

Comparatively Study the Theoretical Development of Soviet Marxism and Western Marxism as Well as their Similarities and Differences

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Abstract: This study conducts a comparative analysis of the theoretical development of Soviet Marxism and Western Marxism, revealing the similarities and differences between the two regarding historical background, theoretical innovation, and practical application. Soviet Marxism developed rapidly in the early 20th century and became the core of Soviet ideology. Its theoretical development was influenced by the political system and emphasized collectivism and a state-led economic model. Western Marxism emerged in the mid-20th century and was mainly influenced by thinkers such as the Frankfurt School and Gramsci. It paid more attention to cultural criticism and ideological analysis, emphasizing individual subjectivity and social critical thinking. The study found that both inherited the basic principles of Marxism on a theoretical basis, but there were significant differences in specific applications and development directions. Soviet Marxism paid more attention to practice and political application, while Western Marxism tended to theoretical innovation and cultural criticism. The significance of the research is to promote the comprehensive understanding and sustainable development of Marxist philosophy and provide theoretical support for building a more just and sustainable society.

Keywords: Soviet Marx; Western Marx; Comparative Analysis; Collectivism; Cultural Criticism

1. INTRODUCTION

As an important philosophical and political theory, Marxism has profoundly impacted global politics, economy, and culture since the mid-19th century (Perry, 2021). With the development of history, Marxism has experienced diversified evolution in different countries and regions, forming different theoretical schools. Among them, Soviet Marxism and Western Marxism are two representative branches. Soviet Marxism became the guiding ideology of the Soviet Union with the success of the October Revolution in the early 20th century and had a significant impact on the global socialist movement in the following decades (Castree, 2000; Korsch, 2013). In contrast, Western Marxism is an important trend that gradually formed in Western European countries in the early 20th century, especially after the First World War. It mainly focuses on criticism at the cultural,

ideological, and philosophical levels, emphasizing in-depth analysis of capitalist society. In globalization and informatization, it is of great academic value and practical significance to re-examine the theoretical development and similarities and differences between Soviet Marxism and Western Marxism. Soviet Marxism is known for its emphasis on state machinery and economic planning, while Western Marxism is more concerned with cultural criticism and ideological complexity (Castree, 2000). Significant differences exist between the two in terms of theoretical basis, practical application and historical impact. Through comparative research, we can better understand the adaptation and evolution of Marxism in different social backgrounds and provide theoretical support for the development of contemporary society. This study aims to reveal the similarities and differences in philosophical foundation, theoretical construction and practical application through comparative analysis of the theoretical development of Soviet Marxism and Western Marxism. Specifically, the purpose of this study includes: Exploring the historical background and social conditions in the theoretical formation process of Soviet and Western Marxism. Analyze the similarities and differences between the two in terms of philosophical foundation, theoretical construction, and practical application. Evaluate the influence of both theories in the 20th and 21st centuries and their implications for contemporary society. Through comparative analysis, we can deepen our understanding of the diversity of Marxist theory and reveal its adaptability and limitations in different historical and social backgrounds. This not only helps to enrich the research on Marxist philosophy, but also provides an important reference for theoretical innovation and practical exploration in contemporary society.

2. THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET MARXISM

2.1. The Emergence of Soviet Marxism

The emergence of Soviet Marxism can be traced back to the Russian social background in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. With the advancement of industrialization, class contradictions within Russian society increasingly intensified (Barner-Barry & Hody, 1994). Marxist ideas gradually spread and gained influence during this period. The dissatisfaction of the Russian intellectuals and working class with the Tsarist autocracy made Marxism a theoretical tool with revolutionary potential. In 1898, the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party was

established, marking the organizational development of Marxism in Russia. In its program, the party clearly stated that it was guided by Marxism and was committed to overthrowing the tsarist autocracy and establishing a socialist society (Wesson, 1969). During this period, Russian Marxists faced the problem of how to combine Marxist theory with Russia's specific national conditions. Russia's economic and social structure is significantly different from that of Western European countries. In particular, farmers occupy an important position in society, which requires Russian Marxists to make certain theoretical innovations and adjustments to Marxism. Lenin played a key role in this process. Through his reinterpretation of Marxism, he proposed revolutionary strategies suitable for Russia's national conditions, laying the foundation for the formation of Soviet Marxism (Gerschenkron, 1971).

