

## TOWARDS A MARXIAN CONCEPT OF SOCIAL SPACE

### Hacia un concepto marxista del espacio social

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#### ABSTRACT

This article aims to construct Karl Marx's concept of social space by examining a few fragments of his works with relevant terminology (space, spatial). The main result of this interpretation is the definition of social space as a suprasensible form of division between necessary labour and surplus labour, which due to private property on all means of production creates the appearance of the absence of exploitation. While in slave-holding mode of production slave is socially naturalized labour instrument, thus the division of forms of labour have only formal meaning to him/her, and in feudal mode of production the labour instrument is a nature itself, namely cropland, the division of forms of labour acquires a social character per se (social relation of labourer to means of production via wages, and socialized means of production, namely, nature (and everything else except wage labourer) subsumed under private property) only under capitalism. Unlike the established in philosophical literature concepts of social space based on Marx's theory, the definition introduced in this article is characterized by sensible-suprasensible, extraterritorial-territorial dialectics.

#### KEYWORDS

*Social space, Marx, concealment, necessary labour, surplus labour, exploitation.*

#### RESUMEN

Este artículo tiene como objetivo construir el concepto de espacio social de Karl Marx mediante el examen de algunos pasajes de sus obras con una terminología relevante (espacio, espacial). El resultado principal de esta interpretación es la definición del espacio social como una forma suprasensible de división entre el trabajo necesario y el trabajo excedente debido a la propiedad privada en todos los medios de producción, lo que crea la apariencia de la ausencia de explotación. Por lo tanto, el espacio social no se define como un contenedor, un lugar de producción, sino como una relación social. El espacio social es un fenómeno puramente capitalista, que crea una forma especial de apariencia, que esconde su propia socialidad en contraste con los modos de producción esclavo y feudal, donde las relaciones sociales particulares se manifiestan de manera sensual y material.

#### PALABRAS CLAVE

*Espacio social, Marx, ocultación, trabajo necesario, trabajo excedente, explotación.*

## **Is there a place for the concept of social space in Marx's theory?<sup>1</sup>**

Marxian scholars either construct the concept of social space from Marx's concepts in an arbitrary fashion or argue that there is no spatial thinking in his theory<sup>2</sup>. We cannot agree on both of these claims, but before explaining our line of reasoning, firstly one should understand why existing approaches to this problematic failed.

Henri Lefebvre claims that the German philosopher understood the social space "only as the sum of the sites of production, as the territory of various markets" (Lefebvre, 2009, p. 211). The reason for the territorial and empirical interpretation of social space in Marx, according to Lefebvre, was that only by the second half of the twentieth-century capitalism integrated the city and the village into its social relations (Lefebvre, 2009, p. 212). Lefebvre states that Marx's concept of social space can be constructed on the basis of his concepts, such as "abstract labour," "commodity," etc., in order to create a materialistic theory of social space (Lefebvre, 1991, pp. 26, 32-33, 49). Under capitalism, according to him, there is a domination of abstract space, by analogy with abstract labour, which means the subordination of space to the logic of capitalist accumulation and commodity fetishism. Capitalism produces social space as an economic and a political instrument

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<sup>2</sup> Of course, many researchers have developed variations of the Marxist spatial theory for several decades, but this article approaches those who carefully read the works of Marx himself in search of his spatial thinking.

of the bourgeoisie. Thus, under capitalism, social space has the same properties as a commodity, since it becomes a thing that conceals the order of social relations. In general, Lefebvre understands social space as a social product that exists in any mode of production as the basis for human biological reproduction and reproduction of labour force and production relations (Lefebvre, 1991, pp. 27, 31-32). Thus, the logic of Lefebvre is the following: since in Marx's oeuvre the concept of social space was reduced to a territory, then it should be constructed from other concepts, but these concepts he chose in an arbitrary fashion, namely, there is no methodological or theoretical necessity behind the choice.

Following Lefebvre, Edward Soja also points out that Marx understood social space geographically-empirically-territorially, as “*the territory of different markets* [here Soja literally borrows the words from Lefebvre — my parentheses — I. I.], the source of a crude friction of distance to be ‘annihilated’ by time and the increasingly unfettered operations of capital” (Soja, 1989, p. 126). At the same time, Soja lists several reasons for the absence of the concept of social space in Marx's theory. Firstly, Marx did not complete his fundamental work – *Capital*. Secondly, his thought has deeply anti-spatial tendencies. For example, in contrast to Friedrich Hegel, who considered the history of the Absolute Spirit completed and spatialized in the form of a Prussian state, Marx paid more attention in his thinking to the temporal dimension (the labour theory of value and the theory of the proletarian revolution). Soja argues that the first and second volumes of *Capital* based upon a «simplifying assumption of a closed national economy, an essentially spaceless capitalism systematically structured almost as if it existed on the head of a pin» (Soja & Hadjimichalis, 1979, p. 62). Thirdly, the conditions of capitalist exploitation have been undergone changes: while production of absolute surplus value prevailed at the time when Marx wrote *Capital*, the focus of exploitation in 1870-1900 was redirected to production of relative surplus value due to the class struggle of the proletariat aiming to

reduce labour time; therefore, the factor of social space could arise in its material embodiment only from the last quarter of the XIX century (Soja & Hadjimichalis, 1979, p. 63). Thus, Lefebvre and Soja agree on the idea that historical conditions prevented Marx from paying attention to conceptualizing social space. However, Soja also adds the methodological limitations of Marx's theory to this factor. Nevertheless, these thinkers did not trace the functioning of "spatial" vocabulary in Marx's works.

