
Labour, Exploitation, and the Tau-Flow of Work

Every Hour of Human Labour is Directed Tau-Flow

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Propositions P-LAB-1 to P-LAB-6

Abstract

Labour economics studies how human work is organised, compensated, and exchanged. The Force of Time (FOT) grounds labour theory in physics: human labour is the directed Tau-flow of a conscious Tau-address — the most concentrated form of intentional Tau-flow available in nature. This paper derives the FOT account of wages, exploitation, automation, meaningful work, and the future of labour from the conservation law $dST = 0$.

§1 — Introduction

Labour is the fundamental input of economic production. Conventional economics identifies it as a factor of production alongside capital and land, subject to supply and demand. The Force of Time framework identifies it more precisely: labour is directed Tau-flow from a conscious Tau-address. This grounding in physics dissolves several persistent paradoxes in labour economics — why labour feels qualitatively different from capital; why meaningful work improves health while alienated work degrades it; why exploitation is not merely unfair but physically self-defeating.

§2 — P-LAB-1: Labour as Directed Tau-Flow

Labour is directed Tau-flow from a conscious Tau-address. It differs from capital (crystallised past Tau-flow) and land (positional Tau-address claim) in being present, living, and self-referential. An hour of human labour is an hour of conscious Tau-flow irreversibly expended — it cannot be returned to the worker.

Employment contracts govern the direction of Tau-flow; they do not transfer the Tau-address. This grounds the intuition that labour is special among factors of production. Capital and land can be owned, sold, and transferred between addresses. Labour cannot be fully alienated: the Tau-flow of a conscious being is inseparable from the being itself.

§3 — P-LAB-2: Wages as Tau-Flow Compensation

A fair wage is one that returns sufficient Tau-flow tokens to the worker to maintain and reproduce their Tau-flow capacity — to cover subsistence, recovery, skill development, and sufficient leisure for self-referential modelling (consciousness). A wage below this threshold is Tau-suppressive: it degrades the worker's future Tau-flow capacity.

This is the FOT grounding of the minimum wage concept: not as a political intervention but as a physical necessity. A wage that does not allow workers to maintain their Tau-flow capacity is self-defeating — it degrades the very resource (conscious human Tau-flow) that the economy depends on.

§4 — P-LAB-3: Exploitation as Forced Tau-Flow Transfer

Exploitation is the systematic transfer of Tau-flow from worker Tau-addresses to employer Tau-addresses at a rate that leaves workers with insufficient Tau-flow tokens to maintain their Tau-flow capacity. It is not a moral category imposed from outside — it is a physical description of Tau-flow dynamics that leads to the degradation of worker addresses over time.

FOT does not require any particular remedy for exploitation — that is a political question. It does establish the physical diagnosis: exploitation is a Tau-flow imbalance that, sustained over time, degrades the Tau-flow capacity of the exploited addresses and ultimately reduces the productive capacity of the entire Tau-economy.

§5 — P-LAB-4: Automation as Tau-Flow Substitution

Machines crystallise past Tau-flow (design, manufacture, energy) into reliable repetitive output. They can substitute for routine directed Tau-flow but cannot substitute for self-referential Tau-modelling (creativity, judgment, care). Automation displaces routine labour; it cannot displace conscious Tau-flow.

This predicts a structural division in automated economies: routine Tau-flow tasks will be automated while self-referential Tau-flow tasks (creative work, teaching, healing, leadership) will become more valuable. The challenge is distributing the Tau-flow tokens generated by automation to those whose routine Tau-flow has been substituted.

§6 — P-LAB-5: Meaningful Work and Tau-Address Alignment

Meaningful work is Tau-flow that is aligned with the worker's own Tau-address structure — their skills, values, and self-referential model. Such work enhances rather than depletes Tau-flow capacity. Alienated labour is Tau-flow directed entirely by external address commands, disconnected from the worker's self-referential model.

The empirical finding that meaningful work improves health, longevity, and cognitive function is a Tau-conservation result: Tau-aligned work maintains and develops the worker's Tau-flow capacity; alienated work depletes it. Organisations that invest in Tau-alignment (autonomy, mastery, purpose) achieve superior Tau-throughput.

§7 — P-LAB-6: The Future of Labour — Universal Tau-Flow Income

If automation substitutes routine Tau-flow and the resulting Tau-throughput is concentrated in few addresses, Tau-conservation requires redistribution. Universal Basic Income (UBI) is a Tau-conservation mechanism: it ensures that all Tau-addresses receive sufficient Tau-flow tokens to maintain Tau-flow capacity regardless of whether their routine Tau-flow has been automated. It is not charity — it is the Tau-dividend of collective mechanised Tau-flow returned to the conscious addresses that ultimately authorised and built the machines.

FOT does not prescribe UBI as policy — that is a political decision. It establishes that any long-term sustainable economy must satisfy the Tau-conservation constraint: total Tau-flow tokens in circulation must be sufficient for all conscious Tau-addresses to maintain Tau-flow capacity.

§8 — The Tau-Flow Economy: Key Identities

Capital = Crystallised Past Tau-Flow

All capital goods are frozen records of past directed Tau-flow. Their value derives from the conscious Tau-flow that created them. Capital does not generate value independently — it amplifies or redirects the Tau-flow of current conscious addresses.

