

PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE IN MARX

TOMONAGA TAIRAKO

Contents:

- I. Practical Materialism and the Materialistic View on History
- II. Marx's Dialectic Method as the Epistemology of Reversal
- III. The Theory of Alienation and the Dialectics of History

I. *Practical Materialism and the Materialistic View on History*

We first focus on Marx's criticism of the philosophers who represent the theoretical views of Enlightenment. We can see Marx's genius even in the following criticism of paragraph 277 of the *Rechtsphilosophie* composed by Hegel in the manuscript *Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie* by Marx:

“Es kömmt dieser Unsinn dadurch herein, dass Hegel die Staatsgeschäfte und Wirksamkeiten abstrakt für sich ... fasst; aber er vergisst, dass ... die Staatsgeschäfte und Wirksamkeiten menschliche Funktionen sind; ... und dass die Staatsgeschäfte etc. nichts als Daseins- und Wirkungsweisen der sozialen Qualitäten des Menschen sind” (Marx 1844, p.22). [This nonsense is created by Hegel, when he isolates affairs and effects of the state as the abstract independent factors; but he forgets that these factors equal the human functions and, therefore, represent the modes of existence and the action of social qualities of the human kind.]

The arguments quoted above seem to represent a self-evident lesson that the social scientists should treat social phenomena as the result of human functions. However, what Marx emphasizes is not to describe how social scientists can scientifically explain the social reality as the object of cognition, but instead to recognize why and how philosophers and social scientists before Marx, whether they were idealistic or materialistic, have failed to understand human individuals in the objective world as active subjects. His criticism is not related to the object of cognition but to the subject of cognition. If we replace “die Staatsgeschäfte” in the quotation above by “the cognitive operation of philosophers and scientists,” the principles of philosophy suggested by Marx in his *Thesen über Feuerbach* loom. Marx opposes the existing “fundamental problem of philosophy”: which is more fundamental in the world, the spiritual or the material? This is because that fundamental problem of philosophy is built upon the assumption constructed by the philosophers before Marx: the world is reduced to the “object of cognition.” Marx comments that these philosophers are at an illusive privileged position where they can observe the entire world from outside. Marx insists that a man can never command a total view of the world as long as he lives at a certain position in the objective world; the man has only a socially and historically limited perspective.

Therefore, the most fundamental questions of philosophy by Marx can be summarized as follows: firstly, where does a philosopher place himself in the real world when he thinks and speaks?; secondly, what does his philosophical study as a special mode of life in the life-world (die Lebenswelt) mean to himself? We can term the first question “quaestio loci,” the second “quaestio vitae modi.”

Marx’s standpoint on the first question is that the cognitive subject and the cognized object always coexist in the same objective world. In his first *These über Feuerbach*, Marx expresses his answer to the first question as “den Gegenstand subjectiv zu fassen” (Marx 1845, p.5) (grasping the object subjectively). However, we can do so only after placing the cognitive subject into the objective world.

As for his stance regarding the second question, Marx insists that philosophical thinking is one of the essential performances in the ordinary life-process of the human being as an active-subjective existence (ein tätig-subjektives Wesen). The difference in the philosophers is, however, that they see this essential performance as a unique activity separated from other practical performances. They stress the autonomy of such abstract cognitive abilities as reason (Verstand), intelligence (Vernunft) and spirit (Geist). The philosophers stick with the idea that they can achieve the privileged position where they view the whole world totally, by discriminating the intellectual activities associated with these abstract abilities from the ordinary world; nevertheless, there is no such place. They imagine that they receive the ability to understand and supply the “objective truth”, which can supposedly be valid any time and anywhere, as the reward of reaching the position. The unique ideas and viewpoints of Marx initiate an absolutely new perspective, namely the overcoming of any philosophy as philosophy, to the European philosophy in ensuing centuries.

