



Title	POWER AND ITS STRUSTURE
Author(s)	KARATO, OKINORI
Citation	HOKUDAI ECONOMIC PAPERS, 13, 78-86
Issue Date	1983
Doc URL	http://hdl.handle.net/2115/30708
Type	bulletin (article)
File Information	13_P78-86.pdf



[Instructions for use](#)

POWER AND ITS STRUCTURE

OKINORI KARATO

Associate Professor

Faculty of Economics, Hokkaido University

Preface

At first, we need to know that so-called power has various levels. In this point, the English language is not so strict. Especially, the Japanese language is more inaccurate and emotional. We, Japanese, have only one word, Chikara in Japanese. Though power has various levels, we, Japanese, have only quite poor image to power.

But, the German language stipulates three stages to the power. That is to say, the concepts of power are composed with three words which are Kraft, Macht, Gewalt (in German). Those are distinguished in use consciously by K. Marx.

The nature and the society are regarded as a dynamic system which is formed by reciprocal work of power and power. We intend to explain this in accordance with the guide of the marxian theory.

(1) The Nature and the Society as a Structural System of Power —Kraft, Macht, Gewalt—

The power of Kraft is used in manner of labor-power (Arbeits kraft), productive force (Produktiv kraft) or nature power (Natur kraft), and it signifies productive and creative power before anything else. That is to say, for men it is positive and affirmative power. The power which works and effects productively and creatively is the power of Kraft.

The power of Macht is used in manner of might, ruling power, influence, mysterious power, or confronting power to the men. The power of Macht has substance in the power of Kraft, but it is an alienated, independent power from the power of Kraft. That is to say, though the power of Macht has substance in the power of Kraft, it is a mysterious power for men because they can not understand where it comes from and where it works on. While men do not understand what it is, it's mysterious power which they authorize and become obedient before it.

The power of Gewalt is used as violence or force, but it's destructive power for men. Though the power of Kraft is productive and creative for men, the power of Gewalt is symmetrically different. The power of Gewalt

has the origin in the power of Macht. In this point, Macht is Gewalt in the sense of potentiality and latency. The power of Macht transforms itself into Gewalt under the given conditions. That is to say, the power of Gewalt is the concentrative presentation of the power of Macht.

The system of power, namely, Kraft, Macht and Gewalt forms three stages of power. The power of Kraft presents itself as the power of Macht, and then the power of Macht as the power of Gewalt. When Kraft presents itself as Gewalt through the intermediation of Macht, we must pay attention to the point Gewalt becomes destructive to the power of Kraft before anything else.

Now we intend to explain the above-mentioned about the nature.

The relation of men to the nature determined their social relation, their social relation determines the relation of men to the nature. On the early stage of history, the identity of the nature and a man appears in such a way that the restricted relation of men to the nature determines their restricted relation to one another, and their restricted relation to one another determines men's restricted relation to the nature.¹⁾

Consciousness of nature appears to men as a completely alien, all-powerful and unassailable force. The power of nature-power is the form of movement of material in the world of the nature. If the law of movement of material in the world of the nature is recognized, it appears as productive power. But while it's not understood what it is, it appears to men's eyes as something alien and antagonistic to men. The power of the nature antagonistic to men is the whole of the mutually effecting power in the world of the nature, and the blindly effecting power of the material without consciousness.

As far as the blindly effecting power is not recognized and considered, it appears as the power of Macht and acts violently as the blind power. In the case that the power of Macht in nature acts blindly and concentratedly, it appears as the power of Gewalt like flood, thunder, disaster, and so on. If the effecting power under the power of Macht in the world of the nature can be recognized, considered, used and then controlled, the power without consciousness becomes productive and creative power, namely productive power of labor. That is to say, it becomes useful to men from Gewalt. The development of the relation of men to the nature is that of the recognition and use of the blindly effecting power in the world of the nature. It implies dominion and rule of nature-power by men. Dominion and rule is nothing but exploitation of the power belonging to the another, and to control the another by the power in question.

