

A Theoretical Approach to the French Edition of *Capital*

Toward a Reinterpretation of Marx's critique of political economy from the perspective of MEGA study

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Fred Schrader's groundbreaking work, *Restauration und Revolution. Die Vorarbeiten zum "Kapital" von Karl Marx in seinen Studienheften 1850 – 1858* (1980), deals with the relationship between the economic excerpts of the early 1850s, the 1857 Crisis, and the formation of Bonapartism in France. However, the perspective and methods of Schrader's MEGA study need to be extended to the 1860s and the 1870s, when Marx wrote *Capital*. In other words, it is necessary to reexamine the content of Marx's critique of political economy from a total political and economic perspective, focusing on the 1866 Crisis and the Paris Commune (1871) around the time of the publication of the first volume of *Capital*.

This presentation pays particular attention to the theoretical scope of the French edition of *Capital*, which was published between 1872 and 1875, after the Paris Commune¹. As Kevin B. Anderson emphasizes, Marx's critique of capitalism turned more radical between 1867, when the first edition of *Capital* was published, and the end of the 1870s. Although the French edition has been disregarded by Engels and others as a mere "simplification," this edition reflects Marx's continued study of political economy after the publication of the first edition of *Capital* and contains many important revisions and additions. In connection with *the Letter to Zasulich* (1881), Anderson focuses on the fact that Marx limited the transition into capitalist production to "Western Europe" in his theory of primitive accumulation and emphasizes Marx's "multilinear perspective of world history" in the French version. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that Japanese Marxian economists in the 1970s had already compared and examined the first or second version, the French version published by Marx and the version published by Engels. Furthermore, two different translations of the French edition, an abridged one in 1976 and a complete one in 1979, had been published in Japan before Anderson began his research on the French version of *Capital* in the 1980s. In this presentation, I focus on a few points out of Marxian economic themes such as the theory of value, money, and labor wages, which argued on the French version of *Capital* studies in Japan.

1. The Significance of "Historical Investigation" in the French Edition

¹ For more information on the history of the French edition of *Capital*, see Rodrigo Maiolini Rebello Pinho, 'The Originality of Marx's French Edition of Capital: An Historical Analysis', in the International Marxist-Humanist, 2021.

Since the 1970s, the *Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe* (MEGA), a "historical and critical edition" containing Marx's own manuscripts and notebooks, has been newly published separately from the *Marx-Engels-Werke* (MEW). However, in spite of the publication of various editions of MEGA (the first, second, and French editions in German written and revised by Marx, and the third, fourth in German, and English editions edited by Engels), the old edition of the first volume of *Capital*, mainly the MEW edition, continues to be reprinted in many countries as if ignoring MEGA editions². As is well known to scholars of *Capital*, Marx himself preferred the completion of the second or third volume to the third edition of the first volume, and so there are only two author-approved final editions: the German second edition and the French edition which contains many new descriptions and improvements on the second edition. Even more important is the fact, unknown to Engels before Marx's death that Marx had written notes in the second and French editions of his own book and had conceived of the publication of English (US) version. This fusion of the second and French editions was intended to provide a basic policy for the second Russian edition and the translation into other languages. This policy can be summarized in three main aspects. (1) The division of chapters and sections should follow that of the French edition, (2) The translator should carefully compare the German second edition and the French edition, and (3) The first two parts, "Commodities and Money" and "The Transformation of Money into Capital", should be translated exclusively from the second edition³.

In his afterword to the French edition of *Capital*, Marx emphasizes that it has "independent scientific value" from the German second edition. Especially in the chapters on "The Process of Accumulation of Capital" there are "the most important changes", and the descriptions therein are "radically improved"⁴. In fact, out of about 70 changes indicated in the instructions to the English version, about 50 are concentrated in the part on the capital accumulation⁵. It should also be noted that Part VII, "The Process of Accumulation of Capital" is divided and reorganized into two parts in the French edition: Part VII, "Accumulation of Capital" and Part VIII, "The Primitive Accumulation". In the second edition, the sections from the first to the seventh of Chapter 24 in Part VII, "The Process of Accumulation of Capital" are upgraded to independent chapters in the French edition, and together

² The only exception to this is Kuczynski's edition, published on the 150th anniversary of the publication of *Capital*, which is a "German popular edition" that attempts to revise the existing textual edition from the perspective of "historical and critical edition". See Karl Marx (Thomas Kuczynski, hrsg.) : *Das Kapital: Kritik der politischen Ökonomie, Erster Band, Buch I: Der Produktionsprozess des Kapitals*. Hamburg: VSA Verlag, 2017

³ See Karl Marx to Nikolai Danielson. on 15 and 28 November 1878, in MECW vol. 45, p. 343 and 346.

