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On the Meaning in Our Time of the Drafts of Marx's Letter to Vera Zasulich (1881)

With Textual Criticism

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Recently, there began to be a great transformation in our time, especially by a new wind blowing through the Third World. On the other hand, in East Asia Japan's capitalism had recovered quick since the end of the Second World War, and achieved a high-speed economic growth till now, pushing into the Southeastern Asian market (instead of the Chinese market in prewar days), drawing out the cheap labour force from the internal rural communities and bringing about a bad environment pollution. Thus, Japan's capitalism is destructing the rural communities both in and outside our country. But, such a situation causes sufferers to protest. For example, many events of effluence pollution provoke fishermen's anti-capitalist movements. It seems to be important that in these cases fishermen strengthen the solidarity often on the base of the fishing village communities from old times¹⁾. Although we cannot recover the old community, here is its meaning in our time as a probable of the base for a spontaneous self-defence struggle, which tends sometimes toward an anti-capitalist movement²⁾.

In connection with the subject on the old community, we would remember that, about a hundred years ago, Marx wrote Vera Zasulich a meaningful letter after he had made its four drafts. As well known, they are more meaningful than the letter itself. But, I believe that they haven't undergone any textual criticism to this day. Although many scholars have ever alluded to them, most of the scholars have used as a text "*Marx-Engels Archiv*" Bd. I (Frankfurt a. M., 1926), S. 318-342. In fact, as the chief editor D. Ryazanov said in "Zur Einführung" (S. 314), the original manuscripts handwritten by Marx were not always arranged in proper order and with correct revision in the printed text. Ryazanov explained, "Die vielen Streichungen, in deren Netz man die ungestrichenen Worte stellenweise nur mit Mühe entdecken kann, die ineinander fahrenden eingeschobenen Zeilen, ... machte eine Redaktion dieses Rohmaterials in dem Sinne notwendig, daß ich die inhaltlich zusammengehörenden Teile selbst aneinanderreichte, wo Marx für die Anordnung keine Hinweise gibt, und außerdem einiges in Fußnoten brachte". If we only compare the printed text with a sheet of

- 1) In connection with this point see Takao Shimura, *Nihon Keizai no Kōzō Hēndō (Structural Change in Japanese Economy)*, Kyōto, Minerva Shobō, 1973, especially pp. 180-198.
- 2) Many excellent works have been published as follows; V. G. Kiernan, *Marxism and Imperialism*, L., 1974, N. Miller and R. Aya (ed.), *National Liberation: Revolution in the Third World* (With an introduction by E. R. Wolf), N. Y., 1971, Barrington Moore, Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Land and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*, Boston, 1966, and so on.

facsimile inserted (fortunately!) on S. 315, and if we only reread carefully the Russian text, “*Arkhiv K. Marksa i F. Engel’sa*” Kn. I (Moskva, 1924), we can find easily Ryazanov’s revision improper in “*Archiv*”³⁾.

The above has to be remarked not from the scholiastic point of view, but from the theoretical point of view. Because, I think, the contents of the four drafts are able to be understood more clearly, if correct textual criticism is carried out on them.

In this thesis, I endeavour to do so for the purpose of understanding the meaning in our time of the four drafts, in connection with the above-mentioned subject on “*commune*”.

To begin with, I comment the various concepts of “*commune*” used by Marx himself.

“The fourth draft” says that not only a vague historical analogy but also the study on the history of “*commune russe*” is necessary to have a firm view of its fate, and that Marx has been studying it for a long time⁴⁾. I wonder it would be “a vague historical analogy” to compare “*commune russe*” in the latter half of the nineteenth century with “*commune agricole* as Tacitus described”, which Marx called “the recent type of the archaic formation of human society.” In short, Marx identifies “*commune agricole* as Tacitus described” with “*commune russe*” in “the first draft”⁵⁾, but I doubt the propriety of such identification.

