

A TURNING POINT IN MARX'S THEORY ON
PRE-CAPITALIST SOCIETIES
—MARX'S EXCERPT NOTEBOOKS ON MAURER IN MEGA IV/18—

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After the publication of the first volume of *Capital* in September 1867, Marx immediately set to work on Volume 2. This work, however, experienced several interruptions. As a result, he was unable to complete his main work during his lifetime. The reasons for this could be ascribed not only to the bad health that had plagued him continuously or purely scientific aporiae caused by the second and the third volumes of *Capital*, but also to his encounter with new theoretical topics accompanied by the expanding horizon of his knowledge. The newly obtained knowledge prompted him to critically reconsider arguments proposed in the first volume of *Capital*, partly modify them and, moreover, abandon some of them. Marx's voluminous excerpt notebooks, which were planned to comprise the fourth section of *Marx-Engels- Gesamtausgabe* (MEGA), document his thinking processes after 1868, giving us a hint as to why *Capital* remained incomplete.

In my opinion, Marx abandoned his notion on the three forms of precapitalist communal property: the Asiatic, the classic and the Germanic forms, described in the *Grundrisse*, through his study on Maurer (1790-1872) from 1868 onward. After the publication of the first volume of *Capital* (the first edition), in March of 1868, Marx got to know the works of Georg Ludwig von Maurer on mark communes (Markgenossenschaften), which Marx regarded as very important, and drew up detailed excerpts from Maurer twice (in 1868 and in 1876). Maurer directed Marx's attention to the fact that the regular allotment of arable lands had been taking place in the Germanic communes and this custom still survived even in the 19th century (especially in regions around Marx's birthplace of Trier). The allotment of cultivated lands presupposed the power of communes to regulate the work and life of communal members. The Germanic commune was no longer regarded as one consisting of independent individual farmers as was the case in the *Grundrisse*.

In this paper, I consider Marx's excerpt notebooks on Georg Ludwig Maurer as a turning point in his thinking on precapitalist societies. Marx mentioned Maurer for the first time in his letter to Engels of March 4, 1868, indicating Marx's great interest in Maurer as follows:

In the museum I diligently studied the latest works on Deutsche Mark-, Dorf-, etc. Verfassung [Germanic Mark-, Village-, etc. Constitution] by the old Maurer. He demonstrates in detail that the private property of land was later introduced etc. The stupid assumption by Westphalian Junker (Möser etc.) that each of the Teutons separately settled down and later formed villages, Gaus etc. is completely refuted. It is only now interesting that the Russian way of reallocating the land in a certain term (in Germany first annually) was preserved in places in Germany up to the 18th and 19th century. The hypothesis I presented was that the Asian or Indian property forms were everywhere in Europe, and the

most primitive ones are here newly demonstrated although Maurer knows nothing about this¹. (MEW Bd.32, p.42)

Another letter to Engels on March 25, 1868 indicates that his interest in Maurer was increasing:

Maurer's books are extremely important. Just in my region, in Hunsrück, the old Germanic system was preserved up to a few years ago². Even philologists who matched Grimm mistranslated the most simple Latin sentences. For example a well-known phrase from Tacitus: *avra per annos mutant, et superest ager*, which means that they change the fields [*avra*] (by means of *Los* [*lot*], therefore also [*lots*] later in all *Leges Barbarorum* [*Barbarian Laws*]) and a common land (*ager* as *ager publicus* in contrast to *avra*) still remains. This phrase was translated by Grimm: They cultivate new fields every year and, notwithstanding, uncultivated fields still remain. Likewise another phrase "*Colunt discreti ac diversi*" seems to demonstrate that the Teutons had from ancient times been administering individual farming like Westphalian Junker. However, the same phrase is accompanied by the following sentence: "*Vicos locant non in nostrum morem connexis et cohaerentibus aedificiis: suum quisque locum spatio circumdat*", and such primitive Germanic villages in the described form still exist here and there in Denmark. Scandinavia must have naturally been important for German jurisprudence and economy as well as for German mythology. And just by starting from this point, we were able to decipher our past again. Incidentally, even Grimm found in Caesar, that the Teutons at all times settled down as *Geschlechtsgenossenschaften* [kinship communities], not as individuals: "*gentibus cognatibusque qui uno coiereant*"³. (MEW Bd.32, pp. 51f.)

