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- THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDY ON THE
HISTORY OF JAPANESE ECONOMIC THOUGHT
Eijiro HONJO 1
- SOCIAL THOUGHT OF R. H. TAWNEY
Yuzo DEGUCHI 17
- THE STUDY OF STATISTICS IN JAPAN:
ITS DEVELOPMENT, PRESENT STATE,
AND FUTURE TASK
Ryoken OHASHI 48
-

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SOCIAL THOUGHT OF R. H. TAWNEY

By

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- I. Preface
- II. Social Thought and Social Sciences
- III. Tawney's Criticism of Capitalism
- IV. Tawney's Socialism
- V. Tawney as a Christian Socialist

I. Preface

In June, 1958, the present writer contributed a short essay entitled "Tawney's Humanism" to the "*Economic Review*" (Japanese edition), Vol. 81, No. 6. In view of the fact that, despite much being talked in Japan about the study of economic history by Richard Henry Tawney, his social thought has not been sufficiently understood, the present writer is confident that his essay was not without some significance in our country.

The short essay, however, was not sufficiently comprehensive in expounding Tawney's social idea. In the present treatise, effort was made to examine some characteristic features of his social idea.

II. Social Thought and Social Sciences.

Social thought is different from social sciences. But the difference has not been made clear and commonly accepted. I want to state my opinion about the difference before going into the subject-matter of this paper. The difference comes from two points. (1) Social thought is the systematised knowledge about *society in its totality*. Social science is the systematised knowledge about *certain phenomena of society*. The subject-matter of a social science is a part or some parts of that of social thought. (2) Social thought is the product of thinking by a *man in his total personality*. Social science

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needs not be the product of such a thinking. Its research may be achieved by *one side*—intellectual side—*of his personality*.

I will trace this abstract assertion a little further. Social thought points to the contents of cognition comprehended over the entity of society by the total personality, while social science is an organisation of knowledge about a part of the social world, e. g. economy, law and moral, which are not necessarily required to be cognized by the total personality. This difference at once denotes their mutual relations. (1) The position or significance occupied by a part of society in social life as a whole may be seen in nowhere but social thought. Economy, law and moral are parts of social life as a whole, and, therefore, social sciences, which are related to each of these can not tell about social life as a whole, and even when they are put together, a comprehensive aspect of social life can not be obtained. The comprehensive aspect, as such, will be seen clearly only as these are integrated into one social thought.

(2) As to the subject of cognition, there is also a relation of the whole and parts. The person as a whole takes part in the cognition of social thought, while partial persons do in that of social sciences. *Partial person*, though sounding rather queer, here signifies the following: While it is evident that learning about social world involves personality in its subject-matter the cognizing subject also behaves as a person in society. Namely, it participates in the act of cognition itself as a person acting in society. Accordingly, so far as this interpretation prevails, social sciences must always relate to persons with regards to the subject-matter in consideration. It should be noticed that the whole personality does not participate in it, because persons involved in the subject-matter of social sciences are only concerned with their special social acts. If economy is at stakes, the way a person acts in economic life alone should be considered. The *homo oeconomicus*, premised by bourgeois economics as the person acting in capitalistic society is one example of this personality. Thus personality in social sciences becomes the object of observation only partially but never comprehensively. It is personal only partially and in its abstract mode of being.

In the case of social thought, in contrast to this, something concrete or comprehensively personal, as in the case of objects, always acts. Social thought and social sciences, thus, in their respective relation to object and subject, stand in a relation of a whole and parts in the sense described above. Accordingly, while admitting that it goes without saying that sciences pertaining to society should always be practical, it should also be self-evident that social thought should ever comprise personality or practical propensity in a form more substantial than in the case of social sciences.

Now, R. H. Tawney ranks among the first-rate historians, and, at the same time, is a man provided with a distinct social idea. From what he has written, I perceive that he holds the difference of social thought and social sciences almost as I have pointed out above. In the initial part of the Preface to Max Beer's "*History of Socialism in England*", he wrote to the following effect:

"This book is called, 'A History of British Socialism,' because the particular aspect of that thought with which it is primarily concerned is the effort, partly critical, partly constructive, at once aspiration, theory, prophecy, and programme, which had as its object to substitute for the direction of personal profit and the method of unrestricted competition some principle of organisation more compatible with social solidarity and economic freedom."¹⁾

This passage already indicates clearly the outlines of Tawney's social thought, which the present writer is trying to expound in this paper. The first part of this passage, in particular, deserves attention, for, here, Tawney asserts that socialism is characterised by the "efforts, partly critical, partly constructive", and refers to "at once aspiration, theory, prophecy and programme". Because opinions are not necessarily agreed concerning the practical character of socialism, the statement of the "efforts, partly critical, partly constructive" may be interpreted as one already stepping out of the scientific domain by those who fail to discern the basic difference between social science and social thought.²⁾ An answer to this problem, however, does not concern us here; we will consider, beyond such problem of scientific method, the second part of the statement mentioned above, where Tawney refers to socialism as a combination at once of "aspiration, theory, prophecy and programme." What does this mean at all?

If we take the position of methodology of social sciences which began to take a definite shape from the closing years of the 19th century, it would not be permissible to allow aspiration and prophecy to be included in scien-

1) R. H. Tawney's Introduction to M. Beer's *A History of British Socialism*, One volume edition, 1948, VII.

2) A brief explanation will be given to the expression "partly critical, partly constructive". While "critical" allows a number of different interpretations, still more doubts will accompany the term "constructive". It depends on the objective or intention of cognizing subject, and, therefore, it will not be manifest whether it is objectively constructive or destructive. Thus, for the reason that "constructive" in scientific cognition means *technically effective*, a standpoint is seen where practical expression ought to be limited only to one which pertains to technical efficacy. This standpoint was that of Max Weber. The present writer labels such a narrowing of the sense of practice a technological degeneration. Refer to my "Max Weber's Economic Theory", *Economic Review*, Vol. 78, No. 1 (July, 1956) and "Objectivity and Subjectivity in Social Theory" in "Shiso" (a Japanese journal) (May, 1959).

tific cognition. Should, however, thought is recognised as an achievement of all-personality cognition of men, then, penetration of the factors of feeling and will in a scientifically purified form, would be simply a matter of course. When we admit in our social knowledge the preservation of a lively relationship with feeling and will, our knowledge may be said to have been acquired not, as a German historicist philosopher has maintained, with "deluted blood of intellect", but with a warm and palpitating blood, and no knowledge but such will have the force to move personality and awaken personality-motivated conduct.