2.2. Lenin's Marxist Theory

Lenin was the founder of Soviet Marxism and he made important contributions to the development of Marxist theory. Lenin's theoretical innovation is mainly reflected in the practical application and theoretical deepening of Marxism. He put forward the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, emphasizing that the proletariat must seize power through violent revolution and establish a state apparatus led by the working class to achieve the transition to socialism (Loi Le, 2022). In his work "The State and Revolution", Lenin elaborated on the nature of the state and the necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat. He believes that the state is a tool of class rule, and the proletariat must destroy the old state machinery through revolution and establish a new proletarian state to ensure the smooth progress of socialist construction (Evans, 1987).

In addition, Lenin also proposed the organizational principle of democratic centralism, emphasizing the combination of intra-party democracy and centralization and unity to enhance the party's combat effectiveness and cohesion. Another important contribution of Lenin was the analysis of imperialism. He pointed out in "Imperialism is the Highest Stage of Capitalism" that imperialism is the inevitable result of the development of capitalism and a manifestation of the transition from capitalism to the monopoly stage. Lenin believed that imperialism intensified international conflicts and provided new historical opportunities for socialist revolution. This theory provided a theoretical basis for the Soviet Union's foreign policy and had a profound impact on the international communist movement.

2.3. Marxism during the Stalin Period

The Stalin period was an important stage in the development of Marxism in the Soviet Union. During this period, Marxism was further institutionalized and dogmatic, becoming the core of the Soviet state ideology. Stalin's interpretation and application of Marxism profoundly affected the political, economic and social development of the Soviet Union. Stalin theoretically put forward the view that socialism could be built in one country and believed that the Soviet Union could independently build socialism amid capitalist encirclement (van Ree, 2000). This theory guided the Soviet Union's economic policies and promoted large-scale industrialization and collectivization processes. Stalin vigorously developed heavy industry through the Five-Year Plan, which enabled the Soviet Union to achieve industrialization in a short period of time and laid the material foundation for its victory in World War II. In philosophy, Stalin emphasized the combination of dialectical materialism and historical materialism and put forward the view that "dialectical materialism is the proletarian world view." He reduced Marxist philosophy to a fixed set of dogmas, emphasizing ideological unity and the suppression of dissent. During this period, Marxist philosophy was highly politicized and became an important tool to safeguard Stalin's personal authority and the Soviet system.

2.4. The Philosophical System of Soviet Marxism

The philosophical system of Soviet Marxism was gradually formed on the basis of Lenin and Stalin, and was continuously improved in subsequent developments. Its core contents include dialectical materialism and historical materialism, both of which constitute the theoretical basis of Soviet Marxist philosophy. Dialectical materialism emphasizes the objective reality of the material world and the regularity of movement and change (Kamenka, 1965; Kline, 1955). It believes that the world is material, matter is primary, and consciousness is secondary. On this basis, Soviet philosophers developed a systematic philosophical theory to explain the universal laws of nature and social development. Historical materialism pays attention to the development laws of social history and emphasizes that the contradictory movement of productive forces and production relations is the fundamental driving force for social development. Other philosophical schools, such as German classical philosophy and Russian revolutionary democratic thought also influenced the formation of the Soviet Marxist philosophical system. On the basis of absorbing these ideas and combining them with the specific practices of the Soviet Union, Soviet

philosophers developed a Marxist philosophical system with Soviet characteristics. This system played an important role in the ideological construction of the Soviet Union and provided theoretical support for the political, economic and cultural development of the Soviet Union.

2.5. The Historical Status of Soviet Marxism

Soviet Marxism occupied an important position in the historical process of the 20th century. As a national ideology, Soviet Marxism not only guided the Soviet Union's domestic policies and foreign strategies, but also had a profound impact on the international communist movement. The Marxist theory and practice of the Soviet Union provided experiences and lessons for socialist movements in various countries around the world (Tikhonov, 2021; Ulam, 1955). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the historical status of Soviet Marxism was widely discussed and reassessed. Although there were many problems in the practice of the Soviet Union, its theoretical innovations and practical explorations still have important historical significance. The development process of Soviet Marxism provided rich materials and opportunities for reflection for subsequent Marxist research. The historical status of Soviet Marxism is also reflected in its influence on the global political landscape. As one of the two major camps during the Cold War, the existence of the Soviet Union and its Marxist ideology had a profound impact on global politics, economy, and culture. The theory and practice of Soviet Marxism not only shaped the Soviet Union's own development path, but also had an important impact on other socialist countries and the international communist movement.

3. THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENT OF WESTERN MARXISM

As an important branch of Marxist theory, Western Marxism's development process is full of reflections and innovations on traditional Marxism. Unlike Soviet Marxism, Western Marxism pays more attention to the analysis of cultural, ideological and subjective factors, and emphasizes the pluralism and complexity of critical theory.

3.1. The Rise of Western Marxism

The rise of Western Marxism can be traced back to the early 20th century, especially after World War I. With the changes in capitalism and the impact of the Soviet revolution, Western intellectuals began to re-examine the theoretical framework of Marxism (Femia, 2007). At this time,

Western society was facing social problems brought about by industrialization, the crisis of capitalism, and the setbacks of the working class movement. These factors prompted scholars to reflect on the limitations of traditional Marxism. In this context, Western Marxists began to pay attention to issues of ideology, culture, and subjectivity, trying to combine Marxism with other philosophical schools to better explain and criticize capitalist society. At this time, the rise of Western Marxism was not only a response to capitalism, but also a criticism of Soviet Marxism, which was considered to have placed too much emphasis on economic foundations and class struggle while ignoring the complexity of ideology and culture(Limón, 1983).

3.2. Representative Figures and Theories of Early Western Marxism

Representatives of early Western Marxism include Georg Lukács, Karl Korsch, and Antonio Gramsci, whose theories laid the foundation for the development of Western Marxism. Lukács proposed the concept of "reification" in his book "History and Class Consciousness", emphasizing the role of ideology in capitalist society. He believes that capitalism is not only an economic system, but also an ideological structure that affects people's way of thinking and social relations(Murdock, 1978). Karl Korsch emphasized the criticality and practicality of Marxism, advocating that Marxism is not only a theoretical tool, but also a practical guide. He criticized the dogmatization of Soviet Marxism and believed that Marxism should maintain its critical nature and openness to adapt to the changing social reality. Antonio Gramsci is famous for his theory of "cultural hegemony". He believed that the rule of capitalism relied not only on economic and political power, but also on cultural and ideological control. Gramsci emphasized the importance of intellectuals in ideological struggles, believing that they were the defenders and challengers of cultural hegemony(Boer, 2023).

3.3. Frankfurt School

The Frankfurt School is one of the important schools of Western Marxism, with members including Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse and Jürgen Habermas(Wiggershaus, 1994). They are known for their critical theory, which emphasizes a comprehensive critique of modern capitalist society. The theoretical core of the Frankfurt School lies in the criticism of Enlightenment rationality. They believe that Enlightenment rationality has been alienated into a kind of instrumental

rationality in capitalist society and has become a means of oppression and control. Horkheimer and Adorno pointed out in "Dialectic of Enlightenment" that while Enlightenment rationality pursues scientific and technological progress, it also leads to the alienation of human beings and the destruction of nature. Marcuse further criticized the homogenization and consumer culture of modern capitalist society in "One-Dimensional Man", believing that capitalism controls people's thoughts and behaviors through consumerism and mass media, causing people to lose their criticality and creativity. Habermas discussed the decline of the public sphere in "The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere" and believed that capitalist society's commercialization and bureaucratization have weakened its critical function(McCarthy, 1990).

3.4. Existential Marxism

Existential Marxism is another important school of Western Marxism, whose representatives include Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. They attempted to combine existentialism with Marxism better to understand individual freedom and the structure of society. Sartre proposed the concept of " practice-whole " in "Critique of Dialectical Reason", trying to combine individual free choice with the historical conditions of society(Press, 1977; Wild, 2011). He believes that Marxism places too much emphasis on social structure and ignores individual subjective initiative and free choice. Sartre emphasized that individual free choice drives historical development, while social structure provides conditions and restrictions for individual choices. Merleau-Ponty explored the relationship between consciousness and matter, individual and society in "Adventures in Dialectics". He believes that Marxism should pay attention to individual experience and consciousness and emphasize the subjectivity and creativity of individuals in society. Merleau-Ponty advocated revealing the complexity and diversity of social structures through the analysis of individual experience(McLeod, 1968).

3.5. Structuralist Marxism

Structuralist Marxism is an important school that emerged in the 1960s, and its representatives include Louis Althusser and Pierre Bourdieu. They attempted to introduce structuralist theoretical methods into Marxism to analyze social structure and ideology better. Althusser proposed the concept of "ideological state apparatus" in "For Marx" and "Das Kapital", emphasizing the role of ideology in social reproduction(Friedman, 1974).

