

The Staged Characteristics of the Concept of a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind from the Perspective of Marxist Social Formation

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Abstract: *The community of shared future for mankind” as a concept of global governance has received widespread attention and in-depth discussion in the international community in recent years. This concept emphasizes that in the face of global challenges and the increasing interdependence, countries around the world should work together to jointly address issues such as climate change, resource scarcity, wealth disparity, terrorism, and more, to build a more equitable, just, and sustainable world. Its core concept is not only related to global development and peace but also involves fundamental changes in the structure of global governance and the international order. This article attempts to analyze the phased characteristics of the concept of “community of shared future for mankind” from the perspective of Marxist social formation, exploring how this concept has gradually formed in the context of globalization and demonstrates its inherent historical inevitability and development momentum in practice. The concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind scientifically addresses the era’s question of “where the world is heading and what humanity should do.” It embodies the common values of all humanity, reflects the high degree of unity between China’s development and global development, and holds significant and far-reaching implications for China’s peaceful development and global prosperity. Marxist theory provides profound tools for understanding social change, historical processes, and shifts in global governance, particularly through its historical materialist methodology when analyzing globalization, international cooperation, and cultural transformation. From the perspective of Marxist social formation, this article not only offers a theoretical interpretation of the “community with a shared future for mankind” concept but also seeks to reveal its practical significance amid globalization and global crises. Through this research, we aim to provide a new theoretical lens for understanding the complex interactions within the contemporary international political-economic landscape and the future of global governance.*

Keywords: Marxism, A community with a shared future for mankind, Social formation, Global governance.

1. Overview of Marxist Social Formation Evolution Theory

Marxist social formation theory was first proposed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in seminal works such as *Capital*, *The German Ideology*, and *The Communist Manifesto*. As a core framework for understanding human historical development, this theory emphasizes that societal evolution is determined by material production methods and the economic base, while the superstructure—including political systems, legal frameworks, culture, and ideology—reacts upon the base, driving structural societal changes.

In the complex context of global governance, Marxist social formation theory demonstrates its theoretical value by dissecting the structural contradictions of the global capitalist system and providing a deep analytical framework for deconstructing imbalances in international political economy. Through a transnational class perspective, this theory reconstructs traditional paradigms of international relations research, transcending the limitations of nation-state analysis. It highlights global class dynamics and interest structures, revealing power allocation mechanisms within capitalist globalization and offering a critical analysis of the internal logic of the international political-economic order. The theory’s innovation lies in its dialectical unification of microeconomic analysis and macro-historical evolution, showcasing the internal logic of social transformation and presenting an international relations analytical paradigm that transcends nation-states and embraces a “community of shared future.”

In the intersection of critical theory and international relations research, Marxist social formation theory continues to inspire. It is not merely a mode of historical interpretation but also a normative theoretical framework oriented toward the future. By revealing the historical inevitability of eliminating exploitation and achieving common prosperity, the theory provides a key analytical model for constructing a more just and inclusive international order. In the era of globalization, this theory emphasizes the importance of transnational class “alliances” and global collaborative governance, offering a comprehensive perspective for addressing global challenges such as climate change, poverty, and inequality.

2. Historical Context and Material Conditions

The proposal of the “community with a shared future for mankind” concept in the contemporary globalization process is closely tied to the intensification of global challenges. As global economic integration and transnational issues become increasingly prominent, political, economic, and cultural interconnections among nations grow stronger [1].

Against this backdrop, building a “community with a shared future for mankind” has become an inevitable choice for addressing global problems and promoting shared development. However, this process faces numerous material and historical challenges, encompassing both driving forces and constraints.

The epistemological foundation of the “community with a shared future for mankind” concept is rooted in the revolutionary transformation of productive forces during

globalization. Lenin's theory on imperialism provides crucial theoretical support for this concept, revealing the inherent contradictions of capitalist production relations and the logic of global expansion. The development of productive forces—particularly in information technology, transportation networks, and global trade—objectively deconstructs the geographical and economic boundaries of traditional nation-states. According to Wallerstein's world-systems theory, structural inequalities between developed and developing nations continue to deepen. Transnational capital-driven economic models, while fostering productivity growth, exacerbate the exploitative core-periphery structure, trapping developing nations in persistent dependency [2].

The material dialectical conditions of the "community with a shared future for mankind" concept are manifested in: the deep integration of the global economy, revolutionary breakthroughs in information technology, the structural and complex nature of transnational issues, and the objective demand for global governance. This concept seeks to transcend the paradigmatic limitations of traditional realist and liberal international relations theories, constructing a new global governance model based on common interests. A key contradiction lies in the structural tensions of capitalist globalization. Global issues such as climate change, public health, and economic inequality reflect the inherent contradictions of the existing international order. From a historical materialist perspective, these contradictions are not terminal but inevitable stages of societal development.

