



Marxist Ideology of Fairness and Its Implications for Achieving the Goal of Common Prosperity

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Abstract

In the historical process of human social development, the aspiration and pursuit of fairness has always been present. The Marxist concept of fairness was established in the process of absorbing and drawing on the fairness ideas of previous generations, criticizing the unfair nature of capitalist society and conceiving the ideal communist society. The Marxist idea of fairness is historical and class-oriented, and believes that the pursuit of free and comprehensive development of human beings can be realized through the practical path of eliminating private ownership and developing productive forces. Fairness and justice are the value core of common prosperity. Under the new historical orientation, we can draw strength from the Marxist idea of fairness to promote the acceleration of the goal of common prosperity and continuously meet the people's needs for a better life.

Keywords

Marx, fairness thought, common prosperity, contemporary inspiration

Although Marx and Engels did not specifically discuss the viewpoint of fairness, Marxist theory contains a rich and profound idea of fairness, and the communist society envisioned by Marx is fair and just, with free and comprehensive development for everyone. As a socialist country under the guidance of Marxism, China's market economy has been developing since the reform and opening up, the gap between the rich and the poor has gradually increased, and the problem of social justice has gradually become prominent. By digging into the theoretical origin and profound connotation of Marxism's idea of fairness, it is of great significance to speed up the promotion of development fruits shared by the people and achieve the goal of common prosperity in the new era.

1. The theoretical origins of Marxist ideas of fairness

1.1 Western classical fairness thought and liberal fairness thought

Before Marx, Western philosophers had already actively explored theories of social justice, mainly the Western classical idea of equity and the liberal idea of equity. Socrates regarded social justice (fairness) as a virtue from a philosophical point of view; Plato envisioned an ideal state in which the order operating harmoniously under the hierarchy and social division of labor manifested the idea of social fairness; Aristotle believed that fairness was a manifestation of virtue for individuals and the basis of order for city-states. The classical Western idea of equity, represented by Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, believes that it is necessary to rely on wise people to establish and maintain a reasonable and just social order, and that ordinary people seeking equity can only submit to the social system judged by wise people. Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau are the representatives of liberal fairness. Thomas Hobbes believed that contracting could end the social situation of mutual antagonism be-

tween people and realize the principle of social justice; John Locke believed that unfairness was caused by the abuse of power, and contracting could realize the transfer of power and thus maintain social justice; Jean-Jacques Rousseau advocated equality before the law, agreed with the bourgeoisie's exchange method, and believed that private property and private ownership were legitimate. The liberal idea of fairness focuses on the injustice in the feudal hierarchy and advocates the maintenance of social justice through contracting from the viewpoint of safeguarding the natural rights of human beings, thus realizing the value of freedom and equality, which is a view of fairness based on the bourgeoisie.

1.2 Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's and Ludwig Feuerbach's ideas of fairness

As the representative figures of classical German philosophy, the ideas of Hegel and Feuerbach have played an important role in promoting the development of Marxist thought, of which the fairness view is a part. Hegel believed that fairness is the incarnation of reason and absolute spirit, which is an idealistic view of fairness. In addition, he believes that there is no ultimate thing, absolute thing, sacred thing in human society. Therefore, fairness, as an important part of human social values, is also temporary, and there is no eternal and unchanging concept of fairness. Feuerbach rejected Hegel's idealistic view that regarded absolute spirit and free will as absolutely dominant, and his materialist thought guided Marx to deeply understand and criticize capitalism from reality, and played a very important role in promoting the development of Marx's fair thought. Marx's theory of social justice is based on the materialist and dialectical world outlook, historical outlook and methodology, and it has revolutionarily surpassed the historical and class limitations of previous fair thinking.

1.3 The Fair Thought of Utopian Socialists

The ideas of ideal socialists are also an important ideological source of Marx's theory of equity. The opening work of ideal socialism was Thomas More's book *Utopia*, after which many European scholars, such as Saint-Simon, Charles Fourier and Robert Owen, began to study ideal socialism, pointing out the damage of the capitalist system to fairness and justice, and envisioning the blueprint of an ideal fair society in terms of focusing on social production and establishing a reasonable distribution system. Although the ideal socialists' vision of the future society had many unrealistic aspects, their ideas exposed the inequalities of capitalist society, considered the capitalist system as an obstacle to social justice, and tried to build an ideal fair society with institutional design. The design of the future at the institutional level by the ideal socialists was to some extent characterized by communism, and thus contributed to the development of Marx's idea of fairness.