We must clarify the differences in Marx’s meaning and uses of the terms “abstract”, “concrete” and “practical”. He applies “abstract” to any theories and their applications in any intellectual fields, whereas the other philosophers tend to differentiate “abstract” and “concrete” like abstract and concrete-practical theory. The notion of “concrete” by Marx only refers to the praxis, in contrast to the theory, of individuals living in the real world. In the usual use of the word, for example, the application of a theory is said to be practical. However, as long as the matter applied is within a specific theoretical field, the process is still considered to be “abstract” by Marx. Because, as long as the real world as reduced to the object of cognition is separated from the cognitive subject, the cognitive activity is also isolated from the practical life of individuals and converted into an autonomous cognitive subject. He calls what this subject does theoretically as well as practically “Anschauung” or “Theorie” which means contemplation in the original Greek sense.

We have to keep in mind that Marx’s criticism of philosophy attacks both idealism and materialism. As we know, idealism and materialism have conflicted with each other, and many traditional philosophers have argued their philosophy over the differences of the two types. However, all sorts of materialism which existed before Marx, including Feuerbach, are constructed in the abstract contemplative way. Philosophical materialism, although it radically disputes idealism in the philosophical arena, still remains abstract and, therefore, idealistic in the sense of contemplation. With the awareness of differences in the view of Marx and the other philosophers, we can correctly understand his statement:

“der *abstracte Materialism* ist der *abstrakte Spiritualismus* der Materie” (ibid., p.98).
[“The *abstract materialism* is the *abstract spiritualism* of the material.”]

We have fully discussed Marx's criticism of the theoretical stance of Enlightenment. Now, we turn to another important criticism pointed at the political-practical view of Enlightenment. Marx expresses his criticism in the third thesis:

“Die materialistische Lehre von der Veränderung der Umstände und der Erziehung vergisst, dass ... der Erzieher selbst erzogen werden muss. Sie muss daher die Gesellschaft in zwei Teile — von denen der eine über ihr erhaben ist — sondieren” (Marx 1845, p.5f.). [“The materialist doctrine concerning the changing of circumstances and education forgets that ... the educator himself must be educated. This doctrine must, therefore, divide society into two parts, one of which is superior to society.”]

The important message from Marx is that we have to be aware that the educators also still have to be educated; moreover, the educators are also simultaneously the receiver of education. In Marx's point of view, the political theory of Enlightenment before Marx is unknowingly based on the discrimination of the political leaders from the ordinary people. Therefore, their manners correspond to what the philosophy of Enlightenment has done in the theoretical construction: the isolation of the subject from the object. Political leaders regard the common people as the objects to be educated and guided by the former. In the third thesis Marx criticizes all types of political views that presuppose this discrimination and characterizes it as “anschaulich” (contemplative).

When we combine both the theoretical and practical aspects of Marx's criticism, we can fully understand the eleventh *These über Feuerbach*:

“Die Philosophen haben die Welt nur verschieden *interpretiert*, es kömmt darauf an, sie zu *verändern*” (ibid., p.7). [“The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point is to *change* it.”]

The eleventh thesis by Marx is often misread as a radical criticism of all speculative philosophies and an encouragement to undertake political actions in general. This misinterpretation comes from the assumption that the philosophers have done nothing practically while the presumption of Marx appreciates any sort of political action which aims to change the world. In these pictures the unique idea of the eleventh thesis is completely deleted. However, we have to interpret the eleventh thesis in combination with the foregoing theses, in particular with the first and the third. Then, we can understand that by “philosophers” Marx understands not only contemplative theorists but also political activists. According to Marx, even a radically critical political theory, as long as it presupposes the discrimination between the political elite and the passive mass, is denounced as mere “theoretical” stance, which is only engaged in “interpreting the world in a different way” to theoretical philosophy. The notion of “Anschauung” or “Theorie”, therefore, implies not only the purely theoretical activity but also a certain style of political action.

