

Report summary

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This presentation focuses on the working hours and labor culture in the contemporary Japan from the viewpoint of *CAPITAL* Vol.1, Chapter 8 "Working hours". Regarding Marx's theory of working hours, I have contributed a paper entitled "How to read Marx's working time theory now" to the special issue, "Marx in the 21st Century: 150 Years After *CAPITAL*" of "*Political Economy Quarterly*", Volume 53, No. 4, January 2017. Therefore, I will repeat some points of my paper mentioned above and enter into consideration on the system of working hours in connection with the Labor Standard Law and the labor movement in Japan.

In Section 1, I will show using *CAPITAL* that the working hours reached 15 hours a day, 80 hours a week in the British industrial sectors without the legal restrictions of the exploitation in the mid-nineteenth century. After that, I will confirm the realities of working hours in the early 20th century and today in Japan, where death from overwork, namely *karoshi* including *karo-jisatsu* (suicide), has frequently occurred among the young people.

In Section 2, I will notice that Marx regards the working time as the focus of capitalist-labor struggle under capitalism and stresses that the limitation of the working hours has never been settled except by legislative interference through class struggle. On the basis of Marx's such theories, I will talk about the Labor Standards Law which has lifted the legal working hours due to 36 agreements and submitted the decision on working time to voluntary labor-management consultations.

In Section 3, I will historically review the fact that Japan's labor union movement has focused on raising wages and maintaining employment and left behind the political struggle for shorter hours. And I will refer to "the working style reform" with signs of overtime restrictions promoted by the Abe administrations. In my opinion, it will lead to the more deregulations of working hours in contrast to the signboard.

Finally, I will also address a few issues to be overcome by Marxian economics in Japan on the theoretical and practical appreciation of working hours.