BOOK REVIEW

MARX FOR THE 21st CENTURY
A REVIEW ARTICLE

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Abstract: Marx for the 21st Century, a collection of 14 essays by Japanese scholars, is not only about the relevance of Marx today, but also about Marx Studies, Marx-reception and Marxology in Japan. The themes, thinkers and texts discussed in this volume include: modernity, socialism, theory of history, original accumulation of capital, time sovereignty, distributive justice, environmental problems, labor money, civil/civilized society, Keynesianisms, World Systems Theory, John Stuart Mill, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Louis Blanc, Karl Marx, Max Weber, the Communist Manifesto, and The German Ideology. This publication provides some very interesting glimpses of Marx scholarship in Japan.

Key words: Marx; Japan; history; nature; society; polity; economy; capitalism; socialism

Introduction

The editor of this collection of essays, Hiroshi Uchida, is well known to Anglophone students of Marx for his book Marx’s Grundrisse and Hegel’s Logic. He informs the readers that it is “the fourth volume in the series ‘Collected Essays in English’ produced by the Japan Society for the History of Economic Thought” (p. xiii). It
has been published as the 73rd volume in the series “Routledge frontiers of political economy” (p. vi). Terrell Carver additionally mentions in his Special Introduction, that “this is the first collection of essays on Marx and Marxism, assembled by scholars in Japan for international publication in English” (p. 1). Carver continues: “Marx was received in Japan in the late 19th century, almost as soon as anywhere else in the world (with the possible exception of Germany, France and Belgium)” (p. 1). Yet—save the field of Marxist economics in Japan—very little of the world of Japanese encounters with and, interventions on Marx are known to people outside Japan. The present volume is a rare window that provides some glimpses of that world.

This volume contains 14 chapters/essays, grouped into four parts/sections: Marx for the 21st Century (two essays); Contemporary Problems in Marx Studies (five essays); The Reception of Marx into Modern Japan (four essays); and, New Horizons of Marxology (three essays). Terrell Carver indicates that this landmark publication “surveys current research on Marx and Marxism from an unusual variety of perspectives, asking an unusual range of questions” (p. 1). It may be expected that it will elicit an unusual variety of responses from its readers.

Marx for the 21st Century

1. Kunihiko Uemura: “Marx and Modernity” (pp. 9–21). This is a critique of the assertions that Marx was a Romantic, Eurocentric, Orientalist, and nationalist. Proceeding from the position that “The shaping of modernity coincided with the genesis of the Eurocentric capitalist world system,” Uemura states that “The idea of modernity has three aspects”: a “civil society” model consisting of free and equal individuals; an idea of “world history” based on the dualisms of “civilized/savage,” and “progressive/stagnant”; and nationalism or imagining the “nation” as the highest form of being in the global inter-state system (p. 9); and, then he continues to narrate how Marx examined the Eurocentric notions of “world history” and “nationalism” (p. 10).

This critique, as well as the criticized assertions that Marx was a Romantic, Eurocentric etc., are in an either/or mode (namely, of the form that: either Marx was or, was not a Romantic, Eurocentric etc.). In view of the encyclopedic reach and, continuously evolving nature of Marx’s output, reflected in the so far published and forthcoming volumes of the Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe,4 the both-and mode would have been more appropriate. Take, for instance, the case of his journalistic writings on India: quite a few of his statements therein are indeed Romantic.5 His subsequent study of India—as reflected in his ethnological notes,6 and in his notes and excerpts on the history of land relations in India7—are more nuanced. It may not be out of place to mention here, that an acquaintance with the classical Indian
literature may have had some influence on the emergence of the very concept of world history in the writings of early German romantics. Marx inherited this Romantic legacy, and he sublated Hegel’s critique of this Romanticism. Hegel conducted his critique in the domain of a speculative philosophy of history; and Marx sublated it in the domain of science of history. Marx’s study of world history overcame the limits of Romanticism in the process of its own development. Though Marx’s study of world history, and of the various disciplines evolving therein, was rooted in his geographical location in Europe, he continued to overcome the limits imposed by that location; and, finally his interventions remain internationalist, open ended, and incomplete.

Writing at the beginning of the 21st century, Uemura looks forward to a deconstruction of “nationality” (p. 20), as the first necessary condition for the liberation of the workers and of the other working people, from the internal hegemony of the dominant classes of various states. Here we come face to face with some substantial questions. Today, in the world, we not only have the by and large hearth type civilizations and nation states like those of Japan or Germany or France, but we also have the more or less empire type civilizations and states like those of Nigeria, India, China, Iran, Russia, UK, and USA. Quite a few of these empire type states straddle multiple socio-economic formations, involving a large number of indigenous people and thousands of mother tongues. What are the problems and prospects ahead for the working people living under the hegemony of these empire type states? For instance, should they or should they not try to achieve universal literacy in and through their own languages? If they do, then they will have to do that under the internal hegemony of their respective “national” rulers; and, if they do not, then they will fail to attain effective universal literacy, which is very necessary for their own emancipation.

Uemura further observes that the expected-to-be-internationalist European proletariat of the 19th century has been replaced by a contemporary working class, that seems to be “nationalistic in the bourgeois sense of the term” (p. 20). It is time we paid greater attention to the structure and dynamics of the unpaid domestic workers of patriarchy—the housewives and the children, the precariat, and the cognitariat of the 21st century.