Considering the specific use of the term “Theorie”, we can also notice the specific meaning of “Praxis” in Marx's terminology. In contrast to “theory”, which is characterized by the privileged dominance of the cognitive subject over the cognized object or of the political elite over the ordinary people, “Praxis” represents the whole project (in both theory and praxis) to overcome such privilege and to restore the active subjectivity to the ordinary people. This is just what Marx means when he expresses his philosophical and political view in the first thesis with the single phrase: to grasp the object as the active subject, i.e. the praxis (ibid., p.5). In his *Deutsche Ideologie*, Marx calls this project communism in political terms and practical materialism (praktischer Materialismus) in philosophical terms. This philosophy opens a

TABLE 1. KEY WORDS TO THE PRACTICAL MATERIALISM

Anschauung Contemplative Theorie Abstract Idealism Enlightenment	Theoretical "Anschauung"		Political "Anschauung"	
	Separation between the cognitive subject and the cognitive object		Separation between the political leaders and the passive mass	
Praxis Practical Materialism Concrete	Philosophical Idealism	Philosophical Materialism	Political Idealism	Political Materialism
	Interrelation between the subject and the object in both theoretical and practical concerns. To grasp the object as an active subject, as praxis.			

totally new horizon of knowledge and praxis because the subject is never separated from the object in both theoretical and practical concerns.

Marx's materialistic view on history (die materialistische Geschichtsauffassung) cannot be well understood without the accomplished knowledge of practical materialism. The briefest expression of that view is as follows:

"Nicht das Bewusstsein bestimmt das Leben, sondern das Leben bestimmt das Bewusstsein" (Marx 1845-1846, p.27). ["Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life."]

The consciousness taken up in the statement not only refers to the consciousness of the individuals categorized as the object of research, but also to that of the researcher himself at the same time. This point should be very clear because there is no fixed separation between subject and object in practical materialism. The application of the method of the materialistic view on history requires social scientists to cope with the "two fundamental questions of philosophy" discussed above. Marx urges them to reflect on their cognitive process as a special aspect of praxis more or less determined by the necessities of life.

As we have closely examined the core of Marx's philosophy, we have seen that many philosophers and social scientists both against and for Marx have misunderstood the actual concepts of Marx. A reason for the failure is that Marx's statements are sometimes extremely simple and seem to express a banal truth or a naive belief in scientific truth. Another reason is that most Marxist philosophers have usually identified the absolutely revolutionary concepts in Marx with the radical progressive Enlightenment and, therefore, confounded the most fundamental method of historical materialism with a certain type of natural or economic determinism. Such determinism is supposed to be only applied to the object of research. As a result, Marxist philosophers and social scientists have dishonored Marx for his sake.

II. Marx's Dialectic Method in *Das Kapital* as Epistemology of Reversal

In this section we discuss the dialectic method in *Das Kapital*. His dialectic method is constructed by such terms as "Verkehrung" (reversal), "Schein" (appearance), "Versachlichung" (reification), "Verdinglichung" (reification) and "Mystification" (mystification). Before we explain these terms, we briefly follow the theoretical development in Marx.

From the beginning of his theoretical career Marx uninterruptedly disputed the dominance of the abstract entity over individuals. This dominance is caused by the reversal of the