[1]

Marx summarized the features as a matter of form of “*commune agricole* as Tacitus described”, i. e. “*commune germaine*” into three points⁶⁾, and at the same time, regarded the repartitional system and other aspects under the communal land-ownership of “*commune russe*” as systems which were analogous to “*commune agricole*”⁷⁾. I think, the identification of the two “*communes*” resulted from such a formal analogy. But the two are substantially different in character; “*commune agricole*” was, in itself, an archaic self-sufficient independent economic structure on the transitional stage from the society based on the primitive communal ownership to the society based on the private ownership, but, on the other hand, “*commune russe*” was located as only a part at the basis of a whole structure of more belatedly started Russian capitalism⁸⁾ which was being involved in a world-wide capitalistic system, relating to a world

3) Granting my own judgement is right, it doesn’t mean at all that Ryazanov’s contributions were of little value. On the contrary, I am greatly indebted to him for his many pioneering works, including Д. Рязанов, *Очерки по истории марксизма*, 2 тома, М.-Л., 1928 (2-е изд.). It may here be remarked incidentally that by this thesis I intend to contribute a little to the new edition of “*Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe*.”

4) “*Marx-Engels Archiv*” Bd. I (Frankfurt a. M., 1926), S. 340. Hereinafter this text is referred to as *MEA*.

5) *MEA*, S. 323.

6) *MEA*, S. 321.

7) *MEA*, S. 323. On the repartitional system in contemporary Russia Marx wrote somewhat in detail at the end of so-called “the third draft”; see *MEA*, S. 339-340.

8) “More belatedly started Russian capitalism”—This phrase was coined by me. I took the hint from Narodnik V. Vorontsov’s usage as follows; “Страны, позже других

market emerging in the latter half of the nineteenth century⁹). Even if “*commune russe*” under the serfdom in the first half of the nineteenth century was fundamentally self-sufficient economic organization, it was nothing but an essential structural element of the secondary formation, i. e. of the Russian serfdom society. So, such a commune should be called “a serf community under the serfdom”. To say nothing of “*commune russe*” that was forced by the Russian “primitive accumulation of capital” (Marx) to be a pseudo-independent economic organization as a victim of the drastic establishment of the private landownership and the nation-wide capitalistic fund formation. Thus, as to a historical stage, this “*commune russe*” is absolutely different from “*commune agricole*” which has “dualism” in itself; dualism—that is, parcelled farming of just emerging individual families within new “*commune agricole*” takes place individually under the inclusive primitive communal landownership.

Let's think over factually the “dualism,” because it was regarded by Marx as a proof of the “formal [—S. Hinada]” resemblance between the two “*communes*” above-mentioned. In “*commune agricole*”, the parcelled labour (the parcelled farming) causes “the private fruits of labour”, and furthermore induces the following development; from “the accumulation of movables, for example, cattles, money, and sometimes slaves or even serfs” to “the individual exchange of movables”, and further to “the infringement on the communal ownership of land”. This is so-called “dualism”¹⁰); the communal ownership of land has still remained in spite of its tendency to be dissolved. But in “*commune russe*”, many individual peasant households, which are too poor to pay redemption money and taxes by too small farming area, are being involved rapidly in commodity-economy through the land-renting *otrabotki* on landowner's farm¹¹), working away from home for casual work, debt from a usurer, and “the grain sale in fall and the purchase in spring” by urgent needs. Then, individual peasant's poor income gained thus in commodity-economy is drawn up half compulsively for redemption payments of his land as a part of communal land, and consequently, the form of landownership is made to be communal.

Therefore, the function of “repartition” is quite different between the two. Though Marx, according to Maurer, regards the description in the 26th chapter of Tacitus's “*Germania*” (“the vastness of land guarantees the easiness of parcelling; in spite of annual exchange of arable land, there still remains vast land”) as the description of a repartitional community¹²), it expresses, I think, nothing but one of ways of farming,

выступившие на путь исторического развития” (стр. 13) и “Позднее начнет какая либо страна развиваться в промышленном отношении, тем труднее завершить ей это развитие капиталистическим путем” (стр. 15) в В. В., *Судьбы капитализма в России*, СПб., 1882. I wouldn't use the words “backward” or “underdeveloped,” because Russian capitalism was not only backward. In connection with this point, see A. Walicki, *The Controversy over Capitalism: Studies in the Social Philosophy of the Russian Populists*, L., 1969.