3. Collective Identity and Solidarity

Collective identity and solidarity are dialectical products of productive force development and production relation transformations. In contemporary globalization, the information technology revolution and transnational capital flows objectively facilitate interactions among diverse social groups, creating conditions for transcending narrow identities framed by nation-states. However, the inherent exploitation and oppression mechanisms of the capitalist world-system hinder the formation of truly equal collective identities. Transnational corporations reinforce unequal relations in the international division of labor through global value chain systems, while Western-centric discourses construct non-Western civilizations as "the Other," undermining mutual trust. World-systems theory reveals that the core-semiperiphery-periphery hierarchy sustains identity fragmentation through economic, cultural, and other dimensions, making it difficult for different groups to form solidarity based on shared interests. Lenin's Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism profoundly elucidates the laws of monopoly capital's transnational expansion, which are fully manifested today. While global capital flows create material connections, they also intensify class divisions and identity oppositions in international society.

Dialectically, the deepening of capitalist globalization also fosters the emergence of new collective identities. Global challenges such as climate change and public health crises highlight the objective need for international solidarity, providing a practical foundation for peoples to transcend identity barriers and jointly address global issues. The rising status of developing nations in the global production system,

the deepening of South-South cooperation and regional integration, and the emergence of transnational social movements reflect the global working class's resistance to capitalist globalization and the strengthening of international solidarity consciousness. This corroborates Marx's foresight that capitalist global expansion will ultimately drive the unity of the international proletariat. The digital revolution and the internet era provide new platforms for cross-cultural exchange and identity reconstruction. Social media and online communities enable diverse groups to engage in dialogue beyond geographical constraints. However, this technologically empowered identity construction also faces new challenges such as the digital divide and algorithmic polarization. Constructing collective identities in the globalization era requires overcoming the one-sidedness of technological determinism and addressing the complex role of digital technology in social power structures [3].

From a historical materialist perspective, building new collective identities and realizing a "community with a shared future for mankind" necessitates fundamentally altering the structural mechanisms within the capitalist global system that hinder solidarity. This requires not only advancing a fairer international economic order but also fostering open and inclusive global consciousness through civilizational dialogue and mutual learning.

4. Interdependence and Cooperation

The globalization process, as an objective trend in the capitalist world-system, profoundly reveals the historical logic of productive force internationalization. Lenin's theory on imperialism provides a vital theoretical foundation for understanding contemporary globalization. From a historical materialist perspective, productive force development is the fundamental driver of international relations transformation. For instance, the Paris Agreement on climate change reflects the objective demand for international cooperation in addressing global challenges. By establishing greenhouse gas reduction mechanisms, the international community seeks to transcend traditional nation-state interests and build a cooperative framework that surpasses geopolitical boundaries. Transnational capital's restructuring of global value chains has created unprecedented economic interdependence among nations, providing a material foundation for the "community with a shared future for mankind." However, this process is not linear but filled with internal contradictions and dialectical movements. While capital's globalization trend objectively demands transcending narrow nation-state boundaries, the logic of national interests continues to profoundly constrain globalization. The "vaccine nationalism" exhibited during the COVID-19 pandemic exemplifies this contradiction.

The critical perspective of Marxist international relations theory reveals the inherent limitations of the neoliberal globalization model. While transnational capital drives productive force internationalization, it also exacerbates global resource distribution imbalances. For example, developing nations have long been passive in global trade rule-making within institutions like the World Trade Organization (WTO), where hegemonic governance models dominated by core nations perpetuate the capitalist core-periphery exploitation structure. The marginalization of

developing nations in the global governance system is a manifestation of the inherent inequality mechanisms in the capitalist global order. In this sense, the “community with a shared future for mankind” is not merely an abstract ideological advocacy but a demand for fundamental institutional reform of the existing international political-economic order. The rise of regional cooperation mechanisms such as BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization reflects developing nations’ aspirations to reshape the international order. Marxist internationalist theory emphasizes that the essence of international cooperation lies in human liberation and shared development. This requires transcending traditional realist views of national interests and constructing higher-level common interests.

Confronted with unprecedented global challenges such as climate crises and public health emergencies, humanity must break through the narrow interests of nation-states and establish new international relations. A genuine “community with a shared future for mankind” must be rooted in fundamental transformations of capitalist structural contradictions to achieve a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable global governance system. This historical process itself reflects the dialectical development of human society’s pursuit of higher social formations. From the perspective of Marxist international relations theory, global cooperation is both an objective requirement of historical development and a value pursuit transcending capital logic. The evolution of international relations is not a linear accumulation but the outcome of contradictory movements. In the intense interplay between capital’s profit-seeking nature and the demand for human liberation, human society will continually advance toward higher forms of international cooperation, ultimately moving toward a freer, more equal, and mutually prosperous developmental path.

