

The View of Marxist Civilization: an Investigation Based **on Family, Private Ownership and the Origin of the State**

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Abstract: The family, Private Ownership and the Origins of the State is a representative work of Friedrich Engels who systematically studies the problems of civilization with historical materialism. His main thoughts on civilization are based on the research achievements of Marx, Morgan and others, which are embodied in four aspects: the theory of the origin of civilization, the theory of the progress of civilization, the theory of the motive force of civilization and the theory of the progress of civilization. From the perspective of the development history of human civilization, the emergence of family, private ownership and state is an important symbol of human entering the era of civilization. The course of civilization has gone through the stages of development from barbarism to civilization and from low to high. In the final analysis, the driving force of civilization development is production and reproduction in the real society. The progress of civilization is embodied in the concrete practice of history. One is the progress of civilization relative to barbarism, and the other is the progress of civilization itself. The study of the civilization thought in Engels's Family, Private Ownership and the Origins of the State can provide powerful theoretical guidance for us to cope with the new challenges of global civilization and promote the development and progress of human civilization.

1. Introduction

Since mankind passed through the age of ignorance and barbarism and entered the threshold of the age of civilization, the development and progress of civilization has become the common value and goal pursued by mankind for a long time. As for the understanding of civilization and its category, Marx and Engels, on the basis of learning from and Suckling the modern western civilization theory, and guided by the gradually formed historical materialism, made a deep consideration of the problem of civilization, thus establishing the Marxist theory of civilization. Such as “communist manifesto” German ideology “the poverty of philosophy” critique of the gotha program “the Turin theory” the critique of socialism from utopia to science “on the origin of family, private ownership and state” (hereinafter referred to as the “origin”) “Ludwig feuerbach and the end of the German classical philosophy, such as book of civilization embodies Marx and Engels thought research and the elaboration. Among them, Family, Private Ownership and the Origin of the State, as a mark of the maturity of Marxist civilization theory, has important theoretical status and practical

value.

Origins, written in 1884, is a classic work of Engels' comprehensive and systematic analysis of the primitive society based on the research achievements of Marx and Morgan and based on the standpoint, viewpoint and method of dialectical materialism and historical materialism in his later years. In "Origin", Engels took the theory of "two kinds of production" as the general theory, not only systematically analyzed the origin of the family, clan, private ownership and state in the primitive society, but also scientifically ponders on the origin, power, characteristics, contradictory movements and many other issues of the civilization era. Based on the book "Origin" and related works, this paper discusses briefly the Marxist view of civilization from four dimensions: the origin, the progress, the motive force and the progress of civilization.

2. Origin Theory of Civilization

With "What was the beginning of the age of human civilization? What is the important sign that mankind has entered the age of civilization?" These are the two questions that we have to answer at the very beginning of our discussion of the Marxist concept of civilization.

"What was the beginning of the age of human civilization?" Is the first question we need to answer. Engels' statement on the origin of the era of human civilization is not unchanged, but based on the actual situation of the historical specific analysis, and finally made the capitalist society and slave society from the two different conclusions, is a process of development and change. In "Anti-Durin Theory", Engels pointed out that "the most remarkable place of Fourier is shown in his views on social history. He divided the whole course of social history up to now into four stages of development: ignorance, barbarism, patriarchy and civilization. The last stage corresponds to what is now called bourgeois society. "It can be seen that at this time Engels believed that the starting point of the era of human civilization was the bourgeois society. With the deepening of Engels' civilization thought, Engels followed Morgan's method of division in the origin of human history, and he believed that human history could be divided into the ignorant age, the barbaric age and the civilized age. And Engels thought that slavery should be included in the era of human civilization, and then positioned the starting point of the era of human civilization in the slave society. So why did Engels' cognition about the starting point of the era of human civilization change? Among them, the most important reason is that his understanding of the productive forces and production relations is deepening. In the book Origin, Engels comprehensively expounded the theory of "two kinds of production". On the basis of expounding material productivity and material production relations, he further pointed out the existence of human's own production and blood relationship, thus further deepening his understanding of productivity and production relations. It is because of Engels' more scientific understanding of productive forces and relations of production that he found that commodities, private ownership and communication had already existed before the capitalist civilization at the beginning of human civilization. Thus, it is not hard to explain Engels' conclusion that the beginning of human civilization was a slave society, not a capitalist one.