He believes that ideology is not only a tool of the ruling class, but also a social structure that maintains social stability and rule through education, religion, law and other systems. Bourdieu discussed cultural and social capital concepts in "Distinction" and "Practice and Reflection", and analyzed the relationship between social structure and individual behavior. He believes that social structure affects individual behavior and status through cultural capital and social capital, and individual behavior in turn affects the reproduction of social structure. Through the analysis of various schools of Western Marxism, we can see the diversity and complexity of its theoretical development (Scholte, 1972). These schools not only enrich the theoretical connotation of Marxism, but also provide new perspectives and methods for understanding modern capitalist society.

4. COMPARISON OF THE THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF SOVIET MARXISM AND WESTERN MARXISM

In the development process of Marxist philosophy, Soviet Marxism and Western Marxism formed two theoretical systems with significant differences. The differences between the two in terms of philosophical worldview, historical outlook, epistemology, dialectics, and humanistic theories reflect their unique social background and theoretical pursuits.

4.1. Comparison of Philosophical World Views

The philosophical worldview of Soviet Marxism was mainly influenced by Leninism and emphasized the unity of materialism and dialectics. Its core is that material determines consciousness, emphasizing the principle that social existence determines social consciousness. Soviet philosophers such as Plekhanov and Lukács were committed to combining Marxist philosophy with natural science to form a scientific and systematic worldview. This worldview emphasizes the inevitability of history and the regularity of social development, and believes that the objective laws of social development can be revealed through scientific analysis. Western Marxism pays more attention to the role of subjectivity and ideology. Represented by the Frankfurt School, Western Marxists such as Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse emphasized the critical function of ideology and paid attention to the role of culture and ideology in society. They believe that ideology is not only a reflection of social existence, but also a critique and transcendence of social reality. The Western Marxist philosophical worldview is more critical and reflective, emphasizing individual

subjectivity and the possibility of social change.

4.2. Comparison of Historical Views

The Soviet Marxist view of history is based on historical materialism and emphasizes the objective regularity and inevitability of historical development. Soviet scholars believe that the contradiction between productive forces and production relations drives history. The development of society follows certain stage laws. From primitive society to communist society is an inevitable process. This view of history emphasizes the decisive role of the economic base on the superstructure and believes that economic factors drive social change. Western Marxism reinterprets historical materialism and emphasizes the diversity and complexity of history.

Western Marxists represented by Gramsci proposed the concept of "cultural hegemony" and believed that ideology and culture play an important role in historical development. They pay attention to the contingency and subject initiative in history, and believe that history is not solely determined by economic factors, but is the result of the joint action of multiple factors. The Western Marxist view of history places more emphasis on the role of culture and ideology, and focuses on subjectivity and creativity in social change.

4.3. Comparison of Epistemologies

In terms of epistemology, Soviet Marxism emphasized the objectivity and scientific nature of knowledge. Soviet philosophers believe that knowledge is a reflection of objective reality, and scientific knowledge can reveal the nature and laws of things. Lenin pointed out in "Materialism and Empirio- Criticism" that knowledge is a process from perceptual to rational, from phenomenon to essence, emphasizing the practical basis of knowledge and the importance of scientific methods. Western Marxism criticizes traditional epistemology and emphasizes the subjectivity and criticality of knowledge. Western Marxists represented by Althusser believe that knowledge is not only a reflection of objective reality, but also a critique and transcendence of reality. They pay attention to the impact of ideology on cognition and believe that the cognition process is a complex social practice that is restricted by multiple factors. Western Marxist epistemology places more emphasis on criticality and reflection, paying attention to the subject's initiative and social background in the process of understanding.

4.4. Comparison of Dialectics

The dialectics of Soviet Marxism is based on dialectical materialism and emphasizes the unity of opposites and the universality of contradictory movements. Soviet philosophers believe that dialectics is a scientific method for understanding and transforming the world, emphasizing that contradiction is the driving force for the development of things, and that everything contains its own opposite. Dialectics was regarded as a universally applicable scientific method in the Soviet Union and was applied in various fields of natural and social sciences. Western Marxism has reinterpreted dialectics, emphasizing the critical function and negativity of dialectics. Western Marxists represented by Adorno believe that dialectics is not only a tool for analyzing reality, but also a criticism and transcendence of reality. They focus on negativity in dialectics and emphasize revealing the possibility of social change by negating existing social structures and ideologies. The dialectics of Western Marxism is more critical and reflective, focusing on subjectivity and creativity in social change.

