

# The Brilliance of Economics in Mozi's Thought

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**Abstract:** Mozi's works have discussed the utility and marginal theory in modern microeconomics, showing the brilliance of microeconomics, which is rarely seen in Chinese ancient books. This paper aims to show mohist culture from the perspective of economic theory and interpretation of Mozi's works.

**Keywords:** Mozi's "criticism fault"; "Economization"; Economic maximization; Marginal theory

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## 1. What is economic thought

Mohist thought is not only simple materialism in ancient times, but also the source of modern economic thought. Unfortunately, the environment for rapid development has not been developed, so that it is not known to future generations.

Modern economics, as we know it, originated in the West. In the East, Mozi's daily words and deeds on economic issues, and even his economic ideas on war issues, are especially reflected in the economic thoughts in the excerpts of "excusing" and "economizing" in Mozi, which have deeply touched the core content of economic issues.

It should be said that the discussion on economic issues is shared by every nationality. Some theoretical studies on economic problems are systematic and some are fragmentary. In the East, there is no systematic and complete discourse. But there is such a thing as a "theoretical idea of the economic problem," and this can be seen on two levels:

When there is a problem in the society, it is a specific and real problem, and people will seek ways to solve it. Only when it is solved, can things go on. This is "the study of the problem".

Problems of a certain type exist in large numbers, appear frequently, are universal and typical, and they may haunt us for a long time. Because it is a general existence and does not require immediate solution, or the urgency is not particularly strong, there may be alternative and approximate solutions in reality. In this case, some people, for reasons of interest, may not necessarily be the problem they are facing, and that is all, or personal hobbies, after a period of investigation and analysis, put forward their own understanding and solutions from the theoretical level. When necessary, they cite other people's theories that have gained consensus or recognition to support their own theoretical views, so as to enrich the theoretical results of the research on relevant issues.

Economic thought begins with the way in which everyday economic problems are dealt with ---- economy and efficiency

## 2. Economical economic logic contained in Mohist's original speech

Theoretical research does not necessarily have the formal expression of logic, but it should contain logical thinking and stand the test of theory and practice. More importantly, it can stand the scrutiny and proof of theoretical logic. Can be tested in practice is correct, is the theory of science; Otherwise, it is an unscientific theory and a fallacy.

In accordance with this way of thinking, we should see whether the expression of economic problems in the Eastern history of Mohism belongs to the discussion or study of theoretical problems. The following quotes a text of Mozi for analysis:

resign

When the ancient people did not know that they were chariots, the heavy duty did not move and the long distance did not arrive. Therefore, the holy King acted as chariots to facilitate the people. It is also for the boat, the whole good light, can be heavy Zhiyuan, it is less for Zhou CAI, and to benefit more, is to benefit the folk music. Therefore, the law is not urgent to act, and the people do not work hard enough, so the people return. Today's time, it is the boat car, and this is different, the whole solid light benefit has been collected in the people, will be thick to decorate the boat car, decorate the car with literary style, decorate the boat to carve. Women waste its textile and literary talent, so people cold; The man left his grain and carved, so the people hungry. If the king for the boat and

car, so around like it, is the people hungry and cold, so for evil. More evil, deep punishment, deep punishment, chaos. You really want to rule the world and hate its chaos, when the boat must not be tied.

Obviously, Mozi's expression in this paragraph does not seek to solve a specific problem, but talks about the general economic problem that the whole society is facing in different fields: that is, human beings are too extravagant and limited resources do not give full play to the maximum effect, namely the problem of "utility maximization". "It's a boat and a cart... Here, the marginal utility of resources is already zero, and they are increasing investment. "Women waste weaving and cultivate literary talent, so the people cold; In this case, the resources of "men" and "women" have not reached the optimal allocation, but also the problem of reduced or even wasted utility in carving. Similar to the theory of diminishing utility, it is essentially similar to the theory of "utility maximization" and "marginal utility theory". Mozi's focus here is only on the broad issues of people's livelihood, and the concept of general economic theory is not clearly expressed, but has touched on the general issues of microeconomic theory -----, "the contradiction between the finite nature of resources and the infinity of human nature" and "utility maximization". Here economic thought is still in its infancy, far from economic theory.