Uemura rightly points out (p. 20), that Marx was a critic of Eurocentric Bourgeois modernity. It remains a fact, however, that Marxism arrived at many countries outside Western Europe as a modern and modernizing ideology and, that it was/is used as a part of an ideological apparatus devoted to the task of original accumulation of capital in those countries. How to proceed from Marx and deal with the consequences of such Marxist accumulation policies? If the working people of these countries are to oppose Bourgeois modernity as well as Marxist statist modernity, then which practical trajectories remain open to them, for initiating a
sublation of their respective traditional lives? How will, for instance, these people attain total and effective literacy in and through their respective mother tongues and, have access to a bare minimum of health care facilities, by going beyond the realm of hegemony of the Marxist ruling elites of their respective areas and/or, by refusing the funds offered by the bourgeois-modernity-promoting charity sector of global capitalism, channeled through organizations that are disarmingly called NGOs or, civil society institutions?

Many of these countries were colonies of a European imperial power. It is common knowledge that colonial modernity is a product of hybridization. Some recent, and some not so recent, studies of world history have highlighted the fact that the making of what is called the modern “West,” has also been considerably influenced by the “Rest” \(^{(16)}\) of the world. This fact about Europe’s past, together with the current multiethnic and multicultural demographic situation in many countries of the “West,” characterized by large scale migration of people from the rest of the world, draws our attention to the hybrid character of the past and the present of modern “Western” culture. Hence, if a sublation of this or that sort of hybrid modernity is at stake all over the world, then some new theoretical positioning systems and practical methods are required to be devised by the pupils of Marx, over and above the prevalent and customary critique of bourgeois and/or Marxist statist modernity.

2. Makoto Itoh: “Marx’s Economic Theory and the Prospects for Socialism” (pp. 22–35). The author first examines a critique of Joseph Stalin’s economic thought and policies by Kozo Uno (1897–1977), whom he considers to be a traditional Marxist (pp. 22–24). For a different view on Kozo Uno’s contributions, see Makoto Noguchi’s article (pp. 148–161), reviewed in section 11 below. In the second part of the essay, Itoh deals with “The nature of Soviet economy” (pp. 24–29). Here his position is close to that of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, and he does not endorse the current position of the Japanese Communist Party, which is of the view that the Soviet society was not socialist (p. 27). It would be of interest to know about his response to some of the current research on the economies of countries that were previously/are presently ruled by communist parties.\(^{(17)}\)

Itoh also proposes a return to Marx’s idea of using labor time in future socialist economic calculations. This may open up interesting possibilities, in spite of the huge problems related to converting complex labor time into simple labor time. Today, new vistas are being opened up before political economy as a whole through time use studies of care work, including that of unpaid domestic work.\(^{(18)}\) These studies and their reception among Marxist economists have gone through a lot of ups and downs, since the time of the pioneering efforts of Stanislav Gustavovich Strumilin (1877–1974).\(^{(19)}\) An opportunity is presenting itself today, for constructing
a broader data base for political economy, through the use of time measure of all human activities. When such a data base becomes more comprehensive, and is analyzed by the students of Marx in the domain of political economy, then the prospects of socialism may appear before us in a newer, more gender sensitive and child friendly light. What is more, time measure has the potential of making the sociological concepts of social, cultural, human and erotic capital less metaphorical, less rhetorical, more measurable and more concrete and, thereby open up the paths of integrating these concepts with the evolving discourses of political economy and historiography.

In the third and final part of his essay, Itoh examines “The possibilities of the Chinese road to socialism” (pp. 29–33). Here his position is closer to those of the Japanese and the Chinese Communist parties. One wonders how he would respond to some of the contemporary studies on inequality in China.

Contemporary Problems in Marx Studies

3. Hiroshi Uchida: “Marx’s Theory of History Reappraised” (pp. 40–52). Here an attempt has been made to extend Marx’s account of previous/primitive accumulation of capital, to “generate a theory of history” that may “enable us to understand the structure and trends of primitive accumulation,” in some earlier (England and Japan) and contemporary (Iran, Taiwan and China) developing countries (p. 40). This sample of five countries includes three (England, Japan and China) from the list of G20 major economies, one of which (China) also belongs to the list of G20+ developing countries, and two (Iran and Taiwan) are not included in either list. Uchida characterized the states associated with original accumulation of capital in these countries as “rentier-state capitalism” or “developmental dictatorship.” It would be of great interest to know how this theory fares when tested in respect of more representative data sets.

One wonders if some Japanese Marx scholars have proceeded from Marx’s observations about the Asiatic, Slavonic, Germanic and other regional variations of modes of production prior to capitalism, and investigated the actual trajectories of all the regional variations of original accumulation of capital for industrialization. If yes, then what are their results? Further, one would be interested to know how the concerned Japanese scholars responded to the late Soviet era ideological construct of a “non-capitalist path.”

In the section on China, we learn from Uchida that today there exist “Western socialist democratic states” (sic), and that the current Chinese macroeconomic control of the market economy “is almost the same” as that found in those Western states (p. 49). One also learns from Zhang Yu Lin, quoted by Uchida, that the current political and economic strategy of the Chinese state is very close to those
observed in the contemporary ‘socialist states’ [sic] of Indonesia or Malaysia’\(^\text{26}\) (p. 50). Should one conclude from these observations that in the 21st century, the distinctions among the macro political and economic strategies followed by West European social-democracy, Chinese communist mandarin rule, and South-East Asian crony capitalisms are all vanishing, like some camps of nomads, into some “socialist” blue?