4.5. Comparison of Anthropological Theories

The humanistic theory of Soviet Marxism emphasizes the social and collective nature of human beings and believes that human beings are a passive existence in society, subject to social structure and economic foundation. Soviet philosophers believed that the essence of human beings lies in the sum of their social relationships, and emphasized the realization of human liberation through the transformation of social structures. The humanistic theory of Soviet Marxism focuses on people's social roles and collective interests, emphasizing individual obedience and contribution to the collective. Western Marxism emphasizes human subjectivity and individuality and pays attention to the active role of individuals in society. Western Marxists represented by Sartre believe that the essence of human beings lies in their freedom and choice, emphasizing the subjectivity and creativity of individuals in social change. They pay attention to human alienation and liberation, and believe that human comprehensive development and freedom can be achieved by criticizing and transcending the existing social structure. Western Marxist humanistic theory places more emphasis on individual subjectivity and the possibility of social change, focusing on the individual's active role and creativity in society. In the comparison of the theoretical basis of Soviet Marxism and Western Marxism, we can see the significant differences between the two in terms of philosophical world view, historical outlook, epistemology, dialectics

and humanistic theory. These differences not only reflect their respective theoretical pursuits and social backgrounds, but also provide rich theoretical resources and practical experience for the development of Marxist philosophy.

5. COMPARISON OF THE SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL THEORIES OF SOVIET MARXISM AND WESTERN MARXISM

The development of social and historical theory between Soviet Marxism and Western Marxism reflects the significant differences in theoretical foundation, historical background and practical application between the two. Although both are rooted in the basic principles of Marxism, due to their different social environments and political backgrounds, their theoretical development in social structure, class, social change, state, and ideology presents different characteristics.

5.1. Comparison of Social Structure Theories

Soviet Marxist social structure theory was mainly influenced by Leninism and emphasized the decisive role of productive forces and production relations. Soviet scholars believe that social structure is determined by the economic base, and the superstructure is a reflection of the economic base. The Soviet social structure theory emphasized the dominant position of economic factors in social development and believed that changes in the economic base would inevitably lead to changes in the superstructure. This view was practiced in the planned economic system of the Soviet Union, which emphasized the overall development of society through state planning and collective ownership. Western Marxism has criticized and revised traditional economic determinism. Western Marxists represented by the Frankfurt School, such as Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse, emphasized the importance of culture and ideology in social structure. They believe that the complexity of capitalist society cannot be explained solely by economic foundations. Cultural, ideological and social psychological factors also play a key role in shaping social structure. Western Marxists are concerned about the alienation phenomenon in capitalist society and believe that cultural industry and ideological control are important means for capitalism to maintain its rule.

5.2. Comparison of Class Theories

The class theory of Soviet Marxism takes class struggle as its core and

emphasizes the historical mission of the proletariat. Soviet scholars believe that class struggle is the fundamental driving force for social development, and the ultimate goal of socialist revolution is to eliminate classes and realize a classless society. In Soviet practice, this theory was used to justify the dictatorship of the proletariat and the policy of eliminating the bourgeoisie.

Western Marxism has re-examined the traditional class theory. Gramsci proposed the theory of "cultural hegemony", arguing that the bourgeoisie maintains its dominance through cultural and ideological control rather than relying solely on economic and political power. Western Marxists pay attention to the ideological status of the working class and believe that the revolutionary consciousness of the working class does not arise spontaneously, but needs to be realized through the guidance of culture and education. Althusser further developed this view and proposed the concept of ideological state apparatus, emphasizing the role of ideology in class struggle.

5.3. Comparison of Social Change Theories

The Soviet Marxist theory of social change emphasized the realization of social change through revolutionary means and believed that socialist revolution was the inevitable result of historical development. Lenin's theory of "imperialism is the highest stage of capitalism" provided a theoretical basis for social change in the Soviet Union, emphasizing the overthrow of the capitalist system through proletarian revolution in order to establish a socialist country. Western Marxism has reflected on the possibility and form of revolution. The Frankfurt School believes that the transformation of capitalist society requires not only changes in the economic foundation, but also changes in culture and ideology. Marcuse proposed the theory of "one-dimensional man", arguing that capitalism has caused people to lose critical thinking and revolutionary consciousness through the control of technology and consumer culture. Western Marxists emphasize gradual social change and promote social progress through cultural criticism and ideological struggle.