At the same time, Paul Claval notes the lack of socio-spatial and temporal characteristics in the analysis of commodity-money exchange in the *Capital*. Marx, according to him, having betrayed his own method of ascent from the abstract to the concrete, that is, the theoretical movement from the concrete-in-reality to the concrete-in-thought, and created abstract, the one-sided definition of value: «Marxist thought always begins by eliminating space», — as Claval argues, pointing out that the main means of knowledge, according to Marx, is an abstraction, — "(...) which destroys the outstanding privilege of the experimental approach and substitutes for it an abstract development of ideas whose aim is to define the profound essence of reality" (Claval, 1993, pp. 81-82). This leads, as Claval believes, to totalitarianism and the false universality of Marx's theory. While he criticized Marx about elimination of space, there is no actual textual exploring of Marx's works on this subject from Claval.

Thus, Soja and Claval explain the absence of the concept of social space in Marx's works by the limitations of his methodological position. They came to the conclusion that Marx, on the one hand, departed from the Hegelian primacy of space, i.e. Prussian-centeredness of his political thinking, but on the other hand, established through abstract concepts of value and commodity a totalitarian and universal truth about exploitation, capitalism, etc., without spatial dimension.

Therefore, according to the above-mentioned authors, one can summarize the following factors which determined, the absence of

the concept “social space” in Marx’s theory: 1) an interpretation of space as a mere territory; 2) the departure from the Hegelian primacy of space and thus privileging temporal dimension; 3) abstractness of the Marx’s theory and method; 4) social space did not play a significant role under capitalism in the years when Marx wrote his main work. Only Lefebvre decided to arbitrarily construct the concept of social space from Marx’s concepts by acknowledging this absence. The one thing that all of them have in common is an absence of actual reading of Marx’s works for “spatial” vocabulary.

One can certainly find some terms directly referring to the space as a territorial given (spatial - räumlich, space - Raum) in Marx’s oeuvre, including the first volume of *Capital*—to which, in general, the above-mentioned thinkers refer—, but Marx also used particular concepts, for example, concerning social classes, modes of production, necessary and surplus labour, forms of appearance, connected with terms “räumlich” and “Raum” in several fragments through which the conceptualization of social space can be carried out. In other words, instead of a rather arbitrary tactic of constructing the concept of social space from other concepts, proposed by Lefebvre, or negating this possibility and also Marx’s thinking about social space, as Soja and Claval did, a closer look to the Marx’s works in German will help to conceptualize social space on the basis of those well-defined concepts which are located in close textual and semantic proximity to the terms “spatial” (räumlich) and “space” (Raum). In fact, the “spatial” vocabulary in several fragments of the first volume of *Capital* and its manuscripts may have specific theoretical content because of the density of the well-defined concepts and their interconnectedness.

Therefore, the purpose of this article is to interpret several fragments of Marx’s works with the terms “space” and “spatial,” on the basis of which a non-territorial concept of social space will be constructed. This article offers a conceptualization of social

space from semantic connections of terms which are connected with “spatial” vocabulary and well-defined Marx’s concepts.

The general rule for determining the theoretical content of these terms, which connected with “spatial” vocabulary and well-defined concepts, will include the following selection criteria borrowed from terminological studies: if already well-defined concepts in theory are semantically related to terms that have no definition and have not become full-fledged concepts in theory, then it becomes possible to determine these terms based on a certain semantic communication between them and concepts. Therefore, to create full-fledged concepts for these terms one should search for the contexts using these terms within Marx’s oeuvre (Cabré, 1999, pp. 131-139; Maynard & Ananiadou, 1999). Thus, the construction of concepts based on hitherto undefined terms is justified through the creation of their theoretical content from a definite semantic connection with well-defined concepts. This is the method to construct the Marxian concept of social space.

Consequently, we argue that there is a place for the concept of social space in Marx’s works. By closely examining his texts we have managed to construct several concepts from undefined terms and phrases: a space, the separated space, the combined space and a social space. Let us give definitions of them. A space is the form of the division between necessary labour, that is labour for reproducing the life of the labourer, and surplus labour, that is labour for reproducing the life, free time of non-labourer, thus a space is the “how” of this division. The separated space is the form of division between necessary labour and surplus labour under feudalism, in which this division is visible due to peasant’s ownership of the means of production and non-economic coercion of peasant to execute surplus labour for a feudal lord, and consequently, antagonistic economic relations, time of exploitation appearing in the sensually-perceived way. The combined space is the form of division between necessary labour and surplus labour under slave-owning mode of production, in which necessary labour is

concealed due to the slave is owned by slaveholder, and therefore all labour is appeared as surplus labour, and thus antagonistic economic relations, time of exploitation cannot be distinguished in any way, because slave is socially naturalized property of slaveowner. A social space is the form of division between necessary labour and surplus labour under capitalism, in which this division is invisible, that is not distinguished sensually and materially due to private property on all means of production and presence of wages, creating the appearance of absence of surplus labour, time of exploitation, because all labour appeared to be paid. By creating the term “a social space,” we do not mean to claim that other forms of space and space in general are not social, but there is an important feature differing social space, as the capitalistic phenomenon, from other historical forms of space. While in combined space slave is socially naturalized labour instrument, thus the division of forms of labour have only formal meaning to him/her, and in separated space the labour instrument is a nature itself, namely cropland, the division of forms of labour acquires a social character *per se* (social relation of labourer to means of production via wages, and socialized means of production, namely, nature (and everything else except wage labourer) subsumed under private property) only under capitalism.

