

Brief Analysis of Kawakami Hajime'S Labor View

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Abstract: Kawakami Hajime is a well-known Marxist theorist and socialist activist in Japan's modern history. He discussed dialectical materialism systematically and studied Marxist economic theory. In the early economic research of Kawakami Hajime, a unique view of labor, which is "gamification of labor" had already formed. Gamification of labor is a means to reduce labor pain, and also a form of labor development. Kawakami Hajime believes that the gamification of labor from primitive societies, abandoned in capitalist societies, will reappear as a new form of labor in communist societies. This paper makes a comprehensive analysis between Kawakami Hajime's thoughts and the Marxist thought, and analyzes Kawakami Hajime's assumptions about the unique labor concept of "the gamification of labor" in communist society.

1. Introduction

Kawakami Hajime's economic research is based on his insight into labor. Shiro Sugihara discussed Kawakami Hajime's view on labor in his paper, which mainly contains the following aspects: First, Kawakami Hajime, in his earliest works "The Fundamental Concept of Economics" and "Socialist Review", took labor theory as the center of economy and established that "reducing labor pain" and "shortening labor time" were important phenomena of economic evolution. Second, during the Meiji period in Japan, Kawakami Hajime published "Change of the times", "Economy and Life" and other works, which proposed that with the development of productivity, with the shortening of labor time and the development of gamification of labor, labor would be free from pain. Thirdly, in the taisho period of Japan, labor pains were divided into physical pains and spiritual pains. The cause of spiritual pains came from the purpose of labor, namely the pursuit of external material. Therefore, his viewpoint of "work without pursuing the purpose, completely free choice of occupation and obtaining social security" embodies the thought about the prospect of communism, which is matched with Marxist thought. Fourth, the idea that "the gamification of labor" will be realized in the ideal society is also presented in Kawakami Hajime's 1930 paper, "Outlook to the communist society".

On the basis of these contents, Shiro proposed that Kawakami Hajime regarded labor as the central topic of economics between his ages of 20 and 50, and his unique argument of "the gamification of labor" is a point that should be paid attention to in the history of economic research.

2. Hajime's dialectical materialism and his investigation of labor process

In his paper, "Self-liquidation of historical materialism", Kawakami Hajime pointed out that "reality" is the fundamental starting point of dialectical materialism and historical materialism, which can be manifested in labor and the process of material production. This article starts from the standpoint of Marxism that the process of labor is described as follows: "the process of human natural working practice is nothing more than the process of human material production", "The unified and fundamental basis of all phenomena is nothing more than the process of production and labor". Kawakami Hajime believes that the root of all social phenomena lies in the process of material production, namely the economics of labor process, which is also considered as Marxist economics. In the contemporary public publication, The Outline of Economics, Kawakami Hajime's view of labor based on Marxism has a more detailed description:

"If there is any use value to be produced, one must add external material to the Labor. That is to

say, the so-called labor is the controlling behavior of human beings with their own actions as the medium. It is the natural and necessary process of material metabolism between human beings and nature.”^[1]

The labor view that labor is the antagonistic struggle between man and nature has applicability in every stage of social development. Based on this view, when Kawakami Hajime wrote the “The Outline of Economics”, his research focused on labor in capitalist society. In a capitalist society, labor produces goods. Standing on the materialist view of history, the analysis of capitalist labor is based on the analysis of commodities, that is, the inspection of labor and commodity production. After careful consideration, Kawakami Hajime summarized the relationship between historical materialism and commodities. Biologists Ernst Haeckel put forward that ontogeny is a miniature of the system which is also applicable to the human society. The theoretical analysis of capitalist society with Marxism describes the development process of commodity production and re-exchange. That is to say, the explanation of capitalist society is the beginning of commercial analysis and establishes the economics from the reality analysis of goods and production, which is the result of the study of Marx’s economics. The schema of the opposition between human beings and nature in dialectical materialism is also reflected in the concept of labor. In this regard, Kawakami Hajime offers the following explanation:

“The opposition between nature and man produces the opposition between the means of production and Labor and the opposition between constant capital and variable capital, so that the total capital of a society is often constructed as the element of the opposition between constant capital and feasible capital. Thus, human labor becomes indispensable to survival, indispensable to labor.”^[2]

In the struggle between man and nature, labor is an indispensable part of survival. In this respect, this view of labor applies to all societies. Especially in the capitalist society, labor bearing the production of goods support the survival of human beings.