5.4. Comparison of State Theories

The Soviet Marxist state theory is based on Lenin's theory of state and revolution, which emphasizes that the state is a tool of class rule. During the socialist stage, the state was regarded as a tool of the dictatorship of the proletariat, used to suppress counterrevolutionary forces and promote

socialist construction.

Soviet state theory emphasized the centralization of the state and the necessity of a planned economy, believing that the state played a key role in the transition to a communist society. Western Marxism provides a more complex analysis of the role of the state.

Gramsci's theory of "cultural hegemony" believes that the state is not only a tool of class rule, but also maintains rule through cultural and ideological control. Althusser further proposed the ideological function of the state, believing that the state achieves control over society through ideological state machinery. Western Marxists pay attention to the multiple roles of the state in capitalist society and believe that the state is not only a tool of oppression, but also a promoter of social change.

5.5. Comparison of Ideological Theories

The ideological theory of Soviet Marxism emphasizes the class nature of ideology and believes that ideology is an important part of the superstructure and serves the economic base. In the Soviet Union, Marxism-Leninism was regarded as the guiding ideology, and ideological unity was considered an important guarantee for socialist construction. The Soviet ideological theory emphasized the consolidation of socialist ideology through education and propaganda and resisted the influence of capitalist ideology. Western Marxism's analysis of ideology is more diversified. Althusser proposed the concept of ideological state apparatus, believing that ideology is not only a tool of the ruling class, but also a framework for social individuals to construct their own identity. The Frankfurt School focuses on the role of ideology in the cultural industry and believes that capitalism shapes people's ideologies through the production and consumption of cultural products. Western Marxists emphasize the complexity and diversity of ideology and believe that ideology is not only a tool of domination, but may also become a weapon of resistance. By comparing the social and historical theories of Soviet Marxism and Western Marxism, it can be seen that the differences in theoretical development between the two reflect their respective historical backgrounds and social environments. Soviet Marxism emphasized the decisive role of economic foundation and class struggle, while Western Marxism focused on the role of cultural, ideological and social psychological factors in social development. This difference not only affects the theoretical development of the two, but also has a profound impact on their respective practices.

6. COMPARISON OF CULTURAL THEORIES BETWEEN SOVIET MARXISM AND WESTERN MARXISM

The development of cultural theory between Soviet Marxism and Western Marxism reflects the differences in ideology, historical background and social practice between the two. By comparing the nature, functions, social relations, popular culture, art culture, and cultural critical theory of culture, we can gain a deeper understanding of the similarities and differences between the two theoretical systems.

6.1. Comparison of the Nature and Functions of Culture

In Soviet Marxism, culture was regarded as an important part of ideology, and its essence was to serve the construction of socialism. Culture is considered part of the superstructure, directly reflects the economic base, and plays an important role in promoting social change. Soviet cultural theory emphasized the educational function of culture and believed that culture should shape new socialist people and promote collectivism and patriotism. Different from this, Western Marxism has a more complex and diverse understanding of culture. Western Marxists, such as representatives of the Frankfurt School, believe that culture is not just a reflection of the economic base, but is relatively independent. Culture is seen as a tool of social criticism capable of revealing ideological control and alienation in capitalist society. Culture has been given critical and emancipatory functions in Western Marxism, emphasizing its importance in ideological struggles.

6.2. Comparison of the Relationship Between Culture and Society

Soviet Marxism emphasized that the relationship between culture and society was direct and linear. Culture is seen as a tool for social change and must be consistent with the goals of socialist construction. The social function of culture is mainly reflected in its shaping of social ideology and the dissemination of socialist values. Cultural activities are strictly controlled to ensure they comply with the party's ideological requirements. Western Marxism emphasizes that the relationship between culture and society is complex and multi-layered. Culture is not only a reflection of social structure, but also has the function of criticism and reflection. Western Marxists are concerned about how culture is commodified and alienated in capitalist society, and believe that culture can become a force against capitalist ideology. The relationship between culture and society is

regarded as a dynamic interactive process. Culture is not only subject to social structure, but can also challenge and change it.

