Powerty in the Context of the Authentic History

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Abstract: The article is concerned with the pressing issue of poverty. The author sees it as a global social danger. An attempt to determine the causes of poverty and its historical origins has been made. Various forms of government assistance to the poor have been defined. It is noted in the article that relations of the poor and the state had been conflictual until social problems became regulated by the government. It contains extensive materials relating charity in our country. The author traces the history of foundation and development of social assistance institutions in Russia. Based on the analysis of a number of historical facts it is concluded that charity has become a mass and professional activity since the 19th century.

Key words: Poverty · Impoverishment · Global Social Danger · Social Inequality · Mechanism of Material Inequality · The Concept of "Natural" Inequality · The Concept of Generic Savings · The Concept of "Social" Causation · Social Assistance Institutions · Charity

INTRODUCTION

Russian President Vladimir Putin at the State Council Session announced the figures that today 13% of population in the Russian Federation is still living below the poverty line. This makes "about 18 million people". The Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat) provides a bit different figures-13.6 instead of 13 % and 19.1 million people instead of "about 18 million of the poor". Today the threat of impoverishment is a global social danger. Poverty is associated with regression in social development.

The problem of poverty arises as a result of disproportion in social reproduction. It is connected with social forms of alienation of man from man (from society), from prerequisites and products of labour, from the labour itself significantly restricting consumption of commodities and creating the conditions under which subculture of the poor turns into the factor of destabilization of the life of society [1-7]. The relevance of this issue lies in the fact that stratification of our society into the rich and the poor is its basic characteristic at the moment.

Tracing historical origins of poverty it is necessary to note a number of points.

- The first burials which give evidence of social inequality are dated the Bronze Age and connected with the ability to use labour of dependent employees. Inequalities in life of tribes living in accordance with primitive communal norms were observed by Claude Lévi-Strauss and Margaret Mead, while Gerhard Lenski conducted a special comparative structural and social research devoted to the problem of intertribal inequality. Similar results were obtained by the American researcher Ruth Benedict when studying historical destinies of backward peoples [8-10].

In one of his works devoted to problems of social inequality Sorokin P. A. noted the following: "Even if it is impossible to find any society without stratification in primitive societies, it is even more useful to try finding it in later periods of developed and complex civilizations." [11, p. 305].

The basic social problem is the study of the mechanism of material inequality. We can distinguish three main concepts. The first one is the concept of "natural" inequality (division of labour, separation and accumulation of wealth in the most capable members of the community). The second one is the concept of "social" causation (forcing to obedience due to predatory wars, wealth accumulation through spoils of war). The third one is the concept of generic savings (treasure or surpluses are held by generic leaders who eventually become their sole disposers).

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It is typical that the community persistently resisted such accumulation: many primitive tribes had various customs associated with restoration of equality [12, pp.54, 66, 103].

- With the appearance of early forms of state social stratification acquired the features of a stable social structure based on separation of the ruling elite stratum and a poorer social stratum living, as a rule, by their work. Social dependence relations are formed. "Appearance of material and social inequality between members of the society resulted in formation of groups and appearance of individuals that are unable independently, *i.e.* without assistance and protection of more powerful and richer individuals and groups to maintain the lifestyle typical for this society" [12, p. 305].

Besides, the institution of slavery is formed in many countries where social differences reach their maximum. It is also necessary to emphasize the fact that relations with social and material inequality often acquired a distinctive ethnic trace: as a result of conquests representatives of the other conquered peoples and tribes became slaves.

With the appearance of a social stratum of the poor the problem of protection of own interests by the poor and the impoverished arose that in the era of states with different classes had the form of riots and rebellions. Protection of interests of the ruling stratum turns into both military crackdown and legislative protection.

Material differences in living standards cover the entire regions (Hellenistic world and "barbarians") in the ancient world. This difference to a certain extent caused numerous wars.

The development of civilization, urban growth, separation of agricultural population from traditional resources due to various reasons-all these factors result in such a social phenomenon as beggary. It is originated from changing the social status of individuals, from their forced separation from sources and resources. The social composition of beggars is rather diversified: impoverished commoners, merchants and craftsmen, fire victims, persons deprived of social protection in their social circle among whom we can distinguish elderly and disabled people families and communities of which were not able to support them, breakers of social and cultural rules

expelled from their environment etc. This phenomenon appeared in the era of societies with different classes and became a mass phenomenon in great ancient civilizations.