In social sciences also, intellect in operation is not merely understanding, or *Verstand* in Hegel's term. It is intellect which is backed by human mind that can not be separated from human passion. Human mind is dialectically constructed and Hegel called it *Geist*. Because intellect in operation in these sciences is backed by this human mind, knowledge of these sciences itself have, some kind or other, a certain dialectic character, which is recognised in the intense relations between knowledge and action, and one of the causes is due to the dialectic structure of the cognising subject itself. As to the dialectic structure of knowledge in social sciences, one thing may be mentioned here. Knowledge in social sciences should be accessible to human action, and the accessibility gives birth to the results that are either the bettering or the worsening of society, and whichever result should be due to the choice of our moral and political deliberations.

Speaking of social thought, the all-personality factor in cognition, and, therefore its dialectic emerges still more distinctly. Aspiration and prophecy must make their bold entry into knowledge side by side with theory and programme. In the light of this logical construction, Tawney's method of understanding social idea, as mentioned above, is right and correct.³⁾

Even in terms of the prevailing view, it may be admitted that, between

3) This will be taken up later on for more detailed discussion. Prof. Knight, one of the liberalists of to-day's America, can not agree with Tawney's emphasis on the practicability of social idea. So, when he reviewed Tawney's collected essays, "*The Attack*", he expressed himself in opposition to Tawney's social standpoint. He reviewed this book and said: "all the essays, including the more argumentative or controversial, reveal the idealism and the charming personality which shine through all author's writings and which are known to so many through personal association.....For many reasons one would like to agree with and comment on Tawney's 'social position'. But more compelling considerations force me to point out why I cannot do this. In fact, for all the author's indubitable sincerity and competence, I must regard the work as insidious and dangerous propaganda, (F. H. Knight, *Professor Tawney: Essayist and Christian Socialist*, in the *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. LXI, No. 5, Oct. 1953, p. 406). The present writer thinks that this criticism reveals the fundamental character of economic liberalism in to-day's America.

social sciences and social thought, both the object of investigation and the subject of research are different. But the difference should be more thoroughly considered. I think Tawney is one of the thinkers who are well conversant with the difference. I will show this, to begin with. Pointing out the liability of Marxist historical explanation to be confused with judgement of value, he says: "the truth is that a movement of institution is to be interpreted with reference, not merely to the causes which contributed to its growth—though they, too, have their light to throw—but to the ends which it serves and to the qualities which the pursuit of those ends quickens into life."⁴⁾

It is highly important to interpret social and historical facts by synthesizing causal and teleological explanations. Such a synthesis, however, is very difficult to attain.

We know that, in the conventional epistemology of social science, the significance of causality and teleology has been repeatedly debated. The conclusion reached by the bourgeois science, as typically shown in the case of Max Weber, was to realise a certain rapprochement between causality and teleology—not in an unification of these contradictory explanations—within a logical framework. And this framework was called *ideal-type*.

If we take up economic theory as an instance of Max Weber's conception of ideal-type, two explanations, causalistic and teleological, of economic phenomena find themselves at the same time in this conception. We may show the reason as follows. On the one hand, the casual retrogression of historical facts is limitless, and we can not decide the original cause of the facts, but in the ideal-type cognition, the cause which is aimed at is nothing less than the subjective motive on the part of the man who acts, and it is demanded to find out this motive in the cognition. On the other hand, as it is possible to presuppose many ends, that is, intention or motives, laid behind social phenomena, we can not decide the end which our cognition aims to attain. But in the ideal-type cognition, we find a certain end already established in the conception, and it is the subjectively conceived end of the person who acts. We are not to raise any objection against this end, because the theory of freedom of value-judgement will demand us not to do so. The problem laid before the cognition is just to choose out of many means to attain the object one which is most advantageous to it, and to make this choice possible is the problem of our teleological or practical cognition. In

4) Tawney, "The Attack and other papers," 1953, p. 161. As instances of historical facts that are necessary to explain by an unification of causal and teleological cognitions, Tawney points to toleration in England and braveries shown by French wretched recruits at Valmy.

this meaning, causality and teleology meet together in the ideal-type conception.

Tawney does not use such a conception as ideal-type. How can he then get his knowledge which make him possible the dual interpretation of causality and teleology, as we have seen above? As is well known, both Max Weber and Tawney have made brilliant works to see in protestant religion the origin of modern capitalism, and it is all the more interesting to compare the modes of thinking of these two scholars about this problem.

Weber may have considered, at the outset of his study, the ethos of protestantism as the substantial cause of modern capitalism. As his study proceeded, however, the ethos became to be not the cause but a means of investigation, and when it was elaborated methodologically, it has become a constructive element of an ideal-type. It is a significant fact. As for Tawney, we know that he had not got the theme of his study from Weber, rather he had been guided by previous achievements of English economic historians. And in his famous study, the protestant disciplin of life is not a methodological tool of cognition, but a substantial cause beneficial to the rise of modern capitalism. Then, it is natural that Tawney has certain objections against Weber.⁵⁾

One objection arises concerning the relation of the Protestant ethics to concrete historical facts. While here is not the proper place to discuss this question in detail, it shall be briefly noted that, in the case of Weber, the Protestant ethics was a means for ascertaining concrete historical facts, and, therefore, even when it was made clear that, in investigating into concrete historical facts, the *ethic* did not exist in its original form, the conception would not be deprived of its value as a means of study. Rather this means that a step forward should be taken to the more concrete historical cognition. In the case of Tawney, however, what he endeavoured to clarify was the extent to which religious sects in England, together with industrial needs, have contributed to the creation of modern capitalism.