6.3. Comparison of Popular Culture Theories

In Soviet Marxism, popular culture was seen as a tool of education and propaganda. The main function of popular culture is to spread socialist ideology and improve the cultural level of the people. The Soviet mass culture theory emphasized the ideological correctness and educational significance of cultural products, and believed that mass culture should serve the construction of socialism. Western Marxism is critical of popular culture, especially theorists of the Frankfurt School such as Adorno and Horkheimer. They believe that popular culture is a tool used by capitalist society to control the public. Through the operation of the cultural industry, popular culture has been commodified and lost its criticality and creativity. Popular culture is seen as a means of ideological control aimed at maintaining the status quo of capitalism and paralyzing the critical consciousness of the public.

6.4. Comparison of Art And Culture Theories

The Soviet Marxist theory of art and culture emphasized the social function and ideological role of art. Art is seen as an important tool to promote socialist values, and artists are required to create works that meet the standards of socialist realism. The value of artistic works lies in its contribution to socialist construction and its educational effect on the people. Western Marxism emphasizes the autonomy and criticality of art. Art is seen as a medium capable of revealing social contradictions and alienation. Western Marxists, such as Lukács and Brecht, believe that art should have the ability to criticize reality and be able to challenge and reflect on social structures. The value of art lies in its ability to inspire the audience's critical consciousness and social responsibility.

6.5. Comparison of Cultural Critical Theories

The cultural critical theory of Soviet Marxism mainly focused on the criticism of capitalist culture, believing that capitalist culture is the embodiment of bourgeois ideology and is corrosive and subversive. Soviet cultural criticism emphasized the class nature of culture and ideological struggle, believing that socialist culture should resist the erosion of capitalist culture. Western Marxist cultural critical theory is more extensive and in-depth. The cultural critical theory of the Frankfurt School focuses

on the control and alienation of individual consciousness by the cultural industry, and believes that cultural criticism should reveal ideological manipulation and social injustice in capitalist society. Western Marxists emphasize the liberating nature of cultural criticism and believe that social change and individual liberation can be promoted through criticism of culture. By comparing Soviet Marxism with Western Marxist cultural theory, we can see that the two have different understandings and practices in terms of the nature, function, social relations, popular culture, art culture, and cultural criticism of culture. These differences not only reflect the differences in ideology and historical background between the two, but also reveal their unique paths in theoretical development and social practice.

7. CONTEMPORARY VALUE AND INSPIRATION OF SOVIET MARXISM AND WESTERN MARXISM

This study conducts a comparative analysis of the theoretical development of Soviet Marxism and Western Marxism, as shown in Table 1, revealing the similarities and differences between the two in terms of historical background, theoretical innovation, and practical application. Soviet Marxism developed rapidly in the early 20th century and became the core of Soviet ideology. Its theoretical development was influenced by the political system and emphasized collectivism and a state-led economic model. Through textual analysis of Soviet Marxism, its important role in the process of industrialization and modernization can be seen. However, this theory ignores individual subjectivity and social diversity to some extent.

Western Marxism emerged in the mid- 20th century, mainly influenced by thinkers such as the Frankfurt School and Gramsci. Western Marxism pays more attention to cultural criticism and ideological analysis, emphasizing individual subjectivity and social critical thinking. Through the study of Western Marxism, we can discover its unique contribution in criticizing capitalist cultural hegemony and ideological manipulation.

Table 1(a): Comparison between Soviet Marxism and Western Marxism

Aspect	Soviet Marxism	Western Marxism
Theoretical Background	Influenced by Russian historical context, emphasizing the combination of dialectical materialism and historical materialism.	Emerged in the early 20th century, focusing on changes in capitalism and the influence of the Soviet Revolution, re-examining Marxist theory.

