

Analysis of Marx's Idea of Free Time

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Abstract

This Marx's ideas on free time show how free time is the emancipation of every human being necessary conditions. Nowadays, when material resources are extremely abundant, how to liberate people from labor time is also a realistic problem that needs to be solved urgently.

Keywords

Marx, Free time ideas, Human development.

1. Introduction

Time is an important category in the history of philosophy and has always been a hot spot for philosophers. Since the early natural philosophy of ancient Greece, philosophers have been discussing the problem of time, but the thinking about time at that time was still mainly related to the original. During the period of German classical philosophy, Kant turned the problem of time to the study of the epistemology of time, and he called time the innate condition of perceptual intuition, the innate form of cognition. Marx, on the other hand, based his discussion of time on the materialist conception of history and externalized time as a space for human development. He believed that time, in a subjective sense, is the social time that is closely related to the practical movement of human beings, and its main characteristic is that it will change with the change of social development. Marx's idea of free time encompasses not only human activity but also social activity.[1]

2. Theoretical Background and Development of Marx's Idea of Free Time

In the mid-18th century, the Industrial Revolution began in Britain. Industrial reforms rapidly changed the face of production in all sectors of industry, and in the 1840s, machine-based industrial production replaced traditional handicraft production, and Britain became known as the "factory of the world" Subsequently, the Industrial Revolution swept across Europe.

The acceleration of the process of the Industrial Revolution was likewise accompanied by the development of capitalism, which first took hold in the Several countries in Europe took root and in turn used capitalism to accumulate wealth and establish bourgeois states. The Industrial Revolution not only brought the bourgeoisie to the center of the stage of history, but also enabled the proletariat to play an important role in world history. In the course of the ensuing capitalist economic development, along with the strengthening of the bourgeoisie's dominance, the conflicts with the proletariat intensified. The living and production conditions of the working class deteriorated, the gap between the rich and the poor between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat became wider and wider, and the workers' movement and the pro-democracy movement were on the rise. the economic crises from 1825 onwards not only inflicted heavy injuries on the working class, but also exposed the inherent defects of the capitalist system. In the successive workers' uprisings, the resistance of the working class against the bourgeoisie went from spontaneous to conscious, and the proletariat began to emerge as an independent political force.

Marx threw himself into the revolutionary movement of 1848-1849, and after the failure of the revolution, analyzed in depth about the reasons why the revolution took place. The failure of this revolution fully demonstrated that the representatives of the advanced productive forces of society and the prime creators of social wealth were mainly the working class, which was better suited than the peasant class to be the vanguard of the revolution. In this context, Marx revealed the means by which capitalists exploit workers by discussing the theory of surplus value and pointed out that the essence of capitalists is to pursue the maximum surplus value, thus realizing capital accumulation.

Under the capitalist system of employment, the working class can only obtain real freedom and its survival by raising wages and reducing labor hours. Marx pointed out In the *Wages, Prices and Profits*, Marx argues that "a time is the space for human development." [2] This fully demonstrates that Marx's idea of free time is closely linked to the emancipation of the working class, and in the macro perspective, this correlation can also be magnified to the development and emancipation of the whole human race.

Marx had studied time in relation to it since his youth, and in his doctoral thesis, the *Through a study of the natural philosophies of Democritus and Epicurus*, it is suggested "the sensibility of man takes the shape of the embodied time is the existential reflection of itself in the world of sensibility." [3] In this period, Marx understood time as the perceptual perception of human beings, a category belonging to the activity of human thinking. In his next study of the capitalist economy and the system of employment, Marx puts forward a series of economic categories such as "labor time," "free time," "an alienation of labor," and so on. In his description of these categories, he expressed the philosophical aim of eliminating alienation and realizing the free and comprehensive development of human beings.

Marx wrote in the *Philosophical Manuscripts of Economics of 1844*: "The more the worker produces, the less he can consume; the more value he creates, the less valuable and inferior he is; the more perfect the worker's product is, the more deformed the worker is; the more civilized the object created by the worker is, the more barbaric the worker is; the more powerful the labor, the more impotent the worker is; the more skillful the labor, the more stupid the worker is, and the more the worker becomes a natural person. the more stupid the worker becomes, the more he becomes a slave of nature"! "His labor is not voluntary labor, but forced compulsory labor"! These descriptions by Marx can show to some extent that the labor of the worker is not a conscious and self-willed labor, but the capitalist has forcibly appropriated the labor time of the worker and turned it into a means of preserving his own existence. In the *Economic Manuscripts of 1861-1863*, Marx sublimated time to "time is in fact the active existence of man, it is not only the measure of his life, but also the space of his development." [4] In his continuous research on the theory of surplus value, Marx discussed in detail the alienation of human beings and labor, and the free time enjoyed by workers in addition to the socially necessary labor time will inevitably increase with the abundance of material resources.

3. Core Concepts of Marx's Idea of Free Time

3.1. Marx's definition of time

With regard to the category of "time", Marx argued from the perspective of the social view of time: "Time is in fact the active existence of man, not only the measure of his life, but also the space of his development." In Marx's idea of free time "this time is not absorbed by direct productive labor, but is to be used for recreation and rest, thus opening up wide areas for free activity and development." [5] The content of free time should be rich and vital. Marx profoundly indicated that free time includes "the time for education, the time for the development of the intellect, the time for the performance of social functions, the time for social activities, the time for the free use of physical and intellectual powers, and the time for rest on Sundays"! People

use the time at their disposal to perform acts of self-improvement, such as social relations, education, physical fitness, etc., in addition to their material productive work.

