

## Self-exploitation as a concept in the capitalism of the 21st century

### La auto-explotación como concepto en el capitalismo del siglo XXI

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#### Abstract

The publication exposes an approach to a little explored concept that has been called self-exploitation; basically it is the discussion of arguments from two visions that at times seem to converge and at other times diverge, namely: the more philosophical vision of Byung Chul H.; and a more economic vision, from Marxism, of the writer. The theoretical support used, to argue the vision of the author who writes, is the school of Marxist political economy; with a research approach from dialectical materialism, where some aspects of the history that the subject in analysis are taken up are taken up again. The objective is to present a proposal for the explanation of some elements of contemporary socio-economic reality, that which is gestated in the 21st century. It is the self-exploitation, from the vision of the writer, the expression of the evolution of the means of production, or as it is usually named: the 3rd industrial revolution and the 4<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution; as well as, for a state of collective ecstasy, for the idea of freedom, of everything, including work, something exposed for Byung Chul H.

**Exploitation, Self-exploitation, Third industrial revolution, Fourth industrial revolution**

#### Resumen

La publicación expone un planteamiento de un concepto poco explorado al cual se ha llamado auto-explotación; básicamente es la discusión de argumentos desde dos visiones, que en momentos parecen converger y en otros momentos divergen, a saber: la visión más filosófica de Byung Chul H.; y una visión más económica, desde el marxismo, de quien escribe. El sustento teórico utilizado, para argumentar la visión del autor que escribe, es la escuela de la economía política marxista; con un enfoque de investigación desde el materialismo dialéctico, en donde se retoman algunos aspectos de la historia que aborda la temática en análisis. El objetivo es exponer una propuesta para la explicación de algunos elementos de la realidad socio-económica contemporánea, aquella que se gesta en el siglo XXI. Es la auto-explotación, desde la visión de quien escribe, la expresión de la evolución de los medios de producción, o como suele llamarse: la 3ra y 4ta. revolución industrial; así como, por un estado de éxtasis colectivo, por la idea de la libertad, de todo, incluido del trabajo, algo muy expuesto por el filósofo Byung Chul H.

**Explotación, Auto-explotación, Tercera revolución industrial, Cuarta revolución industrial**

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## Introduction

There is a phenomenon, and the beginning of a theoretical debate, about what has been called self-exploitation. Until now, attention has been paid to this process not because it is something unique and unprecedented in the history of capitalism, but because in today's capitalism, at the beginning of the 21st century, it has become more than evident as part of a manifestation of accumulation, for some, and of subsistence or survival for others. Indeed, at the present moment in history the concepts of exploitation, something they have called hyper-exploitation (which is no other house than the increase in exploitation in its relative and / or absolute form) and self-exploitation, a term that in years recent has begun to be in the theoretical debate, and although the social philosopher Byung Chul Han has mentioned it repeatedly in his books, in some very timid and in others with more precision, the truth is that in a veiled way many other theorists have left between the lines to see an insinuation on the matter, Samir Amín to mention some.

The theoretical framework that is taken up in the present is the Marxist political economy, although Marx never mentioned self-exploitation, he did leave a whole theoretical-philosophical construct that is the basis that shapes the reflections on the topic being addressed.

The objective that surrounds it, is to contribute and resume, the debate of self-exploitation as a category of reflection and analysis entered the capitalism of the 21st century, which is characterized above all by a change in the general conditions of capital accumulation, since that the so-called industry 4.0 (I-4.0) or the fourth industrial revolution, is modifying the accumulation pattern, and although, self-exploitation can be seen as a subsistence and survival mechanism in a capitalism that expels all amounts of force For work, the truth is that the same phenomenon also exists as a new capital accumulation mechanism on the border of I-4.0, and that does not mean that it is no longer self-exploitation; Before I-4.0, a capitalist paradigm shift is underway and it is necessary to start exploring the debate in that direction.

Given that it is not a case study or a laboratory study, but rather a reflection on the concept of self-exploitation, it does not handle hypotheses, and that the research approach used does not consider it, either by mistake.