Human history is not obliged to remain beholden to the favorite conceptual stereotypes of an era. Concepts and terms are periodically reviewed and changed in the sciences. Why should the science of history be an exception? Perhaps we should rethink the very concept of “mode of production” in the light of developments that have occurred in the disciplines of Economic Anthropology, Historiography and, Economics of Family Time, since the days of Marx.\(^\text{27}\)

Further, any future “reappraisal,” or reconstruction, or extension of “Marx’s theory of history” must necessarily entail a thoroughgoing textual examination of the entire trajectory of Marx’s own study of history,\(^\text{28}\) reflected in the hitherto published and forthcoming 114 volumes of \textit{MEGA} I–IV, of which his study of political economy is but one part, contained mainly in the 15 volumes of \textit{MEGA} II, as well as in the related correspondences (located in \textit{MEGA} III) and, notes and excerpts (located in \textit{MEGA} IV).

Finally, we shall have to go about it in the spirit of Marx; that is, we shall have to simultaneously engage ourselves in comprehensive and systematic, case by case, synchronic and diachronic studies of all the existing and emerging disciplines, social and natural sciences, art forms and technologies of our time. In view of the gigantic strides of human knowledge and activities since the days of Marx and, especially since the second half of the 20th century, these tasks are required to be handled by motivated international collectives.\(^\text{29}\)

4. Masanori Sasaki: “Marx and the Future of Post-Capitalist Society” (pp. 53–64). The author cogitates on a future social space beyond capitalism that will reduce labor-time and recognize individual and collective sovereignty of human beings over their own time. This is a long run vision that takes its inspiration from Marx, especially from the \textit{Grundrisse} (pp. 54–56). It envisages a reduction of labor time and enlightened management of free time. Sasaki, however, is not only concerned about the future of human leisure time, he is also alert to the here and now problems of including unpaid domestic labor time into public policy. Here, the Dutch model—of gender equitable combining and balancing of unpaid care work in the family, with paid work in the labor market—is mentioned (p. 63). This model shifts the related responsibility to the family, thereby it strengthens patriarchy; and spares the market and the state, which are the two main beneficiaries of episodic familial
reproduction of child (=worker) and, of daily child care and rejuvenation of the adult worker in the family.

The current Venezuelan model appears to be more humane. It has been reported that, since May 1, 2000, female heads of households in Venezuela have begun to receive about 80 percent of the Venezuelan minimum wage as payments from the government, in recognition of their socially and economically valuable work at home. In this context the pioneering work of Selma James and that of the Global Women’s Strike deserve closer attention.

5. Daisuke Arie: “Marx and Distributive Justice’ (pp. 65–76). At the very beginning of his essay, Arie traces the evolution of the idea of justice in the West since Aristotle’s *Nichomachean Ethics*; then he situates Marx’s critique of capitalism in the context of that history; and finally, explains Marx’s ideals of distributive justice in an Aristotelian context. An examination of Marx’s connections with Aristotle in the realm of the social sciences was also attempted in the United States of America around the same time. Marx’s Aristotle studies have been documented in: *MEGA* I/1, 2; II/1–5; IV/1, and 7–9. Earlier Alfred Schmidt and Hiroshi Uchida had alerted us to Marx’s link with Aristotle in the domain of political economy. Aristotle—directly, and/or mediated through Hegel—may also have exerted some influence on Marx’s extensive study of the natural sciences, and in particular on his attempts at comparing the characteristic forms of the natural and social sciences.

While introducing the theme of his essay, Arie has, *inter alia*, observed in respect of the difficulties faced in the domain of Marx studies in his country: that Japan had, and still has, “the world’s largest concentration of traditional Marxists who have been reading *Capital* like the Bible. Japan is the only developed country where an introduction to Marxian economics is taught as a prerequisite subject in the majority of universities. Its content is still a catechism-like reading of *Capital*…” (p. 66). Mori Koiti had struck a similar note about a quarter of a century ago, when he wrote: “it may be said, that now it is not the season for philosophy in Japan.” These observations underscore the fact that in a given society economic development and development of critical theoretical thought may not always go hand in hand. In Marx’s own time, economically more developed England was not the site of a comparably developed socialist theoretical culture. Today Japan may not be alone in going through a period of relative stagnation in Marx studies.

6. Hideaki Kudo: “Marx and the Environmental Problem” (pp. 77–88). Kudo at first takes us through a journey of reconstruction and rediscovery of Marx’s philosophical “Naturalism,” which Kudo locates in Marx’s doctoral dissertation and in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. Then he indicates the continuation of this theme in Marx’s later writings up to the first volume of *Capital*;
and, finally, makes out a case for the possibility of a more ecocycle-friendly social and political economy that can take its inspiration from Marx.