In the society which is distinguished from the nature, how appears the power of Kraft, Macht, Gewalt? Those powers in the world of the nature was the blindly effecting power without consciousness, and nothing is what

is generated as the object. On the other hand, matters are different in the society. Men have consciousness, behave with consideration and passion, and acts with objects.

The compound consequences of human consciousnesses and acts which effect in various directions form certainly daily history of human being. The society, in the sense of substance, is formed by combination of men, and in the sense of activity, is formed by co-operation of men. In the civil society, how appears the above mentioned?

To make men unite with is the social relation. Men combine and exchange their ability and action in accordance with this relation. Under this relation men's power becomes the social power (Kraft) which is so-called labor-power. Their labor-power (Kraft) are realized in accordance with this relation. In this reason, relation like this is the power of Macht confronting to men.

About this point, K. Marx explains as follows ; "To the producers, the relation connecting the labor of one individual with that of the rest appear, not as direct social relations between individual at work, but as what they really are, material relations between persons and social relations between things."²⁾

The social power, namely the power of Kraft presents itself as the power of Macht which generates from social relations of materials. The power of Macht which makes men move is the power of materials, such as commodity or money, and then it presents itself as the native power of materials. Men are made to drive by social relations of materials, and form society in accordance with this relations. This society becomes subjects to individuals, and they becomes subordinate to it. The society, therefore, becomes confronting and antagonistic to men as the power of Macht.

The relations of will generates from the social relation of men which is determined by the relation of materials, and then men act in accordance with this will. In the sense that the will of men makes men put into movement, it is the power of Macht. But the power of will generates from the social relation of materials. In this reason, the power of materials presents itself as the driving force of history. That is to say, it is the ultimate driving force of human history.

These movement of materials sometimes realize themselves violently, and behave as the power of Gewalt. Money, capitalistic machine and so on, present itself as such, as explained already, the power of Gewalt is the destructive power before anything else, and antagonistic to the power of Kraft.

In our society, the power of Gewalt can be seen at the state-power (Staats gewalt). It's the most developed power of Gewalt. It shows the

most highly-developed form of Gewalt. The state-power is formed from the power of Macht which is alienated and becomes independent from the power of Kraft.

We intend to explain the above-mentioned under the following sections.

(2) The Power (Macht) of Money and Capital

As already explained a little, social relation of men at the process of labor presents itself as the relation between materials, and becomes crystalized to the form of money. Under this social relation between materials, men exchange and combine the labor-power, but they are not conscious of it. Because they work separately each other as the private labor. The labor power realized and acquired by combination and co-operation is the social power of men. This power becomes separated from them as the power of materials, becomes the power ruling men.

The power (Macht) of money is nothing but the social power which bases on men's labor-power, namely the social power of men. Therefore, the power of money is what the whole member of society gives it with co-operation unconsciously. Generation of money is the result of development of exchange of commodity. But the process of generation of money has disappeared to the result, and leaves no traces behind the result.³⁾

Once money has generated, men chase the money and become to have a lust for money. Therefore they become to be ruled by the power of money. Thus, money gives the power to whom possess it, and become social thing which acts as ruling power to whom doesn't possess it. The power of money makes a person a citizen or a private possessor. Combination of these private possessors by intermediation of commodity and money presents itself as the civil society. In this civil society, "Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham" are the ruling principle and thought.

By the way, money transforms to capital. The power of money is vested with the power of capital, and becomes more developed power. Capital as capital stands on its legs by acquirement of surplus value. Production of surplus value gives the capitalistic form to the conditions of production. Labor becomes the controlled and forced labor. Mittel of production becomes the mittel of absorption of surplus value. Capitalist fronts on to laborer with dual functions. One is the control and direction, another is the domination and enforcement. What and how to produce become the function of capitalist. Laborers therefore are deprived of the concrete character of useful labor, and become abstract human being who is forced to expend only labor-power. Though labor-power which put in motion in combination with the mittels of production is the productive power of labor, it transforms into the productive power of capital. Relation between wage-labor and capital

become that of domination and enforcement. In this way, capital becomes antagonistic to the labor-power, and effects to labor-power as the destructive power (Gewalt). Laborers produce not only social wealth (=surplus value), but also the power of Macht which dominions and enforces themselves. That is to say, laborers produce mental power intrinsic to labor as the capital power (Gewalt) antagonistic to them.

