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Marx and Stalin

by Kenzō Kiga

Karl Marx's materialistic interpretation of history has been expounded from the standpoint of the suppressed class, and he has pointed out the passiveness of the upper structure of society. Stalin in contrast has emphasized the active role of this same upper structure from the standpoint of the ruling state power. As a result, the law of the development of the lower structure of society, described by Marx as "the natural law which is as solid as iron," was interpreted by Stalin as though it were a condition to be employed by and for the benefit of the upper structure. Stalin stated that the Soviet power "has created a socialistic system where there was virtually none."

Stalin explains the basic economic laws of socialism and laws of the development of the planned (proportionate) socialistic economy. But he does not conform with the Marxist definition that economic laws are the reflection of an objective process of development in society which takes place independently and regardless of human will. His basic economic laws are nothing beyond desires for improvement in the material welfare of the people under socialism. His laws of planned development are nothing more than statements emphasizing the desire of developing a socialistic economy in a balanced pattern conforming with basic economic laws. What he implies is an economic possibility. That is, there are several possibilities which must be made real by the enforcement of an actual plan. However, a possibility is only one of various possibilities and cannot therefore claim to be singularly the reflection of an objective process of the development of society. Nevertheless Stalin contended that these plans are more or less the reflection of these laws. His selfcontradiction is evident here where he claims that a plan realizes and at the same time reflects what has not been put into reality. This contradiction arises from attributing the active role to the upper structure.

Another example of Stalin's non-dialectic approach is the emphasis he lays upon the constant element in history as shown in his works

on etymology written during his later years. He contends here that language is a constant substance independent from both upper and lower structures of society, developing not dialectically but by a gradual process in accordance with its inherent laws. And he continues to say that pending the world conquest of socialism, the Russian language will defeat and assimilate the languages of other races.

If his contention is to be justified, the development of other cultural phenomena should also be explained non-dialectically. This naturally would undermine the Marxist idea of the upper structure. Moreover, his idea of unifying languages to Russian is contrary to his claim made public during the 16th Communist Party Convention of 1930 that he encourages the development of various racial cultures and languages. He unconvincingly tried to bridge such contradiction.

Stalin's contention of the constancy of the state or of centralized power is the product of the powerful position he held. For Marx, as is well known, the state was the organ for suppressing classes. For Stalin, it meant the guiding organ for a "revolution from above," and the influential power for developing productivity while charged also with the duty to make adequate adjustments between productivity and the scheme of production to thus avoid any frictional explosion. For Stalin therefore, state power is destined to exist permanently even in a classless society. Thus Stalin's view of history is not materialistic, but is idealistic in marxian sense.

Theory of Insurance in Economics

—Insurance Theory of Classic and Marxist Schools—

by Noriaki Niwata

Emanuel Herman, in the beginning of his book "Die Theorie der Versicherung vom Wirtschaftlichen Standpunkte (I Aufl. 1867, II Aufl. 1869), referred to insurance as "Das Versicherungswesen ist das Stiefkind der Volkswirtschaftslehre." It is a good expression given to the position held by the theory of insurance in the field of economics. In fact the hitherto so-called theory of insurance can hardly claim to

be such. Their study covered mainly the legal aspects in the field of property insurance and the mathematical technique in the field of life insurance as well as the field study of management. They have paid greater attention to insurance laws, laws covering insurance contracts or insurance policies and to the applied insurance mathematics. It is probably the result of the nature of insurance itself, but it has nevertheless greatly hampered the establishment and development of a systematic theory of insurance.

Insurance is a social product unseparable from the economy, and the theory of insurance (Versicherungswissenschaft) is, in essence, without doubt, a part of economics (Wirtschaftswissenschaft). In this way only can insurance as a living business be truly understood. However, students of insurance as well as economics have in the past shown little interest in the study of insurance as an economic phenomena.

However, the need for the economic theory of insurance has lately been felt, and many students of insurance have started study in this direction.

The present report purports to contribute to such study by tracing the changes in ideas of insurance which were incorporated in economic theories developed by a chain students from Adam Smith, David Ricardo to Karl Marx.

Chapter 1 of this report covers the ideas of insurance held by Smith and Ricardo as expressed in their works of "An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations" and "Principles of Political Economy and Taxation." The reporter's evaluation of their ideas are given in Chapter II. In Chapters III and IV, Marx's idea of insurance as expressed in "Das Kapital" and his other works is covered. Chapter V deals with the position of insurance in the Marxist economic theory, with particular attention paid to the ideas held by Rudolf Hilferding and Nikolai Lenin. In their individual original works, little has been mentioned about insurance. Nevertheless, the study of their general trend of thought was rewarding from the standpoint of economic theory of insurance.