In the above quoted passages from Caesar and Tacitus, Marx regards "ager" in general as well as "spatium" (in pl. *spatia*) as "ager publicus" (communal land)⁴.

Since Marx's reading on Maurer, Caesar and Tacitus had been playing an increasingly important role in his modified notion on Germanic communal property. Maurer led Marx to consider Caesar and Tacitus as witnesses to two completely different stages of the development of the Germanic commune before and after the Common Era that were classified as the more archaic communities (*les communautés plus archaïques*) and the agrarian commune (*la commune agricole*), respectively.

¹ This hypothesis was abandoned by the latest Marx himself, namely in his drafts for the letter to Zasulich, where both the primitive Germanic property form and the Asian or Indian type belong to the same primitive social formation while the former type was more primitive than the latter and, moreover, the Asian form constituted the latest phase of archaic communal property.

² This sentence derives from the following passage by Maurer: "Auf dem Hunsrück pflegen aber heute noch die Acker je nach der Bewirtschaftungsweise der verschiedenen Ortschaften auf 3, 4, 9, 12, 14 oder 18 Jahre verlost zu werden [On Hunsrück, however, there is still today a convention that the fields are allotted by drawing lots to 3, 4, 9, 12, 14 or 18 years according to the cultivation method of the different areas]." (Maurer 1854, p.6)

³ "unocoiereant" cannot be understood and must have falsely been quoted by Marx himself, which, however, remains unnoticed by the editors of MEW. The original Caesar says *una coierunt* [have united].

⁴ Marx's notion of *ager* as *ager publicus* is ascribed to the following passage by Maurer: "*avra per annos mutant, et superest ager*, which must signify that they annually change the fields and communal land still remains, namely a common undistributed Mark remains, for by *ager*, Tacitus evidently understood it as an *ager publicus* in the Roman sense of the word" (Maurer 1854, p.6).

The stage described by Caesar in the history of Germanic communes is characterized by the following features: In Caesar's times old Germanic communes were primarily organized as hunting and military ones. Among the Sueben one thousand armed men were annually conscripted from each village (pagus). They waged war and plundered regions outside their country while the members remaining at home, who cultivated the land, and engaged in hunting and stock farming, were responsible for providing for the soldiers and their families. The following year, another thousand men who had in the previous year engaged in cultivation and so forth went to the battlefield while the soldiers came home and provided for the present soldiers and their families. "The tribal leaders (magistratus) and the tribal directors (principes) annually allot a piece of land for one year to tribes (gentes) and kindreds (cognatus). The following year, they forced them to leave their allotted land (Caesar 22-3)." A unit of allotment had not yet been an individual family as was the case in Tacitus' times but a blood relative. Household industries like spinning and weaving that characterize Asian communities had not yet been established. No individual or private property of land existed yet.

Between Caesar and Tacitus there is a time lag of 150 years. During this period the old Germanic commune had experienced a radical transformation. The stage described by Tacitus is characterized by the transition from a warriors' commune to an agrarian one. "The Teutons occupied arable lands at first as a whole in proportion to the number of cultivators, and then distributed them among them in proportion to their status (Tacitus 26)." The common property of land by a commune that Tacitus called vicus was still preserved but independent households of individual families were increasingly expanded⁵, although the arable fields in a commune were annually re-allotted to its members. Even in Tacitus' times no household industry had taken place yet. The stage described by Tacitus corresponds to the agrarian commune (la commune agricole) outlined in the drafts of the letter to Zasulich.