The first section deals with the conceptual theoretical support that allows laying the foundations to be able to gradually expose the self-exploitation approach, which in the best of cases joins the theoretical body of evolution of the current of the Marxist tradition for the explanation of the economic and social reality of contemporary capitalism. A second segment is mentioned as a methodological framework, which presents the process and the construction of elements that explain the approach of the self-exploitation approach. In item three, the discussion of the above is carried out, as part of the process to arrive at presenting self-exploitation from the perspective of who writes. Finally, the conclusions section is displayed.

## Theoretical support

In the Marxist tradition, a whole current of economic, philosophical, sociological and political thought is built, to say the least, from the analysis of the capitalist system, and to achieve this there are a set of concepts that provide sustenance to the mentioned school theoretical. A fundamental one is the concept of exploitation, which refers to the amount of work that the owner of capital appropriates from the worker, based on social production,

"In countries under the capitalist production regime, labor is never paid until it has functioned for the period specified in the purchase contract, at the end of each week. In other words, the worker advances the capitalist everywhere, the use value of labor power and the buyer consumes it, uses it, before having paid it to the worker, being, therefore, the one who opens credit to the capitalist" (Marx, 2010 [1867], p. 127)

This appropriation is also known as surplus value, which is equivalent to the amount of work that belongs to the worker but that the capitalist appropriates within the production process; 10 hours of work, manifested in a certain amount of production of merchandise, a quantity of coins, will always be equivalent to less than 10 hours of work, those given to the worker, and the rest of the hours worked are appropriated by the owner of the means of production, the capitalist.

"the formula  $C = c + v$  that, when transformed into  $C' = (c + v) + p$ , transforms  $C$  into  $C'$ . We know that the value of constant capital is limited to reappear in the product. In other words, the value product that emerges in the process as something really new is distinguished from the value of the product preserved in that process; therefore, it is not as it seems at first glance  $(c + v) + p$ , which is the same, (410 pound sterling  $(c) + 90$  pound sterling  $(v) + 90$  pound sterling  $(p)$ , but  $v + p$ , or what is the same 90 pounds sterling, not 590 pounds sterling, but 180. ... We already know, in effect, that the surplus value is not more than the result of the changes in value that is operated in  $v$ , is that is, in the part of the capital invested in labor power; which, therefore,  $v + p = v + \Delta$  (increase of  $v$ )" (Marx, 2010 [1867], p. 161)

In this regard, on exploitation, Amín (2001)

"In the industrial revolution, the means of production become a collection of equipment (machines and buildings) outside the scope of artisanal property. While the exploitation of labor [...] the team becomes the primary form of ownership. But still, over a long period, workers who had become factory labor were repositories of the knowledge required to operate the machines." (p. 66)

The issue of exploitation is the basic foundation of the capitalist system, without it, there would be no purpose to produce, not within the system in question, since there would be no surplus value that would be transformed into accumulated money, therefore the minimum wage level should be "the only necessary one is what is required to support the worker during work, and so that he can feed his family and the race of workers does not become extinct" (Marx, s / f [1930], p. 2); thus, the worker has as a constant axis, the sale of his strength and productive skills to capital, but as has already been said, this sale is also in credit towards capital, since the salary of what has already been worked is paid. In this regard, Amín (2001) reflects when he points out "when the human being in question defines himself as a factor of production or as a human resource, the recognition of the naive expression" resource for whom? For what? "Arises. (p. 16)

This is how exploitation develops in a differentiated way according to the historical moment of capitalism, in the sense of observing it in terms of rate, it increases according to the historical forms of capital accumulation. In a publication on Mexican neoliberalism Valenzuela (1997) states that

" Regarding the exploitation rate, for 1982 we can roughly estimate that it would have reached a level of the order of 236%. In other words, the ratio between the surplus and the necessary product would revolve around 2.36. By 1995, after thirteen years of neoliberal experimentation, the rate of surplus value had experienced a spectacular increase, as it amounted to 529%. The increase, from 2.36 to 5.29 is something very rarely seen in the entire history of capitalism. Consecutively, it is had that the hour value of the labor force would have gone from 0.30 in 1982 to 0.16 in 1995. It would therefore have been cut almost in half." (p. 28, 29)