Let us make clear the reasoning behind these constructions.

**Constructing Marx’s concept of social space using a triad of terms-becoming-concepts: “invisibility,” “fusion”, and “form of appearance”**

In the following fragment, the term “spatial” (*räumlich*) is associated with a set of Marxist concepts, namely, necessary labour and surplus labour, mode of production (feudalism, capitalism), classes (peasant, Boyard; capitalist, labourer). It is worth noting that in characterizing the relationship between necessary labour and surplus labour under capitalism, Marx uses the phrase “ist nicht sichtbar” and the word “verschwimmen”, which are rende-

red in English translation as “is not evident on the surface” and “glide” accordingly.

Suppose the working day consists of 6 hours of necessary labour, and 6 hours of surplus labour. <...> But this is not evident on the surface (*ist nicht sichtbar*). Surplus labour and necessary labour glide (*verschwimmen*) one into the other. (...) It is otherwise with the corvée. The necessary labour which the Wallachian peasant does for his own maintenance is distinctly marked off (*räumlich getrennt*) from his surplus labour on behalf of the Boyard. The one he does on his own field, the other on the seignorial estate. Both parts of the labour time exist, therefore, independently, side by side one with the other. In the corvée the surplus labour is accurately marked off from the necessary labour. This, however, can make no difference with regard to the quantitative relation of surplus labour to necessary labour. Three days' surplus labour in the week remain three days that yield no equivalent to the labourer himself, whether it be called corvée or wage labor. (Marx, 1996, p. 245; Marx, 1962a, p. 251 —my parentheses— insertion in German hereinafter is mine – I. I.)

The phrase *räumlich getrennt* is incorrectly translated into English as “distinctly marked off”, which hides spatial terminology. It can be translated much closer to the original as “spatially separated.” Marx uses it to describe the feudal mode of production.

The necessary labour which the Wallachian peasant does for his own maintenance is distinctly marked off (*räumlich getrennt*) from his surplus labour on behalf of the Boyard.

This phrase, “spatially separated,” could be used to create the particular term “separated space” and general term “space,” definitions of which will be extracted from its semantic relations with well-defined concepts surrounds it: necessary labour and surplus labour, mode of production, etc. Thus the separated space is defined by the following factors: 1) feudal relations of production, and more precisely, peasant’s ownership of the means of production (cropland); 2) non-economic coercion of peasant to execute surplus labour (labour on the seignorial estate, and subsequent



transfer of products of his labour to the feudal lord, Boyard). The separated space is the form of division between necessary labour and surplus labour under feudalism, in which this division is visible due to peasant's ownership of the means of production and non-economic coercion of peasants to execute surplus labour for a feudal lord. Consequently, space is the form of the division between necessary labour and surplus labour.

In the following sentences Marx describes the division between necessary labour and surplus labour under capitalism using the phrase "is not visible" (a more accurate English translation of the German phrase *ist nicht sichtbar* instead of "is not evident on the surface"), and "fuse" (*verschwimmen* from the original text should be rendered as "fuse" instead of "glide"). In the first sentence, he argues about invisibility (*ist nicht sichtbar*) of division between necessary labour and surplus labour (in contrast to feudalism, where peasant can visibly indicate the separation of necessary labour and surplus labour), and about fusion (*verschwimmen*) of this division (these forms of labour apparently *fuse* into one form of labour, like two atoms of hydrogen *fuse* to create an atom of helium; this connotation is impossible to communicate with "glide" from English translation) in the second sentence.

But this is not evident on the surface (*ist nicht sichtbar*). Surplus labour and necessary labour glide one into the other (*verschwimmen ineinander*).

Consider the context of the term *sichtbar*. Marx used this term (German for "visible," therefore *ist nicht sichtbar* is "invisible") in the first volume of *Capital* to indicate the division between necessary labour and surplus labour. But what does it mean to be (in) visible from Marx's point of view? Here are the fragments from the first volume of *Capital* in which this term is mentioned (in all following quotations in parentheses are mine): "(t)he substance linen becomes the visible (*sichtbare*) incarnation, the social chrysalis state of every kind of human labour" (Marx, 1996, p. 77; Marx, 1962a, p. 251); "(...) riddle presented by money is but the riddle