The second difference is pregnant with a more important significance in relation to the problem at issue. It pertains to the peculiar properties of the social idea elaborated in the foregoing lines. With Weber, the Protestant ethics as a means of scientific cognition is free from the life-attitude of the researcher. It would be beside the point, then, to assume that Weber entertained the ethos or its modern counterpart and adjudge that he was either critical

5) Tawney's view of Weber can be seen in his preface to the 1937 edition of "*Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*", and in his notes to Chapter IV of the same. It is shown too in his contribution to the Literary Supplement, London Times, Jan. 1956, entitled "*Religion and Economic Life*".

of or admiring capitalistic society. The case of Tawney is a little different. It would be erroneous to think that he, by frankly expressing his view of life and referring to the driving force of history, attempted to criticize modern society. It would be safe, however, to suspect a criticism of modern society in the very way he took up the theme, while, in the manner in which he talked about history, not a few readers might suspect that Tawney's own view of life was expounded. How should a frank expression of the objective of life on the part of a historian prevent his scientific study? Even if scientific cognition is closely related to a view of life, scepticism about an objective value of such cognition may be suspected of being responsible for the unreasonableness, which will force a split into life. Tawney did not say so much; but it may not be denied that Tawney, in his expression of social idea, might have been talking in this vein. At the bottom lay his demand for practicability and his desire, emanating from his very personality, to work with ethical and religious zeal.

The present writer, in his previous essay, referred to Tawney's high evaluation of Marx and his thought and his conviction that Marx will be correctly understood through a historical study. It is because Marx had a full ethical sense that Tawney evaluated him very high. He said "Marx himself, as his scathing denunciations of capitalist vices show, was as saturated with ethics as a Hebrew prophet."⁶ He also complained that there were so many Marxists who lacked such ethical sense that parodies of Marxism are rampant in the world.

Many Japanese scholars, who are only too liable to be attracted by the German way of thinking, and who are finding themselves in difficulty to escape from the abyss thus prepared, are often deprived of the possibility of a practical union between learning and reality, would think that Tawney was a victim of self-deception of a scientist, which Weber advised us to avoid by all means. However, it would be said that, after desperately endeavoring to free himself from the relativity of cognition, Weber could barely overcome such relativity in the negative sense of the term, but never in the positive (although it must be admitted that even a negative overcoming is not without value in low dimensions). When scientific achievements are vividly motivated by a subjective view of life or the world, and lead to a presentation of truth, indeed, our minds will be moved from the very root. A combination of the contents of cognition and the whole personality of the researcher in the case of social idea as well as of social sciences would seem to offer a criterion for evaluating a scientific achievement.

6. Tawney, *ibid.*, pp. 160-1.

This criterion, indeed, does not pertain to individual personality, the individual differs in his respective existing situation socially as well as historically; but, a criterion of value of scientific cognition and of thought would lie in the *universal personality* which transcends such individual differences. The personality, mentioned here, is to be found not in psychology as seen from the standpoint of a philosophy of life, but in the totality of his social activity.

This does not mean that Tawney, in his framework of thought, has such personality that will be recognised in his cognition. Nevertheless, there is something in his thought which strongly appeals to our minds. And this probably is because we come in touch here with such personality.

III. Tawney's Criticism of Capitalism.

There are evident traces of development in Tawney's criticism of capitalism. To clarify this point, I will attempt, in the following lines, to describe the process of such development, while referring, as far as I can, to the happenings in Tawney's life.¹⁾

After graduating at Balliol College, Oxford, in 1903, together with W. H. Beveridge (1879-), who later became his brother-in-law, Tawney settled in the Toynbee Hall, a settlement set up in London's slums in 1885.

The reformatist and Christian passion *vis-a-vis* the conditions of labourers after the Industrial Revolution, held by Arnold Toynbee (1852-83)²⁾ and the endeavor to grasp the actualities of modern poverty, as seen in "*The Life and Labour of the People in London*" (17 vols, 1891-1903) by Charles Booth (1840-1916), were both proving highly attractive to contemporary young generations. Tawney and Beveridge, graduates at Balliol College, then under the direct influence of Toynbee, were evidently among them.

Tawney at once started to devote his full youthful energies to the salv-

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- 1) The publications touching Tawney's life so far published in Japan are the following three, namely: the postscript to the Japanese translation of "*Land and Labour in China*" (1935); an essay by Mr. Shiro Abe, contributed to "Meiji Gakuin Review", No. 40, Vol. 1, Feb., 1956.; and the postscript to Vol. 11 of the Japanese translation of "*Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*", which is written by Mr. Takeomi Ochi and the present writer.
 - 2) In the presense of labourers, Arnold Toynbee confessed that middle classes had neglected labourers, given them charity instead of justice and given them unrealistic advices without sympathizing with them, and given vent to repentance for his past and hopes for the future (G. C. Binyon, "*The Christian Socialist Movement in England*", 1931, p. 116.) Mrs. Webb, likewise, asserted that the social reform movement in 1880's was based on the guilty sense on the part of the intelligentsia and propertied classes (B. Webb, "*My Apprenticeship*," 1926, p. 179.) And the actual founder of the Toynbee Hall was S. Barrett (1844-1913), a parish clergyman at the time.

ation of the poor and education of workers. What was noteworthy in his endeavors was the emphasis he placed on the fight against poverty, based on the self-awakening of labourers themselves, but not on charity, which was a time-honored tradition of England.

In this sense, Tawney's fight against poverty was modern from the very outset. However, a marked development had taken place in such fight against poverty between the first years of the 20th century and the years following the end of the first World War.

Tawney himself, in his lecture at the Manchester College of Technology in February 1920, told of the fact that, prior to 1920, the attention of students and social reformers was evidently directed against poverty alone, but, at that time, it has come to shift to various problems of industrial controls.³⁾

At the bottom of this statement, it should be noted, lay the facts of the first World War, Tawney's own serious injuries on the battleground, discharge from the military service on that account and his subsequent activities as a member of the Coal Industry Committee.

