Name: Seaky Luo

Section: M1

Critical Reaction 4

Mintz: This chapter basically deals with the use of sugar in food and its existence in people’s diet. The need for sucrose increased dramatically for its sweetness. Besides the British, people from other countries started their craze of sugar after 1900. France benefited from sugar early due to their sugar colonial and sugar monopoly. I think the rise of sugar fosters the development of capitalism as this is usually the result of monopoly. French people also rely heavily on sugar in their diet. Sugar cane are highly efficient in energy provision, which is an important factor for the success of sugar. Although it is not nutritionally good, it has a positive impact on economy. Sugar sellers have invented lots of sweet food to increase the sugar consumption. Hence, the growing need for sugar brought down the price and finally sugar becomes a common commodity. It also changes people’s food habits and choices. People are more willing to eat away from home or prepare some precooked or frozen food for convenience. Although the author thinks the linguistic analogy of lexicon or grammar is less satisfying, I think it reflects the attributes of food well, abundant variety and crucial support. We can hardly eat without meals and we can hardly speak without grammar. They are important but not super indispensable. There is also a trend that food with sugar does not taste sweet. Although sugar can make food more palatable, in my opinion, the hidden sweetness makes people unaware of the intake calories and potentially encourages them to add more sugar, which consequently requires more sugar. Last but not least, Mints thanks sugar for enabling him to learn so much more than what sugar can tell.

Lenin: Lenin introduces the parasitism of the imperialism by using the examples of the UK and Germany. The German rentier state of parasitic is decaying the capitalism. Lenin also refers a lot to Hobson and thinks his words are partially right, but he also points out his negligence in proletariat. The British’s increasing land usage for sport is an obvious example for imperialism as the upper stratum ignores the lower one. Engels unveils the “irreconcilability between opportunism and the working class” due to the England’s monopoly and the colonial policy. Then, Lenin criticizes imperialism for the concentrated capital and calls the reform of imperialism “pious wish”. He also takes Kautsky’s imperfect criticism of imperialism for example. Kautsky takes imperialism as a policy of capitalism without considering the monopoly on the economy, which reveals the most basic issue of capitalism. Lenin’s sharp analysis and supportive evidence on Kautsky’s theory successfully demonstrates his ability to be a leader of communists and proletariat as he knows the flaws of capitalism and cares more about the working class and economic liberty. Last but not least, Lenin lists four “principal manifestations of monopoly capitalism” and reemphasizes its parasitism and corruptibility. He is a devoted socialist as he believes capitalism will finally transit to socialism.