Social power of laborer, which is the social productive power of labor, becomes not only the productive power of capital, but also the power which domains and controls laborer. This power of Capital gives capitalist the political power and the authority which control and govern the system of the factory or society in the factory. Though capitalist power is formed from what become independent from the mental ability of labor, it develops to what governs the society in the factory.

The power of capitalist will is given by the power of capital which presents itself as the form of materials composed of giant conditions of production, and becomes the complete form as explained below.

First of all, it presents itself as the organ of the person in charge of capital movement. Especially it becomes executor and carrier of conscious order in the co-operation body. This organ is organized by industrial officers separated from industrial soldiers and sergeants like army. This is the realized mode of the capitalist power and summarizes the society in the factory and organizes the total laborers like a bureaucratic system.

The second, the social process of production in the factory becomes to be commanded by military order. This order was put into concrete as the inner law of the factory. These laws and regulations of the factory determine the order of society in the factory.

The third, the machine becomes the arms to the spontaneous rebellion of laborers. It is not only the instrument of production but also the instrument of political power of capitalist. Thus the capitalist power becomes the organized violence (Gewalt) and enriches itself.⁴⁾

From the above-mentioned, the capitalist power accepts dual character as economic and political power. In the system of the factory, laborers are organized as a kind of the "society." This is the society which is made to combine and co-operate by capitalist. The power (Gewalt) which comes from and antagonizes and restrains this society is the capitalist power (Gewalt). Therefore, the substance of the capitalist power is nothing but the social power (Kraft) of laborers. From the above we can understand that the factory under the modern industry includes the essential category of the state power.

(3) State Power and State

Organization of the people in the state of capitalism is made up over the foundation basing on the mode of capitalist production. This organization splits into two camps, antagonistic classes on increasing scale. This organization, first of all, begins from the formation of capitalist class. The social influence of capitalist class are based on concentration and centralization of capital. This is the material base which organizes the class on nation-wide scale.

The concentration and centralization of capital as the economic power put forward themselves to the one point, a gigantic city, and a national center. These signify the centralization of capitalists and labors to a central city. The gigantic city concentrates the big population and centralizes the driving force of history.

On the contrary, the reverse matters arise at the rural districts. The revolution of instruments of production on agriculture drives away rural labors to the industrial center. The reduction of the number of rural labor dispirits their mental life, and wrenches their power of resistance. In this way, politic and economic power, especially the power of resistance of rural laborer, are absorbed from rural districts to the industrial cities.

The organization of capitalist class is put forward by big capitalists who monopolize the giant power of capital. Their combination becomes the core of an organization, and their initiative promotes the organization on nation-wide scale.

As soon as the political form was given to the influence of capitalist class, it becomes the centralization of politic powers. The capitalist class organize themselves against the laborer class. Various capitalist corporations with the common interest are organized at each industry and districts. Over these organizations, nation-wide capitalist corporation is made up. Though these corporations to realize their common will which make each other combine are trade association with common economic interests. The political club, association and the political party are made up as the carrier of the realization of common will of the capitalists class. The combination of the capitalist class thus comes to have political influence. The capitalist class have contact with other classes and moreover have influence on and form the relation of alliance with other classes. Thus the capitalist class acquire the social domination and raise their own position as the ruling class.

The capitalist as the ruling class enhance their common will and ideology to ruling thought, and transform them into the common sense of the people. Under the influence of this ruling thought, the political combination of the people are formed.

The political combination (the political society) are formed over the civil society. The people combine together at the various levels which are constructed from production, distribution, exchange, and consumption, namely the whole of the relations of production. The whole of economic combinations presents itself as the civil society. Though these combinations base on the movement of economic materials, and are spontaneous and natural, the ruling class forms the political combination as super-structure over the civil society consciously and practically in accordance with their thought, will, and ideology.