As Marx published in 1867 the first volume of *Capital* he had not yet recognized the importance of Maurer's works. Maurer was mentioned first in the second edition of *Capital* of 1873 (MEGA II/6, p.102). Increasingly intensive engagement with Maurer had been leading Marx to change the view on Germanic communal property that he had entertained in the section on the forms that preceded the capitalist production in the *Grundrisse* (1857/58) where the Germanic form of primitive communal property was characterized by the following two features: Firstly, an individual household appeared as an independent unity. Secondly, the commune appeared as no more than an appendix or a supplement to independent households.

The ager publicus appears rather only as a supplement to the individual property among the Teutons. The property of individuals does not appear as mediated by the commune but the existence of the commune and its property appears as mediated, namely as a mutual relation of independent subjects. The economic whole is actually contained in each individual household that constitutes an independent center of production by itself (manufacturing being purely the side job of a female household). On the one hand, the commune itself is presupposed as a community of language, blood etc. for an individual proprietor but, on the other, the commune as existence exists only in the real meeting of individual proprietors for a communal purpose. (MEGA II/1.2, pp.388f.)

⁵ "suum quisque locum spatio circumdat [each surrounds his place with free space] (Tacitus 16)." In contrast to Tacitus, Caesar reports that the whole tribe (not an individual household) surrounded their territory with a large empty space (Caesar 4-1).

In the *Grundrisse*, Marx had not yet recognized the annual re-allotment of arable lands to members of the commune as described by Caesar and Tacitus. Marx's engagement with Maurer led Marx to pay attention not only to the fact of land allotment, but also to the multilayer structure of a primitive Germanic community. Just after the above quoted correspondence with Engels in March 1868, Marx started to carefully read Maurer's *Einleitung* and drafted voluminous excerpts from it that are contained in MEGA IV/18⁶. He owed the overcoming of his former perspective on historical trajectories of precapitalist societies mainly to Maurer (as well as Caesar and Tacitus).

According to the drafts for the letter to Zasulich, Marx classifies three successive phases in the development of the Germanic commune: (1) The first form corresponds to the Germanic commune before the coming into existence of the agrarian commune as described by Caesar. He regards it as a more archaic type (un type plus archaïque) of the Germanic commune, which is characterized by the fact that the fields are annually allotted to groups of the same commune (called gentes and cognatus), but have not yet been allotted to any individual households and cultivation was also collectively conducted by groups⁷. (2) The second form is called the agrarian commune (la commune agricole), which is characterized by the fact that independent management by individual households in the same commune has already been introduced, while the annual re-allotment of fields through the commune still continues and private property by individual farmers has not yet been established as described by Tacitus. (3) The third form is called the new commune (la nouvelle commune), which originates in the agrarian commune, and is characterized by the fact that the fields already belong to individual farmers as their private property while forests, pastures, uncultivated lands etc. still remain communal property⁸. This form corresponds to the Germanic form of primitive property (MEGA II/I, p.399) or the German property (ibid., p.383) described in the *Grundrisse*. By this we can recognize that Marx's perspective on the Germanic commune in the *Grundrisse* was confined to the latest (third) stage of its development and did not cover earlier stages of the Germanic commune that Marx in the drafts for the Letter to Zasulich introduced to his conception of the history of precapitalist societies.

Firstly, it is interesting that, in the third draft for the letter to Zasulich, Marx considers the transition from the first form to the second one as a natural development⁹. In contrast, the disappearance of the agrarian commune and its transition to the new commune takes place as a result of uninterrupted wars and the migration. Therefore, the second transition could not be

⁶ In 1868, Marx drafted the following two excerpts from Maurer's *Einleitung*: (1) Exzerptheft IISG (B112) (Mai-December 1869), pp.116-140, pp.144-162. (2) Exzerptheft IISG B128 (B112) (April- November 1868), pp.5-21.

⁷ "A l'époque de Jules César il y avait déjà une répartition annuelle de la terre labourable entre des groupes, les gentes et les tribus, mais pas encore entre les familles individuelles d'une commune; probablement la culture se fit aussi par groupe, en commun"(MEGA I/25, p.236).

