



“Social Relations”: The Key Category to Grasp the Integrity of Marx’s Theory

Qi Wang

Shenxian experimental senior school, Liaocheng, Shandong, China.

Abstract

The existing Marxist holism lacks the discussion of the unity of historical and contemporary views, and its root is the lack of connection and integration of the central concepts of various Marxist theories. Looking at the formation, enrichment and interrelation of Marx's various theories from the core category of "social relations", we can reveal the connection and connection between Marx's philosophy, political economics and scientific socialism from the vertical development and horizontal theoretical interaction. Marx's transition from the difficulty of "materialism" to "scientific world view", from the systematic investigation of political economics to the comprehensive logical deconstruction of capital, from the fundamental cornerstone of socialism to the central mission of socialism, and even the combination of these three links, "social relations" have played an important role as a bridge and link. Based on "social relations", mastering the formation process and internal relations of Marx's "three universities" theory will help us better understand the initial structure of Marxist holistic view and promote the comprehensive development of Marxist holistic view.

Keywords

Marxist theory, social relations, entirety

<https://ss.damray.com>

OPEN ACCESS

DOI: 10.26855/oajrcss.2023.02.003

Received: February 12, 2023

Accepted: March 8, 2023

Published: April 6, 2023

Copyright: ©2023 Qi Wang. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

1. The definition of the concept of social relations and the birth of the scientific world view

1.1 The logical development of Marx's thought before the establishment of "social relations"

1.1.1 Doctoral Thesis: the bud of abstract intersubjectivity

In an abstract way, Marx expounded his understanding in his first systematic philosophical book, Doctoral Thesis. Marx believed that human self-knowledge is free and independent, which is not bound by fate and can be bound by distorted atoms. However, this exalted subjectivity is not limitless. It is based on intersubjectivity. As Marx said, "If a person has other things associated with it, and it is not another life with it, and it is an individual, then it is not a thing of nature". Although at this time, subjectivity is still an abstract state, it ultimately limits its realization, this makes Marx not bound in the dilemma of "absolute subjectivity", but also brings a pressure to his thinking (Wu, 2011).

1.1.2 The Rhine Times: the conflict between objective rationality and material interests

It can be seen from his political papers that from his graduation from university to becoming the chief editor of the Rhine, Marx defended the public newspaper with objective reasons according to his views. I'm just based on my personality. "Marx took the right of reproduction of the press and publication as the public reason, and eliminated the right of

review of newspapers, thus eliminating the legitimacy of "newspaper inspection" (Wang & Hu, 2017). In the early days, when he was the editor in chief of *The Rhine*, Marx insisted that the freedom of publication of the newspaper was an objective and reasonable expression. However, the freedom that only a few people were allowed to publish surprised him, which made him have a huge impact on his view of real life, and Marx did not immediately change his insistent rationalism. Marx put forward in the article that to understand the real world, we should not only see our own will, but also see the various links hidden behind us. They all have their own objectivity. Marx did not explain its objectivity from a reasonable point of view, which means that its position of rationalism has been completely shaken, and its root lies in its relationship between rationality and material (Liang, 2021).

1.2 Determination of the concept of social relations

1.2.1 Paris Manuscript: the establishment of social relations position

In the late period of the German and French Yearbook, Marx realized that "civil society should be decomposed into political economy", and settled down in Paris, where he engaged in a work on political economy, thus writing the Paris Manuscript. Marx clearly defined his position of "social relations" here, and carried out a lot of theoretical work from this point. The most important item in the Paris Manuscript is the analysis of "alienated labor", which is a study from concrete to abstract, from concrete to concrete, that is, "thought is used to grasp concrete, and regards it as a specific psychological reflection". In such a study, Marx found the real, concrete, transformed, existing, and social connection. On this basis, Marx focused on the social relations of modern commodity economy, especially the materialization of social relations embodied by money. Through the criticism of a series of materialization social relations in modern society, Marx promoted social relations to human nature, and believed that "real, self-conscious and real existence is social behavior and entertainment". Because human nature is the combination of human's real sociality, we can see the prototype of classical assertions about human's real nature, which shows Marx's establishment of the status of "social relations".

1.2.2 Holy Family: The identity of sublating alienation and establishing social relations between people

Marx established the initial concept of "social relations" in the "Paris Manuscript", and then in the book "Holy Family", regarded rational social relations as a prerequisite for "alienation" of human beings, and further developed his theory on this basis. According to Marx, Prutung "criticized the national economy from the perspective of the national economy", but "from the perspective of the national economy" also implied Prutung's great mistake in thinking. The equal pay it sought was still private, that is, it was still in the category of "differentiation". In fact, to eliminate the inequality between people, we must go beyond the prerequisite of national economics, which requires people to give up private ownership. To achieve this goal, we need to understand the nature of social relations within the economic field, so as to establish human freedom, freedom and equal social relations. This is to take "object" as the object of human beings, that is, the purpose of human beings, and the relationship between human beings and others, Social connections between people.