presented by commodities; only it now strikes us (*sichtbar*) in its most glaring form” (Marx, 1996, p. 103; Marx, 1962a, p. 108); “Although invisible (*unsichtbar*), the value of iron, linen and corn has actual existence in these very articles: it is ideally made visible by their equality with gold, a relation that, so to say, exists only in their own heads” (Marx, 1996, p. 105; Marx, 1962a, p. 110); this one-sided character of the money's motion arises out (*sichtbar*) of the two-sided character of the commodity's motion, is a circumstance that is veiled over (Marx, 1996 p. 125; Marx, 1962a, p. 129); “surplus value cannot be created by circulation, and, therefore, that in its formation, something must take place in the background, which is not apparent (*unsichtbar*) in the circulation itself” (Marx, 1996, p. 175; Marx, 1962a, p. 179); a capital “also sets in motion, by means of invisible (*unsichtbare*) threads, another army; that of the workers in the domestic industries, who dwell in the large towns and are also scattered over the face of the country” (Marx, 1996, p. 465; Marx, 1962a, pp. 485-486); in the form of appearance (salary), the real relationship (the fact of unpaid labour) becomes invisible (*unsichtbar*) (Marx, 1996, p. 540; Marx, 1962a, p. 562); “Roman slave was held by fetters: the wage labourer is bound to his owner by invisible (*unsichtbare*) threads” (Marx, 1996, p. 573; Marx, 1962a, p. 562); «By unseen (*unsichtbare*) threads it (credit system – my parenthesis), moreover, draws the disposable money, scattered in larger or smaller masses over the surface of society, into the hands of individual or associated capitalists (Marx, 1996, pp. 621-622; Marx, 1962a, p. 655). Thus, according to Marx, a “*sichtbare*” is a characteristic of a sensually perceived object, which represents a certain social relation: linen—social labour; money-gold— commodity exchange. “*Unsichtbar*”, in contrast, characterizes the social form of the object, which cannot be sensually and materially perceived: value, surplus value and surplus labour under capitalism, the subordination of workers to capital, the function of credit, the genesis of domestic labourers, etc. Thus, the division between necessary labour and

surplus labour is invisible, that is, it is impossible to perceive it sensually and materially, since it has acquired a purely social form of existence. The word “*unsichtbar*” will be used to form the term “invisibility” from now on.

In the next sentence, Marx used the word “*verschwimmen*” (German for “blurred,” “fuzzy,” and “indistinct”), from which one could create the term “fusion,” that explains the relation between the surplus labour and necessary labour. He mentioned it in the first volume of *Capital* in the following cases (all following parentheses are mine): in chemical production “distinction between principal substance and accessory vanishes [*verschwimmt*] in the true chemical industries, because there none of the raw material re-appears, in its original composition, in the substance of the product” (Marx, 1996, pp. 191-192; Marx, 1962a, p. 197), and also when describing the capitalist’s point of view, which captures only the appearance when he/she talks about the source of value: “value of the means of production, spindles etc., – (...) is so inseparably mixed up [*verschwimmt*] with their property, as capital, to expand their own value, and to swallow up daily a definite quantity of the unpaid labour of others” (Marx, 1996, pp. 315-316; Marx, 1962a, p. 321). Therefore, the fusion makes it impossible to separate the elements of the production process (in the context of chemistry) and an object from its concrete historical property (in the example of the capitalist). The fusion of surplus labour and necessary labour conceals the essential reality of capitalist relations of production since it is impossible to single out and perceive sensually and materially the moment of exploitation. The fusion in the context of capitalism is a social form, suprasensual characteristic of the interrelationship of the elements, moments of social relations of production.

Thus, on the basis of these two terms, “invisibility” and “fusion,” which Marx uses to explain the capitalist mode of production, a preliminary theoretical definition of social space can be constructed: it is invisible, social existence of surplus labour

and necessary labour, their fusion, or, in other words, social form of division between surplus labour and necessary labour. Under capitalism, the social characteristics of the production process come to the fore (all means of production are privately owned), that is, the division between surplus labour and necessary labour are not objectified, naturalized in sensually perceived forms (as in separated space – the peasant’s field and the seignorial estate). That is why social space is peculiar to capitalism. For this reason, it is also possible to give a clear definition of space as such: it is the form of the division between surplus labour and necessary labour, which is present in any social formation (on this point we agree with Lefebvre).

Further, in the following passage, Marx describes the separated space and what have been defined as social space (the unity of two characteristics: invisibility and fusion) by expression, “form of appearance”.

In the corvée the surplus labour is accurately marked off from the necessary labour. This [*verschieden Erscheinungsform* – a different form of appearance], however, can make no difference with regard to the quantitative relation of surplus labour to necessary labour. Three days' surplus labour in the week remain three days that yield no equivalent to the labourer himself, whether it be called corvée or wage labour. (Marx, 1996, p. 245; Marx, 1962a, p. 251)

The use of the term “form of appearance” (*Erscheinungsform*), completely omitted in an English translation, significantly clarifies Marx’s approach to the separated space and social space. What is the “form of appearance” in the first volume of *Capital*? On the one hand, it is an external, visible, accidental, empirical expression of essential, necessary, internal relations. On the other hand, essential relations are hidden, concealed in the form of appearance (exchange value is hidden in use value; money conceals relations between commodities; the measure of value, labour time, etc., are