⁸ "Mais ce qu'il y a de plus important, nous trouvons l'empreinte de cette «commune agricole» si bien tracée sur la nouvelle commune qui en sortit, que Maurer, en déchiffrant celle-ci, put reconstruire celle-là. La nouvelle commune, où la terre labourable appartient en propriété privée aux cultivateurs, en même temps que forêt, pâtures, terres vagues etc. restent encore propriété commune, fut introduite par les Germains dans tous les pays conquis. Grâce aux caractères empruntés à son prototype, elle devenait pendant tout le moyen âge le seul foyer de liberté et de vie populaires"(MEGA I/25, p.236).

⁹ "Sur le sol german même cette communauté au type plus archaïque s'est transformée par un développement naturel en commune agricole, tel que l'a décrite Tacite." (MEGA I/25, p.236).

regarded as an inevitable process governed by natural laws. “Depuis son temps nous la (=la commune agricole) perdons de vue. Elle p rit obscur ment au milieu des guerres et migrations incessantes ; elle mourut peut- tre de mort violente [Since then we have lost sight of the agrarian commune. It obscurely perishes in the midst of incessant wars and migrations. It probably died from violent death]” (MEGA I/25, p.236). He contends that, without the encroachment of alien tribes and incessant wars, the agrarian commune could have survived through the entire medieval age. Here, we can assume that Marx recognizes two types of historical development of various social formations: (1) The first type is based on a natural, spontaneous development inherent in each social formation. (2) The second type is caused by the violence inflicted upon it by extraneous forces like wars or the invasion of alien ethnic groups. The second transition is also that from communal property to private property.

Comme derni re phase de la formation primitive de la soci t  la commune agricole est en m me temps phase de transition   la formation secondaire, donc transition de la soci t , fond e sur la propri t  commune,   la soci t , fond e sur la propri t  priv e. La formation secondaire, bien entendu, embrasse la s rie des soci t s reposant sur l’esclavage et le servage. [The agrarian commune as the last phase of primitive formation of society is at the same time a phase of transition to the secondary formation; therefore, transition from a society based on communal property to a society based on private property. Naturally, the secondary formation comprehends a series of societies founded on slavery and serfdom.] (Troisi me projet de la lettre   Zassoulitch. MEGA I/25, pp.237f.)

According to the latest Marx, the introduction and the establishment of private property is no longer an historical necessity based on a spontaneous development inherent to a society but the result of unnatural changes inflicted by alien powers, which remind us of the British rule in India and European colonialism.

Secondly, it is important that Marx derives the freedom in the West from the agrarian commune (before the introduction of private property): “Gr ce aux caract res emprunt s   son prototype, elle (= la nouvelle commune) devenait pendant tout le moyen  ge le seul foyer de libert  et de vie populaires [Thanks to the characteristics borrowed from its prototype, the new commune became during the entire medieval age the sole hearth of freedom and popular life]” (MEGA I/25, p.236). In his latest opinion, the exceptionally immense vitality of an agrarian commune consists of a combination or dualism of communal land property (a collective element) and individual management by individual households accompanied by private appropriation of land products. Marx distinguishes the agrarian commune from the more archaic communes through the following features:

(1) “La «commune agricole» fut le premier groupement social d’hommes libres, non resserr  par les liens du sang [The agrarian commune was the first social grouping of free men not restricted by blood ties].”

(2) “Dans la commune agricole la maison et son compl ment, la cour, appartiennent en particulier au cultivateur. La maison commune et l’habitation collective  taient au contraire une base  conomique des communaut s plus primitives, et cela d j  longtemps avant l’introduction de la vie pastorale ou agricole [In the agrarian commune, the house and a complement to it, the court, belong to the cultivator. In contrast, the common house and the collective dwelling were an economic base of more primitive communities, and this had already been established long

before the introduction of the pastoral or agrarian life].”