2. The profound connotation of Marxist idea of fairness

2.1 The root cause of inequity is the capitalist system

Under the banner of freedom and equality, the bourgeoisie overthrew the feudal aristocracy and established the capitalist social system, but the bourgeoisie's claim of equality for all was only a formal equality that concealed the essential inequality. Since the Industrial Revolution, the bourgeoisie has forced the original peasants, small craftsmen and part of the petty bourgeoisie to transform into the proletariat through various means. The bourgeoisie exchanged the value of workers' labor in the form of wages, and the formal fairness of this exchange concealed the exploitative nature of the workers' surplus value behind the scenes, making the wealth in capitalist society more and more concentrated in the hands of a few capitalists and widening the gap between the rich and the poor. At the same time, the use of machines in the production process and the refinement of management methods also made the bourgeoisie's oppression of the proletariat more rigorous and cruel. The absolute laws of the capitalist political system and the capitalist mode of production, which constantly pursued the maximization of surplus value, made the working class unable to bear the unequal fate of exploitation, and the resulting fundamental antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie triggered the proletariat to revolt against the bourgeoisie. Marx made a profound critique of the formal and superficial equality of capitalist society, exposing the inherent exploitation and substantial inequality inherent in capitalist society, and in the process gradually formed the Marxist idea of fairness and justice.

2.2 The concept of fairness is characterized by history and class

Marxism holds that the idea of fairness is socially historic. The concept of eternal fairness varies not only from time to time and place to place, but even from person to person. The connotation and form of social justice always

change with social history, reflecting the characteristics of its economic base under different social systems, and therefore has its historical limitations. From primitive society, slave society to feudal society, capitalist society, and then through the transition of socialist society eventually to communist society, the concept of fairness is constantly developing from a low state to a high state with the progress of human social history. In the Marxist view, fairness also has a class nature. The fairness of slave, feudal and capitalist societies was based on safeguarding the interests of the ruling class. The nature of class society determines that there is no concept of fairness in class society that safeguards the interests of all people.

2.3 The value pursuit of fairness is to realize the free and comprehensive development of human beings

Different social groups have different views on fairness, but Marxist theory is characterized by the people's nature, and its idea of fairness represents the fundamental interests of the greatest number of people. *German Ideology* affirms that the first premise of human history is the "real individual", without the premise of "real individual", history will not develop (Peng Gao, 2019). The people are the subject of history, and it is an inherent requirement of Marxist theory that everyone in society enjoys the right to free development in an equitable manner. In the ideal communist society envisioned by Marx, the ultimate value of fairness is to realize the free and comprehensive development of human beings through the form of the association of free people. In a communist society free from exploitation and oppression, the interests of some people will not be sacrificed for the free and comprehensive development of others; the whole society will share the material means of production, each will do its part and distribute according to needs; everyone will equally enjoy the right to fairness, dignity and free development, and social equality among people will be truly realized.

2.4 The path to equity is the elimination of private ownership and the development of productive forces

The Marxist concept of fairness holds that in order to achieve real fairness and justice the old capitalist social system must first be overthrown by revolutionary means and a communist society must be established. Marxism believes that fairness in slave, feudal and capitalist societies is fairness that upholds the interests of some classes, and without free and equal relations of production as a support all fairness and justice can only be superficial and partial, and only in a communist society can true fairness be realized. Equality as the basis of communism is its political justification (Marx, 1959). Marx also mentions in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* that Instead of the indefinite concluding phrase of the paragraph, "the elimination of all social and political inequality", it ought to have been said that with the abolition of class distinctions all social and political inequality arising from them would disappear of itself (Marx, 1970). Inequality between classes is a fundamental feature of class society. Marxist fairness sees that true justice can only be achieved if classes are eliminated and communism is achieved.

After the establishment of the social system of public ownership of the means of production, there is still a need to vigorously develop the productive forces, and only when the productive forces have developed to a certain extent can the elimination of class differences be possible and true social justice be realized. The practice of material production is the precondition for social development and the basis and guarantee for the realization of social justice. Only in a society where material wealth is abundant and productivity is highly developed to the extent that it can meet the needs of all members of society can we truly achieve fairness among people and realize the distribution of goods to the best of our ability and according to needs. At the same time, it is necessary to build an advanced social ideology. While the bourgeois concept of freedom and equality is a reflection of the bourgeois society, the new social consciousness that is compatible with communism must be a true concept of fairness and justice that is constantly and historically generated along with the "movement of reality". Only by establishing an advanced ideology in line with the interests of the proletariat and by everyone accepting the Marxist concept of fairness and justice from the bottom of their hearts can inequality be completely eliminated and a high degree of harmony and equality in social relations be achieved.