The aforementioned, gives entry to observe that exploitation can be increased by different means, currently many writings mention it as -hyper-exploitation- that if it is analyzed more deeply, it can refer to something that Marx, from the 19th century, already referred to as - Relative and absolute capital gain-; for now, it is mentioned why conditions can increase the rate of surplus value, in this sense, Valenzuela (1997) is quite illustrative when he exposes the factors that intervene in this regard

"What factors explain the increase? Three factors influence the level of the rate of surplus value: I) the extension of the working day; II) the productivity of labor in the branches that directly or indirectly produce the goods that make up the basket of salaried consumption; III) the level of real annual salary." (p.29)

In the same respect, with the issue of the rate of surplus value, González (2005) explains that

"In the decline in the value of labor power, productivity growth plays a fundamental role. But as the productivity growth rate falls, the reduction of the real wage then becomes essential to act in favor of the decrease in the value of the labor force..." (p.64)

In this sense, reference is being made to relative surplus value and to a different way of characterizing surplus value, which has to do with the loss of purchasing power of wages.

The previous quote shows certain conditions under which exploitation increases; When references are made to the extension of the working day, they speak of obtaining a higher rate of -valuation in an absolute way-, through which the volume of production of the merchandise increases, but the wage of the worker remains constant, Thus, there is an increase in the rate of capital gain. However, the same quote from Valenzuela (1997) also refers to the increase in productivity, even though the workday may remain constant, whether the increase is due to a new applied technique or the development of the productive forces. , the result would be the same, a greater quantity of production, under the same amount of salary and the same working day, thus reaching an increase in the rate of surplus value through productivity, is then a relative surplus value-

" In his theory, Marx points out that the value of labor power is equivalent to the value of a given quantity of means of subsistence, and that the worker produces a value of the same magnitude in a fraction of his working day. Such a fraction is called necessary work time, the other part of the day is excess work and gives rise to profit. Hence the tendency to reduce the necessary work time." (González, 2005, p. 64)

Various writings on productivity mention that there is a process of hyper-exploitation, which may or may not be correct, the reality is that reference is made to obtaining absolute or relative surplus value, if you want to call it hyper-exploitation, because they point you out as you like, but the scientific explanation was offered by Marx in the 19th century.

Now, in the capitalism of the 21st century, there is a concept that begins to have a presence in the theoretical debate, reference is made to the concept of - self-exploitation-, exposed more insistently by the philosopher Byung Chul Han (2013 [2012 ], 2014 [2012], 2016 [2010], 2016 [2014], 2017 [2014]), in different works, in some of them in a very timid, and even imprecise way, but in the work "Psicopolítica" is where he does a fairly mature contribution to the concept

"This transition from subject to project is accompanied by the feeling of freedom. Well, the project itself is shown as a figure of coercion, even as an efficient form of subjection subjectivation. The self as a project, which believes that it has freed itself from external constraints and from the constraints of others, submits to internal constraints and to its own constraints in the form of constraint to performance and optimization (...) the subject of performance, which purports to be free, is actually a slave. An absolutist slave, to the extent that without any master he exploits himself voluntarily, does not have before him a master who forces him to work" (Byung-Chul, 2017 [2014], p.11,12)

But the analysis of the issue of self-exploitation must be qualified in current capitalism, where the conditions of capital accumulation demand greater productivity, that is, by manipulation of consciousness or by the shortening of production cycles, entering a terrain self-exploitation, which is even more demanding than self-exploitation itself.