⁴ See Karl Marx to Pyotr Lavrov on 11 February 1875 and to Adolf Sorge 4 April 1876, in MECW vol. 45, p. 58 and 114

⁵ See explanatory notes in Karl Marx (Edited and translated by Naomichi Hayashi): *Le Capital livre premier 7 et 8 sections*, Otuski Shoten Publishers, Tokyo 1976.

with the chapter "Modern Colonial Theory," they constitute the independent Part VIII, "The Primitive Accumulation". The theoretical relationship between "capital accumulation" and "primitive accumulation" has been a main theme in the history of the *Capital* studies to understand the relationship between "logic" and "history" in the system of *Capital*. The independence of the Part "The Primitive Accumulation" in the French edition indicates systematically the significance of the "Historical Investigation" of the capitalist mode of production.

In the final part that concludes the first volume of *Capital*, or in Part VIII, "The Primitive Accumulation", Marx investigates the "historical formation" or "historical conditions" of capitalist mode of production, as distinguished from the "Theoretical Development" of capitalist production itself in the earlier parts. The French version clarifies that the "Historical Investigation" in the part "Primitive Accumulation" is completely distinct from the conceptual grasp of capital within the capitalist mode of production. Nevertheless, this historical investigation means not merely a supplement to the "Theoretical Development" of capital accumulation and other issues, but rather a conclusion to the consideration of the subject of "the development of capitalist production" (a title of the first book in the French version), in the sense that the historical specificity of the capitalist system would finally be revealed. Therefore, the "Historical Investigation" in the part "Primitive Accumulation" is not only distinguished from the "Theoretical Development", but also is an integral part of the critique of political economy because the former concludes the latter's consideration of the capitalist system.

2. Some Interpretations of the Section "The Inversion which Converts the Property Laws of Commodity Production into Laws of Capitalist Appropriation"

This section in Part VII, Chapter 22 (Chapter 24 in the French edition), "The Transformation of Surplus Value into Capital," is the most mixed and edited text by Engels from the German second and French editions. Particularly in the history of Japanese studies of *Capital*, there has been much controversy over the theoretical interpretation of this inversion [*Umschlag*] of "the Property Laws of Commodity Production into Laws of Capitalist Appropriation". As Sasaki emphasizes, contrary to Engels' editorial policy, the French version with its simple descriptions is theoretically easier to understand than the first or second editions with its prominent German terminology such as *Umschlag* or *Schein*, and *Dialektik*⁶. This can be seen clearly from the French subtitle of this section, "**Comment** le droit de propriété de la production marchande **devient** le droit d'appropriation capitaliste". Before comparing and examining the second German edition and the French one, I will give a theoretical overview of the inversion of laws.

⁶ Ryūji Sasaki 2011, *Marx's Theory of Reification. Criticising Capitalism as the Thought of the Material* (in Japanese), Tokyo: Shakai Hyōronsha, p.291f

According to Marx, in capitalist society, the right of ownership derived from commodity production or commodity exchange is inevitably transformed into the right to appropriate the labor of others. This is because of the following circumstances. When a capitalist who wants labor power and a wage laborer who wants money enter into a contract for the sale, they exchange equivalence or reified things [*die Sachen*] with each other as free and equal persons or private owners. However, as a result of the exchange of equivalents according to the "property laws of commodity production," "the eternal right of capital to the fruits of labor by others is derived" from these "just fair laws" of equivalent exchange (MEGA II/1.2, 407). This is because while the capitalist is able to appropriate the fruits of the other's labor through the use or consumption of labor-power commodities, the wage laborer is deprived of the possibility of appropriating the fruits of his own labor and is forced to sell his labor power as a non-owner. Thus, the capitalist class is able to exploit the surplus labor of the working class in a completely legitimate way, according to the "property laws of commodity production" that inevitably arises from the reified [*versachlichte*] relations of production. In the second edition, this inversion of the "property laws of commodity production into the laws of capitalist appropriation" is explained dialectically.