5. Cultural and Ideological Transformation

Cultural formations are deeply rooted in specific socio-economic foundations, with cultural identities at different developmental stages bearing distinct historical characteristics. In the contemporary globalization context, cultural transformation exhibits multidimensional tensions: on one hand, globalization promotes extensive cultural exchange and integration, breaking the closed boundaries of traditional cultures; on the other hand, such exchanges simultaneously intensify cultural identity fragmentation and conflict. Under neoliberal globalization, Western cultural hegemony seeks global value penetration through diversified dissemination mechanisms such as transnational media, digital platforms, educational systems, and cultural industries [4]. However, this unidirectional cultural export inevitably encounters resistance from non-Western civilizations, leading to complex processes of cultural subjectivity reconstruction. Cultural transformation in globalization is essentially a dialectical process of interaction and mutual transformation, reflecting both the objective trends of capital globalization and deep power struggles among civilizations.

Ideological transformation represents the most profound cultural shift in the globalization process. The post-Cold War restructuring of the international political landscape has replaced traditional binary ideological confrontations with a

more diverse and complex ideological spectrum. From a Marxist internationalist perspective, ideological transformation embodies the concentrated expression of contradictions between production relations and productive forces in the superstructure. In the face of global challenges such as climate change, public health, and poverty governance, singular ideological paradigms have proven inadequate. In this transformative process, the “community with a shared future for mankind” concept provides a theoretical framework that transcends traditional international relations paradigms. This concept surpasses the narrow vision of Western liberal international relations theory, emphasizing commonality and cooperation in global governance. It calls on nations to transcend cultural boundaries and ideological barriers, constructing an open, inclusive, and mutually learning global governance model based on higher human common interests. However, the realization of this concept is not linear but fraught with contradictions and struggles. Building a global cultural identity faces challenges such as rising nationalism, potential civilizational conflicts, and tensions between capital globalization and cultural localization. In this complex transformation, Marxist dialectical thinking offers a critical analytical perspective, enabling us to transcend simplistic cultural determinism and deeply understand the dynamic evolution of culture and ideology under globalization.

6. Sustainable Development and Future-Oriented Perspectives

The 1987 UN report *Our Common Future* first explicitly proposed that the ultimate goal of development should not only improve living standards but also “meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” The theoretical foundation of global sustainable development lies in the balance of ecosystems and the coordinated development of socio-economic systems. From a systems theory perspective, the global ecosystem is a highly complex self-organizing system with intricate interactions and feedback mechanisms among its components. Within this framework, the “community with a shared future for mankind” concept embodies a holistic thinking mode, viewing human society as an organic whole and emphasizing systemic synergy across ecological, economic, and social dimensions. This perspective transcends the linear thinking of traditional development paradigms, adopting a more inclusive and forward-looking circular development view. Particularly in addressing major environmental challenges such as climate change and biodiversity loss, this systemic approach better captures the essence of issues and provides theoretical guidance for formulating effective strategies [5].

From a global governance perspective, sustainable development is inherently a complex, multi-level, and multi-stakeholder governance issue. As globalization deepens, traditional state-centric governance models have proven inadequate in addressing cross-border environmental and global developmental challenges. Instead, a new global cooperation model based on networked governance theory is emerging, emphasizing the participation and collaboration of multiple actors, including national governments, international organizations, NGOs, transnational corporations, and civil society. Under this framework, achieving sustainable

development no longer relies solely on top-down governmental intervention but increasingly on consultation, cooperation, and interaction among diverse stakeholders. This polycentric governance model demonstrates greater adaptability and efficacy, particularly in areas like climate change governance and biodiversity conservation.

From a social development theory perspective, sustainable development is not merely a technical or economic issue but a profound matter of social equity and intergenerational justice. The “community with a shared future for mankind” concept reflects profound ethical concern at this level, emphasizing the inclusivity and universality of developmental outcomes and demanding that social fairness and justice be fully considered alongside economic growth. This theoretical orientation aligns with contemporary trends in justice theory, particularly in environmental justice and climate justice, showcasing strong moral-philosophical implications. Practically, this perspective requires that development strategies prioritize not only efficiency but also fairness, promoting inclusive growth and sustainable development globally. Realizing this vision necessitates deep global cooperation, establishing a fair and rational international economic order, enhancing North-South dialogue, strengthening capacity-building in developing nations, and ultimately achieving shared sustainable development goals. Additionally, this perspective underscores the importance of intergenerational justice, urging current generations to consider the interests of future generations in pursuing development and ensuring the sustainability of Earth’s ecosystems.

7. Conclusion

In summary, clarifying the staged characteristics of the “community with a shared future for mankind” concept aids in deeply understanding its evolving connotations and significance across historical periods, providing support for its implementation. In the future, this concept will continue to lead global trends, promote the construction of a more just and reasonable international order, and advance world peace and development. Confronting global challenges, it will play an even greater role in uniting nations to address unknown risks and envision a brighter future for humanity’s sustainable development.

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