"The greatest success of current capitalism has been having a process of self-hyper-exploitation of the working and scientific class and keeping ourselves happy thinking that we are hyper-productive and that the world could not exist without us and our work; something we might well call hyper-egocentrism" (Camelo, 2017. p s/n)

The previous quote is contextualized in a previous paragraph that exposes the conditions of how such a condition is reached in current capitalism

"The development of the productive forces has had an advance never expected, or rather unsuspected, in the last 120 years. But this by itself does not generate the conditions under which the current economy develops, but, to achieve the volume of consumption, due to the increase in the volume of production, disciplines such as: Marketing, administration, accounting, specialty, computer science, market-oriented psychology, etc. These disciplines that I point out, eventually, would not have evolved or been born if it had not been for the acceleration of the production cycle and the need to shorten the cycle of capital accumulation." (Camelo, 2017, p. s/n)

"This development of the productive forces, which we also have to evolve the concept, because analyzing the category, bio-science may well enter there, the acceleration of egg production (a hen can lay 5 to 7 eggs a day and without cock), for example, is the acceleration of production and this generates the need to accelerate all other cycles that allow the acceleration of capital accumulation, something known as hyper-accumulation, it even had to be modified the conception, consciousness, of the world population to adapt our consciousness to the new reality of hyper-accumulation; therefore, likewise, the social relations of production; nor how to deny what Marx points out when he says: -Consciousness is determined by materialism. That is to say, that the society of the eighteenth century and the society of the twenty-first century have a physical resemblance, but not a conscience; affirming that: Society is a driver and a product of itself." (Camelo, 2017, p. s/n)

Byung-Chul (2016 [2010]) makes a narrative about self-exploitation that clearly illustrates the topic in question, noting that

" The myth of Prometheus can be reinterpreted considering it a scene of the psychic apparatus of the contemporary performance subject, who violates himself, who is at war with himself. In reality, the subject of performance, believed in freedom, is as chained as Prometheus. The eagle that devours its ever-growing liver to its alter ego, with which it is at war. Thus seen, the relationship of Prometheus and the eagle is a relationship with himself, a relationship of self-exploitation." (p.9)

of the appointment, the concept of self-exploitation, in its early and embryonic phase, must be rescued; beyond its non-economistic, but more philosophical character. But to correct an eventual complaint about this fact, it is possible to reflect, perhaps the categories of Use Value and Exchange Value do not come from the contribution of Aristotle? Or even Karl Marx's own contributions do not also arise from philosophy?

Here, the writer, considers, in agreement with Marx, Amin, Singer, even Keynes, and others, that the economy is NOT pure, but also political; but even further, economics, in addition to politics, should not be seen as mainly technical, but also philosophical, because the economy will always be covered by a philosophical section, even though some neo-classical economists are not aware of it, because the philosophy in this current is hidden, by technicality, it is the philosophy of the benefit of a few over the life of a few.

Although Byung-Chul for the year (2016 [2010]) already stated clearly the approach of self-exploitation, but it does not end by defining whether said self-exploitation was due to self-imposition of increasing performance, without the need to nobody asked it, for an excess of positivity; in turn, it does not end by pointing out that the productive activity is stripped for a third party; arriving in such a way, only to a manifestation of increased productivity of their own free will (due to an excess of positivism translated into self-violence), without the need for their capitalist exploiter to request it, that is, to the relative surplus value.

"The performance subject is free from an external domain that forces it to work or even exploits it. He is the owner and sovereign of himself. In this way he is not subject to anyone, rather, only himself. In this sense, it differs from the subject of obedience. The suppression of an external domain does not lead to freedom; rather it makes freedom and coercion coincide. Thus, the subject of performance is abandoned to the freedom required or the free obligation to maximize performance. Excess work and performance sharpens and becomes self-exploitation. This is much more effective than exploitation by others, as it is accompanied by a feeling of freedom. The exploiter is at the same time the exploited. Victim and executioner can no longer be differentiated. This self-referentiality generates a paradoxical freedom, which, due to the structures of obligation inherent in it, becomes violence." (p. 32)

Byung-Chul (Op. Cit) closes this paragraph by pointing out that "The psychological illnesses of the performance society are precisely the pathological manifestations of this paradoxical freedom" (p. 32).

