from both qualitative and quantitative point of view. As far as work material conditions are concerned, it is nowadays statistically confirmed an increase of working time and, often, an accumulation of more duties at the same time, a decrease of the separation between working and life time and a prevalence of individual bargaining over collective bargaining. Furthermore, labour activity is more and more characterized by immaterial factors: relation and interpersonal activity, communication a brain involvement are interrelated and relevant. These activities need education, competences, knowledge and attention. The separation between arms and brain, typical of the traditional Taylorist organization, tends to disappear till to develop a strong relationship of routines from one side and of deep involvement and adaptability to the work, from the other. To the traditional labour division based on the different duties, it is added the new labour division based on know-how and knowledge, with the effect to increase the degree of labour subalternity. This subalternity is no more imposed by a command activity in a disciplinary way, as in Fordist era, but it is introjected by social and generally accepted customs, thanks to the diffusion of conformist behaviours result of a sort of *social self-control.*[9] The individual bargaining becomes the natural institutional picture, inside which competition and emulation represent the guideline of the working behaviour.

When we discuss of *cognitive capitalism* or *knowledge society*, we mean production of money by means of knowledge and not only of commodities, through the exploitation of those faculties which has to do with brain and attention activities (cognitive labour).

[9] The concept of social self-control reminds to the concept of society of control and bio-power. On these topics, see note 14.

Since brain (as the accumulation process of knowledge) is by definition individual, or, more, the principal element of identity definition thanks to memory and language,[10] cognitive work cannot be considered homogenous. It is bio-economic, that is, it depends on individual biology. In order to make it productive, cognitive labour needs a strong relational activity, as tool for its transmission and decoding of the accumulated knowledge. It follows that cognitive labour needs "space", to develop a network; otherwise, if it is remains incorporated in a single person, it cannot be valorized, or, in other words, it does not become *exchange value* but only *use value* for the single agent. *Cognitive capitalism*[11] is by definition "network capitalism", non-linear and the inner hierarchies are inside the different nodes, which constitutes the same network: these new hierarchies are complex and linked to different factors, subcontractor relationships, depending on the technological and financial power structure.[12]

5. Manual and intellectual labour (excursus)

The traditional and Fordist division between manual and intellectual labour needs to be revised. The spread of flexible technologies linked to Ict structurally changed the way of working.

Manual labour needs now more attention and individual involvement in the activity to check, modify and program the flexible manufacturing systems, with different degree of automation. The possibility of intra-communications between two machines thanks to informatics language implies an increase of skilled education and professional training. The level of routinized work tends to decrease, even if the degree of exploitation not. In fact, if the work becomes less

[10] On human identity, defined as memory and language, the modern thought is still inspired by Locke. See Locke, 1690, Italian Transl., 1994.

[11] See. Y. Moulier-Boutang (Ed.), 2002.

[12] See M. Castells, 2000.

Taylorised, the speed of many technical operations increases together with the their number, which the same operator has to do at the same time (lean production). We define it **corporeal work**.

From the other side, “intellectual labour” was modified in deeper way. If once it was remunerated according to the type of activity, the degree of education and, anyway, not in a salaried way, now the standardization of cognitive procedures and the language codification have highlighted an increase of routinized behaviour and a Taylorist organization of the “creative” working time. In many cases, it deals with salaried brain intensity activity, which is subject to different constraints and timing tables like a new type of cerebral assembly line. That is why we prefer to call it **cognitive work** instead of intellectual work. Of course, this argument cannot be enlarged to every type cognitive work. Since cognitive work, as we already discussed, is an individual work, it is possible to have a wide range of different activities, which cannot be analysed in a homogenous way. Cognitive work has to do, by definition, with knowledge and learning process (by doing or by using). Nevertheless, we can distinguish two categories of knowledge, which play an important role in classifying cognitive work: codified and tacit knowledge.

Codified knowledge is defined by all those competences and know-how, which are transmittable and can be diffused in easily way with no prohibitive transaction costs thanks to Informatics and communication technologies (Ict). They constitute the most important tool for the diffusion of new technologies and they represent the “core” of professional training. More this knowledge is diffused; more people who have it can be substituted without lack of know-how for the firms. Thus, in presence of individual bargaining on labour market, this type of knowledge represents a disadvantage for the workers, diminishing their contractual power at individual level. Codified knowledge is more diffused in tech-taker industries, which usually adopt technology from outside and are not on the technological frontier.