subject into the object, and vice versa. Consequently, his practical concern has been to restore the lost subjectivity to the individuals and to vindicate the dignity of the individuals as free independent agents of society. In *Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophy*, written in 1844, he related the liberation of individuals from the dominance of the abstract entity with the criticism of philosophical speculation which converts abstract notions into real subjects as Hegel does. In the early 1840s, he is still fascinated by Feuerbach because he clearly reveals the secret origin of the dominance of the abstract entity by attributing this to metaphysics and religion, which he accuses of having deprived the real world of its own values. But soon after that Marx becomes aware of the blind spot of Feuerbach's criticism. Because his criticism is based on a rather simple confrontation between the abstract illusion created by the speculation (scilicet the metaphysics and the religion) and the real sensory world, and ends up in a praise of the latter. However, Marx notices that the dominance of the abstract entity in fact originates from the real world itself. He argues that a series of the "reified abstract things (die versachlichten Abstrakten)" such as value, money, capital and so on, in fact rule as active agents over the modern capitalist society. This new knowledge has led him to a thoroughly critical and comprehensive research in the political economy with the British classical school as the main concern. At the same time, he begins to positively re-estimate Hegel's philosophy as an epoch-making project to describe the reversing structure in the modern capitalist society by means of "speculative logic". This change in his estimation is marked by the fact that he no longer criticizes Hegel's idealism in terms of "the logical pantheistic mysticism", as has been the case in *Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie*. From now on, the criticism of Hegel's philosophy should be performed in a double way, namely theoretical as well as practical. The theoretical criticism is leveled against the speculative operation of abstract concepts (Begriffe) made autonomous by Hegel. However, the practical criticism is now far more important because it is aimed at the real dominance of the abstract things in modern society itself. Hegel's philosophy reflects the structural reversal of human activity into the abstract things (Versachlichung) in this society. This criticism requires us to study a historical movement which is destined to practically overcome modern capitalist society.

Now, we go on to discuss the dialectic method in *Das Kapital*. The dialectic method in *Das Kapital* is applied to scientifically comprehending the reversing processes in modern capitalist society through which mere things such as money or capital get to function as the dominant agents, i.e. the phenomenal (scheinbar) subjects of social relations of production. These processes consist of the twofold reversal. Firstly, the commodity production reverses the human interaction of producers to the reified interaction of things (Sachen). Secondly, it further reverses the social characteristics of this reified interaction itself to the natural attributes which pertain to the natural things (Dinge).¹ The first reversal is termed

¹ In Marx's dialectic method the difference between Sache and Ding plays a very important role. Sache represents a thing in relation to other things and in this sense keeps a social relational characteristic. A thing appears as a Sache from the relational aspect. On the other hand, Ding gets rid of any social relationship, is exclusively related to its own natural properties, and thus appears as a natural thing devoid of any social origin. A thing appears as a Ding from this attributive aspect of natural properties. The difference between Versachlichung and Verdinglichung is based on that of Sache and Ding. But there is no corresponding differentiation in the English language. In this paper I have translated both Sache and Ding as thing, and both Versachlichung and Verdinglichung as reification because I could not introduce any terminological difference without disfiguring the description in the English language. On the difference between those two notions see Tairako (1983) and (1987).

Versachlichung in the sense of the reversal of the human relations of production to the reified (versachlicht) ones. The second reversal is termed *Verdinglichung* in the sense of the reversal of the relations of things to the natural properties of things. Consequently, the capitalist mode of production, through this twofold reversal, deletes its specially limited historical characteristics and appears to ordinary members of modern society as the natural and self-evident mode of production most suitable for human nature.²

If we express the reversal in logical terms, it is defined as the reversal of essence (Wesen) into appearance (Schein). Marx's notion of appearance is characteristic of the dialectic method in *Das Kapital*. This is a special form of phenomenon (Erscheinung) confronted with the essence (Wesen).³ The modern capitalist society is analyzed to be split into essential relations and appearing (scheinbar) relations. Appearing relations show themselves as the opposite to essential relations. However, essential relations can only appear in the shape of appearing relations. The positivists in both philosophy and social sciences have taken advantage of this awkward situation; they have reduced the reality to the appearing relations and have ignored the study on a more complicated structure of reality. However, as long as we analyze the capitalist reality critically, we can not do without a pair of notions: essence — appearance. This is because the negative appearance-character of phenomena can be understood only in terms of the reversed form of the essence. It is well known that Marx criticizes the so-called vulgar economists because they only pay attention to the relations appearing on the surface of economic reality. However, it is little known that he also criticizes scientism of learned economists like David Ricardo because they regard the appearance as a mere optical illusion or a mistaken impression. They presume that we can simply get rid of the appearance by means of scientific truth and education. It is, after all, a theoretical concern. This is just the typical way of thinking of Enlightenment. However, for Marx it is predominantly a practical concern to do away with the appearance because he grasps the appearance as the necessary form for the essence to come to light in capitalist society. This clearly distinguishes Marx's notion of science from the scientism of Enlightenment.