(3) “La terre labourable, propriété inaliénable et commune, se divise périodiquement entre les membres de la commune agricole, de sorte que chacun exploite à son propre compte les champs assignés à lui et s’en approprie les fruits en particulier. Dans les communautés plus primitives le travail se fait en commun et le produit commun, sauf la quote-part réservée pour la reproduction, se répartit à fur et mesure des besoins de la consommation. On comprend que le dualisme inhérent à la constitution de la commune agricole puisse la douer d’une vie vigoureuse [The arable land as inalienable and common property is periodically divided among the members of the agrarian commune so that each member on his own account uses the fields allotted to him and individually possesses the products from them. In the more primitive communities, the labor is performed in common and the common product, apart from parts reserved for reproduction, is distributed according to consumption. We understand that the dualism inherent to the constitution of the agrarian commune could provide it with a vigorous life].” (Troisième projet de la lettre à Zassoulitch. MEGA I/25, pp.237f.).

Together with a modified view on the Germanic commune, Marx changed his opinion on the Asian one. This is no longer regarded as the oldest form of primitive commune that every civilization had once undergone at the outset but the latest, newest form of archaic social formation that can be qualified to persistently survive. This opinion implies a self-criticism of his former opinion on Asian, especially Indian, communal property as the oldest form of it¹⁰.

Marx no longer emphasizes the civilizing role of the British rule over India as is the case in the 1850s in a series of articles on India contributing to the *New York Tribune*¹¹. In contrast to the 1850s, the latest Marx expresses the British colonialist rule over India as an act of vandalism that reminds us of the Vandals and the other nomadic tribes who violently interrupted a natural spontaneous development of the Germanic primitive communes and destroyed the agrarian commune. British capitalism no longer signifies the highest stage of an inevitable inherent development of economic forces and relations.

As a result, he recognizes the Russian rural commune as a possible starting point for overcoming the capitalist system.

This theoretical change implies criticism of Engels of 1875 because he still, even in 1875, sticks to a thesis on the revolutionary role of the bourgeoisie that he shared with Marx when they wrote the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848. In an article of 1875 titled *Literature in Exile*, he criticized Tkatschhoff as follows:

To the new organization of a society through the abolition of all class discrimination contributes not only a proletariat who performs this transformation, but also a bourgeoisie in whose hands social production forces have developed to such a degree that they make

¹⁰ “Ein genaueres Studium der asiatischen, speciell der indischen Gemeineigenthumsformen, würde nachweisen, wie aus den verschiedenen Formen des naturwüchsigen Gemeineigenthums sich verschiedene Formen seiner Auflösung ergeben. So lassen sichz.B. die verschiedenen Originaltypen von römischem und germanischem Privateigenthum aus verschiedenen Formen von indischem Gemeineigenthum ableiten [A more exact study on the Asian, especially Indian forms of communal property would demonstrate how from various forms of spontaneous communal property arise various forms of their dissolution. Thus, we can derive for example different original types of the Roman and Germanic private property from different forms of the Indian communal property]” (*Zur Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie. Erstes Heft*. MEGA II/2, p.113).

¹¹ See Tairako (2003).

the final abolition of class discrimination possible. Even among the savages and the half-savages there is no class discrimination, and each nation has undergone such a phase. This should not be reconstructed just because, together with the development of social production forces, class discrimination inevitably arises from it. The production forces have reached this developmental level first in the hands of the bourgeoisie. Therefore, the bourgeoisie is also from this aspect a necessary precondition of socialist revolution like the proletariat itself. If a man can contend that this revolution can be more easily achieved in a country because this country has not only no proletariat but also no bourgeoisie, he, thereby, demonstrates that he must learn the ABC of socialism. (Engels, Flüchtlingsliteratur V, MEGA I/24, pp.414f.)

My paper basically corresponds to the conclusions reached by Professor Kevin Anderson in his *Marx at the Margins* and my arguments on Marx and Maurer complement and enlarge them.