Kudo’s reconstruction of Marx’s 1840s philosophical views on nature is simply brilliant. He also deserves to be praised for drawing attention to the neglected work of Alfred Schmidt on Marx’s early philosophical concept of nature. Nearly two decades ago Uchida too drew our attention to this book by Schmidt (see preface to Uchida’s *Marx’s Grundrisse and Hegel’s Logic*, 1988). Another relatively neglected topical work of the 1960s was authored by Kurt Reiprich, who was productive till the 1980s.36

Schmidt as well as Kudo (p. 87) lamented that later on Marx shifted his attention to the critique of political economy, and did not continue with further study of nature. It needs to be pointed out here that Marx’s interest in the natural sciences continued till the end of his own life.37 Further, starting at least from 1850,38 his friends and comrades continued these studies throughout the rest of the 19th century.39 Owing to the fact that the results of these studies remained largely unpublished, and that the published reports about their existence were not very widely circulated thanks to the cold war, language barriers and other reasons, many of the more ecologically-enlightened political economists, as well as many Marxists engaged in the study of the natural sciences during the 20th century,40 continued with their efforts without any awareness about this past. The task of integrating the results of all these efforts of the 19th and the 20th centuries in a global ecosystems-sensitive social and political economy of the future remains to be accomplished by the concerned investigators of 21st century. What is more, their investigations must not only address the concerns of the dominant ecologically-enlightened thinkers of our time, but also those of the heretics, who challenge the prevailing dogmas in these and in related fields.41

7. Makoto Nishibe: “The Theory of Labor Money: Implications of Marx’s Critique for the Local Exchange Trading System (LETS)” (pp. 89–105). This essay has two parts: one theory-related and the other practice-related. At the level of theory, to begin with, a case is put forward for revisiting the Proudhon–Marx debate—on such issues as the associative and cooperative markets and use of alternative money—without any prior prejudice against Proudhon. Next, the issue of alternative money is again taken up, in the context of Marx’s criticism of Robert Owen, and of the Ricardian socialists on the question of labor money. Finally, at the practical level, Nishibe enthusiastically pleads in favor of the Local Exchange Trading System (LETS).

In view of the collapse of the First International, and the follies and crimes of the parties associated with the Second and the Third Internationals, a call for revisiting a part of the spirit that prevailed before the First International is certainly understandable. One can similarly make a case for a fresh engagement with the ideas of Comte, Kropotkin, Bakunin, the Narodniks, the Jewish and Christian anarchists,
Tolstoy and the Tolstoyans. Such engagements, to be more comprehensive, may be extended across the board, over all the issues pertinent today and for a future society that may emerge after capitalism. Such engagements need not be kept confined to the traditional questions of political economy. For instance, one may need to go into Proudhon’s opposition to social and political emancipation of the black people in the USA, to the French women’s right to divorce, and his position on sending the Jews back to Asia, to find out where he stood on the issue of abolition of racism, inter-gender “association and cooperation” under patriarchy, and political tolerance of the religious people of all persuasions and of the non-believers in a given society. One may be required to go back even further and critically study: the teachings of the grand masters such as Siddhartha Gautama turned the Buddha, Lao zì, Confucius, Socrates, Kautilya, Sun Tzu, and those of their followers and commentators; Jesus Christ and his disciples, the Zen masters, the Sufis, the religious, educational, social and political reformers of all lands of all ages. For instance, among the Europeans of the modern age, we may have to go to Comenius (for his stress on inter-sect tolerance among the Christians, on education for all, and on international education in a European context);42 to Condorcet (for his philosophy of history43 of which not only Hegel but also Marx was aware,44 advocacy of the rights of women as citizens,45 struggle against dogmatism, and stress on the instruction of political citizens, not merely in reading-writing-and-arithmetic, but also in the functioning of institutions46); and to Leibniz (for his encyclopedic study and vision of the sciences,47 and in search of the Leibnizian sources of Marx’s dialectic48). We can and we do need to revisit all the conservative, liberal and humanist thinkers, and all those socialists who came before Marx—in search of some wisdom, for some new light on the issues that concern us today.

On the practical question of endorsing some ongoing efforts such as the LETS, one needs to have a similarly tolerant spirit. Operations of Barter Cards, Islamic Banking, Gift Economies, and of the various claimants on behalf of Money-Free Economies, like the Wikimedia Foundation, Wikileaks etc., need to be examined together with the LETS. Their positive and negative sides, the stories of their alleged successes and recognized failures, in this or that domain or locality or country, are just a mouse-click away on the internet.

Reception of Marx into Modern Japan

8. Hiroshi Mizuta: “The Japanese Concept of Civil Society and Marx’s Bürgerschaft” (pp. 109–120). In the “Introduction” (p. 109) to this essay, the author at first clears the air around the different, divergent and/or convergent meanings, nuances and translations of the terms “civil” or “civilized” society in the writings of Adam Smith and Adam Ferguson, Marx’s concept of bürgerschaft,
Gramsci’s concept of *societa civile*, and of the Japanese term *shiminshakai* (literally: “society of citizens”).

Then he explains the two meanings and translations of Marx’s term *buergerliche Gesellschaft* as “civil society/civilized society” (in *The German Ideology*) and, as “bourgeois society” (in *The Economic Manuscripts of 1857–58*). The distinctions highlighted here are of crucial importance for the future of democracy and socialism in all countries, especially in the context of 20th century barbarisms in the name of socialism/socialist politics in some countries where “civil societies/civilized societies” were comparatively less articulated.

