

# *Distributive justice and common prosperity in the perspective of Marxism*

Zhu Ping<sup>1,2</sup>, He Qiaochu<sup>2,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*School of Culture and Education, Shaanxi University of Science and Technology, Xi'an, Shaanxi, China*

<sup>2</sup>*Weiyang University Park, Xi'an, Shaanxi, China*

<sup>3</sup>*School of Marxism, Shaanxi University of Science and Technology, Xi'an, Shaanxi, China*

**Keywords:** Distributive justice, Common prosperity, Marxism

**Abstract:** Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the Party Central Committee has led the people of the country to win the battle against poverty and build a well-off society in an all-round way, creating good conditions for promoting common prosperity. Now, it is time to solidly promote common prosperity in a new historical stage.<sup>[1]</sup> The concept of common prosperity aims to eliminate the gap between the rich and the poor and achieve social fairness and justice, while distributive justice is the key link in achieving common prosperity, which requires fair and just this paper will deeply analyze the inherent connection between distributive justice and common prosperity, and explore effective ways to achieve common prosperity in the current era. By deeply analyzing the core essence of Marxist distributive justice theory and combining it with the actual situation of my country's economic and social development, three paths are proposed: adhere to the national "one chess game" strategy, break the logic of capital, eliminate labor exploitation, and provide theoretical support and practical guidance for promoting common prosperity.

## **1. Introduction**

In today's era, common prosperity, as an essential requirement of socialism, is not only an important goal of national development, but also the people's deep expectation for a better life. From the perspective of Marxism, exploring the inherent connection between distributive justice and common prosperity and its realization path has far-reaching theoretical and practical significance.

The concept of common prosperity profoundly reflects the superiority of the socialist system, which aims to eliminate the gap between the rich and the poor and achieve common prosperity for all members of society. It is not only about balanced development at the economic level, but also an important manifestation of social fairness and justice. Distributive justice, as an important part of social justice, is a key link in achieving common prosperity.<sup>[2]</sup> Therefore, from the theoretical perspective of Marxism, this paper will deeply analyze the inherent connection between distributive justice and common prosperity, and explore effective ways to achieve common prosperity in the current era. By deeply analyzing the core essence of Marxist distributive justice theory and

combining it with the actual situation of my country's economic and social development, it provides theoretical support and practical guidance for promoting common prosperity.

## **2. Theoretical logic of Marx's spatial justice and distributive justice and the realistic dimension under the goal of common prosperity**

### **2.1 Deepening Marxist theory**

When exploring the inherent connection between distributive justice and common prosperity, it is necessary to deeply explore and widely quote the classical theories of Marxism to build a more solid theoretical foundation. In addition to Marx's distributive justice theory, his surplus value theory and historical materialism are also indispensable analytical tools.

As the core of Marx's economic theory, the surplus value theory reveals how capitalists accumulate wealth by occupying the surplus value created by workers, thereby causing inequality in the distribution of social wealth. Under capitalist production relations, workers can only get a living wage, while capitalists occupy the surplus value created by workers for free. This exploitation mechanism has led to the widening gap between the rich and the poor in society.<sup>[3]</sup> Through the analysis of the surplus value theory, it can be seen more clearly that under the capitalist system, distributive justice is difficult to achieve, and common prosperity is even more out of reach.

Historical materialism provides a scientific method for analyzing social change and development. Historical materialism reveals that to achieve distributive justice and common prosperity, it is necessary to fundamentally change the old production relations and establish new production relations that adapt to the development of productivity. This means that under the socialist system, it is necessary to continuously adjust and improve the income distribution system to ensure the realization of distributive justice, thereby laying a solid institutional foundation for common prosperity.

### **2.2 Comparative Analysis**

In order to highlight the superiority and practical guiding significance of the Marxist theory of distributive justice, it is necessary to compare and analyze it with the distributive injustice in capitalist society.

In capitalist society, distributive injustice is mainly reflected in the following aspects: First, due to the existence of private ownership of the means of production, capitalists, relying on their right to possess the means of production, occupy the surplus value created by workers for free, resulting in the concentration of social wealth in the hands of a few people, while the majority of workers have been in poverty for a long time. Secondly, the market competition mechanism in capitalist society has exacerbated social inequality. In market competition, entities with more capital and resources are often able to occupy an advantageous position, further consolidate and expand their wealth and power base, while vulnerable groups are often marginalized or even excluded. Finally, the distribution system in capitalist society often ignores social fairness and justice, overemphasizes efficiency and profit maximization, and leads to the continuous intensification of social contradictions and conflicts.