In *Marx at the Margins*, the author demonstrates, by analyzing the voluminous works, manuscripts, newspaper articles and excerpt notebooks by Marx, that Marx had constantly changed his opinion on the non-capitalist and precapitalist societies from the *German Ideology* and the *Communist Manifesto* of the 1840s to the drafts for the letter to Zasulich and the preface to the Russian edition of the *Communist Manifesto* of the latest life stage. Marx's opinion on non-capitalist and pre-capitalist societies had changed from the model of uni-linear development according to which historical processes of the transformation of modern Western Europe were generalized as universally valid to that of multi-linear development according to which historical processes different from those of Western Europe were positively recognized.

Marx parted with his older view on British colonialism in which he recognized the positive role played by British colonialism in modernizing the colonized countries while increasingly insisting upon the destruction and violence inflicted on non-capitalist societies by Western colonialism. Together with this change, his view on rural communities still existant in most non-Western societies dramatically changed. By the Tribune essays on India of 1853, he had regarded rural communities negatively as causing backward stagnancy and 'oriental despotism' in non-Western societies while, in the late 1870s, he came to recognize them as bases for resistance to the capitalist encroachment and even as the vanguard for universally overcoming the capitalist world system.

As mentioned above, in a series of Tribune essays on India of 1853 Marx contended that the British rule over India might have played a positive role in so far as it modernized India, however violent it might have been. However, Marx began to revise such a Eurocentric notion when he wrote in 1857 a series of Tribune essays on India and China concerning the Sepoy Mutiny and the Taiping Rebellion. He openly supported in the Tribune the cause of the Chinese people against the British encroachment. In the same year, Marx began to write the *Grundrisse*, his first attempt to draft a system of the critique of political economy and at the same time to elaborate a multilinear idea on historical development.

Throughout the 1860s, Marx was involved in issues on ethnicity, race and colonialism. Marx was led to the conviction that the movements of the working class in the developed countries were unable to gain traction in their struggle against capitalism as long as they discriminated against ethnic minorities living in their homeland such as Irish migrants and Afro-Americans. This conviction was increasingly intensified through Marx's commitment to

the Slaves Liberation Movement during the Civil War, the support for the Polish Revolt of 1863 and the Irish Independence Movement in the latter half of the 1860s. In 1864, an international network of the working class to support the Union during the Civil War in the United States as well as the Polish Revolt of 1863 was formed. This finally led to the establishment of the International Workingmen's Association. This fact illustrates how deeply the issues about class, ethnicity and race are intertwined in the historical context as well as in the theoretical development by Marx.

In the French Edition, "*Le Capital*" (1872-75), Marx openly contended that the historical transition from the feudal mode of production to the capitalist one, described in the section on 'Primitive Accumulation,' could apply to no other regions than the West-European countries.

But the basis of this entire development is the expropriation of the cultivators. So far, it has been carried out in a radical manner only in England; therefore, this country will necessarily play the leading role in our sketch. But all the countries of Western Europe are going through the same development. (Karl Marx, *Le Capital*, Paris 1872-1875. MEGA II/7, p.634)

Through the confinement of the validity of *Capital* to Western Europe, Marx was confronted with a new task to conceptualize trajectories of historical development in the non-European societies and corresponding possibilities to overcome capitalism.

What interests Marx in his excerpt notebooks is to confirm that communal social forms in the non-European societies had undergone historical development and, as a result, could play a positive role as a stronghold of resistance against Western colonialism. With this perspective Marx was able to eventually overcome his former Eurocentric ideas such as those on the progressiveness of European colonialism and the civilizing effect of capitalism.

Marx's comprehensive studies on Russian rural communities during the 1870s were embodied in his two latest works: the Drafts for the letter to Zasulich (1881) and the Preface to the Russian Edition of the *Communist Manifesto* (1882), in which he expressed his final view that Russian rural communities could become a starting point for the socialist transformation in Russia. "Since Russian rural communes were contemporaneous with industrial capitalism in the West, a village-based revolution in Russia might be able to draw upon the resources of Western modernity while avoiding the pain of capitalist development" (Anderson 2010, p.243).