Land = Positional Tau-Address Claim

Land value derives from its Tau-address position in the planetary node network, not from any Tau-flow of the landowner. A landowner who performs no Tau-flow on the land nonetheless holds a positional claim on the Tau-flows of all who occupy or use that address.

Money = Tau-Flow Token

Currency is a transferable claim on future conscious Tau-flow. Inflation is Tau-flow token dilution — more tokens chasing the same Tau-flow. Deflation is Tau-flow token concentration — fewer tokens available relative to Tau-flow capacity, suppressing economic activity.

dST = 0 — The Conservation Law

Total Tau-flow is conserved in any closed system. Exploitation does not destroy Tau-flow — it redirects it. Conservation requires that the redirected Tau-flow eventually return to its source addresses or the system degrades. This is the physical basis for sustainable economics.

§9 — Propositions P-LAB-1 to P-LAB-6

P-LAB-1 | Labour as Directed Tau-Flow

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P-LAB-3 | Exploitation as Forced Tau-Flow Transfer

Exploitation is the systematic transfer of Tau-flow from worker Tau-addresses to employer Tau-addresses at a rate that leaves workers with insufficient Tau-flow tokens to maintain their Tau-flow capacity. It is a physical description of Tau-flow dynamics, not merely a moral category. Sustained exploitation degrades the productive capacity of the entire Tau-economy.

P-LAB-4 | Automation as Tau-Flow Substitution

Machines crystallise past Tau-flow into reliable repetitive output. They can substitute for routine directed Tau-flow but cannot substitute for self-referential Tau-modelling (creativity, judgment, care). Automation displaces routine labour; it cannot displace conscious Tau-flow.

P-LAB-5 | Meaningful Work and Tau-Address Alignment

Meaningful work is Tau-flow aligned with the worker's own Tau-address structure. Such work enhances rather than depletes Tau-flow capacity. Alienated labour is Tau-flow directed entirely by external address commands, disconnected from the worker's self-referential model. Tau-alignment predicts the empirical finding that meaningful work improves health and longevity.

P-LAB-6 | Universal Tau-Flow Income

UBI is a Tau-conservation mechanism: it ensures all Tau-addresses receive sufficient Tau-flow tokens to maintain Tau-flow capacity regardless of automation. It is the Tau-dividend of collective mechanised Tau-flow returned to the conscious addresses that authorised and built the machines.

Figure 1 — Tau-Flow Economics: Labour, Wages, and Conservation

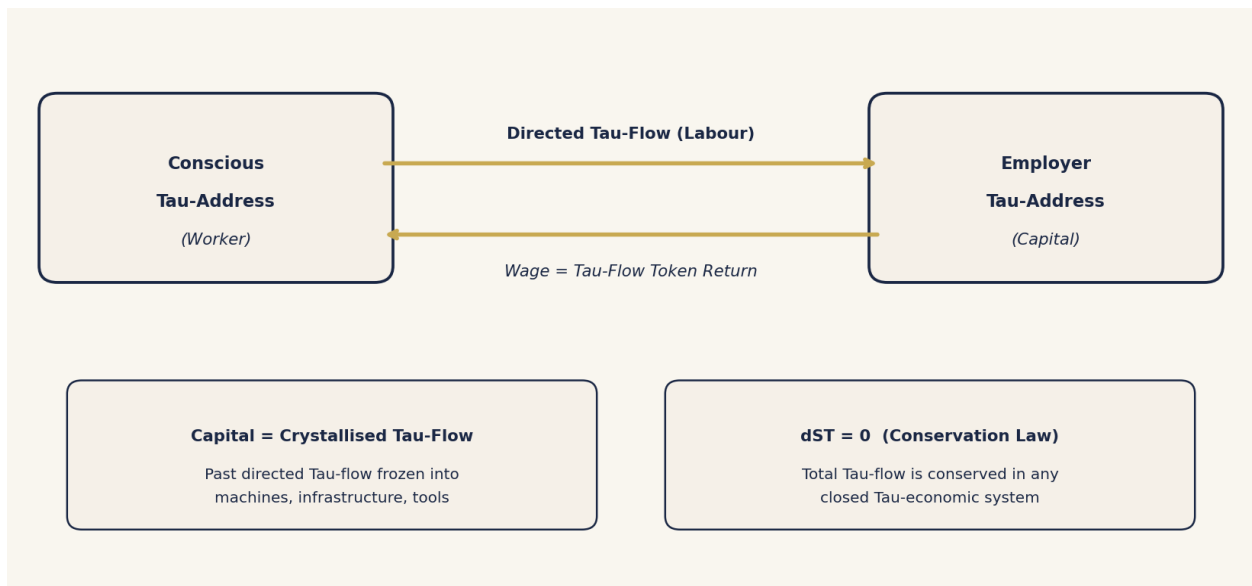


Figure 1. Tau-flow dynamics of labour economics. The worker (conscious Tau-address) directs Tau-flow to the employer; wages return Tau-flow tokens to maintain worker Tau-flow capacity. Capital represents crystallised past Tau-flow. The conservation law $dST = 0$ governs the entire system.