Insofern der Mehrwerth, woraus Surpluskapital Nr. I besteht, das Resultat des Ankaufs der Arbeitskraft durch einen Theil des Originalkapitals war, ein Kauf, der den Gesetzen des Waarenaustausches entsprach, [...]; sofern Surpluskapital Nr. II u.s.w. bloß Resultat von Surpluskapital Nr. I, also Konsequenz jenes ersten Verhältnisses; [...] **schlägt offenbar das auf Warenproduktion und Waarencirkulation beruhende Gesetz der Aneignung oder Gesetz des Privateigenthums durch seine eigne, innere, unvermeidliche Dialektik in sein direktes Gegenteil um. Der Austausch von Aequivalenten, der als die ursprüngliche Operation erschien, hat sich so gedreht, daß nur zum Schein ausgetauscht wird,** [...] Das Verhältniß des Austausches zwischen Kapitalist und Arbeiter wird also nur ein dem Cirkulationsproceß angehöriger Schein, bloße Form, die dem Inhalt selbst fremd ist und ihn nur mystificirt. [...] Ursprünglich erschien uns das Eigenthumsrecht gegründet auf eigne Arbeit. Wenigstens mußte diese Annahme gelten, da sich nur gleichberechtigte Waarenbesitzer gegenüberstehn, das Mittel zur Aneignung fremder Waare aber nur die Veräußerung der eignen Waare, und letztere nur durch Arbeit herstellbar ist. Eigenthum erscheint jetzt, auf Seite des Kapitalisten, als das Recht fremde unbezahlte Arbeit oder ihr Produkt, auf Seite des Arbeiters, als Unmöglichkeit, sich sein eignes Produkt anzueignen. **Die Scheidung zwischen Eigenthum und Arbeit wird zur nothwendigen Konsequenz eines Gesetzes, das scheinbar von ihrer Identität ausging.** (MEGAII6, S.537-8)

It is important to note that this passage was deleted in the first place by Marx himself in the French version, unlike the current version edited by Engels. In the second edition, the emphasis is on the fact

that the exchange of equivalents as the first operation becomes a mere appearance [*Schein*] belonging to the circulation process, a mere form which is estranged from the content itself and which only mystifies it. However, in this dialectical explanation that emphasizes the critique of appearance, the following two dimensions are ambiguous: on one hand the exchange of equivalents according to the "property laws of commodity production", on the other hand the illusion of "ownership based on one's own labor" as a representation that inevitably arises from the "property laws of commodity production". In fact, in the history of Japanese *Capital* studies, the inversion of laws has tended to be interpreted as denouncing the illusion of "ownership based on one's own labor". In other words, it is supposed that in the process of capital accumulation, the "property laws of commodity production," as ideologically defended by classical political economists, expire and thus the laws of capitalist appropriation develop. In the French version, however, the dialectical explanation rather disappears, and the critique of appearance in the second edition recedes to the background.

Ce mode de s'enrichir qui contraste si étrangement avec les lois primordiales de la production marchande, résulte cependant, **il faut bien le saisir, non de leur violation, mais au contraire de leur application.** [...]

La conversion primitive de l'argent en capital **s'opère donc conformément aux lois économiques de la production marchande et au droit de propriété qui en dérive.** [...]

La reproduction simple ne fait que répéter périodiquement la première opération; à chaque reprise elle devient donc à son tour conversion primitive de l'argent en capital. **La continuité d'action d'une loi est certainement le contraire de son infraction.** (MEGAII7,S.506-8.)

The disappearance of terms such as appearance and dialectic does not only mean a "simplification" by Marx. Contrary to Engels' understanding, we should rather read into this simplification an important theoretical implication. In short, in the process of capital accumulation, the constant repetition of equivalent exchange based on the "property laws of commodity production" leads to an inversion into "the laws of capitalist appropriation". The French version, which emphasized this point, was also adopted by Engels, but as Mukai points out, Engels still insists on the dialectical inversion in the second version⁷. For example, the passage in the French version that "A mesure qu'elle **se métamorphose** en production capitaliste, ses lois de propriété se changent nécessairement en lois de l'appropriation capitaliste" (MEGAII7, S.509.) is replaced by the passage in the current version that "Im selben Maß, wie sie nach ihren **eigenen immanenten Gesetzen** sich zur kapitalistischen Produktion fortbildet, in demselben Maß **schlagen** die Eigentumsgesetze der Warenproduktion **um** in Gesetze der kapitalistischen Aneignung." (MEW23, S. 613) But, again, we must not interpret this