1.3 The core of social relations is stripped out of the birth of a new world view

1.3.1 Outline of Feuerbach: social relations have practical nature

Marx's book "Holy Family" defines an ideal form of social relations, which is essentially a change and criticism of social reality. It is Marx's exposition in the Outline of Feuerbach. Due to the limited space, this paper only analyzes its "key" - the sixth article of the outline. In the sixth article, Marx proposed that human nature is the collection of social relations, and criticized Feuerbach. In fact, Marx had realized Feuerbach's shortcomings in the era of the Paris Manuscript, because Feuerbach ignored Hegel's "critical form", that is, "Feuerbach believed that it was only" opposite to itself. Because of his understanding of the principle of negation, Fischer knew nothing about the meaning of work. Therefore, he could not understand the important role of activities including work, nor did he realize the internal relationship between society and non-material activities. On the contrary, Marx transformed the negative labor into reality and linked it with social relations. Therefore, Marx pointed out in the Outline that the biggest shortcoming of Fisher was that he did not criticize social relations because he did not understand the actual nature of social relations. Taking "practice" as the basic nature of social relations is a philosophical basis for the reconstruction of "social reality" (Wang, 2012).

1.3.2 German Ideology: the stripping of the core of social relations and the birth of a new world view

A lot of things in the Outline have not been fully unfolded, and the most important thing is that there is no clear entry point on social relations. It was in the German Ideology that Marx realized the mission of "separating production relations from all social relations" put forward by Lenin, thus contributing to Marx's new world outlook. Form is based on German philosophy of thought and the recognition of the essential truth of social history. Marx believes that the reason

why human beings surpass herds is that they can produce what they need. It plays a decisive role in human and human development. Therefore, What individuals "look like is consistent with their mode of production, which is consistent with their mode of production". Marx then said: "What a person is, is determined by the material conditions they are engaged in, and this mode of production is also based on the mutual exchange of individuals." Lenin called it "productive social connection", that is, productive social connection. Obviously, Marx regarded the living conditions of human beings as essentially determined, and later Marx made a more in-depth discussion on this. We all know that the basic principle of historical materialism described in the Preface to the Critique of Political Economy is at the beginning: "certain, inevitable, independent of personal will, inevitable, and independent of the influence of his will, which is compatible with the development of his own productivity." The large number of "production relations" in the book "Form" indicates that Marx's thought of "social relations" has been thoroughly established, Marx's new world view was also formed during this period (Zhang, 2021).

2. The demand for reforming social relations and the launch of political economic criticism

2.1 Marx's political and economic critical battle declaration and the historical elucidation of social relations

The book "The Poverty of Philosophy" originates from the negative effect of Proudhon's theory about the working class, that is, Proudhon uses category reasoning to explain that changes in production relations have covered up the history of capitalist production relations, thus hindering the subjectivity and subjectivity of social transformation. In his criticism of Prudence, Marx put forward a scientific view of the history of production relations and a criticism of political economy in the form of refutation. Prutung regards "destiny" and "social genius" as the driving force to promote the development of human history, and the essence of this phenomenon is "rationality", and this change of "rationality" depends on its change in the final analysis. Marx pointedly pointed out that the so-called rational economic concept is only an abstract production, while Prudence inverted the real relationship between it and production. In fact, all social relations, including production relations, are generated by the actual actions of the people. To maintain and develop productive forces, human beings must make appropriate adjustments to the original mode of production and social relations. That is to say, human beings establish corresponding social relations according to their own productive forces. These principles, concepts and categories, as expressed by their actions, are not permanent. In line with Prutung's view of history, bourgeois economists also have "myopia" towards capitalist production relations, "Their views are very strange. They believe that there are only two systems: artificial system and natural system. Feudalism is artificial, and the capitalist system is natural". The theme of the book "Poverty in Philosophy" is not only a criticism of Prutung, but also a comprehensive propaganda of the political economy of the entire bourgeoisie. Its theme is to prove its historical nature.