Regarding the difference in the manner in which the problems of poverty were handled, the following may be said. In the previous period, of course, modern means must have been taken, but approach was evidently limited to the apparent conditions of poverty. After the first World War, however, attention was directed to the social system which was directly responsible for poverty. In other words, the crux of the issue began to be taken up for study. Of this change of view, Tawney said to the following effect: if an unbiased student, although, at the outset, recognizing in its present state the relation existing between the capitalist, manager, laborer and general public, undertakes to study the problem of how an industry may be directed most efficiently on its foundation, he, in the course of such study, will be surely tempted to reconsider the nature and outcome of such relation itself.⁴⁾

This unmistakably indicates what evolution Tawney had effected in his manner of tackling the problem. The present writer earlier alluded to capitalism as a social system, described as an acquisitive society.⁵⁾ But this lecture of Tawney shows that he had expressed in it his criticism on capitalism earlier than in his first book.

Now, the second phase of development begun after 1937. That year Tawney wrote his Preface to the Pelican edition of his "*Religion and*

3) Cf. Tawney's lecture on "Recent Thoughts on the Government of Industry" in "*Labour and Industry*," 1920, p. 192.

4) Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 195.

5) Cf. Y. Deguchi, "R. H. Tawney's Humanism" *Keizai-Ronso*, Vol. 81, No. 6.

the Rise of Capitalism" and "*A Note on Christianity and the social Order*", which was first published in his subsequent book "*The Attack and Other Papers*."

These clearly reveal that his criticism of capitalism added to their sharpness. This tendency became even more apparent during the second World War. Tawney, then, was sent to America as an advisor to the British Embassy in Washington. The present writer is not sufficiently informed of his activities in that capacity, but he presumes that the fight against totalitarianism, in his case, worked to redouble his zeal for a criticism of capitalism.

What should be kept in mind, in this connection, is the fact that Tawney was not an economist, in the strict sense of the term, but a social thinker. This is shown by a perusal of his works, and he himself has declared to that effect.⁶⁾ Accordingly, it will not be fair to adjudge his economic thought on the basis of his economic theory; rather it would be more to the point to evaluate the situation from the following angle.

He attempts to recognise capitalism as follows. "Capitalism is an ambiguous term. The most general characteristic of the arrangements designated by it is, I suppose, the direction of economic activity by the owners of capital; but the phenomena described by the word are obviously complex. They are at once a body of technical devices, a form of social organisation, a system of ethical assumptions and doctrines, and a type of civilisation resulting from all three. The character of that civilisation is to be judged, not primarily by what is said about it either by its admirers or its critics, but by the institutions which it creates, the relations between human beings which those institutions establish, and the type of character, individual and social, which is fostered by those relations."⁷⁾ As is known from those utterances, capitalism was taken as a body of technique, a form of social organisation and ethical doctrines, and type of civilisation arising out of all these.

As capitalism is thus taken for a broader concept, its relation with politics could not but be grasped sharply. Tawney said: "The economic system is not merely a collection of independent undertakings, bargaining on equal terms with each other. It is also a power system. It is a hierarchy of authority; and those who can manipulate the more important levers are, directly or indirectly, conscious or unconsciously, the real rulers of their fellows.

All ignorant, they turn an easy wheel

6) When Tawney criticises on economic opinions of von Hayek, he began to write "having no pretensions to speak as an economist." ("Attack" p. 94.)

7) Tawney, *ibid*, p. 69.

Which sets sharp racks to pinch and peel."⁸⁾

This unrelenting statement was made against what the bourgeois-liberal economists are too apt to ignore behind the shield of the requirement of purity of an economic theory, and, as such, amply shows the uncompromising sharpness of Tawney's social insight.⁹⁾

Similarly important was his perfect comprehension of the rigorously material propensity of capital. Capitalism often labelled as "fetish worship"¹⁰⁾ or "a juggernaut sacrificing human ends to the idolatry of material means"¹¹⁾ will entail a reversed evaluation and induce man to kneel before material means to such an extent that he will eventually find himself at the mercy of it—this was told by Tawney from his earlier years till to-day. Rather, it would not be exaggerating to assert that he has steadfastly concentrated on stressing this particular aspect alone.

It is well known that Marx, as a young man, used to refer to wealth and private property as "fetish". Here, Tawney showed a peculiar approach to Marx. As a youth, Marx had not yet penetrated deep enough into economics, and, accordingly, was unable to fill the category of his "estrangement" (Entfremdung) with proper economic contents but only the inferred contents from Hegel's conceptions of "objectivation" (Vergegenständlichung) and "Externalisation" (Veräusserlichung). We find in Tawney's case also that the conception of "fetish" is not given enough intension to be called properly economic.

Thirdly, dialectic thinking in Tawney will have to be appreciated. Apparently he is not especially conscious of this logic, but his historical sense as a historian works to render it possible. We take up as an example his idea of property. He thinks as follows. Property originally was legal as a means of realizing man's social freedom, but, as the right of property came to be valued to such extremities in the modern ages that it was gradually deprived of its original functions, but came to be pursued for the sake of acquisition, exploitation, or power, and, thus, was turned into functionless property". He says of such a property. "Indeed, functionless property is the greatest enemy of legitimate property itself. It is *the parasite which kills the organism that produces it*. Bad money drives out good, and, as the history

8) Tawney, *ibid.*, p. 89-90

9) On the contrary, however, American economists have pointed out the naiveté of Tawney's economic idea. (Cf. F. E. Knight, *Cit. Op.*) Lindsay, dean of Balliol College, who was in intimate terms with Tawney, criticizes that Tawney's economic view contained an insufficient approval of the independence of economics (Cf. A. D. Lindsay, "*Christianity and Economics*", 1943. pp. 10-12.

10) Tawney, "*The Acquisitive Society*." p. 48.

11) Tawney, "*The Attack*". p. 165.

of the last two hundred years shows, when property for acquisition or power and property for service or for use jostle each other freely in the market, without restrictions such as some legal systems have imposed on alienation and inheritance, the latter tends normally to be absorbed by the former, because it has less resisting power. Thus functionless property grows, and as it grows it undermines the creative energy which produced the institution and which in earlier ages property protected.¹²⁾

However, we can criticise on this mode of thinking of Tawney. Though he sees correctly the reversal of social evaluation in the development of modern property and its result that man can not keep a humanistic existence, he does not make due emphasis upon the preparations made of modern property for raising society to a higher stage of socialism in the future. This, as has already been mentioned earlier, is, of course, due to Tawney's character as a social critic. If, however, capitalism is taken to be a type of civilisation, then, the movement of capital, too, will have to be shown as a positive moment, contributing its share to the growth of a new type of civilisation. Tawney's dialectic reasonings obviously concentrate more on the discovery of a negative moment, but indicate insufficient cognition of an affirmative moment (which must not be taken in a conservative meaning only, as in the case of Hegel.)