3. Implications of Marxist ideas of fairness for achieving the goal of common prosperity

Under the guidance of Marxist theory, the CPC has led the Chinese people to continuously pursue and build socialist justice and explore the path of achieving common prosperity with Chinese characteristics. Since the new era, under the strong leadership of the CPC, the level of China's economic development has continued to rise, the level of people's livelihood has continued to improve, and initiatives to safeguard social justice have been implemented. However, China is still in the primary stage of socialism, and facing the main social contradiction of "the contradic-

tion between unbalanced and inadequate development and the people's ever-growing needs for a better life", the problems of uncoordinated development and unfair distribution still exist in China, and there is still a gap to achieve the goal of common prosperity. Fairness and justice are the inherent requirements of common prosperity. The Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee will include "achieving more obvious and substantial progress in the common prosperity of all people" in the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035. In the new historical orientation, we need to use Marxist ideas of fairness to guide our practice and strive for the ambitious goals of common prosperity, human freedom and comprehensive development.

3.1 To achieve the goal of common prosperity, we must always adhere to the leadership of the Party

The Marxist idea of fairness believes that overthrowing the old social system is the basis and guarantee for achieving social fairness. Under the leadership of the Party, China has established a socialist system capable of guaranteeing social equity and justice. History and reality have proved that the CPC has strong leadership and organizational power to put into practice policies and important initiatives that are in the fundamental interests of the broadest number of people. Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, the whole Party and the country have given full play to the advantage of the socialist state's system of concentrating its efforts on major issues to win the battle against poverty and build a moderately prosperous society, which is a concrete manifestation of the concept of letting the fruits of development be shared by the whole nation and a realistic practice of practicing Marx's idea of fairness. Under the leadership of the Party, the institutional mechanism to guarantee common prosperity has been continuously improved, and the sense of happiness, security and access of all people has been steadily increased. The original mission and goals of the CPC determine that always adhering to the leadership of the Party is the fundamental guarantee to promote the goal of common prosperity from ideal to reality.

3.2 Realizing the goal of common prosperity should implement the new development concept

The Marxist idea of fairness believes that the highly developed level of productive forces is the material basis of social justice. Development is the key to solve all problems, and the new development dilemma faced by the goal of achieving common prosperity needs to be tackled with a new development concept. At present, China's economic development is facing the real challenges of slowing down development growth, low quality and unbalanced structure. It is necessary to always adhere to the people-centered development ideology and implement the new development concept to help achieve the goal of common prosperity. Based on the new development stage, we need to fully implement the new development philosophy of "innovation, coordination, green, openness and sharing", and accelerate the establishment of a "dual circulation" development pattern in which domestic economic cycle plays a leading role while international economic cycle remains its extension and supplement. Always adhere to the main position of the public sector economy, play a decisive role in the market economy, promote high-quality economic development with an effective market, continuously increase the total amount of social wealth, so that the people of the country share the fruits of material civilization development, and promote the goal of common prosperity.

3.3 Realizing the goal of common prosperity should promote the all-round development of human beings

The value goal of the Marxist idea of fairness is to realize the free and comprehensive development of human beings. Achieving the goal of common prosperity is the essential requirement of socialism and the goal of the Communist Party of China, which requires the common struggle of all people to achieve, and it is necessary to always adhere to the people-oriented approach and promote the all-round development of people. Under the basic national conditions of the primary stage of socialism in China, we do not yet have the conditions to achieve the free and comprehensive development of all people, but we should always adhere to the concept of people-oriented development, continuously improve the level of social security, maintain social justice, and create a social environment for the free and equal development of each person. In the new era, in the process of achieving the goal of common prosperity, it is necessary to focus on the construction of spiritual civilization while promoting the development of material civilization, and to achieve the coordinated development of common material and spiritual prosperity. The satisfaction of material living standards is the primary basis for the realization of comprehensive human development, and the free and healthy development of the spiritual dimension is a necessary path for the realization of comprehensive human development. An empty material life with an empty spiritual world is not conducive to the free and comprehensive development of each person and the long-term development of society. It

is necessary to strengthen the construction of spiritual civilization, cultivate a free environment in the whole society where people can give full play to their intelligence on an equal footing, improve the moral cultivation and comprehensive quality of the people, adhere to the core socialist values to cultivate the new man of the age, and continuously enhance the endogenous power to achieve the goal of common prosperity.

4. Conclusion

The Marxist idea of fairness believes that fairness has a historical and class nature, that the root cause of social injustice is the capitalist system, and that fairness and justice can be achieved through the elimination of private ownership and the development of productive forces to realize the free and comprehensive development of human beings. As part of Marxist theory, the Marxist concept of fairness has the characteristic of development with the times and points the way forward for China to maintain social justice and achieve the goal of common prosperity in the primary stage of socialism. Achieving common prosperity for all people is an inevitable requirement for realizing the goal of socialist modernization. Under the new historical orientation, we should always adhere to the strong leadership of the Party as the political guarantee, implement the new development concept, continuously increase the total amount of social wealth as the material basis, adhere to the people-oriented, promote the all-round development of people as the development goal, and continuously promote the goal of common prosperity to make substantial progress.

Fundamental Project

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