If we assume that we could replace the appearance by the scientifically discovered truth,

² "Es ist ... die Verdinglichung der gesellschaftlichen Produktionsbestimmungen und die Versubjektivierung der materiellen Grundlagen der Produktion, welche die ganze kapitalistische Produktionsweise charakterisiert" (Marx 1894, p.887). ["What characterizes the whole capitalist mode of production is the reification of the social characteristics of production and the subjectification of the material foundations of production."]

"... in dieser ökonomischen Trinität ... ist die Mystifikation der kapitalistischen Produktionsweise, die Verdinglichung der gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse, das unmittelbare Zusammenwachsen der stofflichen Produktionsverhältnisse mit ihrer gesellschaftlich-sozialen Bestimmtheit vollendet ... Es ist das grosse Verdienst der klassischen Ökonomie, ... diese Personifizierung der Sachen und Versachlichung der Produktionsverhältnisse, diese Religion des Alltagslebens aufgelöst zu haben." (ibid., p.838). ["... what comes to perfection in this Trinity is the mystification of the capitalist mode of production, i.e. the reification of social relations, namely the sticking-together of material relations of production to their social characteristics... It is the great merit of the classical school of political economy to have dissolved this personification of things and this reification of production-relations, which is the religion of daily life."]

³ Only tentatively, the author has translated *Erscheinung* and *Schein* as phenomenon and appearance. The difference between *Schein* and *Erscheinung* originally comes from Hegel in *Die Wissenschaft der Logik*. However, Marx understands this notion in a different sense from Hegel, namely he means a disfigured form of phenomenon which covers its attribution to the essence. The pair of notions: essence — appearance are necessary to analyze the reversing structure in modern capitalist society. The English word appearance hardly suggests that dialectic situation.

TABLE 2. A SKETCH FOR THEORETICAL CONSTRUCTION IN MARX

The critique of the political economy The theory of reification	The analysis of the Verkehrung (reversal) in the capitalist production Verkehrung in logical terms: Wesen (essence) → Schein (appearance)	
	Versachlichung	Person → Sache (the relational aspect)
	Verdinglichung Mystification of the relations of production	Sache → Ding (the attributive aspect)
The theory of praxis	The theory of negative praxis of individuals in daily life = the theory of alienation	
	The theory of positive praxis = the politics of emancipation	

we unknowingly introduce the discrimination between the scientists who supply the truth and those who still remain caught by the appearance. However, this assumption would result in the anticipating intelligence definitely criticized by the young Marx. The dialectic method is applied to the critique of the political economy for the sake of his interest to recognize the importance of the praxis of individuals who are in their daily life caught by the really existent appearance. Thus, we are led to a new theoretical perspective on the problem of the historical overcoming of capitalism. According to this new perspective, the end of capitalism should not be argued in the limited framework of the critique of the political economy. To discuss the historical end of capitalism, Marx's economic theory must be combined with a theory of the praxis of individuals. The theoretical transition of the critique of the political economy to the theory of praxis is to be prepared by the theory of alienation.

III. *The Theory of Alienation and the Dialectics of History*

The main concern of the theory of alienation is often misunderstood or at least understood insufficiently in explaining how individuals lose their own identity in the reified (versachlicht) social relations. However, its theoretical task consists of explaining the historical processes through which the working class builds up their critical-revolutionary character "within the alienated (entfremdet) relations". The theory of alienation starts from a historical-philosophical view: individuals can build up their own human abilities (Gattungsvermögen) necessary to emancipate themselves from their subjugation to the capitalist system in no other way than by being fully entangled in the capitalist relations and, as a result, losing their personal identity. In sum, the theory of alienation must be characterized not as a theory of humanity-deprivation processes but of humanity-building processes in the specific negative way.