hidden in money, etc.). That is, a form of appearance can perform both a function of concealment and manifestation, expression; therefore, Marx points to the path of knowledge, which must be bidirectional: from a form of appearance to the essence and vice versa (Marx, 1962a, pp. 105, 109, 335, 425). At the same time, a form of appearance could also mean the transformation of particular attributes of an object into a universal measure for other objects, as well as the transformation of the social being of an object into another form of being. Thus, iron is a form of appearance of weight in the context of measuring other things on a scale; the use value of a single commodity is a form of appearance of exchange value (gold turns into a universal value equivalent under capitalism), etc. (Marx, 1962a, pp. 70, 71, 104). Accordingly, the separated space and social space are the forms of appearance of labour time, but in different ways. Let's explain it. The separated space depends on territorial, naturalistic, sensually perceived being: the natural basis and specific class relations of the feudal mode of production immediately manifests the division between surplus labour and necessary labour, class antagonism, that is, essence and appearance coincide, and, consequently, the separated space is appearance and labour time is the essence. It is important that the separated space manifests different forms of labour time in different places. The crucial point here is that the natural form of a factor of production (land) in combination with feudal property relations (*corvée*) makes it impossible to fuse the forms of labour time, and therefore manifests their real division through the external, visible, separate-spatial (territorial) opposition. Therefore, under capitalism, fusion as the basis of the form of appearance conceals the essential, necessary relations —exploitation, while under feudalism, appearance coincides with the essence. That is why Marx writes that this is “a different form of appearance” (*verschieden Erscheinungsform*). In other words, social space is conditioned by the relations of production of capitalism, namely, private ownership of all means of production, which

makes the separated space of different forms of labour time impossible. Social space is defined by invisibility, non-territoriality, sociality of division between surplus labour and necessary labour. In other words, the impossibility of territorial division between surplus labour and necessary labour creates a social space. Social space is defined through a form of appearance in the following way: it represents the opposite characteristic of social being, that is, labour time, but at the same moment it conceals the essential, necessary relation, namely, exploitation. That is why social space cannot be theoretically reduced to the territorial, sensually perceived separation of surplus labour and necessary labour, like in the case of feudalism. Herein lays the qualitative characteristic of social space.

In the following passage, Marx refers to the term “space,” but in the context of wage form and differences between capitalism, feudalism, and the slave-owning mode of production. One can find here practically the same set of concepts as in the previous fragment (surplus labour and necessary labour, mode of production, classes). However, the new words —“appears” (*erscheint*) and “conceals” (*verbirgt*)— are used here, but they are semantically included in the concept of a form of appearance.

The wage form thus extinguishes every trace of the division of the working day into necessary labour and surplus labour, into paid and unpaid labour. All labour appears [*erscheint*] as paid labour. In the *corvée*, the labour of the worker for himself, and his compulsory labour for his lord, differ in space and time (*räumlich und zeitlich*) in the clearest possible way (handgreiflich sinnlich – tangibly sensual). In slave labour, even that part of the working day in which the slave is only replacing the value of his own means of existence, in which, therefore, in fact, he works for himself alone, appears (*erscheint*) as labour for his master. All the slave's labour appears (*erscheint*) as unpaid labour. In wage labour, on the contrary, even surplus labour, or unpaid labour, appears (*erscheint*) as paid. There the property relation conceals the labour of the slave for himself; here the money relation

conceals (*verbirgt*) the unrequited labour of the wage labourer. (Marx, 1996, pp. 539-540; Marx, 1962a, p. 562)

In the slave-owning mode of production, as well as in feudalism, exploitation is not concealed, since, in the first case, the slave is wholly owned by the master, and in the second case, the peasant can sensually separate the necessary labour from the surplus labour. The main characteristic of concealment in slavery is the concealment of necessary labour, but not of surplus labour. Thus, this is a non-antagonistic concealment that does not imply the duality of the form of appearance under capitalism; therefore one can designate it as the combined space. The context of social space is complicated by wages, which are apparently paid for the entire working day, but in reality only for the cost of the commodity—labour power, that is, necessary labour, not surplus labour. Social space as a special form of appearance is complemented by wages as a form of appearance in which the money equivalent of the cost of labour power appears as the money equivalent of labour.

It is necessary to give a more detailed elaboration of the conceptualization of social space. This can be done by considering how Marx established his account of the division between surplus labour and necessary labour under capitalism, because in the sequence of usage and interconnection of terms one could find logic for determining social space. Thus, Marx begins with the invisibility of the division between surplus labour and necessary labour. Consequently, social space is defined through suprasensibility, social nature of its mode of existence. In other words, social space is what makes the division between surplus labour and necessary labour invisible. Significantly, Marx considers the capitalistic labourer and his/her labour time, without mentioning where this labour takes place, which differs from the clear, tangible, sensual demarcation of this dimension in feudal, Wallachian peasant's labour. Consequently, social space is not treated as a

container (in the sense of vessel, holder of things inside), “where” of the production process, a mere place of production, but as a characteristic of the division between surplus labour and necessary labour. Social space is not a sensory-tangible characteristic, which is also indicated by its “invisibility”. Furthermore, Marx writes about fusing the surplus labour and necessary labour. In this case, social space is defined as the fusion of forms of labour. Thus, the social space here acquires an empirical form, which is also emphasized by later comparison with the territoriality of the forms of labour, the forms of labour time in *corvée* labour. This particular feature indicates that social space has the sensually-suprasensible, extraterritorial-territorial dialectics. At the same time, the empirical form of social space<sup>3</sup> does not manifest, but conceals the essence of social space, because based on its sociality, fusion is not an empirical process (the seignorial estate plus peasant’s cropland), but the characteristic of relations of production that makes it impossible to distinguish one form of labour from another. By analogy with chemical production, where raw materials create a new substance by fusion, the fusion of forms of labour under capitalism creates a commodity, a sensible-perceived thing in which both forms of labour disappear. It can be assumed that the invisibility as an characteristic of social space is logically complemented by a fusion, in which the sensually-tangible side of social space is already given; social space is not sensibly perceived, but at the same time it has a sensually perceived reality that is different from its social form; space take the social form only in social space. These characteristics distinguish social space from the separated space. In this sense, the supplementing of this terminological sequence of “invisibility”, “fusion” with the term

