

Doctrine may be a Framework for Science

We have so far come to know that just as the science of economics deals with production, discovering the crop underproduction law, for e.g., it also deals with distribution, discovering a law such as that of the “iron law of wages.”

In spite of all of this, however, there is often a difference between the scientific research that deals with production and that which deals with distribution. Let us take the law of the crop underproduction and the iron law of wages as examples: The first law represents the scientific research in production; the second represents the scientific research in distribution.

If we study the crops underproduction law, we will find it to include one fact about agricultural production applicable to land in every human society, regardless of its economic doctrine. Land in the capitalist society, according to that law, decreases in producing crops in the same manner it does in the Socialist or Islamic society. This means that the crops underproduction law is not confined to the situation of one particular doctrine; rather, it expresses an absolute scientific fact.

As regarding the iron law of wages, which we explained in the second example, it discovers, as we have already seen, the fixed level of laborers’ wages in a society that enjoys economic freedom. It concludes by stating that in a society wherein freedom dominates, laborers’ wages always remain on the level of subsistence. If they rise or fall, for any reason whatsoever, they always go naturally back to that same level.

This law is scientific in nature, context and objectivity because it tries to discover the reality and to get acquainted with the movement and direction of wages as it takes place in the society. At the same time, it decides that such a fact is true only in the capitalist society in which economic freedom prevails, and it is not applicable to the society which is economy–geared (to a certain direction), one wherein the government enforces restrictions on wages.

Capitalistic freedom is a precondition for the applicability of this scientific iron law of wages, that is to say, it is its general frame within the range of which the iron law of wages is also applicable. This means that the law’s context is scientific, and its general framework (which precludes its application) is doctrinal.

Most likely, the inability to distinguish between the context and the frame, or between the scientific law and its conditions, led to the claim that all distribution laws are doctrinal, and that science does not have to research distribution. Preconditioning a certain doctrinal frame for the scientific laws of distribution made those who put forth such a claim imagine that those laws are doctrinal in nature.

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