2.2 The important promotion of Marx's political and economic criticism and the further clarification of the historical nature of social relations

When Marx wrote "The Poverty of Philosophy", he had not fully demonstrated its history. Most of his works remained in a general perspective. It was not until the "1857-1858 Economic Manuscript" that really promoted this work. In the 5758 Manuscript, Marx first elaborated the social relations between people from the currency chapter, and refined the "general production", and then analyzed its characteristics in the capital chapter. From the whole to the individual, it reveals the history and temporary production of the bourgeoisie. Marx said, "Only when capital and non-capital are combined, it will trade with the things it denies. Here, it is obvious that it is not ordinary labor, it is a kind of hired labor, which is isolated from the material and material owners of labor. It is precisely because of this, the hired workers throw the funds they support to the side of the capitalists, instead of turning them into funds, they are absorbed. The secret of capital growth is through buying Hire workers to manufacture, so that capital becomes capital. It can be seen from this that the nature of the employed workers as a source of capital is a specific mode of production, which is the basis of all relations of capitalism and the prerequisite for the development of capitalist economy. From the perspective of political economy, Marx made a superficial exposition of the insurmountable contradictions and ills in the socialist market economy.

2.3 Marx's political and economic critical system construction and historical and thorough demonstration of social relations

2.3.1 The historical revelation of capital accumulation theory to capitalist production relations

In the first volume of Capital, Marx emphatically analyzed how the accumulation of capital affects the lives of work-

ers. He believed that funds driven by the nature of reproduction would accelerate their own accumulation in different ways, and any one of them would cause an unstable contraction of the capital and technology structure. For example, when social labor productivity increases, individual labor can increase the number of conversion of production materials within a certain period of time, thus reducing the needs of capitalists, That is, "the amount of labor is smaller than the output of production materials." The decrease in the degree of change in the technological composition of capital indicates that "the accumulation of capitalism is in direct proportion to its capacity and size, that is, its growth rate exceeds the average demand for capital growth, thus increasing or increasing the number of workers." Marx pointed out that any method to accelerate the rate of capital accumulation will increase the number of workers to a certain extent. That is to say, with the increase of capital, the poverty of workers is what Marx called the "absolute and universal rule of capitalist accumulation". It is obvious that this process will surely temper a denied capitalist - the proletariat of workers. Therefore, it is both historical and temporary.

2.3.2 The historical revelation of capital circulation theory to capitalist production relations

The second volume of Marx's "Capital" takes the study of capital flow as the main line, revealing the unresolved conflicts hidden behind it. He believes that the growth of capital is a growing cycle, which consists of three links. In these three steps, each step needs to complete a transformation, and the completion of the three steps can complete the cycle of the whole process. However, due to the insufficient real payment capacity in the market, some problems are often encountered when returning to the first level in the third period. With the passage of time, the resulting products are difficult to sell and cannot be converted into corresponding currencies. In this way, the capital chain will be broken, and the social productivity will be stopped, thus causing the chain effect. Marx believed that in the process of capital circulation, there is a "exchange of capital and capital, that is, the compression of capital". Marx pointed out that the failure of the transformation from three to one is not because there is not enough consumption demand, but only because there is not enough purchasing power to change the value of products. In the economic process of capitalism, the essential problem is that commodity capital cannot be converted into money, which leads to the overall economic standstill; At the end of this article, Marx criticized the way to eliminate the crisis by increasing the wages of workers. He said that such an approach could not eliminate the problem from the root. Among those groups that are not really affordable, the working proletariat is the main group, which is the poverty of the working people, as analyzed in the book "The Capitalist".

3. Conclusion

The concept of "social relations" has played an important role in promoting Marx's establishment of a new world outlook, criticism of political economics, and the establishment of scientific socialism. First, under the encouragement of "property rights", Marx moved from idealism to materialism; After elevating the connection of material life to "social relations", Marx constructed a new world view based on the rationality of social relations and rational social relations; The second aspect is that Marx criticized the socialist market economy, whose basic goal is to prove its historical significance, thus laying a proper basis for Marx's transformation of human society in practice; Thirdly, Marx established the theoretical foundation of socialism and the socialist theory based on "social relations", and the central task of this theory is how to master the social system. It can be seen that the concept of "social relations" has the function of "piercing the needle" in the development of Marx's theory. It is a theoretical hub that organically combines Marxist philosophy, political economics and scientific socialism, and a basic starting point and basic principle of Marxist philosophy.

References

- Liang Xu. Research on the academic evaluation of Marx's theoretical system [J]. Reference to Political Teaching in Middle Schools, 2021, (02): 84.
- Wang Jiefa. Marx's Theory and Utilitarianism [J]. Ethics and Civilization, 2012 (04): 52-57.
- Wang Miao, Hu Wenqiang. Reflections on the contemporary significance of Marx's theory [J]. Journal of Changchun Normal University, 2017, 36 (01): 9-10.
- Wu Yulin. The key to grasp the integrity of the basic principle system of Marxism [J]. Introduction to Ideological and Theoretical Education, 2011, (06): 46-47.
- Zhang Yu. The spirit of struggle in the new era: the triple dimension of exploring the origin of Marx's theory [J]. Journal of Zhangjiakou Vocational and Technical College, 2021, 34 (03): 17-20.