The state had to take official measures of social protection. For example, the Theodosian Code prohibiting begging was issued in Byzantium in 438. However, measures directly prohibiting begging rarely gave positive results. Besides, even for the imperial power it was obvious that most beggars were underprivileged people. The consequences of such a consideration were monarchs' decrees prohibiting begging for healthy people and capable employees (Byzantium, 529, Russia, 1551, England, 1662) as an attempt to separate "legal beggars" from "illegal" ones (Germany, 1536), to establish taxes in favour of the poor (England, 1572), to establish charitable taxation of places of entertainment, as well as to open hospitals, poorhouses and workhouses [13, p. 237].

The other form of public assistance for the poor was food credits. In Russia during the reign of Ivan III bread reserves were provided at barley yards in the event of bad harvest, during Boris Godunov's reign in greatest famine in 1603 the attempt was made for state regulation of bread prices that increased 100 times, public purchase and giving bread to starving people [13, p. 237]. Rice reserves were provided in Eastern countries as well-in Korea in the era of Koguryo where the imperator according to ideas of Confucius was to perform paternalistic functions [14, p. 305]. However, these examples have not become the standard of state policy.

Relations of distressed people with the state have often been in conflict. Until realization of the fact that the state should perform control and regulation of social problems, that in one form or another it is responsible for the condition of its citizens, relations were of forced nature.

When developing the theory of civilizations and historical development Toynbee A. made the following assumption: "...Collapse of the broken-down civilization starts with separation of the proletariat from the group of leaders degenerated into the governing minority" [15, p. 305]. At that, Toynbee A. gives a special explanation of the fact who can be referred to proletariat: "A true feature of a proletarian is neither poverty nor low origin, as well as a constant feeling of dissatisfaction sparked by the absence of inherited legal position in society and rejection from its community" [15, p.346].

Undoubtedly, these people bear a direct relation to toppling the governments that made them poor. Fall of great empires as well as the entire revolutionary experience in world history proves this conclusion. Toynbee A. wrote: "If we analyze the types of these deprived and robbed people, it becomes clear that their ethos is made of cruelty and hatred … victims of unlawful actions and despotism should surpass their oppressors in cruelty" [15, p. 347]. Suffice it to recall "Russian revolt, senseless and merciless" as defined by Pushkin A.S.

Destructiveness with regard to the state and impoverished population and the need in other ways were realized only in the 19th century. Development of industry and urban growth resulted in extraordinary impoverishment of population, horrifying living and working conditions for a large number of people. Even such a classic work as Das Kapital by K. Marx gives a lot of examples of exploitation of adults and children: Wiliam Wood, 9, started working when he was 7 years and 10 months old, every day he came to work at 6 am and left at 9 pm; Mary Anne Walkley had been working without interruption for 26.5 hours with 60 other girls, 30 persons in a small room …, the doctor who pronounced her dead due to overwork and exhaustion received a reprimand for not concealing real causes of death... [16, pp. 256-266].

At the end of the 18th century 26 thousand of men, 31 thousand of women and 35 thousand of children worked at weaving plants and workshops in England, significant part of which were younger than 10 years old [17, p. 345]. In 1866 English doctor John Gunter noted that there were more than 20 big colonies in London with at least 10 thousand people in each "desperate position of which is beyond anything imaginable": "…which behavior of children can we expect if they are now receiving education in the country which should make them a dangerous class as the children spend half the night without sleeping with adults, drunk, cynical and quarrelsome" [17, p. 348].

Things were not better in Russia. The biggest laws of the end of the 19th century were "On supervision over manufacturing institutions and on relations between manufacturers and workers" (1886) and "On duration and distribution of working hours in factory sector facilities" (1897). After their adoption factory inspection was established that was intended to monitor their compliance. Reports of the committee contain information on thousands of children and adolescents doomed to die before reaching adulthood, on horrifying injuries including those due to drunkenness, on immense exploitation of women labour etc.

The extent and level of mass disasters faced by the lower class in the 19th century were unprecedented. It is not surprising that the intensity of revolutionary events in Europe was also extraordinary during this century.