9) See my article, “The Russian Peasant Movement in the Era of Imperialism—A Socio-Economic Sketch—,” *Hokudai Economic Papers*, Vol. 3 (1972-3), pp. 161-3.

10) *MEA*, S. 322.

11) See below note 18).

12) K. Marx - F. Engels, *Werke*, (*MEW*), Bd. 32, Berlin, 1965, S. 42-3, 51-2; i. e. Marx an

such as the slash-and-burn farming or so¹³⁾. Of course, this is not always the proof of denial of the existence of a repartitional system. Conversely speaking, supposing the repartition was enforced in “*commune agricole*”, it would function as a method to attain primitive equality since the basic unit of production had been transferred from the whole community to an individual large family.

But, in “*commune russe*” there are many various ways and periods of repartition, and non-repartitional communities are dominant in the Southeast and other provinces, and moreover even in the Central provinces repartitional communities exist adjacent to non-repartitional communities¹⁴⁾. As far as the repartition is enforced, there the important feature is found; by a peculiar method of the Serf Emancipation, that is, the method to share the common responsibility of paying heavy redemption payments and taxes, the re-partition of allotment-land is simultaneously the re-allotment of redemption payments and taxes. In this case, it is not too much to say that transfer of land from one to another peasant within a community means transfer of burden from one to another within the same community, or so to speak, buying and selling of land with burden¹⁵⁾. At the independence of a branch family, transfer of allotment-land from a head family brings the decrease in the head family's burden and, on the contrary, the increase in the branch family's. In this way, though in reality large head families were decomposed rapidly under a new condition of Russian capitalism after the Emancipation¹⁶⁾, the independence of the branch family like this came out as “repartition one by one.” In fact, such “repartition one by one” took place more frequently than “general repartition within *mir*”. And even this “general repartition” was accomplished as a formal disposal by *mir ex post facto* of many factual “repartition one by one” through some frictions. I think, this is the reality of the well-known widespread “repartitional *mir*” and the so-called “allotment-land renting by rich farmers”¹⁷⁾.

It would also have an important meaning as follows; “*commune russe*” in the latter half of the nineteenth century can hardly fulfil the function for economic equalization, but, on the contrary, various economic situations of individual peasant households under the impact of Russian capitalism influences on the manner of repartition. Therefore, in a sense “*commune russe*” is open to the outside.

Engels, 14. März. 1868, 25. März. 1868. The Latin text of “Germania” which I could read is as follows; Tacitus, *Germania*, Lateinisch-Deutsch, München, 1968, S. 90.

- 13) F. Engels, *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staats im Anschluss an Lewis H. Morgans Forschungen*, Stuttgart, 1892 (4-e Aufl., 1891). *MEW*, Bd. 21, S. 143. M. Kovalevsky, who influenced the well-known revision by Engels himself in the fourth edition, had interpreted the Tacitus's phrase in the same way. See M. Kovalevsky, *Modern Customs and Ancient Laws of Russia*, L., 1891, p. 78.
- 14) G. T. Robinson, *Rural Russia under the Old Régime*, N. Y., 1932, pp. 120-3.
- 15) J. Mavor, *An Economic History of Russia*, Vol. II, 2nd ed., N. Y., 1965, pp. 266-7.
- 16) Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 118. И. Гурвич, *Экономическое положение русской деревни*, М., 1941, стр. 61, 63. П. И. Кушнер (отв. ред.) *Село Вирятино в прошлом и настоящем, Труды института этнографии*, Т. XLI, М., 1958, стр. 75-7.
- 17) F. M. Watters, The Peasant and the Village Commune, in W. S. Vucinich (ed.), *The Peasant in Nineteenth-Century Russia*, Stanford, 1968, pp. 143-5. W. T. Shinn, The Law of the Russian Peasant Household, *Slavic Review*, Vol. XX, No. 4 (1961), p. 607.