On the other side, “tacit knowledge” is defined, by converse, from all competences and know-how, which are incorporated in the experience of the worker for a more or less limited time and cannot be diffused outside since individual experience cannot be transmitted at all. In this case, the labour experience and the incorporated knowledge represent the “elite” of the labour market. It is this knowledge, which is protected by patents and is not exchangeable on the information market. From one side, the worker, if it he has consciousness of it, has a strong individual bargaining power, from the other, “tacit knowledge” is the core of technological competitiveness of the firm and only constant investment activity is able to generate it and support it. It represents the “essence” of the technological command and concentration and it has to do mainly with the industries on the technological frontier. Further, it needs to be reproduced every time and who owns it must constantly regenerate it if he wants to keep intact his bargaining power

6. Production of money by means of knowledge

Capitalism system is able to reduce to *exchange value* (in order to get plus-value) what is technologically possible. The first industrial revolution of the late XVIII° century put labour free and thus productive. Thanks to French revolution, labour activity becomes free and, paradoxically, it needs to be remunerated and the labour market was born. Since labour is the only input able to induce accumulation, labour activity it self, according to the used technology, is the core of economic growth.

Is this the case of the production of money by means of commodities (M-C-M’) and in the labour market what is exchanged is only work availability and not the agent (as it was when labour was not free in a pre-capitalist system, production of commodities by means of commodities, C-M-C). There is in some ways a separation between “object” of labour (the final commodity) and “subject”

of labour (worker). That is the question posed by Marx with the word "alienation".

We already discussed the problem of rivalry in the labour market. Generally speaking, according to the economic theory, tangible goods are rival, whilst intangible goods not. A theoretical model, for instance, is a not rival intangible good, is an "idea", a pair of glasses is a rival tangible good. If a good is rival, its production cost and, consequently, its price is positive and constant for every user. For a non-rival intangible good, the production cost is the same, independently on the number of clients, that is, it is null from the second user and more. It is important to notice that non-rival goods are normally incorporated in a material support, which is a rival good. The point is that the cost of material support is not related to the cost of intangible good, which is incorporated in it. Paretian efficiency would say that the right price for non-rival intangible goods should be zero, but at null price there is no convenience to produce.

It is clear, now, why he question of copyright and patents is fundamental in capitalism whose main output is more and more "knowledge". Thanks to copyright and patents, a copy of an intangible good has a positive price, even if its production cost is null, as it is null the incorporated cognitive work, since only the work for the original good (and not for the copy) is paid. Of course, the author's right, that is the remuneration of his cerebral activity, is something different from the copyright or from patent, that is, the exclusivity of the exploitation of the cerebral activity, which nothing has to do with the author.[13] The labour commitment in writing a book or in the creation of new software does not vary according to the number of sold copies.

[13] On this topic, see the wide debate on free-software and the question of copy-left. See, among others, R. Scelsi (ed.), *No Copyright: nuovi diritti nel 2000*, Shake Edizioni Underground, Milan, 1994.

Proposition 7:

In a context of corporeal labour, labour exchange implies a "particular" property rights exchange and rivalry.

The worker, during his working time, ceases his time availability in order to get monetary wage (hence, there is change of property rights as far as the worker's lifetime is concerned) and, at the same time, if this time availability is at disposal of one entrepreneur, it cannot be free for an other entrepreneur, that is there is rivalry in its use and economic results.

With the diffusion of production of money by means of knowledge, the nature of labour activity structurally changes, by posing new questions; many of them still need an answer.

In the market of cognitive labour, the internal exchange assumes a different meaning: if, from one side, it is still possible to generally assume that cognitive work availability still implies a change of the respective property rights, nevertheless, this change occurs in non linear and forced way. Cognitive activity cannot be separable from the body; brain is not separable by arms. In the intangible production, body represents a constraint, but something else. And the content of labour activity, "the idea", (a logistic solution and/or intangible services) can not be alienated from the owner, more, it generates cumulative learning processes thanks to circulation and general exchanges of "knowledge" and "know-how". It is at this point that it becomes necessary to force the cease of the rights on knowledge (as copyrights or patents), that is, the property rights on the result of the cognitive activity. But, differently from material production and corporeal labour, the supply of "knowledge" implies a process accumulation of knowledge, which cannot be alienated to the cognitive workers as before to the manual workers. The result is that "knowledge" is not a rival good. The tradition ways of monitoring labour activity through disciplinary actions does not play any role more. Only in particular cases, there is a formal expropriation of the work object. Only if brain is separable from the body it will be possible to represent the

old form of labour alienation, or, as modern cyber literature often assumes, only if brain is completely manipulated, unable to operate in autonomous way. Thus, it is necessary to highlight new more sophisticated mechanisms to monitor the cognitive capacity. Some trends in this direction seem to be evident:

- juridical trend: the prevalence of individual bargaining is becoming more and more the normal situation, not only in Anglo-Saxon countries. This trend is facilitated by the process of *individualization* of the labour activity, due to the linguistic characteristics of cognitive labour, which, by definition, are individual;

- socio-cultural trend: a stronger control of information and a concentration of mass-media both at national and international level together with the building of positive and individualistic *imaginary* lead to a self-discipline and self-repression of many heterodox behaviours with negative effects on a critical and autonomous cultural capacity (*society of control*). This situation is even worsened in special segment of the labour market and in organizational context in which the practise of mobbing and individual competitiveness is more and more increasing;

- inside the production (material and immaterial), the communication of knowledge tends to be more and more subject to routinized procedures, which are codified and exchangeable independently on the type of input. Only tacit knowledge is able to keep its autonomy and bargaining power.

Proposition 8:

Labour flexibility,

- **when it has to do with corporeal labour, implies wage reduction or an increasing in labour productivity (that is, in both the cases, an increase of labour exploitation);**

- **when it has to do with cognitive, but routinized, labour, implies new forms of control and, finally, the indirect expropriation of the (intangible) output of labour activity, mainly through practises of self-control;**

- **when it has to do with cognitive, but tacit, labour, increases the bargaining power of he worker.**

7. First conclusion

We argued the following points:

- Labour exchange is a particular exchange, which cannot be assimilated to a solvable exchange of any other commodities.

- More in particular, the two necessary and sufficient conditions, which allow talking of solvable exchange - exchange of property rights and rivalry in the use of labour -, are not always verified. As far as the exchange of property rights is concerned, it holds only if the commodity "labour" is considered as pure work availability, by assuming complete separation between the same work availability and the labour supplier. In other words, only if there is labour alienation. But this separation should affect the price of labour, whose level, hence, cannot be only determined according on the demand-supply law.

- In case of total alienation, there is rivalry.

- In labour market, in any case, even if a solvable exchange, under certain circumstances, is possible, the labour exchange is not a free exchange, since the diversity constraints, which affect the two contractors, implies ex-ante discrimination in their behaviour.

- If we consider an economy in which the production is mainly obtained through cognitive work and immaterial input, the labour exchange is no more rivals.

- The relevance of relationship, learning, experience, language, individual character and personal expectations inside labour activity leads to the impossibility to separate this latter from the quality of labour. What in the Taylorist paradigm was called “intellectual work”, professional work, high skilled work, remunerated not in term of salary but in term of results and performances and whose productivity was difficult to quantify, today, in the flexible accumulation paradigm, it is called “cognitive work” and in most of the case (with the exception of the exclusivity of tacit knowledge) is characterized by routines, is quantified and salaried.

The production of money by means of knowledge and the centrality of cognitive work is a reality, which cannot be misunderstood, in the modern western economies. What in the Taylorist era was the “oecomicus”, today it tends more a more to appear as “bio-oeconomicus”, where all the existential activity are useful for and put in production, able to produce added value. The same classic distinction between production and reproduction, lifetime and working time, consumption and output tends to loose its original meaning.

Definition 10: Bio-economy (biopolitical production)

Bio-economy is that economic process which really subsumes (and not only formally) the whole human being, with the aim to achieve monetary accumulation

In this context, labour exchange is something that exits the tradition economic analysis and it cannot be more assimilated to the exchange of tangible goods and to market theory.

Preparatory corollary to the first paradox of labour exchange in bio-economy

In a bio-economic process, labour exchange tends to be individually defined, without any mediation by intermediate forces (like Trade Unions). Nevertheless, if the worker is not in a monopsonist situation due to the possess of tacit knowledge, labour exchange is totally subsumed in the productive process and inside the hierarchies established by the bio-power structure[14]. It follows that labour exchange is no more solvable and not rival, and, thus, it is not assimilable to free market exchange.

Proposition 9: the first paradox of labour exchange in bio-economy

Just when labour exchange becomes individual and it could be analyzed according to the premises of methodological individualism, it has no more sense to speak of solvable exchange in free market.