Note that the concept of self-exploitation is clearly exposed by Byung-Chul, but for that moment of his philosophical contribution, it is, in depth, somewhat different from the same concept that Camelo (2017) exposes to refer to exactly the same concept of self-exploitation

"Because with a micro company you do not exploit anyone but yourself, and without hope of accumulating wealth for your old age, and without social security for your retirement (...) the belief that you are an entrepreneur because you have a micro business, and that absurd thing of the concept of Human Capital, they are not more than forms of manipulation of the collective conscience (...) equally divided in the collective of the exploited because some think they are micro entrepreneurs for being exploiters of themselves, but no longer they are working class; and within the same working class how to organize if there are those who live in the absurd and crazy illusion that they are holders of Human Capital" (Camelo, 2017, p. s/n)

Note that the previous quote, Camelo (2017), is clearly from a perspective of the concept of exploitation from the Marxist tradition; that is, the exploitation of capitalist man towards working man, this is Marx's approach, is exposed in the quote, but with an analytical transition, thus arriving at the exploitation of: capitalist man of himself, by himself; that is to say, exploited for itself. Thus, coming to the exploitation of: man of himself, exploited for himself. Note that this is NOT a voluntary and free approach to relative or absolute surplus value; that is to say, it is not a voluntary self-exploitation, due to excess positivity, for a capitalist third party.

However, Byung-Chul (2017 [2014]) already exposes with great maturity, in the evolution of the concept, from Marxism. "Neoliberalism, as a form of mutation of capitalism, turns the worker into an entrepreneur. Neoliberalism, and not the communist revolution, eliminates the working class subjected to the exploitation of others. Today each one is a worker who exploits himself in his own own company." (p.17)

### Methodological framework

Research that is circumscribed in the conceptual theoretical field, from the Marxist school of political economy that uses sustenance to contrast and contribute to the construction and debate of the concept of -self-exploitation-; with a materialistic dialectical approach, where the historical process is taken up specifically of what the subject of analysis requires. The objective is to contribute to the debate of concepts that allow explaining the new socio-economic realities related to the exploitation of labor, through what has been titled - self-exploitation-; as well as re-thinking and re-constructing the original idea, from whom this publication writes, on the topic being addressed.

In the year 2016-17, the writer, begins to reflect on the new forms of employment in Mexico, but conceiving the approach as a systemic condition of capitalism; from the above, he publishes some small essays on something that he called self-exploitation; This self-exploitation was already clearly focused on the Marxist trend, but analyzing the so-called micro-companies (so called in Mexico), where some of them are basically self-employment, for itself, without any employee and therefore with no one to exploit more than himself; there arises the idea of calling this form of micro-business self-employment self-exploitation.

This analysis was exposed in two informal debate publications in Tepic, Nayarit; Mexico. Some occasion was exposed and discussed with some professors of the Faculty of Economics of the Autonomous University of Nayarit, but that evidently was not understood, not how the writer of these lines conceived it; possibly due to a lack of discursive expertise, to explain it in greater detail, or because the teachers were very pigeonholed in the classic Marxist concept of exploitation.

In the year 2018, the one who writes, finds himself for the first time with the concept of self-exploitation published, by a different author, in an electronic newspaper, El País, by an author named Byung Chul Han.

From then on, we looked for the different, and very proliferating, publications, of the cited author, referenced to the subject of self-exploitation, we continued to read several works of the mentioned author, and we observe some things: that it is a concept that has been working since, at least, since 2014, but which does not address it directly and specifically, but rather quotes and tangentially reconstructs it in some page (s) of his books, and where he refines and evolves the concept through publications. The author's approach arises from a philosophical analysis of current society and its ways of development, that is, the evolution of the concept from this vision comes more from a philosophical construction, rather than an economic one; It is worth mentioning that he is not unaware of Marx's proposal, and even in his book "psychopolitics" he makes direct reference to him on the classical idea of exploitation, but it is not common in his publications. It should be noted that, as a good philosopher, Byung Chul Han's publications are more than invitations to reflect on contemporary society and its dynamics; He is, without a doubt, one of the best social philosophers of today, both for the depth of his novel reflections on today's society, and for the way he transmits them.

It is the two previous written events that trigger the decision to write directly and on time about the concept of self-exploitation; expose the phenomenon, build and present the arguments that support it, from the perspective of the author of this publication; as well as, contrasting the differences and coincidences of the concept, from the perspective of the two authors who are exponents of it, namely: Byung Chul vs. The author of this.