On the other hand, many *mir*s in the Central Russia without uncultivated land, surrounded by the landlord's estates leave no rooms for enlarging allotment-lands necessary for them to meet the population growth, and the allotment-land per head, as a whole, goes on diminishing. In such a sense, "*commune russe*" cannot be compared with "*commune agricole*" as said by Tacitus that there still remains vast land. Therefore, "*commune russe*" is not open but closed to the outside landownership.

Thus, in the situation of Russia in the latter half of the nineteenth century, under the pressure of capitalism firstly and of landlord's landownership secondly, peasants have to rent lands from landowners or to go to work in their estates in the country and have to go out as casual labourers citywards. But, these circumstances promote to impose heavy burden on these peasant-workers; such a vicious circle, in which a high land-rent level and a low wage level (including the one of *otrabotki*) coexist, is called the *otrabotki* system¹⁸). As for the repartition, peasants continue to re-allot "communal" land, searching for a new way of division to enlarge their allotment-land in vain. Then, once they find their expectation hopeless within the limit of *mir*, they come to feel keenly the necessity of general division of the whole land including the landlord's estates; general division was called "Black repartition (*Chorny peredel*)". In the situation of Russia, the practice of repartition fosters such a peasant consciousness quite naturally. This is another decisive differentia between "*commune russe*" and "*commune agricole*".

Here, the so-called dualism means the one which is produced under Russian capitalism accompanied with *otrabotki* system. Therefore, the question is not whether an element of private propriety surpasses an element of collective propriety or not ("*ou l'élément de propriété privée qu'elle implique l'emportera sur l'élément collectif, ou celui-ci l'emportera sur celui-là*")¹⁹), but whether the stronger an element of private propriety would become, the stronger an element of collective propriety would become (the stronger the "*Chorny peredel*" movement would become) or not.

Taking up "*commune russe*" separately from its circumstances, Marx yields the common concept of "*commune agricole*" through the formal resemblance between "*commune russe*" and Tacitus's "*commune germane*"²⁰). This, however, wouldn't be a right method even to Marx's way of thinking. Is this his way of thinking?

18) The economic historical conception of *otrabotki* system seems to be formed by Lenin in his excellent work "*The Development of Capitalism in Russia*" (1899), especially in Chap. III. But, I questioned about his conception in some points. S. Hinada, *Rosiyā Nōseishi Kenkyū (Studies in the Agrarian History of Russia)*, Tōkyō, Ochanomizu-Shobō, 1966. My opinion is expressed in English in the above-mentioned article ("The Russian Peasant Movement ...") and in Russian in two articles as follows; С. Хинада, "Основной характер аграрной структуры в России в конце XIX века", *Scientific Reports of the Faculty of Agriculture Ibaraki University*, No. 12 (1964), pp. 99-110, and "Русский капитализм и отработочная система в сельском хозяйстве России," *Suravu Kenkyū (Slavic Studies, Journal of the Slavic Institute of Hokkaidō University)* No. 18 (1973), pp. 1-52.

19) *MEA*, S. 323.

20) *MEA*, S. 335, in so-called "the third draft".

Didn't Marx always observe anything as a whole and historically?

Of course, it can be said that Marx would also speak of Russian reality after making a study "from the purely theoretical point of view (*à un point de vue purement théorique*)"²¹⁾, as he wrote that "*mais il faut descendre de la théorie pure à la réalité russe*"²²⁾. And, it would be possible to say that he would pay due regard to the historical environment of Russia, as he wrote that "*il faut évidemment des milieux historiques tout-à-fait différents*"²³⁾. But, in fact, as clearly appeared particularly in "the first draft", in case of describing "*les misères*" of "*commune russe*" the above-mentioned "purely theoretical point of view" is not made best use of²⁴⁾. And, what is called "historical environment of Russia" seems to be nothing but her happy [—S. Hinada] "contemporaneity with capitalistic system of production (*la contemporanéité de la production capitaliste*)"²⁵⁾; Marx wrote that "*elle est à même de s'incorporer les acquêts positifs élaborés par le système capitaliste sans passer par ses fourches caudines*"²⁶⁾. I would say as follows; Marx was able to and had to theorize a general problem of "the village community in more belatedly started capitalistic countries under the capitalistic world system", through the analysis of "*commune russe*" and its environment as a whole from the angle not only of her happy contemporaneity but of her unhappiness which was made by the Western capitalist invasion.