We do not have well-defined information on motives for establishment of social institutions for providing assistance to the poor, as well as information on most founders of these shelter-care facilities. We should admit that they become mass in the course of expansion of various confessions typical for this region. The basis for a number of religious denominations is the ideal person that refused wealth and turned to poverty as a way of life.

This is Prince Gautama who upon watching human sufferings left his happy home to perceive the world and to help people. This is also Jesus Christ in Christianity. In Russian Orthodoxy begging especially voluntary one was considered as a condition incomparably above the state of wealth-as a special Christian exploit performed by the afflicted. At that the latter takes care of the spirit of those who is in goodness praying to God for them. Klyuchevskii V. wrote that "begging in Ancient Rus was considered to be one of basic means of moral education of people relating to the church as a practical institute of public morality" [18, p. 2].

Lives of Russian saints such as Theodosius and Anthony of Kiev, St. Sergius of Radonezh called the teacher and mentor of the entire Russian land, St. Nilus of Sora, St. Seraphim of Sarov and many others are full of facts of voluntary poverty. Following these canonical examples many people were engaged in charitable activities while maintaining a modest lifestyle [19].

Klyuchevskii V.O. in his essay *Good People of Ancient Rus* wrote about such exploits [20]. Among them the exploit of Juliana Ustinovna Osorina was especially emphasized: in a famine of 1601 this widow of a wealthy provincial landlord took care of all those in need in such a way that as Klyuchevskii V. O. said "diddled herself out of her money so that she even had nothing to wear for the church".

This is how Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna, Princess of Hesse, granddaughter of Victoria, Queen of England, wife of Russian Emperor's uncle described her aspirations: "I am leaving the brilliant world where I have taken a brilliant position but together with all I am entering a greater world-the world of the poor and the afflicted". She pronounced these words on April 9, 1910 at the day of her departure from the worldly life and consecrating to the prioress of the Martha and Mary Convent of Mercy [21, p. 3].

Bright stories of noble deeds and charity activities can be found in Western European history as well. Vincent de Paul, the confessor and doctor of famous Queen Margot and simultaneously priest of convicts kept at galleys, founded Brotherhood of Charity for Care and Spiritual Assistance to the Poor Sick People. He in his turn left a very touching story about one of his helpers-about Louise Le Gras, the widow of Antoine Le Gras, secretary of Queen Marie de Medici, who had been undergoing hardships for four years to be left in the brotherhood and to help the poor [22].

Providing food, clothes and even money was detected in archaic periods. The first shelters for the homeless, crippled and disabled people, hospitals also appeared long ago but the first evidence refers to the 5th century, they appeared almost simultaneously in India, China, in the Middle East and in Europe [22, p. 257. 6].

Numerous social assistance institutions existed at the initiative and under control of individuals and organizations. There were monastic orders among them such as the Hospitaller Order that helped the Crusaders and played an important role in movement of European population to the Middle East that helped the sick and injured redeemed captives from captivity. There were also semi-monastic organizations such as sisterhoods and brotherhoods of Beguines and Beghards started with different forms of assistance and mutual assistance [21, pp. 14 -17]. On the basis of this diverse experience the community of Sisters of Mercy of Florence Nightingale appeared that has become famous all over the world [21, pp. 34 - 51]. In the 20th century Mother Teresa founded the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy in 1946 has become a legend. She found her call in helping the sick, the dying, the poor and the homeless, as well as the wounded and the maimed.

The first community of Sisters of Mercy was founded in Russia in 1844 by Grand Duchess Alexandra Nikolaevna, since 1873-74 it has been called Holy Trinity. The next one was St. Nicholas community created at the initiative of Duchess Sophia Stepanovna Scherbatova and with participation of "holy doctor" Haas F. P. in 1848 in Moscow in the outbreak of cholera. Establishment of these sisterhoods was preceded by the activities of communities of soft-hearted widows [22, pp. 51-58].

Acuteness of social disasters of the 19th century gave rise to the growth of charity activities. For example, the association of assistance for the poor and charity was established in Germany (in 1884), in the USA-New York Society for the Advancement of the Poor (in 1843), in France - Charities Bureau and public assistance centers in the community, in England-charity associations (1869), charity associations and organizations appeared in Russia as well: Society for Visiting the Poor and Imperial Philanthropic Society.