Kawakami Hajime further developed Marx’s axiology and dialectical materialism, thereby obtaining the two concepts of labor described in *Das Kapital*, namely useful labor and human labor. Kawakami Hajime explains both as follows:

“Labor producing use value is opposite to labor creating value. The former is concrete labor, and there are thousands of different types of use value produced by it. The latter is labor disregarding the specific forms.

The so-called useful labor is the individual labor that produces use value, and there is useful labor in every society. On the one hand, human labor is the Abstract and average labor that produces commodity value, and it is the unique labor of capitalist society. In other words, useful labor is not Abstract labor and human labor is not individual labor. In capitalist society, these two kinds of labor are same existence.”^[3]

On this issue, Kawakami Hajime considers that human labor and useful labor are two categories, and before accepting the Marxist concept of labor, Kawakami Hajime’s concept of labor did not strictly distinguish between the two categories. The recognition of the two categories of human labor is derived from Marx. Kawakami Hajime accepted the Marxist concept of labor, but his idea of “the gamification of labor” persisted. In the “The Original Life of Mankind”(1909) and “Development of Labor” (1915), Kawakami Hajime stated the concept of gamification of Labor. After “Self-liquidation of historical materialism”, Kawakami Hajime turned to Marxism and based on Marxist dialectical materialism to establish his research direction, Kawakami Hajime reviewed the concept of gamification of labor.

3. Description of labor problems in capitalist society

The main focus of Kawakami Hajime on labor problem in the capitalist social is mainly focused on three aspects: the first is the extraction of surplus value by capitalists; Second, the pain of long-term labor; The third is liberation from alienated labor. The first and third points need to be explored from the perspective of human labor to figure out the strategy of solving problems, which is the nature that should be improved in the transformation of social organization. Through the

social revolution, the exploiting class was abolished and the labor was generalized. That is, all people worked equally to eliminate the exploitation of capitalists. In terms of overtime work, with the generalization of the same labor and the development of productivity, the labor time was shortened. These three points are the three problems raised by Kawakami Hajime about capitalist social labor. With the increase of productivity after the social revolution, the development of labor generalization, the abolition of labor exploitation, the pain of long hours of labor is reduced with the shortening of labor time. The laborer would be gradually liberated from the idea that work is the first requirement of life, and Hajime and Marx share the same idea on this point. However, the individuality of Kawakami Hajime's ideology lies in the fact that it is at this point in time that the ideal state of the economy is revealed: the gamification of labor. This point is introduced in Shiro Sugihara's paper mentioned at the beginning of this paper. The gamification of labor is revealed in the section of Kawakami Hajime's essay, "Outlook to communist society".

"The human activities that are carried out for material are gradually separated from the 'game'. In the future, however, to be released from the painful elements of labor, labor will once again be transformed into an activity of game. I think it's a negation of negation."^[4]

In the acceptance of concept of labor existing in Marx's dialectical materialism, Kawakami Hajime maintains the specific concept of labor. Here, it should be noted that the concept of the gamification of labor differs from that in the communist society.

4. The gamification of labor liberated from alienation

From the viewpoint of "the gamification of labor" proposed by Kawakami Hajime in 1910 has a break point in time with the gamification of labor in communist society. If it is explained in this regard, labor is taken as game in the primitive society and such a phenomenon also exists in modern times. The gamification of labor in the society before the emergence of capitalist production is described in "The Original Life of Mankind" published in 1909 and "Development of Labor", published in 1915. For example, in Japan, there are Taueuta and rice cake song. People sing monotonous songs while working and working together with the labor song and working in music atmosphere are the gamification of labor. However, with human activities for material production and the loss of game elements, laborers became the labor force of capitalist society. In the future communist society, labor is the first requirement of life and the gamification of labor will be resurrected once again. In the society before the appearance of capitalist production, the gamification of labor was turned into a means to reduce labor pain. In a capitalist society, the way to reduce the pain of labor after removing the elements of game is to abolish exploitation and shorten working hours.