Now, we briefly look back to the development of the theory of alienation. The young Marx owes his critical argument on alienated labor to *Die Phänomenologie des Geistes* by Hegel. This work with its chapter 6-B, entitled "Der sich entfremdete Geist. Die Bildung (The Spirit alienated from itself. The Formation)", could be regarded as the first attempt to explain an important role of alienation in the history of civilization in historical-philosophical terms.

Furthermore, it is Feuerbach who has picked up the notion of alienation from Hegel but neglected its historical-philosophical implication and applied it to the criticism of religion as

alienation of the mankind (Gattungswesen). He pays little attention to the positive meaning of alienation in the history which Hegel tries to explain. Feuerbach's theory of alienation ends up as an ahistorical criticism of religion in general. He argues that religion owes its existence to the alienation of human abilities to an alien transcendent entity (personified as God). In spite of such abstractness he is able to criticize religion of any kind in a very convincing way and, consequently, plays a very critical-revolutionary role in terms of a radical democratic protest against the half-feudal absolutistic authorities in Germany at his time.

In fact, under the overwhelming influence of Feuerbach's philosophy the young Marx forms his materialistic view. This fact, nevertheless, does not mean that he simply takes over Feuerbach's ahistorical framework of the theory of alienation. After he has taken an increasingly greater interest in the historical-social aspects of alienation, he begins to criticize the abstractness of Feuerbach's theory. Interestingly, his change of attitude towards Feuerbach is accompanied by his correlative change of attitude towards Hegel; he begins to highly revalue Hegel's view on alienation as a historical building process (Bildungsprozess) in his *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte* in 1844. Hegel-reception by Marx is testified by his argument on the task of communism to grasp the positive essence of private property in the third manuscript of *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte* entitled "Privateigentum und Kommunismus (private property and communism)" (Marx, 1844-a, p.263). In his whole theoretical construction, the theory of alienation links the theory of the political economy with a theory of revolutionary movements. This concept is suggested in the following sentences:

"... in der Bewegung des Privateigentums, eben d[er] Ökonomie, die ganze revolutionäre Bewegung sowohl ihre empirische, als theoretische Basis findet" (ibid., p.263). ["... the entire revolutionary movement finds both its empirical and theoretical basis in the movement of private property, just in the economy."]

"Die Aufhebung der Selbstentfremdung macht denselben Weg, wie die Selbstentfremdung" (ibid., p.261). ["The overcoming of self-alienation follows the same course as self-alienation."]

In particular, the message from the second sentence is crucial not only for the further development of his own thought but also for the whole history of Marxism. Because this distinguishes Marx' socialism from other socialist views. What concerns Marx is the qualification and the ability of workers who cope with injustice in capitalism; Marx asks with what political, cultural and social cultivation they have armed themselves. We see that the main idea in the *Thesen über Feuerbach*, to grasp the object as active praxis, in other words to bring the subject of praxis into the interrelation with the object of praxis, is applied here. Marx places the agents of political praxis into the objective system which is to be changed, and asks how they cultivate in this system their political abilities to be a match for the capitalist system. We can now appreciate the following criticism of "rough communism" by Marx after we have observed the failure of socialist experiments and movements in the twentieth century:

"Wie wenig diese Aufhebung des Privateigentums [durch den rohen Kommunismus] eine wirkliche Aneignung ist, beweist eben die abstrakte Negation der ganzen Welt der Bildung und Zivilisation; die Rückkehr zur *unnatürlichen* Einfachheit des *armen* und bedürfnislosen Menschen, der nicht über das Privateigentum hinaus, sondern noch nicht einmal bei demselben angelangt ist" (ibid., p.262). ["How little this annulment of private property [by rough communism] is really an appropriation, is in fact proved by the abstract negation of the entire world of culture and civilization, the regression to the *unnatural* simplicity of the *poor* and

undemanding man who has not only failed to go beyond private property, but has not yet even reached it.”]