[2]

But Marx has not taken that way. There we will find some peculiarities which appeared in the process of his speculation; instead of mention to the contemporary Russia, the theory of "*commune agricole*" has been gradually developed into purification. We must, first of all, grasp the process exactly.

Before taking up this problem, there is a historico-philological question to be solved. The question is, to jump at my conclusion, the order of Marx's four drafts; he must have written in the order from "the second draft (so-called by Ryazanov)", to "the first one", to "the third one", and finally to "the fourth one".

The following are the grounds of my argument that the order would be thus reversed, except the fourth draft (because it is sure to be written lastly).

① In the opening proposition, "the primitive accumulation of capital" is expressed in the words "*la genèse de la production capitaliste*" in both "the first" and "the third draft", although it is in "the second draft" in the words "*point de départ*" of "*la métamorphose de la production féodale en production capitaliste*"²⁷⁾.

Moreover, the word to indicate the process, "*le mouvement occidental*" is found inserted outside the first written body-manuscript in "the first draft", on the other hand,

21) MEA, S. 321.

22) MEA, S. 325.

23) MEA, S. 323.

24) MEA, S. 329. "Ce n'est donc plus un problème théorique".

25) MEA, S. 326.

26) MEA, S. 326.

27) MEA, S. 318, 329, 334.

in "the third draft" it is found in the body from the beginning; but, we cannot find the word in "the second draft" anywhere²⁸).

② In the second item of "the second draft" there is the passage, "I haven't known Russian Marxists' advocating fatal dissolution of the communal property of Russia at all (*les "Marxistes" russes dont vous parlez me sont tout à fait inconnus ... en faveur de la dissolution fatale de la propriété communale en Russie*)"²⁹), but neither in "the first" nor in "the third draft".

It is good enough to presume that as he has, at first, written "the second draft", he would allude to it, directly corresponding to Zasulich's letter to Marx.

③ What would be the most decisive ground of my argument is the way to use the term, "*commune agricole*".

This term is never used in "the second draft", but begins to appear in the middle of "the first", and is used positively from the beginning of "the third".

Namely only terms "*commune rurale*" and "*commune russe*" are found in "the second draft", where only the concrete "*mir*" is mentioned. This would signify as follows; as in her letter to Marx Zasulich translated the common Russian word "*sel'skaya obshchina*" into "*commune rurale*" and called for Marx's opinion against the controversial insistence that "today's Russian village community is an archaic form and is fated to ruin", Marx has written without distinction of Russian "*sel'skaya obshchina*", Zasulich's use of term, and his own use of term, in "the second draft" which, I think, he has written at first. (*La commune rurale est une forme archaïque ... condamné à périr. Les gens qui prêchent cela se disent vos disciples par excellence: 'Marxistes'*)³⁰). Besides, in "the second draft" there is no mention to the communities of Germany, India and Afghanistan, which was mentioned both in "the first" and "the third draft"³¹).

However, to read "the first draft" from the beginning in due order, firstly the concrete "*mir*" in Russia is expressed in words, "*la commune des paysans russes*", "*la commune rurale, encore établie sur une échelle nationale*" and "*la commune russe*"³²). Next, he states that we should know the changes from the archaic society to the modern society and to "the revival of the archaic form in higher dimension", but we know nothing about it. Thus he mentions the history of German communities according to Caesar, Tacitus and Maurer and has referred to India according to M. M. Kovalevsky³³). Just at this moment an original term "*commune agricole*"

28) *MEA*, S. 318, 335. It is not necessarily clearly found that "*le mouvement occidental*" was inserted outside the first written body-manuscript in "the first draft" (S. 318), but can be found in a facsimile of typescripts with some handwritten insertion offered by Institut Marksizma-Leninizma pri KPSS to the editorial committee for Polish "Biblioteki Myśli Socjalistycznej"; A. Walicki (wyb.), *Filozofia społeczna narodu rosyjskiego, Wybór pism*, Tom 2, Warszawa, 1965, str. 658-9.

