[Book Review]

**Teinosuke Otani, *Reading Marx's Bitter Struggle
from his Manuscripts for Capital***

Tokyo: Sakurai Shoten, 2018, 582 pp.

In the "Afterword," the author expressed his intention of finishing the literary career he had pursued for about half a century with this book. Unfortunately, he passed away about 6 months later in April 2019 at the age of 84. This book has hence become the last work of the late Professor Otani; it is a collection of articles he had published since the early 1980s. The book mainly contains a major part of his study on Marx's manuscripts for Book 2 of *Capital* on the process of its circulation, with the exception of chapter 5, which consists of his translation of a part of Marx's manuscripts.

The book is made up of 14 chapters, divided into 3 parts of somewhat different characters and dimensions. Of these, part II (entitled "Reading the manuscripts of Books 2 and 3 of *Capital*"), occupying more than 60 percent of the total pages, is incontestably the core of this book, also according to its contents. In the following, because of the space constraint for such a voluminous work, the review will concentrate on part II.

This part contains 4 chapters, from 5 to 8. As mentioned above, in chapter 5, the author made accessible for the first time to the Japanese public the entire original text of the 8th manuscript of Book 2 of *Capital*, published in MEGA, part II, volume 11, in 2008. This is the

part of Marx's manuscripts on Book 2, of which the author assumed the editorial work for a MEGA volume and hence was well aware of the relevance to the reading of Book 2. Chapter 5 amounts to far more than a half of part II of this book. As is remarked in the blurb on the front cover, this may be the most important contribution of this book for advancing the study of Marx's economic theory in Japan, although it is not a proper original contribution of the author.

Chapter 6 is a Japanese version of an article the author published in German in 1983. This is an article of debate concerning the dating of Marx's writing of the 1st manuscript of Book 2, with the MEGA editorial group working then in (East-)Berlin and Moscow. It is a fundamental editorial principle of MEGA to dispose the entire extant literary legacy of Marx and Engels rigorously in chronological order, the dating and ordering of each original material becomes an indispensable premise for making a MEGA volume. In writing the manuscripts of the 3 Books for *Capital*, Marx did not always proceed in due order from 1 to 3, beginning with the manuscript for Book 3 prior to 2, and at some point interrupting his work on Book 3 to come back to Book 2. It was only after having finished the manuscript for Book 2 that he resumed

writing the remainder of Book 3. Then, the question was where to locate this point of interruption and resumption. In criticizing the inference of the German and Russian editorial group, the author proposed an alternative inference on the grounds of various kinds of proofs, which was finally accepted by the editorial group and incorporated into the above MEGA edition. This occasioned his subsequent longstanding involvement with the editorial work of MEGA, part II, volume 11, which contains Marx's manuscripts for Book 2, and with the study on them.

Chapter 7 is a reproduction of a Japanese paper published in 2009, a year after the publication of this volume 11. This is in fact a rewriting of a part of the "Introduction" to this volume. In this new version, the author largely extended his arguments about the evolution of Marx's views on the circulation process of capital from the 2nd to the 8th manuscripts of Book 2, all of which were written after 1868. As is well known, it was Engels who edited and published Book 2 of *Capital* in 1885 after the death of Marx, in editing various manuscripts for it he left unachieved. Engels attempted to make of them a coherent and readable

book, and in this regard his merit is not to be denied. However, at the same time, this made it "very difficult to discern the trace of theoretical progress Marx attained step by step in his bitter struggle aiming at elaborating Book 2." According to the author, the most important point of progress Marx made in his successive manuscripts on the theory of reproduction consists of change in the way of its description: Marx first attempted to develop the theory of reproduction without the intervention of money, as if every transaction were carried out directly between commodities, before subsequently introducing money as a means of exchange, and it was only in the 8th manuscript that Marx adopted the monetary transaction as the sole possible starting point, and this meant also his final break-out from Smith's influence.

Chapter 8 is a reproduction of a Japanese paper published by the author in 2013, in which is discussed the relationship between the 1st and 2nd manuscripts, providing the reader with complementary materials to the discussions in the foregoing chapter.

(Susumu Takenaga: Daito Bunka University)