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<sup>3</sup>“A greater number of labourers working together, at the same time, in one place [Raum] (or, if you will, in the same field of labour), in order to produce the same sort of commodity under the mastership of one capitalist, constitutes, both historically and logically, the starting point of capitalist production” (Marx, 1996, p. 327; Marx, 1962a, p. 341).



“form of appearance” seems to be quite organic, since it emphasizes the ontological and epistemological aspects of social space: the form of the division between surplus labour and necessary labour concealing the essential relationships, quality (social space) manifesting-concealing the quantity (labour time, exploitation), as well as the movement of thinking from the form of appearance (social space) to the essence (labour time, exploitation) and vice versa. From the point of view of surplus labour, Marx is not interested in social space; therefore invisibility-fusion is just a pretext to talk about time, the quantitative relationship between the forms of labour time, about exploitation. However, if on the quantitative side there are no differences between corvée labour and wage labour, they exist on the qualitative side. Social space as a purely capitalist phenomenon is defined through the social form of coexistence of forms of labour time, creating a special form of appearance, which conceals this sociality itself, and, consequently, exploitation.

***The evolution of Marx’s spatial thinking: 1861-1867***

After using a terminological approach to the interpretation of fragments from the first volume of *Capital* and constructing the concept of social space, let us turn to those fragments that precede Marx’s *magnum opus*. In other words, the article traced, so far, the meaning of spatial terms in the already completed, developed form, but now, through an analysis of early works, one could see how this meaning evolved.

Spatial terms appearing along with above-mentioned relevant lexeme in at least 4 fragments from the works of 1861-1865 (for the sake of convenience, all fragments will be denoted as follows: A, B, C, D, E-F (last two parts in *Capital*, respectively). For the first time socio-spatial lexeme appears in *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (August 1861 - March 1862; fragment A), in the following fragment:

Surplus labour is here more distinctly marked off (*erscheint hier handgreiflicher*) from necessary labour than in the wage system, because here necessary and surplus labour are performed on two different plots of land. (...) He [corvée labourer – I.I.] performs surplus labour for the landed proprietor on the seignorial estate. This spatial separation (*räumliche Trennung erscheint*) makes the division of the total labour time into two parts more clearly (*handgreiflicher*) apparent, whereas with the wage labourer one may just as well say that he works, e.g., 2 out of 12 hours for the capitalist as that he works for the capitalist for 1/6 of every hour or of any other aliquot part of the 12 hours. (...) The form of the wage is absent from the whole corvée system, and this makes the relation yet more tangible (*handgreiflicher*). (Marx, 1988, pp. 212-213; Marx, 1976, p. 190)

Marx emphasizes the characteristics of the separated space in this earliest development of a socio-spatial theme: separation — *Trennung* instead of *getrennt* in the fragment E-F analyzed above, but these words are cognate and tangible— *handgreiflicher* instead of *handgreiflich sinnlich* in the fragment E-F, and appearance — *erscheint*, implying that appearance and essence coincide. Note that the features of the capitalist space are devoid of any characteristics, except wage form. The capitalist terms (invisibility, fusion, and duality of the form of appearance) in this fragment can only be assumed as the direct opposites of the tangibility of the separated space, and also the coincidence of essence and appearance. In other words, the only thing that can be logically extracted from this early fragment about the social space is that it is intangible, non-territorial, and essence and appearance do not coincide with it. However, Marx did not provide specific terms for social space. It should also be noted that although the concept of wage form appears relatively early, after a few paragraphs (in the *Capital* - after 300 pages), but it is still logically separated from the socio-spatial theme. This is important because it shows that social space was not focus point of Marx's economic concerns.

Consider the use of above-mentioned lexeme in this fragment. This lexeme could be split in two groups: words which describe a) appearance, and b) the relationships between forms of labour time (invisible, tangible, separate, etc.). Thus, *the lexeme of appearance: erscheint*—surplus labour appears in a tangible form, and reveals the division of the working day into necessary labour and surplus labour; *the lexeme of the relationships between forms of labour time: handgreiflicher*—surplus labour is manifested in tangible form, which makes the division of the working day tangible; absence of wage form makes corvée more tangible; *geschieden*—surplus labour is separated from necessary labour under feudalism; *verschiedenen*—labour is performed on two different plots of land; *räumliche Trennung*—spatial and territorial division makes the division of labour time in two parts tangible.