Mizuta’s account of Japan’s backward society, its truncated modernization since 1868 (pp. 112–114), and of the spread of Marx’s ideas there, initially under conditions of severe police repression (pp. 114–116), reminds one of similar situations at various levels of society, polity, and culture, in many other previously and currently backward countries: like Germany, USA, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Russia, China, India and, Indonesia, to name a few. When one thinks about the problems and prospects of modernization and articulation of civilized societies in these and in other countries, one notices that repressive states may come and go within relatively shorter time frames of decades or centuries, like the ups and downs of poverty and wealth of economies. Longer lasting stumbling blocks before the task of attaining a civil/civilized society, however, remain the backward social traditions: like the one embedded in the patriarchal norms oriented against women and children worldwide; birth-determined-status-based social hierarchies of the caste system, discrimination against the indigenous people and the Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Buddhist etc. communalisms of South Asia; the discriminatory social attitudes against the Burakumin, Ainu and Ryukyuan people in Japan; xenophobic, racist and communal attitudes against the more recent trans-border immigrants and Muslims in the whole of Europe and USA; against the Christians in Saudi Arabia, against the Roma people in Hungary and France, against Turks and other Muslims in Germany, against Kurds in Turkey, against Central Asians in Russia, against Arabs in Israel, against Tibetans, Uyghurs, Mongols and other minorities in China; against Tajiks in Kirghizia; against minority ethnic groups surrounded by and/or proximate to the majority ethnic groups everywhere. The list is indeed very large; and it indicates a slow growth of civilized societies in all lands, including in those of Western Europe.

In the next section of his essay, Mizuta takes us through some of the pages of the story of Marxist study of economic history in Japan since the 1930s (pp. 116–119)—leading to a vision of radical democracy and extraparliamentary movements, devoted to further articulation of civil/civilized society there—especially by some Japanese Marxists, such as Hisao Otsuka, Kazuo Okuchi and Zenya Takashima, who were also conversant with the writings of Adam Smith and Max Weber.
Throughout his essay, Mizuta deliberately stresses the basic need of a more and more articulated civil society in Japan. In his “Conclusions” he performs a great service by explicitly stating that “the urgent problems are love and solidarity as opposed to separation and loneliness, rather than individual freedom and independency”; and that the Japanese society has the same problems as the West “on the one hand, but on the other hand” the Japanese “are still living among many feudal remnants” (p. 119).

In this context he draws our attention to some of the relevant issues pertaining to Japan today (p. 120), which induce us to think about similar problems elsewhere. These are: the existence of an emperor/monarch—an institution which Japan shares with similarly backward countries of Europe (like the UK, Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and theocratic Vatican) and of Asia (like Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Bhutan and the hereditary partocratic monarchy of North Korea); preponderance of arranged marriages (as in Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Nepal), parliamentary posts inherited along family lines (as in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and the USA). Mizuta leaves his readers hungry and, he forces them to think for themselves. One wishes that one had more food for thought from his sage brain and fingers.

9. In the next essay, titled “Marx and J. S. Mill on Socialism” (pp. 121–134), Shohken Mawatari proposes to offer an analysis of “Marx’s socialist ideas from Mill’s point of view” (p. 122). It turns out to be a rather dicey proposition on several counts. First, on our author’s own admission Mill “was not familiar with Marx’s ideas” (p. 124). Secondly, Mawatari restricts his examination of some of the ideas of Marx (and of Engels) to the period 1845–59 and effectively to the 1840s therein (p. 123). He seems to imply thereby, that Marx’s intellectual development remained frozen during the last three decades of his life, which is not the case. Thence also, his untenable identification of Marx’s incomplete and open ended investigations and ideas with a fixed for all time Marxism/Marxist teleology. The result: a comparison essay that is more charitable to J. S. Mill, who is hailed as a champion of freedom and choice, and less charitable to Karl Marx who is painted as a devotee of some teleological determinism.

Amidst the above indicated shortcomings, however, a substantial question is raised in this essay. It is the question of interrelationship of freedom and determinism in the writings of Marx. Investigations on this question in the present century are already charting out a very interesting path, interesting both for the history of science and for the history of socialism, in and through the domain of probabilistic political economy.21
10. Akitoshi Suzuki: “A Bioeconomic Marx-Weber Paradigm” (pp. 135–147). This is not a study of paradigms in the discipline of Bioeconomics. It is a composite account of how some of the ideas of Karl Marx (pp. 136–137, 140), Max Weber (pp. 137–138) and World Systems Theory (pp. 141–145) got adapted into the soil of academic political economy in Japan. In this account of adaptation, Marx and Weber happen to be the major “species” figures, forming an intellectual hybrid. It seems that according to Suzuki this hybrid itself provides a “paradigm”; hence, perhaps, the hyphen between the two famous names. This is a story of the adaptation of this hybrid in a soil; further, towards the end of this story Suzuki treats economic systems as individual species; hence, perhaps, a somewhat metaphoric use of the adjective “bioeconomic” in the title.52