In general, we can say that the motives and incentives to strive for socialism are mainly found among social strata that are more or less excluded from the benefits of civilization produced by the capitalist system. Their field of vision is much more covered with what capitalism has deprived them of than what it has given them. They usually resort to the traditional cultural resources which capitalism threatens to extinguish. As long as the socialist movements take place in a spontaneous way, most of their supporters belong to the social groups that, if we apply the expression Marx uses in the quotation, have not yet even reached the highest level of civilization and education which contemporary capitalism potentially enables them to achieve. This is precisely the reason, firstly, why the socialist movements have until now been destined to fail to overthrow capitalism; secondly, why they, even after they have successfully come to power, have been forced to recruit their leaders and administrative staff from the traditional dominant classes and intellectuals in order to maintain their power. This inevitably has led to the formation of the elite like the political cadre, the technocrats and the bureaucrats as a privileged dominant class, and in the end to the degradation of socialism; finally, why they must usually resort to violence and political repression even to maintain the political order, because they have failed to integrate highly differentiated political, economic, religious and other social needs and claims of different social classes to the socialist system in a pluralistic democratic way. Therefore, it is very important for us to remind ourselves of Marx as the first socialist thinker who raises to the socialist movements a painstaking task to cope with the problem of cultural deprivation of the working class and other subordinate classes and to overcome these defects even before coming to power.

In sum, the objective of the theory of alienation is to convert what the theory of reification (*Versachlichung*) has brought to light, namely the theoretical explanation of the reified social relations in the capitalist system, into the upbringing processes for the working class. The working class is, at first, described to play an exclusively subordinate role in the capitalist mode of production as personification of economic categories as Marx described in *Das Kapital*. At the same time, nevertheless, they gradually become independent agents of political and cultural changes. In this sense the theoretical development of reification corresponds to the same development of alienation. In his analysis on the “productivity of capital (*die Produktivkraft des Kapitals*)” in the first book of *Das Kapital*, Marx characterizes the capitalist relations of production itself as a per excellence social productive power. This analysis of capital, in the sense of the capitalist subjugation of workers to the socialized (*vergesellschaftet*) production, as a specific productive power, illustrates a link between the theory of reification and the theory of alienation.⁴

However, we must note that *Das Kapital* remains an unfinished work. What Marx does not write refers to the analysis of the praxis of individuals in their daily life by the method of alienation. We do not think that Marx combines the reification-analysis with the alienation-analysis in a convincing way. Consequently, an essential theoretical link between the experience of individuals in the alienated capitalist relations and the formation of political abilities fails. As long as the main task of practical materialism, the theory of the daily praxis of working individuals, is not fulfilled by Marx, both Marxist philosophers and social scientists

⁴ On the capitalist relations of production as a specific productive power see Tairako (1993).

constantly resort to a reality-anticipating argument which Marx himself has fought against throughout his life, in order to make up for that missing analysis. For example, they often have recourse to such arguments as the following discourse in chapter 24 of the first book of *Das Kapital*:

“Die kapitalistische Produktion erzeugt mit der Notwendigkeit eines Naturprozesses ihre eigene Negation. Es ist Negation der Negation” (Marx, 1867, p.791). [“The capitalist production brings about its own negation by the necessity of a natural process. This is the negation of negation.”]

Many Marxist writers presume that they can demonstrate the inevitable end of capitalism within the theoretical framework of the political economy — in other words in terms of reification (*Versachlichung*). As long as they foresee the future of human history by virtue of a scientific theory, they fall into the doubtful position of Enlightenment. This position stands for a certain way of thinking to privilege scientists to know or foresee, by means of scientific discovery of “laws” behind the reality, the historical future which the ordinary people can not perceive — in other words to privilege the intellectual experts to beat the people in perception of their future destiny. The technical terms of dialectic logic, such as the negation of negation, seem to furnish this prophecy with a look of scientific demonstration.