29) *MEA*, S. 331.

30) *MEA*, S. 316-7.

31) *MEA*, S. 320-1, 335-6.

32) *MEA*, S. 318, 319.

33) *MEA*, S. 320-1.

is born after difficult delivery.

To relate in detail; how would Marx express the community which had ever existed up to the time Tacitus had described (including the time Caesar had done), strictly distinguished from “*la commune nouvelle*” introduced after German conquest of Gaule? Marx, at first, expresses “*la commune germane*” but erases it, and then expresses “*commune rurale*” but erases it, and next expresses “*la commune archaïque*” but erases it too, and finally expresses “*la commune*” without any adjectives³⁴). But to consider a more archaic form and “a product of natural growth of development” which should be distinguished from the former, he has reached to express the latter in a new word “*la commune agricole*” for the first time. He erased, however, a sentence which included this new word immediately. And after a brief allusion according to Maurer to the difference in the way to allot land between Caesar and Tacitus, he continues “*la commune rurale est donc issue en Germanie d'un type plus archaïque*”³⁵). (Such a complicated process is able to be deciphered by reading comparatively the French printed text and its Russian translation. But we will find in the latter the important mistake that it does not translate distinguishing “*commune agricole*” from “*commune rurale*”).³⁶)

The above-mentioned suggests that Marx was about to use distinguishing “*la commune rurale*” from “*la commune agricole*”; the former is used in order to indicate the concrete community in Germania or in Russia, and the latter is used in order to indicate the categorical concept of the universal existence which appears everywhere as the most recent type of the archaic formation of societies (Marx writes, “*la commune agricole se présente partout comme le type le plus récent de la formation archaïque des sociétés*”)³⁷). For, next he begins a new line and “*la commune rurale*” is used only to indicate concretely “*la commune russe*”, after characterizing three points “from a purely theoretical point of view”, saying “*il me faut maintenant désigner certains traits caractéristiques qui distinguent la 'commune agricole' des types plus archaïques*”³⁸).

Making a step foreward, Marx writes in “the third draft” from the beginning, that “*Un de ces types [= les communautés primitives] qu'on est convenu d'appeler la commune agricole est aussi celui de la commune russe*”, and that “*Son équivalent à l'Occident, c'est la commune germane ... commune agricole, telle que l'a décrite Tacite*”³⁹). In “the third”, to indicate particularly the concrete *mir*, he simply uses “*la commune russe*” and hardly uses a common word “*commune rurale*” any more (except for the case of Afghanistan and the erased parts). It is quite logical to infer that Marx must have written successively from “the second” to “the first” and to “the third draft”, but if the existing order arranged by Ryazanov were true, we couldn't

34) MEA, S. 321.

35) MEA, S. 321. “*Commune rurale*” is emphasized.

36) *Архив К. Маркса и Ф. Энгельса*, Кн. 1 (под ред. Д. Рязанова), М., 1924, стр. 272.

37) MEA, S. 322.

38) MEA, S. 321.

39) MEA, S. 335.

trace Marx's process of thinking in due order.

④ Not in "the second draft" but both in "the first" and "the third draft", there is the important proposition that "*ou l'élément de propriété privée qu'elle implique l'emportera sur l'élément collectif, on celui-ci l'emportera sur celui-là*" is decided by "*milieux historiques*"⁴⁰⁾.

The above-mentioned four points are the ground of my opinion, and any counter-evidences don't seem to be found.

[3]

If so, we could presume by investigating the contents of each draft as follows; at first, in "the second draft" Marx undoubtedly aims to analyse "*la commune russe*" itself, making clear its historical characteristics under Russian capitalism including *otrabotki* system. ("*Un certain genre de capitalisme, nourri aux frais des paysans par l'intermédiaire de l'Etat, s'est dressé vis-à-vis de la commune; il a l'intérêt de l'écraser. C'est encore l'intérêt des propriétaires fonciers de constituer les paysans plus ou moins aisés en classe mitoyenne agricole et de transformer les cultivateurs pauvres—c'est à dire la masse—en simples salariés, ça veut dire du travail à bon marché*")⁴¹⁾. But, nextly in the process from "the first" to "the third draft", he would rather aim to theorize generally "*commune agricole*" than to analyse the contemporary Russian situation.