Suzuki opens his account with the remark: “The Japanese reception of Marx has employed a framework conceptualized as ‘Marx and Weber’” (p. 135). Conceptualized by whom, when, and where? Is it by Suzuki alone, and in this essay? Will all Japanese students of Marx agree with this assertion? The Japanese reception of Marx and of Weber, we are told, went through two phases of confrontation and complementarity (pp. 135–136): the first one occurred during the 1930s–1960s, and the second since the 1970s. Earlier, in the first essay of this section of the volume, one finds another account of the first of these phases by Hiroshi Mizuta (pp. 116–119), where a third dimension—that of a certain overlap of Adam Smith reception and Marx reception in Japan during the 1930s—is highlighted. During the 1970s, the concerned Japanese scholars first came into contact with the theories of under-development propounded by Samir Amin and Andre Gunder Frank, and then with the theory of world systems propounded by Immanuel Wallerstein, among others. Suzuki wrote: “Wallerstein actually produced a fusion between Marx and Weber, which represents another Marx-Weber paradigm” that defines a social formation “as an ‘individual’ instance” (p. 142). However, following Wallerstein, Suzuki has posed the question: how could such a fusion be possible? How could there be laws of the unique, of the individual instance? Weber’s solution to this problem, Suzuki informs us, has been “visualized through Karl Jaspers’ world schema,” wherein universal history is treated as “divergent metamorphoses of generic social and economic systems.” Here again, our author notices that “we lose historical connections and evolutionary aspects.” In order to solve this problem Suzuki proposes a “classification of all economic systems into five species: mini-systems; bureaucratic world empires; feudalistic world empires (now dissolved); world economies; and world government.” Since “the systems exist as individual social species,” as in Toynbee’s study of history, they have no certain historical order of development (p. 143). Suzuki believes that the “present world is a decentralized feudal world,” which will be replaced by a centralized “world government” (p. 145). He does not exclude the possibility that “we will need a new single religion, which
will unify all present-day world religions, in advance of the establishment of world government”; and a new political idea “transcending all jealous intolerance,” which will accept “all the differences in accordance with individualism” (p. 146).

Thus, we go through Marx, Weber, theories of underdevelopment and world systems, to enter at long last into the portals of Jaspers and Toynbee, and those of some future religion and a future political idea which will accommodate individualism. Why take such a detour? Why not go straight to Karl Theodor Jaspers and Arnold Joseph Toynbee and find out what they have to offer beyond their religiosity, mysticism and metaphysical speculations, by way of some sublation of the multiple paths opened up by Karl Heinrich Marx? Further, why not go directly to the repackaged old and new religions and find out the prospects of a single umbrella religion for the entire population of the world? We may then wait for some new Feuerbachs, to start a new critique of that new religion; and further, for a group of new political and economic utopians and anarchists; and, after that, for some new Marxes, who will provide new critiques of the grounds that gave rise to all of them!

One has an uneasy feeling, however, that by the time we go through even the very first turn of this loop, everybody will become some kind of believing Hindu and start chanting in Sanskrit: *Chakravat parivartante jagat, sukhaani cha, dukhaani cha* (The world goes on turning like a wheel forever and ever, as in times of pain, so in times of pleasure). Some new Marx will then most certainly scold everybody in the world, as the old one had scolded the inhabitants of the Indian peninsula in the 19th century, and in turn get criticized by some later professors for not being post-something enough!

11. Makoto Noguchi’s “Japanese ‘Cultural Eclecticism’ and a Reinterpretation of Marx and Keynes on the Instabilities of Capitalism” (pp. 148–161), is the last essay of this section. Here the author describes some Japanese efforts aimed at reinterpretation of “Marxian political economy along Keynesian lines” (Carver: Special Introduction, p. 5) and that of “Keynes along Marxian lines” (p. 154). Terrell Carver also observes, that the related “Marxist debates in Japan have been influential in economic methodology and are transferable elsewhere” (p. 5). Specialist readers in the Anglophone world are familiar with at least some of these debates. The non-specialists may start with some overview of economic thought in Japan before entering into the terrain of the specialists in the field.

Noguchi considers the above indicated Japanese efforts to be methodologically eclectic, and traces their origins to the fact that Japan was a latecomer in capitalist development (p. 148). However, undeterred by such facts as: lack of acquaintance with the totality of incompleteness of Marx’s investigations in the domain of political economy as reflected in the 15 volumes (24 books) [of MEGA II: the Capital and the work preparatory to it], Keynes’ lack of exposure to and pathological bias
against Marx, and the intellectual handicaps generated by compulsory university drills in Neo-Classical Economics during, and even after, the days of the Cold War, such efforts remain widespread among the academic economists of the early bird of capitalist development: England, the not quite latecomer USA, the rest of the Anglophone world, and even beyond. How to account for that? Some of these efforts may be methodologically eclectic and are, perhaps, traceable to some pragmatic responses in the face of a perceived task of comprehending the instabilities of capitalism of our time, in the interest of providing policy inputs to the masters and managers of polity and economy. Yet others—and these include many heterodox economists\textsuperscript{55}—may not have been philosophically pragmatic and/or methodologically eclectic. The orientations of the Marxists among the heterodox economists are, perhaps, traceable to a certain spirit of Marx, who had once remarked\textsuperscript{56} that capitalism or the bourgeois epoch of world history has to create the material conditions of a new world, in the same way as the geological revolutions have created the surface of the earth; and, that the future social revolution shall have to master the results of this epoch. Some heterodox economists proceed from the position that as students of Marx, it is their duty to master all the results of the bourgeois epoch—including the various Keynesian efforts aimed at managing the socio-political “earthquakes” and “tsunamis” generated by the “tectonics” of the economic “plates” of the capitalist era—in the interests of future social revolutions, that will produce a series of sublations of the various forms of capitalism.\textsuperscript{57}