[14] The concept of bio-power is due to M.Foucault. "Biopower is a form of power that regulates social life from interior, following it, interpreting it, absorbing it and rearticulating it. Power can achieve an effective command over the entire life of the population only when it becomes an integral vital function that every individual embraces and reactivates of his or her own accord" (M. Hardt, A. Negri, 2000, p. 23-24). As Foucalt says: "Life has now become … an object of power" (M. Foucalt, 1994, p. 1979). Therefore, the concept of bio-power is strictly connected with that of *society of control*: they are the two faces of the same medal. For a deep analysis of these concept, see H. Dreyfus - P. Rabinow (eds), 1992, pp. 133-172.

Proposition 10

In bio-economics, labour exchange becomes not measurable and not reducible to private exchange. Labour becomes a *common good*.

8. Second conclusion: why not basic income?

Labour market is a different and particular market, since labour is not a private good. We defined it as *common good*. A common good is something different from a public good, too. Public good is owned by the State, that is, a supra-individual entity. Labour is by definition individual, since it cannot be separable from the single human being.

Since men and women are social animals, they are used to share their lifes in communities. We can call them families or in other way, it is not important. What is relevant to underline is that human experience, relation activity, learning process depend on the social connections, which characterize the community. In other words, labour activity and practises are social attitudes, which cannot be reduced to an individual basis. Hence:

Definition 8: common good

A common good is the result of social procedures in production, or, in other words, is the result of a cooperative process at social level.

In the modern post-Fordist economies, the new temporalities of bio-political production (bio-economy) cannot be understood in the frameworks of the traditional conceptions of time. In the Taylorist context, time was programmed and divided in order to increase and measure labour productivity through the

apportionment of automatic processes and jobs. This was especially valid for the industrial sectors and it is not a case that only the labour of waged workers was productive (and, consequently, remunerated) and, therefore, all the other segments of labour appeared as merely reproductive or even unproductive (and, consequently, non remunerated). Both the working time and the type of job were strictly defined and separated from lifetime and free-time activities. Thus, it was possible to measure the labour supply and the intensity of labour. The determination of labour value (wage) was the result of these two components: working time and labour intensity (productivity), as result of a collective bargaining between entrepreneurs' associations and Trade Unions. Wages were determined in collective way but privately distributed, since each worker's commitment (in terms of effort and time) was measurable. On the distribution side, labour is considered as a private good.

In a bio-economic context, instead, the production of added value (wealth) converges ever more with the production and reproduction of social life itself: it thus becomes ever more difficult to keep distinctions among productive, reproductive and unproductive labour. Labour - material, immaterial, cognitive or corporeal - produces and reproduces social life. The progressive in distinction between production and reproduction highlights the incommensurability of time and value. The most clear example is provided by cognitive work, in which the power of science, knowledge, affect ad communication is fundamental for its productivity, but whose source is not definable on individual basis, but only on social basis. It is the result of what Marx names the "general intellect".[15] According to Marx, at a certain point in capitalistic development (which Marx glimpsed as the future), the powers of labour are infused by the powers of science, communications and language. *General intellect* is a collective, social intelligence created by accumulated knowledge, techniques and know-how. General intellect is a common good, whose value becomes incommensurable.

[15] See K.Marx, 1973, fragm. XXXII.

Proposition 11:

As labour moves outside factories and life is put in production (bio-economy), it is increasingly difficult to maintain the fiction of any measure of the working day and thus separate the time of production from the time of reproduction, or work from leisure time.

There are no time clocks to punch on the terrain of bio-political production.

Proposition 12:

In this contest, the right remuneration for bio-political inputs, since the most important input for production becomes the life itself, is a remuneration of the existence: in other word, a ***basic income*** and a ***guaranteed income for all.***[16]

Basic income stands opposed to the entire family wage. Basic income extends well beyond the family to the entire population/multitude, even those who are unemployed, because the entire multitude produces. In post-Fordist society, labour power has become increasingly collective and social. The old Fordist slogan "equal pay for equal work" cannot be more supported when labour cannot be individualized and measured.

Proposition 13: The second paradox of labour exchange in bio-economy

In bio-economy, labour exchange is subject to a process of individualization (outside free market), but its remuneration should be determined at social level.

[16] For a deeper discussion on the definition of basic income in an postfordist economy, see A. Fumagalli: "Ten Propositions on Basic Income: Basic Income in a Flexible Accumulation System", paper presented at 8th Bien Congress, Berlin, October 2000 (trad. it: in A.Fumagalli, M.Lazzarato (eds.), 2000.

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