In contrast, the Marxist theory of distributive justice emphasizes the fair distribution of social wealth on the basis of highly developed productivity. In socialist society, the means of production belong to the common ownership of society, and workers become the main body and beneficiaries of the production process. By combining distribution according to work and distribution according to need, socialist society can ensure that every member of society can share the fruits of economic development and achieve common prosperity.<sup>[4]</sup>

Through comparative analysis, it can be seen that the Marxist theory of distributive justice has distinct superiority and practical guiding significance. It not only reveals the root cause and essence of the injustice of distribution in capitalist society, but also points out the correct direction for achieving distributive justice and common prosperity. In the current era, it is necessary to adhere to and develop the Marxist theory of distributive justice, combine the actual situation of my country's economic and social development, continuously promote the reform of the income distribution system and the construction of social fairness and justice, and contribute to the realization of the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

### **3. Reviewing the realization of spatial justice and distributive justice in the context of China's pursuit of common prosperity in the new era**

#### **3.1 There is a gap in the development of different regions under spatial differences**

When discussing the grand goal of common prosperity, the significant spatial differences between regions in my country have become a realistic problem that cannot be ignored. This difference is not only reflected vividly at the economic level, but also has a profound impact on the realization of social fairness and justice in multiple dimensions such as infrastructure construction, public service supply and residents' income.

Differences in economic development levels: my country has a vast territory and a complex and diverse geographical environment. In addition, the influence of multiple factors such as history and policies has led to a significant imbalance in economic development in different regions. The eastern coastal areas have formed a number of economically developed regions with their unique geographical location, open policy environment and strong resource aggregation capabilities. In contrast, the economic development of the central and western regions is relatively lagging due to factors such as geographical conditions and policy benefits. This gap poses a significant challenge to the process of common prosperity across the country.

Resident income gap: The income gap of residents is a direct reflection of the development gap between different regions under spatial differences. With its superior economic development conditions, the eastern region provides local residents with abundant employment opportunities and a higher income level. However, the central and western regions are limited by factors such as lagging economic development, with relatively limited employment opportunities and generally low income levels. This significant income gap not only affects the living standards and social status of residents in the central and western regions, but also poses a severe challenge to the process of common prosperity across the country.

In addition, there are also problems such as infrastructure construction gaps and public service facilities gaps caused by differences in economic development levels. In the face of the above challenges, my country needs to take more powerful and effective measures to promote the realization of spatial justice and distributive justice. This includes increasing policy support and capital investment in the central and western regions to promote regional coordinated development; adjusting the income distribution gap among residents through means such as taxation and transfer payments, etc.

#### **3.2 Spatial production dominated by capital logic leads to urban-rural rupture**

In the theoretical framework of Marxist spatial justice and distributive justice, it is not difficult to find that the dominance of capital logic is profoundly shaping the urban-rural relationship and directly leading to a significant rupture between urban and rural areas. This rupture is not only manifested in the isolation and differentiation of material space, but also, at a deeper level, it erodes

the economic connection, social interaction and cultural identity between urban and rural areas, exacerbating social inequality and injustice.

As one of the core forces driving social development, capital's nature of pursuing profit maximization determines its choice of spatial layout. Driven by capital logic, spatial production tends to concentrate in areas with higher investment returns, namely urban areas. Cities have therefore become the center of capital agglomeration, promoting the rapid development and modernization of their economy and culture. In contrast, rural areas have gradually been marginalized due to the withdrawal of capital, with lagging economic development, weak infrastructure and a lack of public services.

This difference in spatial production between urban and rural areas has directly led to the uneven distribution of land and spatial resources. The rapid expansion of urban space often comes at the expense of rural land resources, exacerbating the solidification of the urban-rural dual structure. At the same time, migrant workers in cities also face multiple obstacles such as the household registration system and housing policies, making it difficult for them to truly integrate into urban society and become the "sandwich layer" between urban and rural areas. This injustice in spatial production not only violates the essential requirements of socialism, but also seriously hinders the realization of the goal of common prosperity.

Therefore, in the process of promoting common prosperity, we must deeply reflect on and correct the spatial production model dominated by capital logic. By strengthening urban and rural coordinated planning and promoting the free flow of urban and rural factors, we can gradually narrow the gap in urban and rural development. At the same time, we should deepen the reform of the income distribution system and the construction of the social security system to ensure that urban and rural residents can share the fruits of reform and development fairly. Only in this way can we break the current situation of urban-rural rupture, promote urban-rural integrated development, and achieve common prosperity in the true sense.

### **3.3 Imperfect distribution mechanism leads to large income gap**

In the journey of exploring common prosperity, the imperfection of my country's current distribution mechanism has become an important factor restricting the realization of this goal. From the perspective of Marxist distributive justice, it is not difficult to find that the widening income gap is the direct result of the unreasonable and unfair distribution mechanism, which not only violates the socialist principle of fairness and justice, but also hinders the practice of the ideal of common prosperity.