Noguchi begins his narration with the responses of Uno Kozo (1897–1977) to the controversy about the nature of capitalist development in Japan, which erupted in the 1930s, on the one hand among the spokespersons of the \textit{Koza-ha} (Lecturers School), who authored a series of \textit{Lectures on the History of Japanese Capitalist Development} (in 7 volumes, 1932–33) and argued in favor of a democratic revolution prior to a socialist revolution in Japan; and, on the other hand, the representatives of the \textit{Rono-ha} (Workers-Farmers School), who argued in favor of a socialist revolution straight off. Uno Kozo did not take part in this controversy. He gradually perceived, over the years, that these controversies emanated from some confusion about the various levels of analysis. He proposed that distinctions be made among three levels of analysis in Marxian political economy: the first level is devoted to a somewhat abstract study of “pure capitalism” of a thoroughly commoditized society; the second or middle level analysis studies the “stages” such as mercantilism, liberalism and imperialism; and the third level investigates the concrete conditions of the actual economies of different countries and that of the world economy as a whole (pp. 149–151). According to Noguchi: “The core of Uno’s methodological contribution is the idea that between the realization of the essence of capitalist economy and a causal explanation for its polymorphous existence, there must be an intermediate or middle range level analysis” (p. 151). Noguchi insists that such multi-level analysis is
methodologically eclectic, since it attempts to integrate the heterogeneous elements of polymorphic capitalist development in Japan (p. 152). Does such insistence emanate from a Second and Third International inspired Marxist ideological belief that if an analysis is not methodologically monist, then it is eclectic? By that kind of ideological belief-driven monist theoretical yardstick, a lot of Marx’s relatively finished and unfinished writings (in *MEGA* I and II) and his notes and excerpts (in *MEGA* IV) may be labeled as methodologically eclectic; because, throughout his life, in the case of many of the disciplines, issues or countries that he has tackled, he has engaged himself in the study of the abstractions about their general nature, their stages of history, and the specific here-and-now conditions of the heterogeneous elements constituting the domains investigated. How will labeling Marx as methodologically eclectic help?

Noguchi, subsequently, continues with an account of his perception of the “historical condition of classical capitalism,” which provides “one material reason why Marx could not fully understand” certain features of capitalism (pp. 152–154). Noguchi is of the view that “Marxian political economy can supplement what Marx grasped with insights gained from Keynesian writings” (p. 154). In this context he dealt with some of the contributions of Michal Kalecki (1899–1970), Nicholas Kaldor (1908–1986) and Hyman Minsky (1919–1996) (pp. 154–158), whom he called pioneers of post-Keynesian or neo-Keynesian economics. To put the historical records straight, it needs to be mentioned here that Kalecki’s papers on the theory of business cycles predated and anticipated some aspects of the principle of effective demand put forward by Keynes in his more famous general theory. Further, among these three economists, Kalecki alone had some prior exposure to Karl Marx. So, in which sense is it legitimate to call Kalecki one of the pioneers of post-Keynesian or neo-Keynesian economics?

Noguchi concludes his account of his understanding of the instabilities in modern capitalism “through the eyes of Marx in the spirit of Keynes” (pp. 158–161), following what he calls Uno Kozo’s methodological eclecticism, with an appeal for studying the polymorphous development of capitalism as an evolutionary process and for not reducing capitalism to one single model. With all due respect for this advice, one still wonders why after reading Marx, one will still have to go to Keynes merely to realize that capitalism is evolving historically. One may have to go to Keynes or to any other economist hostile to Marx, for many other reasons, but not for this one. It appears to be a case of some mistaken identity that confuses the static and ahistorical ideas of some monist Marxists, with the dynamic ideas of pluralist Karl Marx, who was always alert to history. Most certainly this is one of those sad and lingering oversimplifying inversions of the 20th century that require to be set right and sublated by the students of Marx, in the 21st. The current interest in Marx
and Keynes, in the wake of the ongoing financial crisis, provides yet another round of opportunities for addressing this task.

New Horizons of Marxology

12. This section begins with the essay titled “The Brussels Democratic Association and the Communist Manifesto” (pp. 165–179) by Akihiro Matoba. It deals with Marx’s Brussels years (1845–48), his relation with the Deutscher Arbeiterverein and members of the Association Democratique there, and their collective internationalist inputs into the production of the Communist Manifesto. Matoba has argued for recognition of the role and contributions of the German workers movement of Belgium, and of the Belgian democrats of that period, in the writing and publication of this famous document. This suggestion deserves close attention and scrutiny from the historians of West European labor, democratic and communist movements of the 1840s.

13. Koichi Takakusagi: “Louis Blanc, Associationism in France, and Marx” (pp. 180–192). This essay starts with the assertion that the role and place of French revolutionary socialism in Marx’s thought remains under-researched. It is entirely devoted to an examination of the notion of association in the writings of French socialist politician and historian Louis Blanc (1811–1882). The author suggests in his “Conclusion” that Marx needs to be repositioned in the historical context of 19th century French associationist socialism, in the interest of locating Marx’s importance for the 21st century. In his own words: “When association and all its associated problems are considered—holism and autonomy, meritocracy and the principles of familial organization, labor movements and business reform, rule by the people and national unity—Marx’s thought will undoubtedly take on a new life” (p. 191). This essay deserves close attention from the students of Marx, engaged in investigations into the history of French socialist thought.