In addition, Kawakami Hajime tries to solve the problem of the gamification of alienated labor in the communist society. Based on this, he thinks that the gamification of labor in the communist society and the gamification of labor in the primitive society should not only be considered separately in time, but also consider the difference of its content.

Kawakami Hajime is based on capitalist economics and takes socialist economics and humanitarian economics as examples to elaborate on this. According to Kawakami Hajime, the representative figure of socialist economics is Marx, and the representative figure of humanitarian economics is Laski. Before Kawakami Hajime's "Self-liquidation of historical materialism", his works had not been influenced by dialectical materialism, such as "The development of the history of capitalist economy". kusida tamizo once commented that this article is "a journey from economics to philosophy"^[5], which is an overview of Marxist economics and capital theory. This article is included in The Outline of Economics, which contains a portion of views of Laski. After accepting dialectical materialism, Kawakami Hajime accepted Laski's view. In his later period, this was reflected in his article "Outlook to socialism".

"Open the curtains and see the light." is said by Laski, and it is also reflected in The Development of Capitalist Economics and The Outline of Economics. This is what Kawakami Hajime says in his translation: "Luxury has the possibility to be realized in the future. The elegant luxury without criminal purpose is the artificial and purposeful elegance created by human beings.

But now luxury is the enjoyment of the ignorant, and even the cruelest of men do not have the patience to enjoy the delicious food in prison, that is, ‘opening the curtains and seeing the light’”^[6].

This sentence is quoted by Kawakami Hajime at the end of “The development of the history of capitalist economy”, but If we sum up Kawakami Hajime’s attitude to Laski’s claim, we need to say something else. Lasky opposed egoistic economics and believed that both producers and consumers should obey the social obligation. For the producer, the best production is to increase the social welfare, while for the consumer, the best use is to take into account the evil of luxury while using the material, and make it one of his obligations. When luxury appears, it is ignorance to fail to see its dark side, that is, the shadow of the poor and laborious people. On the other hand, if the material-rich communist society is realized, people can enjoy luxuries without any worries and enjoy the delicious food in prison. “Social wealth is like sea.” Such a communist society is the prospect of Kawakami Hajime. In “The development of the history of capitalist economy”, Kawakami Hajime compared the views of Laski and Marx and investigated the concept of consumption.

“Things are based on useful use and effectual use generates wealth. This is the most important point proposed by Laski. As far as I know, Mr. Laski is a scholar with excellent views and rich investigation. Besides him, only Marx could match.” Fragments of Marx’s manuscript published since 1903. “Preface to Critique of Political Economy” is the most remarkable work in every respect. In his article, the following discussion is carried out:

“If production does not consume, or consumption does not produce, the purpose of production ceases to exist, and in any case, consumption is one of the two forms of production, the other being production. First, production is the real production on the basis of consumption, such as clothes, which are interwoven with human behavior and become real clothes. For example, a house, if no one is there, will not be a real house. Therefore, what is produced starts with consumption, which is the way to distinguish the natural object from what is produced.

Consumption is the initial achievement of completed production under the condition of solving production. Secondly, consumption puts forward new requirements on production, namely the premise of production, the accuracy of production and the intrinsic motivation of production.”^[7]

In this regard, Hajime and Laski’s views are combined with Marx’s understanding of the relationship between consumption and production, and Hajime combined affluence, consumption and production. In “Outlook to the communist society”, Kawakami Hajime expressed the idea that after the social revolution through communism and the realization of communism by Marx, Laski could achieve what he called “wealth”. The socialist revolution in Marxism is accompanied by the reform of the socialist system and the development of productive forces. The materialistic revolution under historical materialism is premised on Laski’s effective value. It is necessary to realize spiritual development to realize Laski’s “wealth”. In other words, it is a state of material and spiritual enrichment.