⁷ Kimitoshi Mukai, Marx on the Inversion of the Law of Appropriation (in Japanese), in Doshisha Business Review 28(2) 1976

passage only as an inversion of the economic law of equivalent exchange and the property law of commodity production into the completely different laws of capitalist appropriation. "The property laws of commodity production" is not such an illusion of "the ownership based on one's own labor," but it continues to operate in the actual process of capital accumulation. In other words, capitalist appropriation is justified by the repeated application of "the property laws of commodity production," without the need for illusion or ideology.

However, the critique of the illusion and ideology of "ownership based on self-labor" is not completely disappeared in the French version. This can also be confirmed by comparing the second edition with the French edition, instead of referring to the current edition. In the note 23 given in the passage from the second edition quoted above, Marx says that "Ganz so nothwendig, wie die Waarenproduktion auf einem gewissen Entwicklungsgrad kapitalistische Waarenproduktion wird - ja nur auf der Grundlage der kapitalistischen Produktionsweise wird die Waare zur allgemeinen, herrschenden Form des Produkts, - ganz so nothwendig schlagen die Eigenthumsgesetze der Waarenproduktion in Gesetze der kapitalistischen Aneignung um. Man bewundere daher die Pffiffigkeit Proudhon's, der das kapitalistische Eigenthum abschaffen will, indem er - die ewigen Eigenthumsgesetze der Waarenproduktion geltend macht!" (MEGAI16, S.538.) In the French version, the last sentence is elevated to the text and modified as follows: "**Quelle illusion** donc que celle de certaines écoles socialistes qui s'imaginent pouvoir briser le régime du capital en lui appliquant les lois éternelles de la production marchande!" (MEGAI17, S.509.) In other words, the critique of the "appearance" of equivalent exchange that leads to mystification should be understood as a critique of the socialist "illusion" or ideology of transforming the system of capital while leaving the system of commodity production and exchange intact. We should not forget that Marx's critique of political economy included a critique of socialists such as Proudhon and left Ricardian. The critique of ideology as a critique of political economy means not only a critique of political economists, but also a critique of the illusion of "ownership based on one's own labor" shared by the socialists who criticize political economists⁸.

3. On the Irish Question in the Part "The Process of Accumulation of Capital"⁹

As Anderson emphasized, Section 5 "Illustrations of the General Law of Capitalist Accumulation, (f) Ireland" in Chapter 23 in the second and French editions reflects Marx' research of the late 1860s, which grasps the capitalization of Ireland after 1846. Importantly, the law of capitalist accumulation

⁸ For more on the meaning of Marx's critique of ideology, see my conference paper: https://www.academia.edu/49453242/Zur_Kritik_des_Rechtsfetischismus_als_Ideologie

⁹ This section is a modified version of my paper: 'Engels and the Irish Question: Rethinking the Relationship between the Peasants and Socialism', in *Reexamining Engels's Legacy in the 21st Century*, 2021

and the process of primitive accumulation in Ireland are even more emphasized in the French version. In fact, Marx incorporates much of the excerpt from the *Reports of the Irish Poor Law Inspectors* (1870), which was only mentioned in the note of the second edition. In French edition important theoretical content is added, compared to the second edition, which is "arranged with only a few formal changes".

Marx analyzes the condition of rural wage workers in detail, based on the report of the Irish inspectors. As stated in the description added for the first time in the French version, "for a full elucidation of the law of accumulation, his condition outside the workshop must also be looked at, his condition as to food and accommodation." (*Capital* vol. 1, 807, MEGAII/7, S.575) Then, Marx confirms that "[b]efore the famine, the great mass of agricultural wages was paid in kind, and only the smallest part in money; today, payment in money is the rule." (*Capital* vol. 1, 864, MEGA II/7, S.624) According to the report, "[p]revious to the famine, the labourer enjoyed his cabin ... with a rood, or half-acre or acre of land, and facilities for ... a crop of potatoes. He was able to rear his pig and keep fowl... But they now have to buy bread, and they have no refuse upon which they can feed a pig or fowl, and they have consequently no benefit from the sale of a pig, fowl, or eggs." (ibid) In other words, before the Great Famine, rural workers were guaranteed "Original Ownership"¹⁰ of their means of production, but after the Famine, they fell into propertyless wage laborers. "Only since the catastrophe of 1846 they have begun to form a section of the class of pure wage-labourers, a special estate which is now connected with its masters only by monetary relations." (*Capital* vol. 1, 864, MEGA II/7, S.625)