Concluding Remarks

Terrell Carver writes in his Special Introduction to this volume that “The editor, sponsor and contributors to this outstanding collection have all done their job. Now it is up to Anglophone readers to do theirs, and push forward in making contact, generating dialogue and pursuing issues with their colleagues in Japan” (p. 6). This review is one effort from a reader, in that direction. One hopes that this landmark collection of essays will be followed by other publications in English, reflecting the fascinating world of Japanese scholarship in these and related areas.

Notes

5. For instance, when he writes about the people of India, that their “country has been the source of our [meaning European] languages, our [meaning European] religions, and who represent the type of the ancient German in the Jat, and the type of the ancient Greek in the Brahmin” (“The Future Results of the British Rule in India,” New-York Daily Tribune, August 8, 1853); or, when he harshly but rightly criticizes Indians for their innumerable follies, prejudices and social evils, like the caste system, as in the passage on the village communities of India (in his article: “The British Rule in India,” New-York Daily Tribune, June 25, 1853), quoted by Uemura (p. 10), he certainly seems to echo some of the India related opinions of the pioneers of German Romanticism, such as those of Johann Gottfried von Herder or Friedrich von Schlegel. It must be stressed here, that Marx’s criticism of the social evils of India remains largely valid even today. For an account of the reception of Marx’s and Engels’ India-related writings in India see: Pradip Baksi, “Indians on Marx and Engels in India,” AALSA Webzine (July 2008) at: www.aalsa.org
10. See: Harstick, Karl Marx... [indicated in note 7], pp. 231–263.


23. The G20 major economies are: South Africa, Canada, Mexico, United States of America, Argentina, Brazil, China, Japan, South Korea, India, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Turkey, European Union, France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom, and Australia.

24. The G20+ developing countries are: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, China, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, South Africa, Tanzania, Thailand, Uruguay, Turkey, and Venezuela.


28. In Marx’s own words: “History itself is a real part of natural history—of nature developing into man” (Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, in (1975) MECW, 3: 303–304 [Karl Marx/ Friedrich Engels, Collected Works. Moscov: Progress, 1975–]). He continued: “Natural science will in time incorporate into itself the science of man, just as the science of man will incorporate into itself natural science: there will be one science” (ibid.: 304). Further, in the first clean copy of The German Ideology: we read: “We know only a single science, the science of history. One can look at history from two sides and divide it into the history of nature and history of men. The two sides are, however, inseparable; the history of nature and history of men are dependent on each other so long as men exist” (in (1976) MECW, 5: 28–29). For some overviews of Marx’s study of the natural sciences, see: Pradip Baksi, “Karl Marx’s Study of Science and Technology,” Nature, Society and Thought 9, 3 (1996): 261–296; Anneliese Griese and Hans Joerg Sandkueheler, eds., Karl Marx—Zwischen Philosophie und Naturwissenschaften (Frankfurt/M. [usw.]; Peter Lang, 1997) [reviewed by Pradip Baksi in MEGA-Studien, 1998/2: 107–110]; and, BMEF, NF, Beitragse zur Marx-Engels-Forschung, Neue Folge 2006: Karl Marx und die Naturwissenschaften im 19. Jahrhundert. Inhaltsverzeichnis [Contents] available at: www.marxforschung.de/nf21.htm


30. Article 88 of the Constitution of Venezuela (1999) reads: “The state guarantees the equality and equitable treatment of men and women in the exercise of their right to work. The state recognizes work at home as an economic activity that creates added value and produces social welfare and wealth. Housewives are entitled to Social Security in accordance with law.” For the text of the current Venezuelan Constitution, see: www.embavenez-us.org/constitution/title_III.htm

31. For information on the Global Women’s Strike see: www.globalwomensstrike.net/


34. See: Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels, MEGA IV/31: Naturwissenschaftliche Exzerpte und Notizen, Mitte 1877 bis Anfang 1883 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1999), pp. 634–638.


40. For instance: the Marxist historians and sociologists of the natural sciences in the UK and USA and, the Japanese Marxists assembled in and around the Yujbutsuron Kenkyukai [Society for the Study of Materialism] (1932–38), and the journals Yujibutsuron Kenkyu (65 issues) and Gakugeij (eight issues). For some information on these Japanese initiatives, see: Konstantin Aleksandrovich Gamazkov, Iz istorii rasprostranenya marksizma-leninizma v Yaponii (1932–1938gg.) (Moscow: Nauka, 1971).
44. See: Harstick, Karl Marx... [indicated in note 7], p. 255.
49. For an account, from Israel, of the idea of civil society in Scottish Enlightenment see: Fania Oz-Salzberger, “Civil Society in the Scottish Enlightenment,” in Sudipta Kaviraj and Sunil Khilnani, eds., Civil Society: History and Possibilities (New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 58–83; and, for an English intervention on Marx’s concept(s) of civil society, see: Joseph Fernia, “Civil society and the Marxist tradition,” in ibid., pp. 131–146.
50. For an anthropologist’s account of evolution of civil societies outside Europe see: Jack Goody, “Civil Society in an Extra-European Perspective,” in ibid., pp. 149–164.