Fourthly, when Tawney makes mention of labour or work, he does not distinguish between physical labour and spiritual labour, but takes in the two as a united one. There are two aspects to be considered in this point.

Allowing both physical and spiritual labour to co-exist in labour, the latter, so far as it is an expression of technical capacity, may be introduced in an economic theory. But Tawney introduces beyond technical capacities moral, cultural and even religious sides in spiritual labour, and it is improper to economics.

But, on the other hand, economists, too eager to set up economics as a science, are apt to commit the contrary error of severing physical from spiritual labour improperly, with the ultimate result that man is degraded into a robot. This error, however, did not occur with Tawney. Generally, as social sciences become more specialized, they are liable to stray into a blind alley, unless an effort of synthesization is prepared along with it.

During the second World War, Tawney, stressing the significance of the fight against totalitarianism in his "Why Britain Fights," printed in *New York Times*,¹³⁾ pointed out the errors contained in totalitarianism, but, at the

12) Tawney, "*Acquisitive Society*", p. 93.

13) Tawney, "*The Attack*". p. 71. seq.

14) Tawney, *ibid.* p. 83.

same time, as he knew that economic liberalism would refuse to criticise capitalistic economy, apparently proceeded to stiffen his critical attitude. He wrote that man's freedom in a capitalistic society was no longer worth being so called but was already degenerated into an opposite thing. He said: "Reduced to its barest essentials, man's freedom consists in the opportunity secured him, within the limits set by nature and the enjoyment of similar opportunities by his fellows, to take the action needed in order to ensure that certain requirements—ranging from the material necessities of existence to the need to express himself in speech and writing, to share in the conduct of affairs of common interest, and to worship God in his own way or to refrain from worshipping Him—are satisfied."¹⁴⁾ As far as present society was concerned, however, freedom is nothing but a privilege enjoyed by a few, and becomes a kind of tyranny to the mass of mankind. He points to the following fact. "The brutal fact is that, as far as the mass of mankind are concerned, it was by fear, rather than by hope, that the economic system was in the past kept running—fear of unemployment, fear of losing a house, fear of savings, fear of being compelled to take children from school, fear of what one's wife would say when these agreeable events all happened together."¹⁵⁾

Thus, for Tawney, economic freedom and the theory of free economy are as good as dead in the modern age. What is certain at the present moment is that "monopolistic combines create semi-sovereignties which are the direct antithesis of anything that can be, or in the past has been, described as freedom." Then "the suggestion that capitalism, at the present stage of its history, is the guardian of any liberties but its own is an unpalatable affectation. If its pre-war tendencies were to develop unchecked, it would more properly be described as the parent of a new feudalism."¹⁶⁾ Therefore, Tawney feared that Great Britain also had not been free from the danger of Fascism, and he presumed that, if Fascism should take root in Britain, it would happen rather by being negatively accepted by the mass of British people who have found their hopes unfulfilled in the unfree capitalistic society of our times than by the success of the Fascist propaganda that will be made by the minority of the people.¹⁷⁾

15) Tawney, *ibid.* p. 90.

16) Tawney, *ibid.* p. 89.

17) "The war should have taught us one lesson, if it has taught us nothing else. It is that it is idle to blazon Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity on the façades of public buildings, if to display the same motto in factories and mines would arouse only the cynical laughter that greets a reminder of idealism turned sour and hopes unfulfilled. What men desire is, not paragraphs in constitutions, but results, in the form of arrangements which ensure them the essentials of a civilised existence and show a proper respect for their dignity as human

In this vein, Tawney's criticism of capitalism increasingly added to its realistic hue. Lastly, however, it should be noted with emphasis, among others, that although his criticism was concrete as one passed by a social thinker, we can not hear a single word against the existing bond between English capitalism and her colonies. How should such a silence be possible for Tawney, born as a member of the so-called Anglo-Indian family? There must lurk a rather grave question about this fact.

IV. Tawney's Socialism.

About what Tawney thought of the processes of remodelling capitalism and of coming society immediately after the first World War, mention has already been made in the foregoing lines.

In Tawney's "*Acquisitive Society*", the new society was named "functional society", and, there, the plan of reform was studied from the human side—formation of functional bodies—and the material side—public control upon the right of property. How this plan was subsequently materialised—this constitutes the theme of this section.

Although little changed in its contents, the so-called functional society has by now come to be explicitly referred to as socialism. Tawney, discussing freedom in this society as compared with bourgeois freedom, which is converted into tyranny and terror, expresses hopes that it be realised.

"If Socialists are to restore the magic which once belonged to it, they must bring it down to earth. They must state its meaning in realistic and constructive terms, not as possession to be defended, but as a goal to be achieved. They must prove that it is they, not the interests that use it as a stalking-horse, who are the true champions of the faith. They must make it evident that their policy is to end economic, as well as political, tyranny, by making economic, as well as political, power responsible to authorities acting for the nation."¹⁾

beings. If they do not get them in one way, they will try to get them in another. If the interpretation given to freedom reduces it a formal phrase, they will not fight for it against an alternative which pretends, at least, to offer them, substance, not a shadow. We are not ignorant what the alternative is. Should some gentlemanly version of Fascism—it will be called, of course, not Fascism, but True Democracy—ever arrive in this country, it will be established, not by the tyranny of a ruthless minority, but as the result of the indifference of an apathetic majority, so sickened by shams as to yield to any regime which promises them the practical conditions of a tolerable life, without which freedom is a phantom." (Tawney, *ibid.* p. 189)

1) Tawney, *The Attack* p. 91 In his lecture delivered in 1920, Tawney defined the economic system of coming age as "a relation of direct professional responsibility to the public" ("*Labour and Industry*" p. 211.)