Labor time is the time during which people have to engage in the practice of material production in order to satisfy their needs for self-survival. Through the practice of material production during labor time, people create material goods that satisfy their needs. Marx used "labor time" to analyze the nature of the capitalists' extraction of surplus value from the working class under the capitalist system. Under capitalism, labor time is divided into socially necessary labor time and surplus value time. Socially necessary labor time is the basic time that a person exchanges for the means of subsistence and is the cost of time that must be paid. Surplus value time is the time during which workers create surplus value for the capitalists, and by its very nature is an alienation of workers' free time.

Overall, free time and labor time emerge because of the alienated labor of man under the capitalist system. The difference between free time and labor time also implies the degree of emancipation of people under the capitalist employment system.

3.2. The depth of the idea of free time

During the period when the capitalist mode of production was dominant, alienated labor brought the working class both physical and spiritual oppression. The increase in the productivity of labor and the shortening of socially necessary labor time made it possible for the working class to acquire free time. Individuals who carry out activities in free time The human being can give full play to his or her individual subjectivity and engage in other activities in society that are conducive to his or her development movement. The free development of the human personality is facilitated by the constant transformation of the human being in the state of nature and in the state of society, balancing his or her abilities and social relations among the different elements.

First, free time is abstracted from labor time. The abstract concept of time is unchanging; there are only 24 hours in a day, and it does not change with the changes in mankind and society. In the primitive society where the conditions of survival are relatively poor, man's productive labor is only for survival, and clothing, food, housing and transportation only have their use value. In the most primitive state of nature, man only has the desire for self-preservation, and all his time is used for self-survival. With the development of productive forces, the improvement of production efficiency, material material surplus, people's labor time is reduced accordingly, free time from the labor time out of the free time, into a person can be freely disposable time, and labor time has the same social nature.

Secondly, free time depends on changes in the social system and in the mode of social production, which are inseparable from labor time. According to Marcuse, human social time consists of two parts, one is free time and the other is labor time, and the development of modern science and technology will make it possible to shorten the proportion of labor time, so that free time will increase and become the dominant form of human social time. Under the primitive society's mode of production, people spent all their time in self-survival-oriented labor, and had no free time at their disposal. As the mode of production changes and social productivity develops, labor time is gradually reduced, and more and more time becomes available for human free time. There is also a relationship between free time and labor time under the social system. The emergence of private ownership attributed free time to a few people, such as slaves under slavery, who existed as dependents of the slave owner and were forced to produce material goods for the slave owner, while the slave owner was freed from the labor time for his own free time to engage in artistic creation and political administration. There is a fundamental difference between the labor of the slave owner, who engages in labor with full freedom, and the labor of the slave, which is subject to the slave owner's and self the double oppression of natural forces is unfree labor.

Finally, it is only in free time that the practical activity of human beings becomes a self-initiated, self-conscious self-activity, and that the world as an object and the human being "standing on two feet" achieve true emancipation and development.

4. Status and Role of The Idea of Free Time

The idea of free time occupies an important place in Marx's theoretical system. Human free time is a powerful basis for promoting the development of personal productivity. Individuals discretionary time can be utilized for both learning and leisure, with learning increasing personal skills and leisure promoting spiritual enjoyment and development, and personal productivity being enhanced accordingly in free time. The ultimate goal of Marxism is to realize the emancipation of human beings, and then to realize the free and comprehensive development of human beings, and the idea of free time as the prerequisite for the emancipation of human beings, and the realization of human emancipation boils down to the realization of the emancipation of free time. In the study of Marxism's related texts, it is not difficult to find that its deepest implication is the humanistic thought, and the free time thought is closely related to the free and comprehensive development of human beings.

From the point of view of Marxist philosophy, political economy and scientific socialism, the study of the idea of free time is to find both theoretical and practical paths for the emancipation of man and his free and comprehensive development. Marx affirmed the positive role of the capitalist mode of production in the development of society by leaps and bounds. Since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, the direction of development of the whole world has gradually begun to change, and no one would have thought that the rate of development of the productive forces would make such a leap. But the very nature of capitalism is to go on accumulating and plundering social wealth, and part of free time is alienated into time for capitalists to plunder workers' surplus value. "Even in the most favorable state of society for the worker, the worker's end is inevitably overwork and early death, reduced to a machine and a slave to capital." The accumulation of social wealth and the liberation of free time will not change the nature of capitalist exploitation. The worker not only performs his own socially necessary labor but also performs socially necessary labor in the place of the capitalist, acting as a machine for the production of capital for the production of surplus value. The capitalist appropriates the worker's free time without compensation, transforming it into space for his own personal development. Workers beings are subject to exploitation under the capitalist system and do not have sufficient free time to develop their abilities, personalities and social relations. Therefore, the free and comprehensive development of all human beings cannot be realized under the capitalist system. Only by liberating all human beings from the capitalist system and private ownership can true free and comprehensive human development be realized.

5. Conclusion

Liu Ben mentions in his relation to labor and space-time, "In labor practice, the relation between time and space is the relation between subject and object. Time, as the active existence of human beings, can only acquire its own reality in practical activities. Labor time itself exists only as a subject, only in the form of activity." Space is the existing living environment of human beings, which belongs to the category of static; time is the process of human beings' active transformation of the existing environment, which is the category of dynamic. In practical activities, time, as the active existence of human beings, is inseparable from human development. "Marx's ideas on free time show that free time is a necessary condition for the emancipation of every human being." Free time determines the degree of human development. Time, as a physical category, is always finite, and this finitude also delimits the scale of human

life; the more free time one acquires as much as possible within the finite scale of life, the higher the degree of free human development. "The whole of human development, insofar as it goes beyond what is directly necessary for the natural village of man, is nothing else but the use of this free time, and the whole of human development presupposes the use of this free time as a necessary basis."

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