

Research on Marx's anti-poverty theory

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ABSTRACT

Poverty is an important obstacle to the development of human society. In capitalist society, proletarian poverty is manifested in the reality of low economic income, poor housing conditions and low social status. Marx deeply investigated the historical background and characteristics of capitalist society and pointed out that capitalist production relations and exploitation mechanism are the root causes of poverty. The exploitation of surplus value and the accumulation of capital lead to the expansion of poverty and the social problems caused by the economic crisis aggravate the poverty of the proletariat, and propose the realistic path for the proletariat to get rid of poverty, such as eliminating the capitalist system, vigorously developing the productive forces and stimulating the proletariat consciousness. Marx's anti-poverty theory is a strict logical system with main body foundation, practical premise and fundamental purpose, which has important practical reference significance for the proletariat and even the whole mankind to continue to move along the Marxist road, completely get rid of poverty and move towards liberation.

KEYWORDS

Marx; Surplus value; Anti-poverty.

1. INTRODUCTION

Marx's anti-poverty theory is an important part of Marxist economics. Marx focuses on the study of poverty and its root causes, and puts forward a series of theories and methods to solve the problem of poverty. Marx believed that poverty was caused by the existence of the capitalist system. In the capitalist society, the private ownership of the means of production and the relationship of exploitation lead to the widening of the gap between the rich and the poor, making some people fall into poverty. Marx emphasized that only by eliminating the capitalist system and establishing a socialist system can the problem of poverty be fundamentally solved.

2. THE BASIC CONTENT OF MARX'S ANTI-POVERTY THEORY

2.1. 1.1 The causes of proletarian poverty

Proletarian poverty is an inevitable result of capitalism in the long-term development process. There are various reasons for the proletariat to fall into poverty, among which the production relations and exploitation mechanism of capitalist society are the root causes of proletarian poverty. The continuous accumulation of capital is also an important reason for the impoverishment of the proletariat.

2.1.1. Capitalist production relations and exploitation mechanisms are the root causes of poverty

Since the middle of the 17th century, Britain, France and other countries have carried out bourgeois revolutions and established bourgeois regimes. In order to eliminate the residual feudal relations of

production, the bourgeoisie, which holds the political ruling power of the state, uses various means to establish capitalist relations of production. In Britain, in order to quickly occupy social wealth, the bourgeoisie swept the whole society with the land enclosure movement as the main way of plunder, and the bourgeoisie frantically owned farmers' land and other means of production, which was the primitive accumulation of capital. The primitive accumulation of capital made the peasants quickly lose the material conditions on which they depended, and most of the material wealth of the society was occupied by a small number of capitalists, who relied on it to vigorously develop the capitalist economy. Because the proletariat can only obtain income by selling labor force, on the one hand, their income is often restricted by the market supply and demand relationship controlled by capitalists, and they are easy to fall into poverty. On the other hand, in the production relations of capitalist society, the wage-labor system formed therefrom is the institutional cause of the deepening of the poverty of the proletariat. By controlling the means of production, the capitalist employs the proletarian worker for Labour under the cover of the so-called principle of exchange of equal value, whose Labour is nothing more than a commodity sold to the capitalist, and the value created by his Labour is not used for the improvement of his own life, but becomes capital for the further exploitation of the working worker by the capitalist. The labouring worker is completely alienated into the profit-making "machine" of the capitalist, so that this mechanism of exploitation under the wage-labour system makes the proletariat even more impoverished.

2.1.2. The exploitation of surplus value and the accumulation of capital lead to the expansion of poverty

First of all, Marx pointed out that the labor of wage workers can be divided into two parts: necessary labor and surplus labor. In theory, when the worker completes this part of the labor time, he can no longer continue to work, but the capitalist requires the wage worker to continue to work during the remaining time under the pretext of the so-called wage labor of exchange of equal value, and the value created by this part of labor is absolute surplus value. It is exploited and appropriated by the capitalists without compensation. In addition, capitalist socio-economic development emphasizes free markets and free competition between different industries. In order to occupy more market share and gain more profits, capitalists compete with each other through price wars. Price reduction is bound to affect the interests of capitalists themselves, so capitalists constantly improve production technology, improve labor efficiency, and try to reduce production costs to make up for the damage caused by price wars. The increase in labor efficiency means that it takes less time than before for a hired worker to create a share of the value of his wages, and the rest of the time to create relative surplus value for the capitalist for free, and the capitalist is entitled to take the difference. Secondly, with the application of advanced science and technology brought about by the industrial Revolution, the mechanization level of most factories has been greatly improved, and the demand for labor has correspondingly decreased. Moreover, many small and medium-sized capitalists have been annexed and eliminated in the fierce market competition, and a large number of small and medium-sized capitalists who have lost the means of production are forced to join the labor force in order to survive, and have become the proletariat. As a result, the demand for labor is greater than the supply, and capitalists can occupy a favorable market advantage to further depress and undercut the wages of working workers, who will only become more and more impoverished. Therefore, as capital continues to accumulate, the number of unemployed poor people will gradually increase, and labor force will turn to the buyer's market, and capitalists will take advantage of this reality to further exploit the working workers. The harder the working workers work, the overall demand for labor force of capitalists will decrease, which will lead to a large number of workers becoming unemployed. This means that the proletariat is trapped in a cycle of poverty from which it can never get out.