Standing at a big turning point of society, where should we seek the fundamental policy? Tawney suggested as his policy "the wide extension of communal services" and "a genuine and decisive transference of economic sovereignty." He discussed these policies more concretely in his "*Equality*", and showed how private profit earned by a few should be subjected to the interests of a greater majority of the people and how economic development of the country should be directed towards the bettering of the national welfare. He wrote.

"Whatever else socialist programme may imply, it clearly involves, not merely—essential though that is—the wide extension of communal services needed to make available for all advantages which at present are the privilege of the few, but a genuine and decisive transference of economic sovereignty. It does not necessarily mean indiscriminate nationalisation, which is merely one method, though an important method, of achieving that result. It does mean that the keypoints and strategic positions of the economic system shall be removed from the sphere of private interests and held by public bodies. It means that the State shall be equipped with the machinery needed to enable it to regulate, stimulate and direct the flow of capital into different undertakings; that the foundation services, such as banks, transport, coal and power, steel—to mention no others—shall be vested in public ownership; that monopolies shall either be treated in the same way or be strictly controlled; and that the mass of industries which continue to be carried on outside the nationalised sector shall be required to work within a framework of policy laid down by a national authority. The particular methods to be employed for effecting that transformation will be, no doubt, of great importance, and I must not now dwell on them. The essential thing is that private interests should be subordinated to those of the majority of the nation, and that the State should be equipped with such powers and organs as may be needed to guide economic development on lines conducive to the general well-being."²⁾

This is nothing else than to aim at the establishment of a so-called welfare state. One peculiar phenomenon that we find in the development of Tawney's pronouncement of policy is that its phraseology rather than its contents, is radical in his earlier years and becomes moderate in his later years. This is probably because of a shift in the social situation involving an increasing power in the hands of the Labour Party and indicates the added sharpness in his attack on capitalism.

In his "*Labor Movement in England*," 1925, Tawney wrote to the fol-

2) Tawney, *ibid.* pp. 91-2.

lowing effect: "If to be revolutionary is to contemplate the introduction of far-reaching measures of social and economic construction, to be carried out, indeed, with general consent and by our traditional instrument of parliamentary government, but fundamentally altering the institution of property, then the Labour Party always has been revolutionary, is revolutionary to-day, and will continue, I hope, to be revolutionary in the future."³⁾ And, in 1934, he called the Labour Party to which he belongs, "the organ of a peaceful revolution"⁴⁾

After the second World War, however, we have his another expression: "Such survival policies (= policies of government control—the quoter), as they may be called, which in themselves have nothing to do with Socialism, may, of course, be accompanied, and would, no doubt, be facilitated, by measures, such as the extension of public ownership, to which the name may properly applied."⁵⁾

Here, a marked lukewarmness is at once apparent. What is represented evidently is the standpoint of social democracy, and, here, the true entity of Tawney's social thought may be seen.

It should be taken for granted that a number of criticisms are directed against such stand-point as described above. Tawney amply anticipates it, and, has counter-criticisms ready against some of the criticisms. This applies to the case of F. A. von Hayek's attack. Tawney takes up Hayek's "*The Road to Serfdom*"⁶⁾ for a counter-attack, which is to the following vein: While Hayek maintains that controlled economy inevitably leads to Fascism, this criticism is not directed against socialist economy itself, but against "the political nemesis" which it is supposed to bring about. This reaction, no doubt, is one of the likely evils, but can never to considered to be inevita-

3) Tawney, "*The British Labor Movement*," pp. 4-5.

4) Tawney, "*The Attack*," p. 62.

5) Tawney, "*The Webbs in Perspective*", 1953, p. 19.

6) The role played by Lord Beveridge in the development of the School of Economics and Political Science of London University was striking. It may not be denied, however, that his contribution has comprised certain elements not entirely compatible with the aspirations of the Webbs, the founders. Through a tie-up with the American financial magnates, Beveridge invited Allyn Young (1876-1929) from Harvard as the first professor at the chair of economics of the School. Lionel Robbins succeeded him. On the other hand, Beveridge endeavored for academic communion with Austria after the world war I, and invited Hayek to London. This fact simply spoke for liberalism as entertained by Beveridge, while this apparently paved the way for Austrian liberalism to infiltrate into English liberalism. This is significant because of a vast difference between these two versions of liberalism, the English one being embedded into the tradition of philosophical radicalism, while the Austrian one being brought up under the shadows of an absolutism régime in the nineteenth century. This probably was responsible for the subsequent failure of the School to expand in the line as envisaged by the Webbs.

ble. He differs from Hayek fundamentally in two points. One relates to the concept of control. To think that control will inevitably lead to a result as envisaged by Hayek is a theoretical error. The fact that parliamentarism is ineffective in certain country, and, also, that the system of public education has resulted in a prejudiced education does not at once justify the assertion that parliamentarism or public education are erroneous.

“Planning, like parliaments and public education, is not a simple category. Its results depend, not on the label attached to it, but on the purpose which it is designed to serve, the methods which it employs in order to realise them, and the spirit which determines the choice of both. If, for example, the essential characteristic of a planned economy be regarded as consisting, not as Professor Hayek seems to suggest, in a detailed budget of production, but in the transference of responsibility for the higher ranges of economic strategy from profit-making entrepreneurs to a national authority, his mystery of iniquity is attenuated to a mare’s nest, and his bloodthirsty Leviathan becomes a serviceable drudge.”⁷⁾

If controlled economy is interpreted in this way, it will not be necessary to let a single central organ interfere with the details of economic life nor let the State formulate plans comprising all ramifications of production, it being sufficient if public utilities are properly dictated on the state policy.

“In so far as economic freedom depends on the removal of the fear of unemployment, fair standard of remuneration, opportunities of promotion uninfluenced by pull and favouritism, the abolition of private monopoly and the contraction of the area of life where the battle is to the strong, it seems reasonable to say that it would be substantially increased.”⁸⁾

Secondly, Tawney thinks that Hayek conceived a superstitious notion about the State. “The idea that there is an entity called ‘the state’, which possesses, in virtue of its title, uniform characteristics existing independently of the varying histories, economic environments, constitutional arrangements, legal systems, and social psychologies of particular states, and that these characteristics necessarily combine the manners of a Japanese customs-officer with the morals of a human tiger, is a pure superstition.....Half a century ago, when we were informed by philosophers fed on Hegel that the State represented our higher selves, it was an optimistic bluff. To-day, when we were sometimes told that the State is the product of one of the nastier Freudian complexes, it is liable to be a pessimistic bluff. But it is a bluff in

7) Tawney “*The Attack*” p. 95.