From the perspective of who writes these lines, it is to make a transition from exploitation seen as a scheme where:

$$F(M):[Ex=(O+Pp)\rightarrow Vcm\rightarrow Vcm/(O+C)] \quad (1)$$

Where:

F (M) = Depending on the market.

Ex = Exploitation.

O = Worker.

Pp = Production process.

Vcm = Exchange value of merchandise.

$O + C = \text{Worker plus Capitalist.}$  - It does not mean that it is divided equally; assuming that the sum of (O + C) is 2, there is a multiplicity of possible capital gains rate combinations:  $(1/4 + 3/4 = Vcm)$  or  $(1/5, 4/5 = Vcm)$  or any other.

The 2 refers to the worker and the capitalist, who are the parts in which the exchange value of the merchandise sold in the market is divided. For the capitalist it represents the payment for the use and wear of the means of production, plus the rate of profit, which represents the amount of surplus value. For the worker, it represents the payment of the sale of his labor force, to acquire the means of subsistence and recovery of his productive force. This is the classic way of understanding the approach to exploitation, from the Marxist school. (See the book: Capital I)

But what is sought to argue and expose, is how to move to self-exploitation.

That is to say:

$$F(M):[Ex=(O+Pp)\rightarrow Vcm\rightarrow Vcm/1] \quad (2)$$

Where 1 represents, by definition, who produces and keeps the exchange value of what is produced; and he is, in turn, the owner of the means of production. But, the production is sold in the market; that is, it is a commodity.

## Discussion

### Self-exploitation as a concept

Keeping this self-exploitation approach in mind is seeking to understand the capitalism of the late twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first, in the neo-liberal period in Mexico and the world, with changes of various kinds from the third industrial revolution, or the revolution informatics, computing and New Information and Communication Technologies (Ntic's) in general; where new forms of accumulation appear, or modifications of the previous one, represented by the period of heavy industry; In economics, one cannot think that there is a rigid and immovable transverse line to expose periods of advance of the productive forces, a co-existence of different production technologies is carried out during a period of transition, until the predominance of a certain one, without implying the extinction, completely, of the previous ones.

In the techno-economic debate it is said that the fourth industrial revolution has been entered, although it has not yet been solidly accepted; more and more, this possibility becomes more and more accepted, there are still theorists who do not accept it as such, but as an evolution of the technologies of the third revolution; The writer considers that it is precisely the period of transition that generates this divergence of opinions; Although, as of today, in the year 2020, there is non-acceptance of the fourth industrial revolution, but rather something like a second version of the third industrial revolution, who writes considers that in a few years, as it is more established the use and impacts of contemporary advances, it will be seen as the fourth industrial revolution.

	Approximate periods	Base or protruding elements used
First Industrial Revolution.	It starts from 1755-65 to 1830-45.	Steam and coal as productive and transport forces, the birth of statistics.
Second Industrial Revolution.	It starts from 1830-45 to 1960-70.	Electricity, oil, steel, metallurgy and mass use of statistics in the State and companies.
Third Industrial Revolution.	It starts from 1960-70 to 2010-17.	Electronic circuits, informatics in the State and companies, new information and communication technologies (Ntic's), internet, automation of things, computing (hardware and software, tools, seen separately).
Fourth Industrial Revolution or Industry 4.0 (I-4.0)	Starts 2010-17 to present.	Internet of things (hyper-connectivity), big data, virtual reality, augmented or augmented reality, nanotechnology, techno-medicine, techno-biology, 3rd printing. dimension, the artificial intelligence of things, the automaton of things. The 5G Network.
Note: The periodization of the industrial revolutions, proposed here, is built from the emergence, as a technological milestone, of the base or outstanding elements in each of the indicated industrial revolutions; therefore, a transition period is left for the beginning and end of each time referenced to each industrial revolution.		

**Table 1** Periods of the industrial revolutions in the world and their base or outstanding elements

Source: *self made*

That idea that the worker is only exploited by the capitalist, and stripped of a quantity of work, surplus value, through the surplus, ceases to be an axiomatic truth of the mid-nineteenth century and the beginning of the twenty-first, to become one of the different forms of exploitation "The fact that workers do not use the means of production for themselves" (González, 2005, p. 65) this reasoning must be made more flexible in order to accept new forms of exploitation, such as the one coined in this document as self-exploitation.