However, Marx did not forget to insist upon the necessity for the Russian rural communes to link up with the revolutionary movement of the working class as well as technologies of the West-European societies as prerequisite conditions for the success of the village-based revolution in Russia. Marx argued that "a communist development was a real possibility in non-capitalist Russia, if a Russian revolution could link up with its counterpart based on the Western labor movement" (ibid. p.244).

The author of *Marx at the Margins* repeatedly insists upon the intersectionality of class, ethnicity, race and nationalism in the development of Marx's thought and theory in terms of the white labor movements in the United States that were destined to fail without demanding the abolition of slavery and racial discrimination against colored laborers as well as the English workers who were also destined to fail without supporting the cause of the Irish people for an independent Ireland. Throughout his intellectual life, Marx had been shifting his views towards giving more weight to nationalist movements of subordinate nations like Poland, Ireland and India etc. than the interests of the workers' movements in developed countries. This change was

accompanied by another shift of his view on contemporary world-history from a uni-linear to multi-linear development.

An important contribution of *Marx at the Margins* is that it introduced to the study on Marx his excerpt notebooks that are now appearing in the fourth section of MEGA. In order to exactly comprehend the interrelationship of class, ethnicity, race and gender in Marx, it is necessary to carefully analyze these excerpt notebooks. However, studies on Marx involving them have not yet sufficiently been carried out because most of the excerpt notebooks still remain unpublished.

Together with the excerpt from Maurer, the one from Carl Fraas is also contained in MEGA IV/18. The excerpt from Fraas shows a new stage in the development of Marx's theory on ecology. To measure the depth of Marx's criticism of capitalism, it is necessary to consider that the late Marx had been combining an insight into the history of non-capitalist and pre-capitalist societies with deep insight into ecology. The late Marx focused on devastating effects (not civilizing ones) caused by capitalism from the following two points of view: (1) destruction and violence that West European capitalism inflicted on marginal regions of the world (not only capitalist colonies), and (2) the rift in the metabolism between man and nature, the destruction of the ecological system and climate changes causing desertification. In 1866, Marx read *Chemie und ihre Anwendung auf Physiologie* (seventh edition) by Liebig (Liebig 1862) while making a draft for a theory on rent. Liebig persuaded Marx to perceive that capitalist agriculture exhausted land and disturbed the metabolism between man and nature. In the first edition of *Capital* (1867), Marx inserted a brief remark on big industry and agriculture at the end of the fourth chapter "Machinery and Big Industry" where he expressed the highest respect for Liebig because "his historical sketches on the history of agriculture contain more insight than the works by all modern political economists" (MEGA II/5, p.410). But he did not stop at Liebig. In January of 1868, Marx encountered the works by a Munich agronomist, Carl Fraas (see the letter of Marx to Engels from January 3, 1868), who so profoundly impressed Marx that he drafted out detailed excerpts from Fraas. He developed a more serious idea concerning the disturbance in the metabolism from Fraas than Liebig. Fraas illustrated in detail how the lumbering of forests for agriculture had caused drying up and warming of the atmosphere that had wasted land and, as a result, ruined many types of civilization. Marx owed it to Fraas that he learned that the issues on the "conscious control" over the metabolism between man and nature are closely related to the problem on climate changes that have a more long-term perspective than the history of capitalism. In opposition to Liebig, who tried to cope with the exhaustion of land by applying appropriate chemical fertilizer, Fraas proposed a technology to make the best use of the durable forces of nature such as alluvial rivers. He named it *Kraftkultur* (force culture). As an alternative to exploitive agriculture, Marx now had in mind agriculture grounded in the restorative forces inherent in the metabolism itself.

Thus, Marx was able to finally overcome a view on the civilizing effects of capital from the following two theoretical aspects that he gained in the later phases of his life: (1) the recognition of the positive roles of non-capitalist and precapitalist societies to transcend capitalism, and (2) the discovery of the resilient forces of nature in the metabolism as resisting the exhaustion of land caused by capitalist agriculture.

However, Marx's excerpts from Maurer and Fraas have not yet been discussed because they belong to an unpublished volume of MEGA IV/18. The speaker of this paper is now

working on the edition of this volume.

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