In the primary distribution link, the Marxist labor value theory emphasizes that labor is the source of value creation, so workers should receive corresponding rewards for their labor results. However, in reality, improper intervention of administrative power, excessive income in monopoly industries, unbalanced regional development, and low income share of workers have seriously distorted the fairness of primary distribution. The abuse of administrative power may lead to resource mismatch. These phenomena deviate from the principle of distribution according to work and aggravate the uneven distribution of social wealth. As an important means to promote social equity, redistribution also faces many challenges in its effectiveness in my country. Marx once pointed out that taxation is an important tool for the state to regulate the distribution of social wealth. However, my country's current tax regulation mechanism is not yet perfect, there are loopholes in the tax collection and management of high-income groups, and the crackdown on illegal income is not strong enough, which makes it difficult for redistribution to fully play its due regulatory role. In the field of the third distribution, although Marx did not directly discuss the third distribution, his theory of social total product distribution implies the idea of mutual assistance

among social members. At present, the development level of my country's charitable public welfare and personal donation activities is low, the social donation awareness is weak, and the transparency of charitable organizations is insufficient. The imperfection of the distribution mechanism not only directly leads to the widening of the income gap, but also has a profound impact on the sustainable development of the social economy.

Therefore, in order to improve the distribution mechanism and narrow the income gap, it is necessary to thoroughly implement the Marxist idea of distributive justice and deepen the reform of the income distribution system.

#### **4. The path to achieving common prosperity under the perspective of spatial justice and distributive justice**

##### **4.1 Adhere to the national "one chessboard" strategy and coordinate the sustainable development of various regions**

Under the perspective of spatial justice and distributive justice, achieving common prosperity requires adhering to the national "one chessboard" strategy and coordinating the sustainable development of various regions. This means breaking regional boundaries, promoting the free flow and reasonable allocation of resources, talents, technology and other factors across the country, and ensuring that all regions can enjoy fair development opportunities. At the same time, we must pay attention to the coordinated development among regions, increase support for underdeveloped regions, help them improve their self-development capabilities, and narrow the gap with developed regions. Through the national "one chessboard" strategy, we can better achieve spatial justice and distributive justice and lay a solid foundation for the realization of common prosperity.

##### **4.2 Break the logic of capital, uphold the people-oriented concept, and reconstruct the spatial bond between urban and rural areas**

In the context of spatial justice and distributive justice, a key path to achieving common prosperity is to break the dominant position of capital logic, uphold the people-oriented development concept, and strive to reconstruct the spatial bond between urban and rural areas. This means that in the process of development, it is necessary to transcend the mindset of simply pursuing economic growth and capital accumulation, and focus more on the comprehensive development of people and social fairness and justice. At the same time, we must deeply understand the importance of balanced urban and rural development, strive to break the urban-rural dual structure, and promote the free flow and optimal allocation of urban and rural factors. Through this series of efforts, we can gradually promote the integrated development of urban and rural areas, narrow the gap between urban and rural areas, and enable all people to enjoy more equitable, inclusive and sustainable development results, so as to truly achieve the social goal of common prosperity.

##### **4.3 Eliminate labor exploitation, promote the sharing of results, and achieve fair and just distribution**

In the context of spatial justice and distributive justice, another important path to achieving common prosperity is to eliminate labor exploitation, promote the sharing of results, and thus achieve fair and just distribution. This requires strengthening the construction of labor laws and regulations, strengthening labor supervision and law enforcement, and promoting industrial upgrading and transformation to eliminate the root causes of labor exploitation. At the same time, it

is necessary to improve the income distribution system, increase the proportion of the middle-income group, and strengthen the protection of the low-income group to promote the sharing of development results. In addition, adhering to the system of distribution according to work as the main body and the coexistence of multiple distribution methods, strengthening the regulation of high-income groups, and creating a fair and just social atmosphere are also key measures to achieve fair and just distribution. Through the implementation of these measures, the income gap can be gradually narrowed, social fairness and justice can be promoted, and all people can share the fruits of development, and ultimately achieve the social goal of common prosperity.

## 5. Conclusion

In the context of spatial justice and distributive justice, achieving common prosperity is a complex and arduous task, which requires profound changes and innovations at multiple levels. By analyzing Marx's theory of spatial justice and distributive justice, this paper examines the challenges currently facing my country, including the development gap between different regions under spatial differences, the urban-rural rupture dominated by capital logic, and the large income gap caused by imperfect distribution mechanisms. In response to these challenges, three major paths to achieve common prosperity are proposed. These three paths are interrelated and mutually reinforcing, and together constitute an organic whole for achieving common prosperity.

## References

- [1] Zhao Xueqing. *An analysis of Marx's thought on common prosperity* [J]. *Research on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics*, 2014 (4).
- [2] Marx and Engels. *Collected Works of Marx and Engels* [C]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2009.
- [3] Li Dianlai, ed. *Marx and Justice* [C]. Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 2019.
- [4] Cao Yutao. *Analytical Study of Marxist Theory of Justice* [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2010.