The same theme unfolds in the same work, but in 1863 (fragment B):

The corvée labour they [corvée labourers – I.I.] perform for the boyars therefore appears [*erscheint*] as unpaid labour, while the labour of the wage labourer appears [*erscheint*] as paid, but it only appears as paid because (...) 3) his surplus labour therefore does not appear [*erscheint*] as separated [*getrennt*] from his necessary labour (separated spatially and temporally [*räumlich und zeitlich getrennt*]). If the worker works 6 hours a day for himself, 6 hours for his capitalist, this is, over 6 days of the week, the same as if he worked 3 days for himself (and during these 3 days used the means of production for himself as his own property) and 3 days for the capitalist, hence worked 3 days for nothing. But since this division does not take place outwardly [*äusserlich*], he appears [*scheint*] to be paid for 6 working days. (Marx, 1994, p. 213; Marx, 1982, p. 2248)

The absence of separation in space and time under capitalism stands out in this fragment as a distinct point, and as one of the factors leading, along with wages, to the appearance of a paid labour. Instead of the “sensually perceived/tangible” (*handgrei-*

*flicher*) form of division of surplus labour and necessary labour under feudalism, the word “external” (*äusserlich*) appears, that can be considered a synonym, a generic term.

Consider two groups of the lexeme in this fragment. *The lexeme of appearance: erscheint* —corvée labour is manifested as unpaid; the wage labour is appeared as paid; *scheint* – the division of the working day does not manifest itself in the tangible form, hence the appearance of paid labour; *the lexeme of the relationships between forms of labour time: “äusserlich”* — outward, external division into forms of labour is absent; *räumlich und zeitlich getrennt* —labour is appeared as paid because the division of surplus labour and necessary labour in space (read: territorially) and time is not manifested; *Scheidung* — division of the working day under capitalism does not manifest itself.

A significant advancement of Marx’s thought in fragment B lies in the recognition of two forms of appearance: appearance coincides with essence in corvée labour (therefore unpaid labour is *manifested*), but does not coincide in wage labour (therefore unpaid labour is *appeared* as paid, or unpaid nature of labour is concealed by the appearance through wages), in other words, there is a contradiction between essence and appearance under capitalism, in the social space *per se*. However, in fragment B two themes —a) separated space, labour time and b) wages — are intertwined.

In a manuscript written between 1863 and 1865 Marx described the separated space as follows (fragment C):

(...) identity of surplus value with unpaid labour of others need not be analysed here, because it still exists in its visible, palpable form [*sichtbaren, handgreiflichen*], since the labour of the direct producer for himself is still separated in space and time [*ist hier dem Raum und der Zeit nach noch geschieden*] from his labour for the landlord, and the latter appears [*erscheint*] directly in the brutal form of enforced labour for a third person (...) (Marx, 1998, p. 778; Marx, 1992, p. 732)

This fragment explains the use of the term “appearance” (*erscheint*) and “tangible” (*handgreiflichen*): surplus value (essence) under feudalism exists in a “visible” (*sichtbaren*) form, and does not separate from the form of appearance, and therefore does not need any analysis. One could find a methodological statement from the same manuscripts that logically connected to fragment C: “all science would be superfluous if the outward appearance (*Erscheinungsform* – a form of appearance) and the essence of things directly coincided” (Marx, 1998, p. 804; Marx, 1964, p. 825).

Consider two groups of the lexeme in this fragment. *The lexeme of appearance: erscheint* —surplus labour is manifested in the brutal form of forced labour; *the lexeme of the relationships between forms of labour time: sichtbaren, handgreiflichen Form* — a tangible form of coincidence between surplus value and unpaid labour; “*geschieden* —the necessary labour is separated from surplus labour; *dem Raum und der Zeit* —the necessary labour is separated from the surplus labour in the space (read: territorially) and time.

Fragment C is associated with fragment A, but with a distinct socio-spatial problematic without a wage theme. The terminology for E-F is here in preparation, especially concerning the characteristics of the separated space.

Finally, in the lecture “Value, Price and Profit” (June 20 and 27, 1865; fragment D), Marx sets out “spatial theme” as follows:

On the basis of the wages system even the unpaid labour seems to be [*erscheint*] paid labour. With the slave, on the contrary, even that part of his labour which is paid appears to be unpaid. (...). This peasant worked, for example, three days for himself on his own field or the field allotted to him, and the three subsequent days he performed compulsory and gratuitous labour on the estate of his lord. Here, then, the paid and unpaid parts of labour were visibly separated, separated in time and space [*sichtbar getrennt, zeitlich und räumlich getrennt*] (...). (Marx, 1985, p. 132; Marx, 1962b, p. 135)

It is noteworthy that in fragment D the question of social space is intertwined with the concepts of wage, unpaid and paid labour.

Consider two groups of the lexeme in this fragment. *The lexeme of appearance: erscheint* —in wage labour, unpaid labour appears as paid labour; any slave labour is manifested as unpaid labour; *the lexeme of the relationships between forms of labour time: “sichtbar (getrennt)”* — the paid part of the labour time is tangibly separated from the unpaid part; *zeitlich und räumlich getrennt* —the paid part of the labour is separated from the unpaid part temporally and spatially (read: territorially).