2.1.3. The social problems caused by the economic crisis have exacerbated the poverty of the proletariat

When capitalist society has developed to a certain stage, there will be an economic crisis, which is an inevitable occurrence and a malpractice that cannot be eliminated by the capitalist system. When the

economic crisis broke out, the entire social production showed excess phenomenon, but this excess is a relative excess, not poor working people no longer need the products produced by the society, but relative to the working people can afford the demand, they do not have enough ability to pay for the necessities of daily life, resulting in social overproduction. When the economic crisis broke out, because capitalists could not sell commodities to make up for the cost of commodity production and obtain corresponding profits, in order to reduce the damage to their own interests, capitalists recouped some losses by withholding workers' wages or even firing workers. Their factories cut production or even shut down, and a large number of workers became unemployed and lost their economic sources. The living poverty of the workers increased. At the same time, the economic crisis also caused a large number of financial institutions to collapse, the whole social credit system collapsed. As a result of a large number of unsalable commodities and the collapse of the stock market, banks and other financial institutions could not recover the money lent out, and the existing capital could not maintain the normal operation and could only be declared bankrupt, so that the meager deposit of workers in the bank could not be redeemed. While the economic crisis leads to the increase of social unemployment rate, the urban crime rate also increases sharply, and the remaining means of living of the working people of the proletariat are also in crisis, which undoubtedly further deepens the poverty of the proletariat to some extent.

2.2. The manifestation of proletarian poverty

The reasons for the proletariat falling into the poverty trap are numerous and complex, so the manifestations of proletarian poverty are also various, which can be classified as absolute poverty and relative poverty. Marx did not conceptually define these two forms of poverty, but according to Marx, there are three main manifestations of proletarian poverty.

2.2.1. Economic income is low, the standard of living is low

In capitalist society, proletarian workers have a strong labor ability to create value, and the value they continuously create through labor pushes the development of society forward. But the laboring worker lacks the conditions to transform the means of production into the material wealth of society through his own labor, and can only be employed by the capitalists who have these labor conditions in order to sustain the livelihood of the whole family. As stated above, capitalists exploit and exploit the surplus value of workers by various means, and the means of production used by workers in their labor, the entire labor process and the final product of labor do not belong to the workers themselves, and they can only depend on the capitalists to obtain meager wages. It is difficult to bear the expenditure of sufficient means of living with very little economic income, and it is impossible to consider more needs of life when there are problems in survival. The living standard is at the bottom of the whole society, and the long-term lack of means of living pushes the proletariat to a deeper degree of poverty.

2.2.2. Housing conditions are poor and educational opportunities are limited

Under capitalist production relations, the proletariat faces various risks such as unemployment and natural disasters, and its own living conditions are also very poor. Lacking adequate sources of income, they are forced to live in cheap houses, or in dirty basements, or on the streets. There are no decent pieces of furniture in the whole home, and even a bed to sleep in is not available, can only sleep on all kinds of debris, such as sacks. Living in such an environment with worrying living conditions, the harm to the physical and mental health of workers is great, which may lead to the loss of working ability of workers, which is undoubtedly another hidden danger leading to poverty. In addition, the workers themselves have a low level of knowledge, can only engage in some physical work, they put their hopes on their children, but because of the low economic income, the children of the proletariat may not be able to receive a good education, and even because of the living environment and a variety of diseases, limiting their development and change their own or even the fate of the whole family.