The unification of religious truth and scientific truth is a direction to solve Kawakami Hajime’s problem in his later years. In order to realize the necessity of Laski’s “wealth” of surplus value. In “Outlook to the communist society”, regarding the direction of surplus labor in the communist society, the distribution of surplus value is attached great importance by Kawakami Hajime. The so-called “joyfully responsible” is a kind of gamification of labor, which means “opening the curtain and seeing the light”. That is to enable the existence of the poor and the weak in society to get attention. In “The Outline of Economics and Anatomy of the Capitalist Society (Part 1)”, it is recorded as follows: “the result of surplus labor is free, such as in slavery, the master of the slave; Feudal landowners; Capitalists in the capitalist system; Children in communism; The patient; People with disabilities; Old people that are not laborers, the people outside of material production who obtain useful labor.”^[8]

The result of surplus labor in communist society is that, except for the weak, it is distributed to those who engage in useful labor other than material production. In “The Outline of Economics”, there is no distinction between “human labor” and “useful labor”, so “useful labor” cannot be regarded as direct labor but as labor with useful value. In societies outside the communist system,

useful labor other than material production is directed towards the object of the laborer. “Useful labor other than material production” is not included in the scope of human labor and is different from that of useful labor. Useful labor, which enjoys both production and consumption, is part of the gamification of labor in communist society. The enjoyment of surplus labor in consumption is part of the gamification of labor in communist society. There are three points defined by Kawakami Hajime to determine the gamification of labor in the communist society. The first is that, after labor work is generalized, capitalists no longer engage in exploitation, and labor becomes a purposeful activity; The second point is that, not only for themselves, labor becomes a conscious action for society; The third point is to enjoy consumption according to surplus labor.

5. Conclusion of the changes of gamification of labor

The gamification of labor that Kawakami Hajime thought about in 1910 is different from that in 1930. The latter is a combination of Marxist labor view and Laski’s concept of wealth and value. In the early stage of Kawakami Hajime economics research, he did not consider different and specific labor. In this case, the gamification of labor in all its forms is seen as a means of reducing the pain of labor. After absorbing the Marxist view of labor, two categories of “useful labor” and “human labor” were conceived in labor, and the concept of gamification of labor also changed a lot. In the capitalist society, the elements of the gamification in labor have been lost. Regarding the problem of the capitalist society, the extraction of surplus labor and the pain of long-term work are seen from the scope of human labor. Kawakami Hajime takes into account that the elimination of exploitation and the reduction of working hours have been achieved through class struggle. In addition, Kawakami Hajime has another solution, which is the gamification of labor. The gamification of labor cannot be considered from the perspective of human labor. Gamification usually comes from concrete, different kinds of labor, not Abstract. Das Kapital was written on the basis of a useful labor viewpoint, and Kawakami Hajime’s viewpoint was based on the Das Kapital. In other words, the gamification of labor must be examined from the viewpoint of Marxism. In Laski’s investigation of “wealth”, Marx’s view of production and consumption was added, and Kawakami Hajime created “The development of the history of capitalist economy” based on this. Due to the liberation of labor, enjoying the game of labor has become a social reality. “The production of consumption comes from the new production requirements. That is, production should be based on the spirit of production and internal motivation”. Not only in the primitive society, with the development of science and technology and productivity, a new form of gamification of labor has also emerged in modern society. Value is Abstract.human labor, and use value is individual useful labor. Therefore, the necessary condition for effective value enjoyment is a communist society with highly developed productive forces.

Kawakami Hajime aims at communism and to liberate laborers through Marx’s social revolution. Laski’s “wealth” value can be realized. Further speaking, in Kawakami Hajime’s communist society, the development of productive forces is based on Marx’s values and Laski’s values as the material basis of an ideal society unified with dialectics.

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