For the first time since 1846, rural workers have lost "Original Ownership" of their means of production, and Labor Fund has taken the form of wage through the reification of means of living. In short, their relationship with the employer has lost its former communal relationship and has turned to mere "monetary relations." Marx makes a point of this reified relation in the process of reproduction by considering not only "food" but also "accommodation", as newly added in French edition. In Ireland before 1846, "[s]ome of the agricultural day-labourers...continue to live on the holdings of the farmers, in overcrowded huts whose hideousness far surpasses the worst examples the agricultural districts of England can offer."(ibid) But it is important to note that, as Marx emphasizes in a study of Richard Jones in the *1861–1863 Economic Manuscript*, the Irish peasant, called *cottier*, was "labouring cultivators or peasants" and originally "possesse[d] their own instruments of labour."(MECW vol. 33, 334.) The agricultural revolution since 1846 systematically confiscated

¹⁰ What "original [*ursprünglich*] ownership" in pre-capitalist modes of production means is that "the producers relate [*verhalten*] to the objective conditions of their labor as to their own property" (Karl Marx, *Economic Manuscripts of 1857–1858*, in MECW vol. 28, 399). Original ownership also enables the individuals to belong to their community, to be guaranteed as proprietor. Marx's theory of original ownership shows that the communal social form not only restrains the individuals but guarantees their original property in a non-capitalistic or pre-capitalistic society.

cottiers' huts, including cultivating land, on the largest scale. "Thus[,] many labourers were compelled to seek shelter in villages and towns. There they were thrown like refuse into garrets, holes, cellars and corners, in the worst slum districts." (*Capital* vol. 1, 864, MEGA II/7, S.622) This description seems to imply Marx's critique of capitalism that rural property-less workers have worse housing conditions than the worst "overcrowded huts" of cottiers.

4. Marx's Peasant Theory in the Part "The Primitive Accumulation"

By examining in detail the transformation of the peasant into propertyless wage laborers in the French version, Marx further emphasizes the establishment of the capitalist mode of production in Ireland after 1846. Thus, Marx brings a new focus to the "Original Ownership" of the peasants and small tenants before 1846, which is lost in the process of primitive accumulation. This perspective of the peasant theory is also important for the interpretation of Part VIII "The Primitive Accumulation". Marx explains the primitive accumulation not only as the direct transformation of feudalism or serfdom into capitalist production, but also as the transformation from the small-scale mode of production into the capitalist mode of production.

Worauf kommt die ursprüngliche Akkumulation des Kapitals, d. h. seine historische Genesis, hinaus? Soweit sie nicht unmittelbare Verwandlung von Sklaven und Leibeigenen in Lohnarbeiter, also **bloßer Formwechsel** ist, bedeutet sie nur **die Expropriation der unmittelbaren Produzenten, d. h. die Auflösung des auf eigener Arbeit beruhenden Privateigentums**. Das Privateigentum des Arbeiters an seinen Produktionsmitteln ist **die Grundlage des Kleinbetriebs**, der Kleinbetrieb eine nothwendige Bedingung für die Entwicklung der gesellschaftlichen Produktion und der freien Individualität des Arbeiters selbst. Allerdings existirt diese Produktionsweise **auch innerhalb der Sklaverei, Leibeigenschaft und anderer Abhängigkeitsverhältnisse.**" (MEGA II/6, S. 681)

This "formal change," that is, the transition from the "feudal mode of production" to the "capitalist mode of production," is only one aspect of primitive accumulation. Marx rather emphasizes in this passage that the substantive change in capitalism is the establishment of reified relations of domination and subordination by stripping away "independence of the producer in the production process" in the small-scale mode of production (MEGA II/3, S. 2131). Again, a comparative study of the second and French editions helps us to understand the main theme of the primitive accumulation: the expropriation of the direct producer. Marx says in the second edition as follows:

Man sieht auf den ersten Blick, daß dieser Scheidungsproceß [i.e., the historical movement to sever labor from its external conditions] eine ganze Reihe historischer Processe einschließt, und zwar

eine doppelseitige Reihe, einerseits Auflösung der Verhältnisse, die den Arbeiter zum Eigentum dritter Personen machen und zu einem selbst angeeigneten Produktionsmittel, andererseits Auflösung des Eigentums der unmittelbaren Produzenten an ihren Produktionsmitteln. (MEGA II/6, S. 645)

Furthermore, Marx revises the corresponding passage in the French version as follows in order to make it clearer that the same process of separation of the producer from the means of production involves two aspects.

“**Le mouvement historique** qui convertit les producteurs en salariés se présente donc comme **leur affranchissement du servage et de la hiérarchie industrielle**. De l'autre côté, **ces affranchis** ne deviennent vendeurs d'eux-mêmes qu'après avoir été dépouillés de tous leurs moyens de production et de toutes les garanties d'existence offertes par l'ancien ordre des choses.” (MEGA II/7, S. 633)

These texts have been formulated as "emancipation of serfs and class differentiation of peasantry" from the traditional perspective of "historical materialism". In other words, the former is the dismantling of serfdom, especially the dissolution of personal relations of dependency, and the latter is the dismantling of the peasant ownership of land parcels, i.e., the transformation of independent self-employed peasants into ownerless. However, the "ownership of the means of production by the direct producer" here cannot be limited to the personally free peasants like yeoman, who is often regarded as typical of small-scale peasant. This is because the ownership of the means of production means that one is guaranteed an originally owned relation to the means of production, whether one is personally independent or subordinate. In fact, in Chapter 29 "The Genesis of the Capitalist Farmer", it is stated that “[l]es serfs, de même que les propriétaires libres [like yeoman], grands ou petits, **occupaient leurs terres à des titres de tenure très-divers**: ils se trouvèrent donc, après leur émancipation, placés dans des circonstances économiques très-différentes.” (MEGA II/7, S. 660) As emphasized in the French version, “la base de toute cette évolution” of primitive accumulation means precisely "l'expropriation des **cultivateurs**." (MEGA II/7, S. 634) The latter refers to "peasants" including "slaves and serfs". In the French version, the term cultivateurs [*die Ackerbauern*] is clearly distinguished from the term travailleurs, which in context includes not only workers in general as producers but also wage laborers. The former encompasses the peasants including “paysan libre” or “serfs”. This point is important in reconsidering the theoretical implications of the peasants as an ally of the working class articulated in *The Civil War in France*.

5. A Suggestive Relationship between Paris Commune and the French Edition of *Capital*

The foregrounding of the peasant theory in the French version, as described above, does not simply

mean a "multilinear perspective of world history", as Anderson describes in relation to the Russian rural community. Finally, I mention the relationship between the French version of *Capital* and the Paris Commune, as emphasized by Raya Dunayevskaya. The French edition was published over a period of several years during the reactionary period after the Paris Commune, when the activities of the International Working Men's Association were banned in France. It should be remembered, however, that Marx already prepared the French edition at the same time as revised the first edition for the second one, as was typical of his studies on Irish Question. Dunayevskaya argues that the inevitable connection between the commodity form and the commodity fetishism is revealed only in the French version after the defeat of the Paris Commune¹¹. However, before the Paris Commune, and even before the second edition, this point was basically clear to Marx. That is why he stresses that the first part "Commodities and Money" should be translated from the second edition for the various translations of *Capital*. Dunayevskaya suggests the relationship between the commodity form and the illusions that inevitably arise from the form itself. But, as well as the simplification in the section "the inversion of laws" that we have already discuss, her insistence only illustrates the perspective of the critique of the illusion and ideology among Proudhon and other socialists.