"The first draft" (of course, named by Ryazanov) is just in the middle and transitional position: on the one hand, as above mentioned, Marx uses here the term "*commune agricole*" for the first time, but on the other hand, he makes more clear than in "the second draft" a uniqueness of Russian *mir* as follows; "*Mais vis-à-vis d'elle [de la commune rurale (=mir)] se dress la propriété foncière tenant entre ses mains presque la moitié, et la meilleure partie, du sol, sans mentionner les domaines de l'Etat. C'est par ce côté là que la conservation de la, 'commune rurale' par voie de son évolution ultérieure se confond avec le mouvement général de la société russe, dont la régénération est à ce prix. Ainsi ce n'est qu'au milieu d'un soulèvement général, que puisse être brisée l'isolation de la 'commune rurale', le manque de liaison de la vie d'une commune avec celle des autres, en un mot son microcosme localisé, qui lui interdit <toute> l'initiative historique*"⁴²⁾.

Here, the uniqueness of Russian *mir*, i. e. the possibility of the subjective spontaneous "*mouvement général*" (= "*soulèvement <général>*" of Russian peasants) based on the objective confrontation of *mir* with "*la propriété foncière*", is exactly pointed out. Further, comparing this indication with the description in the same draft, "*substituer à la volost', institut gouvernemental, une assemblée de paysans choisis par les communes*

40) MEA, S. 323, 338.

41) MEA, S. 334.

42) MEA, S. 324-5. As mentioned above in the introduction of this thesis, if we read the facsimile of Marx's original manuscript inserted on S. 315 and reread *Архив К. Маркса и Ф. Энгельса*, Кн. 1, стр. 277, we cannot help reading as such.

43) MEA, S. 324.

elles-mêmes et servant d'organe économique et administratif de leurs intérêts"⁴³⁾ (= *briser le microcosme localisé*)⁴⁴⁾, I cannot help being surprised at Marx's sharp prescience of thirty years ago, because we saw "the whole village agreement movement (*prigovor*)" in the revolutionary summer-autumn of 1905.

Now turning to the order of the drafts, however, in "the third draft" that indication of possibilities of the subjective spontaneous peasant movement is replaced in a different context by more objectivistic words as follows; "〈*Mais vis-à-vis d'elle se dresse la propriété foncière tenant entre ses griffes presque la moitié du sol, et sa meilleure partie. C'est par ce côté-là que la conservation de la commune rurale moyennant son évolution ultérieure se confond avec le mouvement général de la société russe, dont la régénération n'est qu'à ce prix. La Russie essayerait en vain de sortir de son impasse par le fermage capitaliste à l'anglaise auquel répugnent toutes les conditions sociales du pays. Les Anglais eux-mêmes ont fait de pareils efforts aux Indes Orientales ; ils ont seulement réussi à gêner l'agriculture indigène et à redoubler le nombre et l'intensité des famines*〉. *Les Anglais eux-mêmes ont fait de telles tentatives aux Indes Orientales ; ils ont seulement réussi à gêner l'agriculture indigène et à redoubler le nombre et l'intensité des famines. Mais l'anathème qui frappe la commune—son isolation, le manque de liaison entre la vie d'une commune avec celle des autres, ce microcosme localisé qui lui a jusqu'ici interdit toute initiative historique ? Il disparaîtrait au milieu d'une commotion générale de la société russe*"⁴⁵⁾.

In fact, Marx writes just before above-cited sentences in "the third draft", "*faisons pour le moment abstraction des misères qui accablent la commune russe, pour ne voir que ses possibilités d'évolution*"⁴⁶⁾. The context here, therefore, must be that "*microcosme localisé*" may be a negative element to the objective "*évolution*" of "*la commune russe*" but will disappear.