2.2.3. Low social status, lack of social security

There is a direct correlation between social status and income level. Marx pointed out that capitalists are extremely unequal in the distribution of the value created by labor workers, and in the process of exploiting surplus value, they become richer and richer, while the wages and incomes of workers remain stagnant. We know that the whole society is constantly moving forward and that the material wealth of society is constantly increasing, but the proportion of the proletariat in the social wealth is gradually declining, and an insurmountable gap has appeared in the gap between the rich and the poor. "Although the absolute standard of living of the worker will remain the same, his relative wages and his relative social position, that is, his position in relation to the capitalist, will decline." Because the proletariat is in the most marginalized of society, their voice and interests are often ignored, and the poor proletariat usually does not enjoy adequate social welfare and security, such as medical care, unemployment benefits, social insurance, etc., which increases their difficulties in coping with diseases, accidents and other emergencies, resulting in the proletariat facing both material and spiritual poverty.

2.3. The realistic path of proletarian anti-poverty

The utopian socialists before Marx placed the hope of the proletariat's escape from poverty on the conscience of the bourgeoisie, which was very unrealistic. On the basis of criticizing and inheriting their thoughts and viewpoints, Marx proposed a scientific path for the proletariat to get rid of poverty.

2.3.1. The abolition of the capitalist system is the main premise

The reason why capitalists can realize the purpose of oppression and exploitation of labor workers is because of the existence of capitalist system, including capitalist wage labor system, capitalist private ownership and capitalist state political system. Under the cover of these systems, the capitalists cover up the fact of their exploitation in a legal form, resulting in the poverty of the proletariat covering all economic, political, social and other aspects. Although the bourgeoisie has also taken a series of actions to try to improve the poverty situation of the proletariat, they are only easing class contradictions and cannot fundamentally solve the poverty problem of the proletariat. Under the operation of the capitalist system, the capitalists only focus on the maximization of surplus value, and it is impossible for them to distribute the wealth they occupy to the poor proletariat, and their reform of various capitalist systems is only to better exploit the proletariat. The concentration of the means of production and the socialization of Labour have reached a point where they are incompatible with their capitalist shell. This shell is about to blow up. The death knell of capitalist private property is about to sound. The deprived are to be deprived." Therefore, as long as the capitalist system exists, the proletariat will never be able to get out of poverty. Only by abolishing the capitalist system can the proletariat gradually liberate itself from exploitation and escape from poverty.

2.3.2. Vigorously developing productive forces is the key means

The development of human society started from primitive society, went through slave society and feudal society, then to the capitalist society where Marx lived, and finally to the communist society. No matter what kind of social form, the level of social productive forces is the fundamental symbol to measure the development level of the entire human civilization, and the improvement of the level of social productive forces is the fundamental driving force to promote the development of society. In capitalist society, while chasing surplus value, capitalists also promoted the progress of science and technology, explored the relatively advanced social management experience at that time, objectively promoted the development of human society, and the material wealth of the whole society was greatly enriched compared with the feudal society. However, due to the exploitative nature of the capitalist system, the proletariat cannot enjoy the value created by itself, and the gap between them and the bourgeoisie in various aspects is getting wider and wider. However, it is undeniable that the proletariat cannot change the situation of poverty without the strong development of social productive forces. Marx pointed out that after the overthrow of capitalism, the proletariat seized

power, and vigorously developed social productive forces on the basis of the power established by the proletariat, each person's labor was no longer a means of making a living and the value created by labor was truly enjoyed by every worker, and social material wealth was reasonably distributed to every member of society to meet their needs in life. Each person is no longer living as in the capitalist society, but engaged in meaningful things to realize their own value on the basis of food and clothing. Therefore, we must vigorously develop the social productive forces in order to enable the proletariat to get out of the abyss of poverty and have material security.

2.3.3. Stimulating proletarian consciousness is an important method

The class consciousness of the bourgeoisie was gradually formed in the course of the bourgeoisie's opposition to the feudal society, including various theories and ideas of the bourgeoisie, and played a huge role in the process of maintaining the political rule of the bourgeoisie. But the class consciousness of the bourgeoisie has a great hypocrisy, it is really aimed at safeguarding the interests of the bourgeoisie, and serves the exploitation and enslavement of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie. The class consciousness of the proletariat is opposed to the class consciousness of the bourgeoisie. The formation of proletarian class consciousness is a process from nothing to something, from unscience to science. In the early stage of the development of capitalist society, the influence of feudal social hierarchy concept has not been eliminated, and the differentiation of the whole social class is not obvious. With the development of capitalist society, the society is increasingly divided into two camps, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, but the proletariat is always at the bottom of the capitalist society and is ruthlessly exploited and oppressed by the capitalists. It is precisely because it has been exploited and oppressed for a long time that the proletariat has the superiority of thorough resistance, which is the premise for the formation of proletarian class consciousness. Under the leadership of the proletarian party, the class consciousness of the proletariat gradually takes shape, and it gradually realizes that only a complete revolution can overthrow the exploitation and oppression of the bourgeoisie, establish proletarian power and completely rid itself of poverty.