The distinctive feature of charity regarding the poor in the 19th century consists in, firstly, extensive participation of individuals and, secondly, increasing involvement of professionals, especially doctors, teachers, psychologists and psychiatrists as well as other specialists.

Such a charity organization as the Salvation Army that appeared approximately in 1865 can serve as an example. Researches of this organization Ivanova E. V. And Ivanova Zh. T. underline an important feature of this organization: "Modern researchers studying methods of work of the Salvation Army are often surprised with the high quality of social programs implemented by its members in the middle of the 19th century. These are the social programs on work with deprived women, with the unemployed and tramps etc." [23, p. 62]. Participation in such specialized social organizations required a more professional work in this field; this resulted in opening a number of educational institutions.

One of the first who established educational institutions for social workers was Mary Ellen Richmond, her plan was implemented at the School of Applied Philanthropy, District of Columbia (U.S.), this school is still existing-it is a faculty of social work at the Columbia University. She also wrote the first textbook.

The other activist of social education was Alice Salomon. In 1899 she headed one-year professional training course in social work for women.

At the beginning of the 20th century educational institutions for training social workers opened in a number of countries: 1903-School of Social Work for Rank and File of Charity Organizations, in 1905-schools in the US, in 1907 - School of Social Training of Gaheri M. opened in Germany and one more school of Salomon A. opened there in 1908. Finally, the Department of Public Assistance at the Psychoneurological Institute opened in Russia in 1910, this Russian social institution was at once brought to the level of higher education under a large research institute leading in its field.

Even in such a brief essay it is obvious that such events were almost simultaneous in Europe, Russia and the U.S. [24, pp .293 -294].

Table 1: Charitable associations and institutions in Russia at the end of the 19ᵗʰ century.

| Regions | Charitable | | | |
	Associations	Institutions	Total	per 100 thousand citizens
European Russia (48 guberniyas)	4,958	5,976	10,934	12
Baltic Sea Region	1,073	286	1,559	57
Privislenskii Krai (Visla River Region)	208	706	914	9
Caucasus region	87	87	274	3
Grand Duchy of Finland	640	209	849	33
Siberia	182	201	383	6
Central Asian possessions	101	40	141	2

Thus, charity is becoming a mass activity and at that more and more professional since the 19ᵗʰ century. Extensive literature devoted to social work history provides abundant proof to this. At the end of the 19th century Maksimov E. wrote in his *Essay of Private Charity* about sizes of private donations in 1893 - 1897, that according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs the following donations were made for charity purposes: in 1893-3, 937, 383 rub., in 1894-1, 697, 988 rub., in 1895-1, 457, 804 rub, in 1896-991, 628 rub., in 1897-1, 469, 268 rub., total-9, 554, 771 rub. and on the average a little less than 2 million rubles yearly [25, p.14]. Not less indicative data is given in the work of Melnikov V.P. and Kholostova E.I. [26, p. 42].

Europe's entry into the era of industrial development resulted in the sharpest mass polarization of population involved in economic life. The facts of poverty were so horrifying that they could not leave cold a large number of people.

The education level was sufficient for those socially active people to realize danger of poverty for both each individual and society as a whole. The situation of the poor has become a concern not individual philanthropists and benefactors but entire groups and social strata; it has become concern of the whole society.

Establishment of professional social work was facilitated by print media development and expansion of communications. At that period journalism made reports of doctors and supervisors as well as the facts of inhuman treatment of workers public. It was prohibited to legally publish accusatory periodicals and newspapers in Russia; this function was performed by revolutionary publications. However, the educational function was possible; this function was performed by newspaper *Russky Invalid* (*Russian Invalid*) founded in 1813. A special place among Russian journalists belongs to Gilyarovskii V. A., one of a few who not only wrote about Moscow "bottom" but also knew well about the life of its inhabitants: "Those born in Khitrovka and managed to grow up in that horrible atmosphere will end up in jail. Exceptions are rare" [27, p. 43].

The society has started carefully studying poverty as a social phenomenon, finding its causes and methods to overcome it. Various professional specialists have studied this problem.

The level of human development in the modern context allows to finally put this issue as a task for a specific social action and to try solving it by combined efforts of all nations.

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