I think, that indication of the importance of the subjective spontaneous peasant movement in contemporary Russia here disappears: Instead, Marx would rather grasp the general theory concerning "*commune agricole*" as a transitional form from the society based on the primitive communal ownership to the society based on the private ownership. Of course, Marx's theory of "*commune agricole*" which is enriched in "the third draft" is precious in itself. But, we must realize that it is gained at the cost of his factual analysis of contemporary rural Russia.

[4]

If we can say in this way, we can summarize the features of four drafts of Marx's letter to Vera Zasulich as follows; first of all, Marx does not accomplish the theorization through a thorough analysis of the contemporary "*commune russe*" and its circumstances, but transfers his theoretical interests to the speculation upon "a general theory concerning '*commune agricole*'" through the elaboration from "the second"—"the first"—"the third" to "the fourth draft".

44) MEA, S. 324, 325.

45) MEA, S. 338-9.

46) MEA, S. 338.

The second, the following question can be pointed out.

① Shouldn't the peculiarity of "the primitive accumulation of capital" in more belatedly started capitalistic countries be grasped by the analysis of the structure of capitalistic world as a whole? I believe, we shouldn't say negatively that "the primitive accumulation of capital" can hardly apply to Russia, but should say positively that Russian type of "the primitive accumulation" exists.

② As to three features of "*peredel*" in "*commune russe*", I doubt whether Marx's cognition of facts was proper. Further, I think it impossible to identify the modern with the old only because they resemble formally.

③ Shouldn't the mutual relationship between the community itself and its external environment be grasped structurally, dynamically and generally? Though his analysis of the contemporary Russian situation at the transition from "the second" to "the first draft" is rather suggestive in this point, but even it disappears in "the third draft".

④ The problems of "more belatedly started capitalistic countries" might not be clarified sufficiently because his analysis of the contemporary Russian situation recedes backwards in "the third draft".

The third, Marx's theory that "the landlord's property *vis-à-vis d'elle* [*de la commune rurale* (= *mir*)]" promotes "*le mouvement général*" should be regarded as a merit in "the first draft", and it grasps intuitively the necessity of the movement for the "*Chornyi peredel*", recognizing in fact the actual situation of "*mir*", which was provided by Russian "primitive accumulation of capital" in the second half of the nineteenth century.

In real Russian history, such a "*le mouvement général*" as had been expected by Marx was realized in "the whole village agreement movement (*prigovor*)", which was initiated by peasant-workers in the revolutionary summer-autumn of 1905⁴⁷⁾, and in "the acquisition movement for the authority of the county committee" in the revolutionary autumn of 1917⁴⁸⁾.

Marx's prescience is sharp. But, if I were granted to add a few more words, I would like to say that Marx here stands near the position of Narodniki⁴⁹⁾.

[5] Conclusion

What we should gain in our time from "Marx's letter to Zasulich and its four

47) See my article, "the Russian Peasant Movement ...", J. Mavor, *op. cit.*, G. T. Robinson, *op. cit.*

48) See the excellent work, L. A. Owen, *The Russian Peasant Movement 1906-1917*, N. Y., 1937 (reissued, 1963). In Japan Haruki Wada made a brief but skilful study on this theme; H. Wada, *Rosiya Kakumei ni okeru Nōmin Kakumei* (Peasant Revolution in the Russian Revolution), in T. Okada (ed.), *Kindai Kakumei no Kenkyū* (*Studies on Modern Revolutions*), Tōkyō, Tōkyō University Press, 1973.

49) Various interactions between Marx and Narodniki are investigated in works as follows; A. Walicki, *op. cit.*, especially in Chap. III (Populism and Marxism), H. Wada, *Marukusu Engerusu to Kakumei Rosiya* (*Marx-Engels and Revolutionary Russia*), Tōkyō, Keisō Shobō, 1975.

drafts” is the theory of “*le mouvement général*” rather than the theory of transitional “*commune agricole*”, although it is a matter for regret that he cannot push out the former theory because of disappearing of the factual analysis in “the third” and “the fourth draft”⁵⁰.

50) In order to confirm my opinion stated in this thesis, it is necessary to read all the original manuscripts handwritten by Marx himself.