Rather, what is important in relation to the Paris Commune is that the peasant, who is also regarded as an agent of social revolution in Marx's Irish studies and focused on in the Part "The Primitive Accumulation," is also emphasized in Western Europe, France, after the transition to the capitalist mode of production. Hal Draper also refers to the significance of the peasant theory as an ally of the working class against the myth that "Marx against the peasant"¹². In particular, he emphasizes that Marx refers to the continuity between the associated labor and the small-scale peasant in *The Civil War in France*¹³. Indeed, in the chapter "Peasantry" in *The Civil War in France (First Draft)*, the negative aspects of the peasant are emphasized, namely isolated labor and dispersed means of production, in contrast to the material basis of the industrial proletariat, i.e., organized labor and concentrated means of labor. "But this peasantry proprietorship has long since outgrown its normal phase, that is the phase in which it was a reality, a mode of production and a form of property which responded to the economical wants of society and placed the rural producers themselves into normal conditions of life." (MEGA I/22, S.62) At that time in Western Europe, especially in England, the historical process of "primitive accumulation" had actually led to the extinction of the small-scale mode of production. As Marx emphasizes in the French version of *Capital*, citing Constantin Pecqueur, the extinction of the small-scale mode of production in capitalist society is a historical fate, and cannot be "eternalized" as the Proudhonists would have it (MEGA II/7, S. 678).

¹¹ Raya Dunayevskaya, *Marxism and Freedom: From 1776 Until Today* (1958, Bookman Associates) p.98f

¹² Hal Draper, *Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution, Vol. 2 The Politics of Social Classes* (1978, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform), 392f

¹³ *Ibid*, 433f

However, it should not be overlooked that small-scale mode of production, which is the basis for any forms of ownership other than capitalist private ownership, is "happier [glücklicher]" than the capitalist mode of production in that the former guarantees "independence in the process of production" and positive relation to the means of production. (MEGA II/3, S. 2288) On the other hand, Marx has this to say about the peasants in France: "it [Commune] is the only form of government that can secure to him [peasant] the transformation of his present economical conditions, rescue him from expropriation by the landlord on the one hand, from grinding, trudging and misery on the pretext of proprietorship on the other, that **can convert his nominal proprietorship of the land in the real proprietorship of the fruits of his labour**, that can combine for him the profits of modern agronomy, dictated by social wants, and every day now encroaching upon him as a hostile agency, **without annihilating his position as a really independent producer.**" (MEGA I/22, S.62). Here, it is supposed that the power of the associated working class prevents the "expropriation of the peasants" and the "further transformation of the peasants into rural proletarians". Furthermore, the aim of this idea is to rebuild the "positive" aspects of the small-scale mode of production based on a modern agronomy that allows for the sustainable control of metabolism. In fact, in relation to ecology, it is important to note that Marx points out in his *Economic Manuscript of 1864-1865* that small-scale peasant, unlike modern capitalist agriculture, does not rift the metabolism between nature and human being. "The moral of the tale, which can also be extracted from other discussions of agriculture, is that the bourgeois system runs counter to a rational agriculture, or that a rational agriculture is incompatible with the bourgeois system {even if, technologically speaking, it promotes its development} and needs **either the touch of the self-labouring peasants or the control of the associated producers**"¹⁴.

Of course, we should not confuse Marx's positive evaluation of the peasant with his approach to the Proudhonian socialism. It has been said that Marx highly praised the Paris Commune, which was carried mainly by the Proudhonists or Blanquists, so to say, in practice, despite his different theoretical position. However, this does not simply mean the antagonism between Marxists and anarchists in the IWMA. Rather, in the historical context of the 19th century, to which both belong, the axis of opposition between collectivist anarchism (Proudhon, Blanqui) and anti-state, association-oriented anarchist communism (Reclus, Kropotkin) is more important, as Kristin Ross emphasizes¹⁵. Therefore, Marx's peasant theory is on a different horizon from Proudhonian socialism. A further study of his peasant theory should be conducted in relation to associated mode of production and the commune as its political form¹⁶.

¹⁴ Fred Moseley (Ed.) *Marx's Economic Manuscript of 1864-1865* (2015, Brill). p.229. MEGA II/4.2, S.191. I modify accordingly this translation because it does not allow us to understand Marx's peasant theory.

¹⁵ Kristin Ross, *Communal Luxury: The Political Imaginary of the Paris Commune* (2015, Verso), Ch.4.

¹⁶ On Marx's notion of the political form of Association, see my conference paper: https://www.academia.edu/41137788/Marxs_Political_Theory_in_Japan_after_the_1990s