The historical moment through which humanity passes requires the evolution of concepts, although self-exploitation has existed in different nuances, including in the steel and oil industry, but the proportion and exponential growth of self-exploitation it occurs with the arrival of the third industrial revolution, the computer industry and the Ntic's, and is further accentuated with the arrival of the recent incursion into the fourth industrial revolution or I-4.0., which is characterized by Internet of things, big data, virtual reality, expanded reality, nanotechnology, techno-medicine, techno-biology, artificial intelligence, the automaton of things.

In the face of such reality, concepts have to evolve, including those of the Marxist school, in order to explain reality, and not seek to adapt reality to a theoretical scheme so that it can submit reality to a model; something as questionable as thinking that all economic elections are entirely rational.

It is then, self-exploitation, the activity of exploiting itself; that in which it engages, its productive force, to be able to generate a commodity for social demand, while being the owner of the means of production required for the elaboration of the merchandise in question; neither can it be indicated as an artisan, although they are not excluded, since they also participate in the economic branches where the application of technologies, from the third and fourth industrial revolution, to carry out their productive activity.

Some of these technologies, which are relatively easy to access, and which in turn allow them to be used as means of production, falling on various occasions in what has been called -economy from knowledge-, where the 3rd tool or 4th. Industrial revolution allows the expression of knowledge, of the self-exploited, whether in the form of software or reprogramming of some hardware, where a third party, a natural or legal person, acquires the service sold by the self-exploited; being this way, striving for the culture of productivity, even in the same sense of being a self-exploited being, which leads him to demand the highest productivity from himself, even in his character of being the owner of the means of production. from your own farm.

Said self-demand to be mostly productive, and being himself the owner of the means of production, whether it be through the extension of the working day, self-imposed, and / or whether through the acquisition of a new, more sophisticated means of production which allows him to increase production, his own production as a worker of himself, something very common in the 3rd and 4th RI with the dizzying advance of technological updates, leads, in the Marxist tradition, to relative and absolute surplus value; Although in this case it is considered that the term of surplus value does not fit, proper in the Marxist tradition, but the logic of the categories is considered if it is preserved; that is, the increase in production through an extension of the working day or through the development of the productive forces.

The foregoing, is something that in 21st century capitalism becomes more and more common to see, people alienated by the idea of freedom, refuse to be employees of a third party, and this is how with the ease of New 3rd and 4th RI technologies allow full production flexibility; It is not required to be in a specific physical space to produce, nor is it required a rigid schedule to be able to produce, it is not required to be listening to the complaints of a foreman or production manager, nor is it required to be in a particular country, among other characteristics of capitalism at the beginning of the 21st century; This is due to the facilities of connectivity -internet and mobile telephony-, transportability of the new means of production -new technologies-, to mention some conditioning factors.

Self-exploitation is within the reach of any workforce, expressed in the form of arms and brains, that has access to current technology, as accessible as a smartphone or a computer, where the phone is no longer a means of communication. to become a means of production, due to the set of applications and other software with which it is equipped, and where updates to said software are as easily accessible, as being at a Wi-Fi point and paying a few pesos, or other currency, for the update or acquisition of new software, thus having the update of the means of production of self-exploitation; similar case happens with the computer. It is the sublimation of the idea of freedom and the ease of mutating new technologies to productive forces, even a smartphone or as they call it "Smart phone", is what makes self-exploitation a reality that has come to establish itself with a swaying force in 21st century capitalism.

"the bourgeoisie cannot exist except on the condition of incessantly revolutionizing the instruments of production and, consequently, the relations of production of the old mode of production was, on the contrary, the first condition of existence of all the preceding industrial classes. A continuous revolution in production, an incessant commotion of all social conditions, a restlessness and a constant movement distinguish the bourgeois era from all the previous ones." (Marx, 2017 [1848], p. 25)

What is experienced in current capitalism is a stage of co-existence of various ways of production. Industrial and manufacturing are still in force, with their nuances adapted to the 21st century; but, in turn, it co-exists with this new way of production, through self-employment, but which only employs itself, which leads to self-exploitation.