"What is the important sign that mankind has entered the era of civilization?" That's the second question we need to answer. In The Origin, Engels believed that the emergence of family, private ownership and state was an important symbol of human entering the era of civilization. First of all, family is one of the signs that human beings have entered the era of civilization. On the basis of integrating the research results of Marx and Morgan, Engels believed that the evolution of the human family has experienced four stages, which are the consanguinity family, the Punalua family, the duality family and the exclusive pair family. Among them, Engels pointed out that the exclusive family "was produced from the dual family in the period of the alternation between the intermediate stage and the advanced stage in the barbaric age; Its final victory was one of the marks of the

beginning of the age of civilization. “Secondly, the emergence of private ownership is a sign that mankind has entered the era of civilization. With the increasingly frequent exchange of goods, the emergence of the merchant class, metal money and slaves promoted the emergence and development of the civilization era. Finally, the country is the general symbol of the civilization era. From the collapse of the clan system to the formation of the state, the human society from the barbaric state into the civilized society, a big step forward. From this, we can see that the emergence of family, private ownership and state is an important symbol of human civilization.

3. The Progress of Civilization

From the perspective of historical materialism, human civilization is constantly advancing and developing, and it is a history of civilization progress that is integrated and unified in different stages. The general trend of human civilization is forward and upward, and it has undergone a process of evolution from low to high, from barbarism to civilization. In the *Origins*, Engels' thoughts on the progress of civilization can be elaborated from two aspects.

On the one hand, the process of human civilization refers to the development process of human society from ignorance and barbarism to civilization. As far as the arrival of the age of human civilization is concerned, the age of human civilization is a more advanced and brand-new historical stage compared with the ignorance age and the barbaric age. In “*Origins*”, Engels pointed out: “The age of ignorance is a period of obtaining ready-made natural products; Industrial products are primarily used as AIDS in obtaining natural products. The age of barbarism is the time to learn husbandry and farming, to learn methods of increasing the production of natural products by man's activity. The age of civilization is the age of learning to further process the products of nature, the age of true industry and art.” As Engels said, the ignorant age was the early stage of human beings, and human beings mainly maintained their basic needs by collecting fruits, eating fish and hunting animals. With the development of society and the continuous improvement of productivity, human beings began to come out from the forest, and gradually moved into the barbaric age characterized by the survival and development of the primitive clan society. Reaching the age of human civilization, mankind has made remarkable achievements in material production, private ownership and state, and the invention and use of writing. Human society has developed from the ignorance age in which natural conditions were the main feature, to the barbarian age in which farming and animal husbandry were the main feature, and finally entered the civilization age. It was the era of civilization with family, private ownership, state, writing and city as its main features that initiated the development of human civilization.

On the other hand, the process of human civilization refers to the historical evolution of human beings in the process of civilization era after they entered the era of civilization. With the development of human civilization, Engels divided the civilization era into three periods in his “*Origin*”. “Slavery was the first form of exploitation inherent in the world in the ancient Greek and Roman times; This was followed by serfdom in the Middle Ages and wage labor in modern times. These are the three forms of slavery peculiar to the three ages of civilization.” Correspondingly to the three forms of slavery, civilized times can be divided into three social forms: slavery, feudal system and capitalist system. The three social forms are the important manifestation of the continuous development of human civilization society, and also the aspects that can not be ignored in the process of civilization era. But in terms of the nature of society, the slave society, the feudal society and the capitalist society were all built on the basis of exploitation under the premise of private ownership, and the real sense of civilized society had not yet arrived. Therefore, it is bound to be replaced in the future by the real sense of civilized society, namely socialist society and communist society. This is an inexorable trend in the process of human civilization from low level

to high level.

4. The Dynamic Theory of Civilization

The theory of the motive force of civilization is a general answer to the problem of the motive force of the development of human civilized society. In modern times, Voltaire, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Fukuzawa Yoshishi and many other Western thinkers regarded the driving force for the formation and development of civilization as the continuous improvement of human rationality. In the face of the civilization view of rational determinism, Engels carried on the analysis of dialectical materialism. Based on the philosophical foundation of historical materialism, he for the first time put forward the theory of “two kinds of production” as the core and soul of the book in the origin, holding that the driving force of civilization development is production and reproduction in the real society in the final analysis.

Engels believed that the history of human civilization is a history of production. In the preface to the first edition of *Origins* in 1884, Engels offered a complete explanation of historical materialism's theory of the “two kinds of production”, stating that “according to materialism, the decisive factors in history are, in the final analysis, the production and reproduction of immediate life. But there are two kinds of production itself. On the one hand, the production of the means of subsistence, that is, food, clothing, shelter, and the tools necessary for that purpose; On the other hand is the human own production, namely the reproduction of species. The social system under which people live in a given historical era and in a given region is constrained by two kinds of production: by the development stage of Labour on the one hand, and by the development stage of the family on the other. In short, Engels' theory of “two kinds of production” refers to the two sides of the contradictory body of social production, namely, the production of material materials and the production of people themselves.