"Resignation", mainly discusses the social existence of the general problem, that is, the phenomenon of uneconomy. It is a general enumeration of the way to discuss the existence of diseconomy in different fields.

The phenomenon of uneconomy is the starting point for economists to study economic problems. First, to express their own views, secondly, from the theoretical height, on the basis of a large number of practical data, demonstrate different situations, design a set of feasible mathematical logic scheme.

"Qui Guo" here put forward the problems existing in practice, but also expressed their own views. There is only a lack of further logical models and complete solutions.

The idea of "quits" is to oppose waste, oppose supplementary economy and advocate efficiency.

Therefore, the viewpoint of Mohism is the germination of economic thought. The fundamental cause of economics is the contradiction between the limitation of resources and the infinity of humanity. How to make the limited resources benefit infinitely, this is its essence. It studies general problems in the process of economic development. Generally speaking, it is the problem of source and flow, input and output, income and distribution, high and low distribution, simplicity and complexity... .

"Excise" describes the limited labor force into the necessary production field, to make tools, weapons, as much as necessary to use materials. In the historical background without modern science and technology, the limitation of resources is particularly prominent. It is of great significance to improve the efficiency. From the point of view of the society at that time, saving resources was the most realistic thing. Therefore, Mozi put forward the idea of "economizing and using", and some of them have already discussed the theoretical problems. Here's the quote:

Use it on....

Why do you care about your clothes? Winter to mass cold, summer to bolt heat. The way of clothes, winter warming, summer plus clear, potato crisps (gain); Those who do not add, go. What is the palace for? Winter to bolt wind cold, summer to mass summer rain. Thieves reinforce, potato crisps; If you don't add, go. Why is it a shield and five soldiers? If there is a rebellion, he who has armor and shield and five soldiers will win, and he who has none will prevail. It is the sage as armor shield five soldiers. All for armor and shield five soldiers, plus light, strong and difficult to break, potato crisps; If you don't add, go. What's the purpose of this? Car to line Ling land, boat to line Sichuan valley, to pass the four sides of the benefit. All for the road, plus light to benefit, potato crispus; He that will not add, will go; and he that will not make use of such things. It is the use of money, civil morality is not hard, its Xingli more. It is easy to gather pearls and jade, birds and beasts, dogs and horses for the benefit of clothes, palaces, armor and shields, five soldiers, boats and chariots.

### **3. The idea of economy and efficiency (the opposite of waste) is the origin of economic thinking**

This simple materialist view is an economic thought to solve the problem of source and flow.

The word "economy" means: economy, saving, economizing, economical, economical. The discipline is Economics, the economic system, economics.

The idea of saving money and improving utility is the cornerstone of economics. Everything and all walks of life have economic problems. In his "Resignation", Mozi reviewed the uneconomic behavior of the monarch and pointed out that it led to the whole country to follow the uneconomic behavior, leading to poverty and war. In "economizing", I clearly put forward my own proposition: to maximize utility and increase input, if utility cannot be increased further, it means that marginal utility has been zero and total

utility has been maximized, so input should not be increased. “Why the clothes? Winter to mass cold, summer to bolt heat. The way of clothes, winter warming, summer plus clear, potato crisps; If you don’t, go.” “Clothes and furs” are used to keep warm in winter and cool in summer. If the increase of investment, can enhance the “clothes and fur” of these functions, increase; If you can’t enhance these features, don’t. So is the manufacture of houses, weapons, boats and chariots.

This whole passage of Mozi is just another expression of the marginal utility theory! As you increase the input, the utility of the increase decreases. And you keep increasing until you get to zero, and you’ve maximized utility. At this point, to increase the input, is a waste, is not economic. This is also the basis of scale effects. This is an objective phenomenon in most industries.

Had Mozi’s thought not been in the historical environment of “dethronement of all schools of thought and exclusive respect for Confucianism”, it would have been possible for a complete economic theory to have been born in the East as early as possible. Today they can only be seen as the germ of economic thought.

This is the brilliance of Mozi’s economic thought.

This thought eventually led to market economy theory, monetary theory, institutional theory, game theory,..... .

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