It is important to highlight that the approach that has been exposed, by the author of these lines, as self-exploitation, has nothing to do with that absurd intellectual confusion of considering self-exploitation as the productive self-demand to increase production to benefit of the greater surplus value that the owner of the means of production appropriates, through relative and / or absolute surplus value, the third capitalist, who continues to be in the classic logic of exploitation that Marx (2017 [1848]) exposes "the exploitation of each other" (p.40), regardless of whether it is due to excess positivity or self-demand, continues to be in the classic approach of exploitation; which is something very different from what the author of this work has exposed throughout it.

In short, it has been transited from:

$$F(M):[Ex=(O+Pp)\rightarrow Vcm\rightarrow Vcm/(O+C)] \quad (1)$$

To

$$F(M):[Ex=(O+Pp)\rightarrow Vcm\rightarrow Vcm/1] \quad (2)$$

## Conclusions

Here it is worth noting something, the phenomenon of self-exploitation is not totalitarian in the capitalist system, at least not from the point of view and argumentation of this writing; from this, then, the system shows a set of possibilities of exploitation, read in the traditional approach of the Marxist school, of man by man; or, from the approach that is exposed, argued and built in this publication, the exploitation of himself for himself. With the aforementioned, it is desired to make explicit that the idea is not shared that in current 21st century capitalism there is only self-exploitation as a way of, in some cases, trying to accumulate capital, this position is not shared, suggested by Byung Chul Han, simply and simply because empirical evidence, throughout Latin America, shows the co-existence of classical exploitation and self-exploitation, it is considered incorrect to generalize by reaching absolutism

"Hardt and Negri build their model of theory on the basis of historically superseded categories, such as classes and class struggle (...) the violence that arises from the global empire is interpreted as the power to exploit others (...) talk about Classes only make sense within a plurality of classes. And the truth is that the crowd is the only class. All those who participate in the capitalist system belong to it. The global empire is not any class that exploits the crowd, because today each one exploits himself, and he figures that he lives in freedom. The current subject of performance is both actor and victim. Without a doubt Hardt and Negri do not know about the exploitation itself, much more efficient than the exploitation by others. In the empire properly nobody governs. He constitutes the capitalist system itself, which covers all. Thus, today an exploitation without denomination is possible." (Byung-Chul, 2016 [2014], p. 30-31)

As previously stated, the self-exploitation approach set forth in this document is that of self-exploitation by itself. That exhibition that many have interpreted, and in which even Byung-Chul himself has suggested in his books, about a so-called self-exploitation by a form of self-demand to produce more; it is wanted to make clear that this is not, from this vision, self-exploitation, that arrives at a form of relative and / or absolute surplus value, but it is still being exploited by a third capitalist, that is, a classic form of exploitation from the Marxist school; therefore, this approach is nothing new and much less novel, if perhaps the elimination of the class struggle by the alienation of self-demand, but that is even incorrect in the total world reality, the class struggle is still present in many expressions of the working class. In the same way, it is made explicit that it is not a historically superseded category, it is enough to turn to any developing country and even forms of exploitation similar to the original accumulation will be found; what exists, then, are co-existences of forms of exploitation, which an effort must be made to explain them; they become more or less clear, according to the evolution of the capitalist system.

Self-exploitation has come to stay in 21st century capitalism, both for the facilities to achieve it, in terms of the means of production to establish it, and for the social alienation for freedom as a false form of self-realization, freedom of everything and everything, without measuring or reflecting, is the irresponsible use of these "liberties".

Paraphrasing Byung (2017) The current subject pretends to be free, but in reality he is a slave voluntarily, while he exploits himself voluntarily.

Despite the fact that the writing does not indicate the conjuncture of the historical moment of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is necessary to mention that it has served as a catalyst to make a deep and extensive expansion of self-exploitation. Convinced of this, he ensures that this conclusion will leave its mark, in the empirical evidence, in capitalism of the 21st century.

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