By systematically expounding the theory of “two kinds of production”, Engels pointed out that the production of material materials and the production of people themselves are the fundamental and decisive factors that promote the development of human society and history. First of all, starting from the dimension of material production, Engels believed that the most basic practice of human society is the production of material materials to meet people's own needs for food, clothing, shelter and transportation. The production of material materials is the precondition and foundation for the existence of civilized society, and the free and comprehensive development of “man” must also start with the enrichment of social material materials. Secondly, if the production of material materials is the production of human beings to maintain their own basic needs and normal life, then the production of human beings is the production of others' lives to ensure the continuation of human society. Engels analyzed the development of human society from the perspective of human's own production, that is, the history of family development. As early as in *The German Ideology*, he pointed out, “People who are reproducing their own lives every day begin to produce others, that is, reproduction. This is the relationship between husband and wife, the relationship between parents and children, namely the family. “The natural and social attributes of human beings make the reproduction of human beings inseparable from the existence of family and marriage. Thus it can be seen that the production of other people's lives is closely related to family and marriage, while the production of one's own lives is inseparable from the production and reproduction of material materials. The two exist in the practical activities of human society, and they interact with each other and develop together.

In “origin”, Engels pointed out that further for advancing process of material production and its production is the continuous development of human society, the dynamic process of the practical point of view of social production is the most important of the basic point of view, “people” is the

main part of the human social practice activities, the motivation of the formation and development of human civilization is human production and reproduction of material and their own. However, it is worth noting that Engels' theory of "two kinds of production" does not take social production activities in the real practice as the only power, although the theory of "two kinds of production" emphasis on social production is the decisive factor to promote the development of human civilization and the ultimate power, but it does not deny that other factors such as politics, law, religion, art, role in the development of civilization, many factors complement each other, interaction, to promote the steady progress of human civilization society development.

5. The Theory of Civilization Progress

The progress of civilization is embodied in the concrete practice of history in the real society, which is the common value appeal and goal orientation of mankind. Insisting on the progress of civilization conforms to the historical trend of the development of human civilization, reflects the internal requirements of the development of human civilization, and points out the way forward for the development of human civilization. "To affirm the progress of civilization, we must first acknowledge the progress of civilization over barbarism, that is, it is a great historic progress for human beings to enter the age of civilization from the primitive barbarism; Second, it affirms the progress of civilization itself, that is, the development from ancient civilization to modern civilization is a process of historical progress." In Origin, although Engels did not specifically discuss the progress of civilization, the progress of civilization is embodied in his view of civilization, which has the characteristics of continuity, universality and integrity.

By combining the related works of Marx and Engels and placing Engels' Origin in the whole view of Marxist civilization theory, we can understand the progressive thought of civilization more deeply. Before the writing of "Origins", Marx and Engels explained the issues related to the progress of civilization based on the history of human civilization. Engels first used the word "civilization" in his Critique of National Economics in 1844, and highlighted the role of labor in the progress of civilization. "Only when accumulated labor is freed from its status as capital can it be freed from all bondage and the real progress of civilization can be promoted. "" In 1877, Engels created Anti-Durin Theory and later Socialism from Utopia to the Development of Science, Engels proposed that the value direction of human history development and progress was to give everyone real free development, which deepened the understanding of the progress of civilization.

In 1883, after Marx's death, Engels wrote the book Origin, the highest achievement of Marxist theory of civilization, on the basis of inheriting Marx's Theory of Human Notes. Engels' exposition on the production of material materials and human's own production reflects the progress of human civilization. The progress of material material production is mainly reflected in the development process from collection, fishing and hunting to farming and settlement to industrial society, that is, from the acquisition of natural products to livestock farming and then to the processing of natural products in three stages. And the production of people's own, that is, the production of others' lives, also contains the progress of human civilization, which is mainly reflected in the family form of continuous development from scratch and from low to high. After promiscuous sexual relationships, as history develops, human beings have families. The evolution from the group family in the ignorant age to the paired family in the barbaric age and to the exclusive family in the civilized age is undoubtedly a sign of progress. Engels's Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of German Classical Philosophy, written in 1886, also embodies the idea of the progress of human civilization. Through a critical analysis of Hegel's dialectics, he revealed the rational core of Hegel's philosophy, thus summarizing the basic thought of human social development and progress. At this point, we can better understand the Marxist theory of civilization through the general combing of the development

of civilization and progress thought, so as to promote the development and progress of The Times in practical activities.

6. Conclusions and Discussion

Engels systematically explained the origin of civilization, the signs of its emergence, the process of development and the driving force of progress in his Origin, and affirmed the progress and function of civilization. His main thoughts on civilization have important theoretical and practical values for promoting the common development of multi-civilizations in the world. At present, we are in a journey to realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation's history, is on the way of all-round construction of socialism modernization country, must be based on principles of marxist civilization theory to follow, the marxist view of civilization has always implement in the new era of the civilization of socialism with Chinese characteristics development process, this will help us to achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation the Chinese dream, let the Chinese civilization in conform to the trend of The Times and coruscate gives new vigor and vitality, and at the world level will also be in response to the global civilization new challenges, China's contribution to promote the development and progress of human civilization.

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