Let's summarize the evolution of Marx's thought about the social space during 1861-1867: 1) in fragments of B-D, socio-spatial vocabulary appears along with the economic issue of wages. It is curious that these two themes are separated in fragments A and E-F, which indicates that Marx initially thought these topics are different, then began to combine them, but in the end, he came to the conclusion that they have a meaningful autonomy from one another; 2) in fragments A-D, Marx focused on the definition of the separated space; all terminological developments relate in most cases precisely to feudalism; only in fragment B “appearance” is defined purely capitalistically; the terms “invisibility” and “fusion” appear only in *Capital* (fragments of E-F), acting as an opposites for the tangible form (*sichtbaren Form*) and separation (*Scheidung*), which are characteristics of the separated space of feudalism; 3) in fragments B, D and E-F, Marx sets out a socio-spatial theme, starting with capitalism, and then proceed to the definitions of feudalism and the slave-holding modes of production, that is, the exposition follows the logic of determining the main subject of his analysis – capitalism; in other fragments (A, C) the exposition deploys historically, evolutionarily; 4) fragments A, B, C, D, and F deal with spatial and temporal separation under feudalism and the absence thereof under capitalism, thus, the territorial given, a simple space-as-container of forms of labour time contrasted with the sociality of social space under capitalism.

Thus, Marx during 1861-1865 posed the following questions for himself: a) are themes, such as “socio-spatial” and “economic” (wages), interrelated or separated from each other?; b) how to determine the separated space and to articulate the specifics of social space as a characteristic of capitalism?; c) what mode of exposition of social space should be used: historical or logical? The answers to these questions were given in *Capital* (1867).

### **Summing up the construction of the Marxian concept of social space**

In fragments A-F (except for fragment E) Marx characterizes the differences in modes of production in the context of relationships between forms of labour time, which could conceal or manifest antagonistic, exploitative social relations. The Marxian concept of social space was constructed through the terms by which Marx describes the relationships between forms of labour time under capitalism (invisibility, fusion, a form of appearance). In the result a non-territorial definition of social space was constructed, albeit presuming the presence of territorial existence. Marx develops his understanding of the separated space, while emphasizing the specifics of capitalism, over a seven-year period: from the first mention in 1861-1862, to the publication of the first volume of *Capital* in 1867. At the same time, both at the beginning of his view on this subject and also in *Capital*, fragments about the separated space and social space do not mix with economic issues of wage, commodity exchange, capital’s circulation, etc.; this point is crucial because it proves autonomy of Marx’s spatial thinking from his economic analysis. Social space is the invisibility of the difference between forms of labour time, which conceals surplus labour, exploitation. That is, social space is not determined economically, through the difference between forms of labour time, but rather as a special way of its existence, irreducible to the very existence of these forms. The forms of labour time are present in any mode of production, but only under capitalism they are fused,

their difference become invisible, that is, it is impossible to empirically, sensually separate the necessary labour from surplus labour: all labour appears as paid labour, while wage in fact is a value equivalent of the cost of labour power (the necessary labour). On the one hand, invisibility should be understood as non-giveness to sensory perception, because it is not by chance that the capitalist characteristics are opposed to feudal relations in which the division of forms of labour are the sensually-perceived; on the other hand, invisibility means the social existence of the fusion of forms of labour. The way of the existence of social space consists in the functioning of two social relations, which are presented as one: the labourer's relation to the means of production for exercising the necessary labour, obtaining means of subsistence, and the relation to the means of production for exercising surplus labour to the capitalist. The simultaneity and coexistence of these two social relations are a special way of their existence, namely, the social space. Two forms of labour time are inseparable, fused under capitalism. The empirical basis, of course, is the labourers' work in one place under the control of one capitalist to create a particular product, accompanied by the payment of monetary compensation for them – wages. This circumstance creates the appearance that the labourer is working for himself, thus surplus labour is concealed.

## **Conclusion**

Based on an analysis of some of Marx's works in which terminologically we can find his discussions on social space, this study constructs several Marxian spatial concepts. Thus, space is a designation of the form of division of the forms of labour time (necessary and surplus labour; labour for oneself and labour for others). Based on this definition, space is a universal characteristic for any social formation. There are some types of spaces that differ in the form of division of the forms of labour time: the combined



space in slavery, which means the division of the forms of labour time is formal, since the slave is owned by the slave owner and is part of the means of production, any form of labour time belongs to the slave owner; the separated space of feudalism, in which the forms of labour time are sensually-perceived, tangibly separated from each other, since the peasant has the means of production for exercising necessary labour and is forced to serve up *corvée* on the feudal cropland. There is a third type of space, namely, the social space under capitalism. The division of the forms of labour time occurs here invisibly, separated from sensually perceived reality. The result of the functioning of space in antagonistic, class formations is the presence of appearance, that is, an empirical manifestation of essential connections, in which either the latter is clearly expressed or remains concealed. Under feudalism, surplus labour time can be sensually and materially separated from necessary labour time. Under capitalism, the forms of labour time are not separated from each other sensually and materially and therefore these forms are concealed. While in combined space slave is socially naturalized labour instrument, thus the division of forms of labour have only formal meaning to him/her, and in separated space the labour instrument is a nature itself, namely cropland, the division of forms of labour acquires a social character *per se* (social relation of labourer to means of production via wages, and socialized means of production, namely, nature (and everything else except wage labourer) subsumed under private property) only under capitalism. Based on this study, one might show the development of social space from the second half of the nineteenth century. However, this is a task for a future article.

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