The ruling class push their common will practically out of by means of "this political society" as background, and intend to give a universal effect and force to their common will. This is nothing but the state power. The state power presents itself as the independent form by uniting with the conscious representative of their common will and the material instruments to realize them.

The representative of the common will of the ruling class presents itself as the special group of men. That is to say, the state of power, first of all, is formed as a state organ and becomes independent as the system of bureaucracy. It receives the executive power, but becomes the real state power only by uniting with the instrument.

The representative of the common will of the ruling class presents itself as the special group of men. That is to say, the state of power, first of all, is formed as a state organ and becomes independent as the system of bureaucracy. It receives the executive power, but becomes the real state power only by uniting with the instrument.

The state power (*Staats macht*) as the special group of men becomes the real state power (*Staats gewalt*) by with armed equipment, namely material forced power. This justly organized violence (*Gewalt*) transforms itself into the essential concept of the state power.

By the way, though the capitalist society have the class society (composed of two classes) as its essential substance, on its surface it presents itself as civil society, and people have intercourse each other as an independent and equal person, and form the civilian combination.

State power transforms itself into the form for the citizen or the private proprietor. Though state power is co-operate product of the capitalist class, it presents itself as if it was formed by the collective will of the civil society. State power presents itself public power, and becomes dual existence by being covered with the surface of the government for the whole citizens.

The form of the state which was formed by ruling thought of "freedom, equality, property," and became to have public power for the protection of them, is the state of the representative system. In this form it shows the

highest form of the state.

As soon as state power became public power, public power transforms the inevitable antagonism which generated from the class struggle, into the opposition of the same rank, right against right between citizens, and becomes the mediator or reconciliator, and stands aloof over the society.

Public power makes to unite with separate citizens who are seeking only their own interests, and infuse the self-consciousness of the nation into them. They unite with each other as the nation. Thus public power ceaselessly work upon the citizens to unify as the nation.

The capitalist class give their own request which generates from their class-consciousness the form of the request of the whole members of the civil society, and heighten it to the form of law or policy. These execution of political power need not to be done by capitalists personally, which are done by ideologue or intellectuals who are the fraction of the ruling class and have the talent to execute them, or by professional politicians or lawyers who have the talent to be able to organize the concensus of the other classes and make to reflect them into public power practically.

Enacting the law is the class struggle which one class force its will on the whole society and intend to give the universal force to it.

Through these moments, the ruling class produces the new moral, new custom and new order. Fusion of public power and "political society" which are organized by ruling class (the block of capitalists corporation, the political party, newspapers, or publications) make this "political society" swell. Moreover this "political society" is reinforced by collection and distribution of the state finance. "Political society" expand to the national state under the support of public power.

The ruling class make efforts to unify the society splitting into two classes, and to organize them. Various organizations, systems, and instruments which instruct and give lessons and obtain their consent are created as the hegemony equipment. This hegemony equipment is constructed by the block of national capitalist cooperation, political party, upper class of bureaucracies, and intellectuals of the ruling class, and grows and enriches in accordance with the development of capitalism.

This hegemony equipment works on the society to unify and organize men as giant power of adjustment. Unify of the capitalist class forms the "political society" and expands towards the national state.

(4) Conclusion

Unity of the capitalist class formed the "political society" and expanded towards the state. Capitalist society summarized under the form of the state is the result of the political combination of the capitalist class. The

material basis of its unity is the power of capital concentrated and centralized.

This very power is the social power which was exploited at the time of cooperation from the combined laborers. This social power of laborer was alienated and became independent from them and transformed into the power of capital and then influence of capitalist class, state power and the state. Social power of men was alienated as political power from the working class, and became antagonistic to them as the forming power of state belonging to capitalist class.

References

- (1) Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1964.
- (2) Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Progress Publishers Moscow, Chapter I.
- (3) *Ibid*, Chapter I, Section 4, "The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof."
- (4) *Ibid*, Chapter XV, Section 4, "The Factory."