8) Tawney, *ibid.* p. 96.

either case." The State, in essence, is "an important instrument"; and "the transference of property to public hands" too, is not an object in itself but a means for an end. The success of the policy "depends, not on the mere change of ownership, which, though the first step, is no more, but on the degree to which advantage is taken of the opportunity offered by it to carry through measures of reorganisation which private enterprise was unable or unwilling to enlist the active co-operation of employees, and to secure first-class management."⁹⁾

These two points constitute Tawney's criticism of Hayek's liberalism. While the wording is sufficiently polite, probably because of his consciousness that he is not an economist himself, the criticism, in its contents, unmistakably indicates a fundamental difference in the standpoint, and, as such, it serves to amount to a warning that these two scholars, simultaneously appointed to professorship of the same university, should, nevertheless, never be placed in the same vein of thought.¹⁰⁾

Now, socialism, in Tawney's case, is so liberal that it is often referred to as social democracy. As far as he was concerned, it could never have been otherwise. According to him, the word "socialism" appeared for the first time in the "Cooperative Magazine", for November, 1827, where those who thought that capital should not be owned by individuals but publicly owned were referred to as Communionsists or Socialists. The phrase did not mean totalitarianism but cooperation where social order was to be established with fraternity, not through competition. The cooperative society means an association bound together by a social principle not through a method of managerial technique. The pioneers of Lochdale did act from the very spirit and their ideology originated from the thought of Robert Owen.¹¹⁾

Knowing that Tawney's socialist idea is thus deeply rooted in the old tradition of England, the present writer now wishes to probe his relation with English Labour Party.

Joining the party soon after it was formed and consistently working for it through the subsequent years, Tawney, in 1934, wrote "*Choice before the Labour Party*."¹²⁾ And toward the last years of the World War II, he delivered a lecture for the Fabian Society, at the outset of which he declared:

9) Tawney, *ibid.* pp. 97-8.

10) Both Tawney and Hayek became professor of London University in 1929, the former as professor of economic history and the latter as Tooke Professor of Economic Science and Statistics. Tawney retired in 1949, and Hayek went to Chicago University in 1950.

11) In his "Introduction to M. Beer's *A History of British Socialism*" and in his "*Equality*," Tawney makes a detailed reference to the principle of co-operation.

12) Tawney, "*The Attack*", p. 52, et seq.

'The part assigned to me is a humbler one. It is that, not of the specialist who diagnosed and prescribes for the disease, but of the attendant who induces the patient to practise the regimen ordered, by persuading him that, repulsive as at first it may appear, he will find it in reality, not only fortifying, but positively agreeable."¹³⁾

This statement represents Tawney's relation with the Labour Party. He has never aspired to be a first-rate politician, and, while, as his profession, engaging in the study of economic history and lecturing on it, has ever since his youth maintained that a close cooperation between physical and spiritual workers should be the spiritual backup of the future society—in this maintenance indeed, the true aspect of Tawney's personality is to be detected.

Tawney's attitude towards the social problems is *sportsman-like*, so to speak. A perusal through his social reviews and recollections of the Western front in the World War I will strike his reader with the passages indicative of a team game player exhorting his team-mates for further effort. He often makes use of such phrases as the "spirit of comradeship" and "esprit de corps" as well as some military terms—a fact which strikes his reader as a representation of his sportsmanship. It would be highly becoming an English gentleman to strive for solving social problems sportsman-like.¹⁴⁾

V. Tawney as a Christian Socialist.

Tawney is an anglican. In any discussion of his social idea, his Christian conception forms its inalienable part, without which the quintessence of his standpoint would be lost. The present writer briefly discussed this particular aspect in his previous treatise, and, in so far as religion affects social life, he feels compelled to dwell on it still further. As with all persons more or less interested in religion, Tawney, in spite of the importance he attached to economics and politics, recognises the transcendent principles of life, and demands that life be regulated on such principles.

In alluding to this particular point, he often makes mention of the passage, "*Porro unum est necessarium.*" Acting according to this passage, our social life will necessarily have to be regulated religiously. The conversion of value is pregnant with a grave paradox, and, if this paradox is accepted,

13) Tawney, *ibid.* p. 82.

14) Military terms used by Tawney include "manoeuvres," "uncharted frontier region," "deployment," "flanks to attack," etc. And he writes of The Webbs. "They were not of the generals who rarely see the line, and they took their full share of hard fighting, as well as of staff work." (Tawney, *ibid.* p. 138.) He named his work "*The Attack*" after the title of an essay in which he told his experience of battle in the First World War. The title is significantly suggestive of his attitude to social problems.

social view will be modified as elaborated in the lines that follow. Here, the present writer intends to enunciate this point in detail, using the last chapter of his "*Acquisitive Society*" as representing the initial phase of his *wvie*' and his "*Note on Christianity and Social Order*" as speaking for his later phase.

The conception of a "professional society" as envisaged by Tawney in his "*Acquisitive Society*" is based on a social philosophy evolved on a teleological standpoint. In this philosophy, "society is not an economic mechanism, but a community of wills which are often discordant, but which are capable of being inspired by devotion to common ends."¹⁾ Such a philosophy is religious, and, if this thinking is correct, he says, English Church should be charged with propagating it. There apparently is a logical flight in the latter part of the assertion, but as far as Tawney is concerned, the conclusion is only natural, because he accepts Church in the following way. He asserts: "Church is related to man's highest and most everlasting interest, and, therefore, it ought to be the highest in society."²⁾

Church is not a social institution partially related to man's life, but is charged with the mission to regulate all phases of life.

