
A Marxist Evaluation of the Renewal of Social Democracy

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Résumé

This study aims to evaluate the renewal of social democracy from the viewpoint of Marxism. Marxists have severely criticized welfare states promoted by social democracies as a form of camouflage of state monopoly capitalism. However, the reason Marx called his socialism as scientific socialism was in trying to build socialism based on the outcome of capitalism. From this point of view, social democracy that pursued the idea of socialism inherent in the development of capitalism is more faithful to Marx rather than Marxism-Leninism that tried to build socialism without going through capitalism. When neoliberalism emerged through the crisis of the welfare state in the 1970s, and the Soviet-type socialist states collapsed in early 1990s, some Marxists began to estimate social democracy positively. At present, some social democrats repent their third way and neoliberal tendencies and are trying to renew themselves. Then, how should Marxists evaluate the renewal of social democracy? Social democracy has to renew itself in the following four points. First, the foundation of the welfare state was in the postwar high growth economy, but it was lost due to the low growth after the 1970s and the occurrence of environmental problems. Social democracy now has to promote a steady state economy. Second, as a result of the advanced development of productive forces, it has become impossible to provide employment to all citizens. Social democracy should pursue post-productivism that separates labor and welfare. Third, criticism has been made that the state became enlarged and oppressed the free activities of citizens. Therefore, a welfare society where citizen's associations are responsible for welfare is required. Fourth, the welfare state has assumed the framework of the nation-state. However, as globalization progresses, it has become impossible for the nation state to deal with the activities of multinational corporations and the movement of immigrants and refugees. What is necessary for the future is cosmopolitanism. However, renewal of social democracy in these four points means that it approaches socialism. The reason why human flourishing for everyone is possible is that it is based on a steady state economy. The necessary principle dominates there, and labor and welfare are separated. In this society, the state is abolished, and the association of free people becomes the basic activity unit. If the state is abolished, the next goal is to build a cosmopolitan society. The renewal of social democracy is possible only by converting it to socialism. This is a Marxist's evaluation of the renewal of social democracy.

Mots-Clés: social democracy, welfare state, third way, neoliberalism, socialism

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