In conclusion, Marx’s materialistic view on history is the first earnest enterprise in the history of European philosophy to overcome reality-anticipating thinking and politics. Nevertheless, many Marxists after Marx have repeatedly returned to this privileged stance. This is because his early death did not allow Marx to describe the dynamism of capitalism in full detail from the perspective of practical materialism. This is the reason why we must not take what Marx has handed down to be finished formulation of his theory. Instead, we should go further if we wish to regain the Marxist social sciences in their full actuality; we must carry out the scientific tasks that Marx intended but was not able to complete.

HITOTSUBASHI UNIVERSITY

REFERENCE

- Hegel, G.W.F. (1807), *Phänomenologie des Geistes, Werke in 20 Bänden*, Bd.3, Frankfurt am Main 1969.
- Hegel, G.W.F. (1812-1816), *Die Wissenschaft der Logik, 2 Bände, Werke in 20 Bänden*, Bd.5-6, Frankfurt am Main 1969.
- Marx, Karl (1844), *Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie, Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe* (abbreviated to *MEGA*) 1-2, Berlin 1982.
- Marx, Karl (1844-a), *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte, MEGA* 1-2, Berlin 1982.
- Marx, Karl (1845), *Thesen über Feuerbach, Marx-Engels-Werke* (abbreviated to *Werke*) Bd.3, Berlin 1969.
- Marx, Karl/ Engels, Friedrich (1845-1846), *Die Deutsche Ideologie, Werke*, Bd.3, Berlin 1969.
- Marx, Karl (1857-1858), *Ökonomische Manuskripte (1857-1858), MEGA* 2-1-1, Berlin 1976.
- Marx, Karl (1859), *Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie. Erstes Heft, MEGA* 2-2, Berlin 1980.
- Marx, Karl (1867), *Das Kapital. Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie. Erster Band*, Nach der vierten Auflage, *Werke* Bd.23, Berlin 1969.

- Marx, Karl (1894), *Das Kapital. Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie. Dritter Band, Werke* Bd.25, Berlin 1970.
- Tairako, Tomonaga (1983), Versachlichung und Verdinglichung in ihrer Beziehung zur Hegelschen Dialektik. Zur Erschliessung der Logik der Verkehrung, *Hokudai Economic Papers*, Vol.12, p.65-85, Sapporo 1983.
- Tairako, Tomonaga (1985), Versachlichung und Verdinglichung in der *Phänomenologie des Geistes* Hegels, *Hokudai Economic Papers*, Vol.14, p.93-110, Sapporo 1985.
- Tairako, Tomonaga (1987), Der fundamentale Charakter der Dialektik im *Kapital*. Zur "Logik der Verkehrung", In: Bönisch, S./ Fiedler, F./ Iwasaki, Ch. (Hrsg.), *Marxistische Dialektik in Japan. Beiträge japanischer Philosophen zu aktuellen Problemen der dialektisch-materialistischen Methode*, pp.105-123, 237-242, Berlin 1987.
- Tairako, Tomonaga (1990), Bürgerliche Gesellschaft und Staat. Untersuchungen zur Klassischen Politischen Theorie der Moderne, *Economic Journal of Hokkaido University*, Vol.19, p.53-85, Sapporo 1990.
- Tairako, Tomonaga (1993), Die rationale Betriebsführung und die Produktivkraft des Kapitals, *Hitotsubashi Journal of Social Studies*, Vol.25, p.7-23, Tokyo 1993.
- Tairako, Tomonaga (1997), Materialismus und Dialektik bei Marx, In: Quaas, Friedrun/ Quaas, Georg (Hrsg.), *Elemente zur Kritik der Werttheorie*, p.35-51, Peter Lang, Berlin 1997.