3. THE INNER LOGIC OF MARX'S ANTI-POVERTY THEORY

Marx himself did not build a systematic anti-poverty theory, but Marx gradually formed this great theory in the process of exploring the poverty problem of the proletariat in capitalist society. Marxist anti-poverty theory has a very strict logic system.

3.1. Subject basis: the essence of human cognition

Different from the "abstract man" emphasized by Feuerbach, the man studied by Marx is "real man", so the lofty value of Marx's anti-poverty theory is to realize the goal of the proletariat getting rid of poverty and the free and all-round development of all mankind. In order to deeply understand Marx's anti-poverty theory, we must first understand Marx's profound understanding of human nature. Feuerbach believed that the essence of man was immutable, and the man he studied was an abstract man, a man without any history or sociality. In Feuerbach's view, under any social condition, the essence of man, as a universal thing of man, is indistinguishable. There is no such thing as an abstract "human individual," which has only reason, will, and emotion, and does not belong to any society or class. Marx pointed out that the essence of man is not abstract and unchanging, but concrete and changing. Feuerbach left the social history of man and separated from his perceptual activities to study man. In fact, the essential difference between man and man lies not in the natural characteristics of age, gender, race, etc., but in the economic, political and other social differences of man. It is precisely because Marx pays attention to "real man" and has a deep understanding of the essence of man that he can build the main body foundation for the elaboration of anti-poverty theory.

3.2. Practical premise: Criticize alienated labor

People are the subject of social history, and the people are the creators of social material wealth and the main force driving historical progress. On the one hand, people's practice reflects their own subjectivity, on the other hand, it also promotes the development of social history. But in capitalist society, the social relations between people are alienated because of the existence of capital. The first is the alienation of the labor process and the laborer. Under the cover of the so-called principle of exchange of equal value, capitalists employ workers to engage in labor and exploit the surplus value created by workers' surplus labor by extending the surplus labor time or shortening the necessary labor time, which also means that workers' labor is not the expression of their own subjectivity, but only the behavior of obtaining surplus value for capitalists. The second is the alienation of labor products and workers. The products produced by the labouring workers do not belong to the labouring people, and are not produced to satisfy the needs of the producers, but to satisfy the needs of the capitalists to realize the multiplication of capital. Finally, the alienation of the tools of labor and the workers. In order to obtain more surplus value, capitalists improve production efficiency by improving production equipment and introducing new science and technology, etc., the necessary labor time of workers is shorter and shorter, and the surplus labor time is correspondingly extended. At the same time, they are increasingly dependent on the tools of production and lose their independence.

3.3. Fundamental aim: the free development of man

In capitalist society, capitalists have commandeered most of the means of production, and workers are forced to sell their labor force to capitalists when they lack the most basic means of survival. Capitalists use various means to extend workers' surplus working time, exploit the surplus value created by workers, and symbolically raise workers' meager wages. Capitalists also manipulate the capitalist market, using various tax penalties, price hikes and other means to offset the increase in workers' wages, and finally concentrated in the hands of capitalists. The harder the labourer works, the more he is exploited. The capitalist system has determined the position of exploitation of the labourer, and it is impossible to abolish exploitation without overthrowing capitalism. In a communist society, there is no exploitation. Labor is no longer a simple means of making a living, but has become the need for each person to show their independence and subjectivity. The value created by workers through labor is to continuously improve and improve the needs of workers' lives. The fundamental purpose of Marx's anti-poverty theory is to promote and improve the past, and to realize free and comprehensive development of everyone in the future society.

4. CONCLUSION

The problem of poverty has been troubling the whole human society, and the human society has been committed to solving the problem of poverty for thousands of years. Marx's anti-poverty theory is based on realistic human research, standing on the standpoint of the broad masses of the people, deeply investigating the actual life of proletarian workers, exposing and criticizing the essence of exploitation of the capitalist system, and establishing its own scientific anti-poverty theory on the basis of transforming the anti-poverty theory of previous thinkers. It is also of great guiding significance to the spiritual anti-poverty, to the proletariat to get rid of poverty, to the common prosperity, to realize the free and all-round development of human beings.

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