"A rule of life, a discipline, a standard and habit of conduct in the social relations which make up the texture of life for the mass of mankind—the establishment of these among its own members, and their maintenance by the corporate conscience of the Christian society, is among the most vital tasks of any Church which takes its religion seriously. It is idle for it to expound the Christian Faith to those who do not accept it, unless at the same time it is the guardian of the way of life involved in that Faith among those who nominally do. Either a Church is a society, or it is nothing. But, if a society is to exist, it must possess a corporate mind and will. And if the Church, which is a Christian society, is to exist, its mind and will must be set upon that type of conduct which is specifically Christian. Hence the acceptance by its members of a rule of life is involved in the very essence of the Church. They will normally fail, of course, to live up to it. But when it ceases altogether to attract them, when they think it, not the truest wisdom, but impractical folly, when they believe that the acceptance of Christianity is compatible with any rule of life whatsoever or with no rule of life at all, they have ceased, in so far as their own choice can affect the matter, to be members of the 'Church militant here on earth.'

1) Tawney, "*Acquisitive Society*". p. 227.

2) Tawney, *Ibidem*.

3) Tawney, *ibid.* p. 236.

When all its members—were that conceivable—have made such a choice, that Church has ceased to exist.³⁾

What Tawney looks for is a society which is regulated with Church statutes. He insists that, here is an order emanating from a beautiful synthesization of unity and diversity, the situation closely resembling the order of the Paradise as related to Dante by Piccarda. When, in his "*Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*", he tells of the Mediaeval Ages as a background and of the true aspect of the Mediaeval Church, he writes so beautifully that it is sufficient to suggest the author's hidden passion.⁴⁾

With the advent of the modern ages, the religious world saw vast disturbances. Both English Church and its opponents ceased to be such as expounded by Tawney. The Church in the 19th century did not believe in the spiritual order, while man became so practical-minded that he ceased to harbor any positive faith, and, thus, religion degenerated into a mere decoration incidental to man's leisure hours. It approved of the conduct of *homo economicus* and was satisfied with preaching on such virtues as would not run counter to it. There, the social ethics of the intrinsic Christianity was denied, and it came to adopt an indifferent attitude to social problems. Tawney names this attitude "indifferentism" and criticizes it severely.⁵⁾ Accordingly, it became imperative that the Church itself be reformed, if ever it was going to restore its old prestige and authority.

The religious view, as expounded in the foregoing lines, became even more urgent in 1947. In his "*Note on Christianity and Social Order*", a collection of Tawney's answers to a set of questions, he maintains roughly as follows.

Question 1. Is there any mode of living peculiar to a Christian?

Answer. The Christian cosmic view comprises the acceptance of the measures of spiritual value, which will remain extremely paradoxical in spite of all endeavor for rationalisation—which marks a departure from the conventional concept. Christianity rejects the worldly kingdom and its glory; it, so to speak, is a convict's religion. And this is the reason why it used

4) Description here, cited from Dante's *Divine Comedy*, appears again in Chapter 1 of "*Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*."

5) Tawney, *ibid.* There are four attitudes which Church ought to adopt toward social problems and *indifferentism* is one of these. This attitude of life was discussed already in "*Acquisitive Society*" as follows. "Hence the opinion, so frequently expressed, that the religion of a society makes no practical difference to the conduct of its affairs is not only contrary to experience, but of its very nature superficial. The creed of *indifferentism*, detached from the social order which is the greatest and most massive expression of the scale of values that is the working faith of a society, may make no difference, except to damn more completely those who profess it." (Tawney, *ibid.* p. 235.)

to be a dynamic and revolutionary force.

Question 2. Provided there is such a mode of living, how far could capitalism go with it? Or, is capitalism anti-religious, and, as such, is it, essentially, not to mention its details, antagonistic to Christianity?

Answer. The latter part of the question is right. Christianity at the present moment is anti-Christian and it is most anti-Christian when it is referred to in any efforts to defend capitalism.

Question 3. If capitalism and Christianity are to be antagonistic to each other, is Christian Church charged with the obligation to try and condemn capitalism in the light of the standards of faith?

Answer. It should be unmistakably understood that it behooves Church not only to work on individual conscience but to recognize that man is capable to realize God's ends. It is erroneous to think that, as the economic order is a movement of non-personal force, any ethical criticism applied to it will be futile, while the notion that religion pertains to the spirit only and, therefore, is not concerned with social order, is similarly mistaken. Thus, it is obvious that Church has an obligation to criticize capitalism.⁶⁾

After making these answers, Tawney recommends the following four items as a guide to the attitude a Christian should adopt vis-a-vis the contemporary social problems.

(1) Concern to Education.—Application of secondary education to all members of the English nation has been Tawney's aspiration for years.

(2) Dispensing with Class Concept.—Man's dignity consists in humanity. The class system is an outright insult to this dignity.

(3) Criticism of Concentration of Power in the Economically Strong.—Power, as is understood now, ought not to be in the hands of man.

(4) Attitude to Property—Property changes historically. A Christian should look on property in the light of its possible contribution to the building of personality and integrity that are becoming in a Christian.⁷⁾

When the views expounded above are considered in conjunction with the fore-mentioned social idea, we know that Tawney may rightfully be called *one of the representatives of contemporary Christian socialism*. Christian socialism started in the latter period of the movement of Chartism. It declined for a time, but, from about 1880 on, it re-emerged in a new attire. All of its representatives—including William Temple, Dean of Canterbury, Scott Holland and Charles Gore—were Tawney's friends.

The reader must already be aware of the fact that "*Religion and the*

6) Tawney, "*The Attack*", p. 167-77.

7) Tawney, *ibid.* pp. 178-92.

Rise of Capitalism", was a collection of his lectures delivered in commemoration of Holland, his comrade. Already at the time when Tawney entered the Toynbee Hall, he must have carried his own religious demand. And an episode may be told here in this connection. In 1916, a group of clergymen, reflecting on the War then raging, organized the National Mission of Repentance and Hope. Committees were set up within it, each publishing its report, of which the most renowned was one on "*Christianity and Problems of Industry*". And it was penned by no other than Tawney himself.⁸⁾

8) M. B. Reckitt, "*Maurice to Temple: A Century of the Social Movement in the Church of England*", 1947. pp. 161-2.