Table 1(b): Comparison between Soviet Marxism and Western Marxism

Aspect	Soviet Marxism	Western Marxism
Core Theory	Emphasizes the dictatorship of the proletariat and planned economy, with economic factors driving social change.	Focuses on culture, ideology, and subjective factors, emphasizing the diversity and complexity of critical theory.
Historical View	Stresses the objective laws of historical development, asserting that class struggle is the fundamental driving force of social progress.	Highlights the diversity and complexity of history, with culture and ideology playing significant roles in historical development.
Epistemology and Dialectics	Emphasizes material determinism, viewing knowledge as a reflection of the economic base.	Places greater emphasis on criticality and reflexivity, focusing on agency and social context in the process of understanding.
Social Historical Theory	Asserts the decisive role of productive forces and relations, claiming that socialist revolution is an inevitable result of historical development.	Critiques and revises traditional economic determinism, emphasizing the importance of culture and ideology in social structure.
Cultural Theory	Views culture as an important component of ideology, emphasizing its educational function and ideological role.	Considers culture to have relative independence and critical potential, serving as a tool for social critique, focusing on the control of individual consciousness by the culture industry.
Contemporary Social Development Guidance	Emphasizes the necessity of planned economy and state intervention, believing that concentrated state power can achieve rational allocation of social resources.	Focuses more on the critique of culture and ideology, emphasizing individual agency and social diversity.
Critique of Capitalism	Primarily centers on economic exploitation and class struggle.	Reveals the more concealed mechanisms of control in capitalist society through critiques of culture and ideology.

7.1. Theoretical Guiding Significance For The Development of Contemporary Society

Soviet Marxism and Western Marxism provide different theoretical guidance in the development of contemporary society. Soviet Marxism

emphasized the necessity of a planned economy and state intervention, believing that the rational allocation of social resources could be achieved through the concentrated power of the state. This theory still has guiding significance in contemporary society, especially when facing global challenges such as climate change and public health crises, the coordination role of the state is particularly important. Through the analysis of economic data from the Soviet period, we can see that at a specific historical stage, the planned economy achieved remarkable results in industrialization and technological development. Western Marxism pays more attention to the criticism of culture and ideology, emphasizing individual subjectivity and social pluralism. This theory provides contemporary society with tools for understanding cultural hegemony and ideological manipulation, helping to reveal the hidden power structures in capitalist society. Through critical analysis of cultural products, Western Marxism reveals the complexity of ideology in capitalist society and provides a profound theoretical framework for cultural research in contemporary society.

7.2. Criticism and Reflection on Contemporary Capitalist Society

Soviet Marxist criticism of capitalism focused on economic exploitation and class struggle, believing that the inherent contradictions of capitalism would lead to its eventual collapse. Although the Soviet model encountered setbacks in practice, its critique of capitalism remains relevant in the contemporary era. In recent years, global economic inequality has increased and the shortcomings of capitalism have become increasingly apparent. The critical perspective of Soviet Marxism provides a historical and theoretical basis for understanding these phenomena. Western Marxism reveals the more hidden control mechanisms in capitalist society through criticism of capitalist culture and ideology. Through the analysis of consumer culture, media manipulation and ideological hegemony, Western Marxism reveals the problems of individual alienation and cultural commodification in capitalist society. This kind of criticism is not limited to the economic field, but also extends to all aspects of social life, providing profound insights for reflection on contemporary capitalist society.

7.3. Enlightenment on Socialist Practice

Soviet Marxism has accumulated rich experience and lessons in socialist practice. Its emphasis on planned economy and state-led development model has achieved rapid industrialization and scientific and technological progress to a certain extent. However, an overly centralized power

structure and a system lacking democratic oversight have also led to severe bureaucracy and economic rigidity. These experiences and lessons provide important reference for contemporary socialist practice, emphasizing that while pursuing economic development, we must pay attention to the construction of democracy and the rule of law. Western Marxism provides another perspective for socialist practice, emphasizing individual liberation and social pluralism. Through criticism of culture and ideology, Western Marxism reminds socialist practice that we must be wary of ideological rigidity and cultural homogeneity. The democratic participation and cultural diversity it advocates provide new inspiration for socialist practice, emphasizing that while achieving economic equality, individual freedom and cultural diversity must be respected.

7.4. Influence on Contemporary Philosophical Trends

The influence of Soviet Marxism in the field of philosophy is mainly reflected in the persistence and development of dialectical materialism. It emphasizes the objectivity of the material world and the regularity of social development, providing a scientific worldview for contemporary philosophy. This philosophical trend has influenced the development of contemporary science and technology to a certain extent, emphasizing understanding the world through scientific experiments and rational analysis. Western Marxism has influenced many fields of contemporary philosophy, including postmodernism, critical theory and cultural studies, through its criticism of ideology and culture. Its emphasis on ideological criticism and cultural analysis provides new perspectives for understanding the complexity of contemporary society. By revealing the power structure and cultural hegemony, Western Marxism has injected critical and reflective elements into contemporary philosophical trends, promoting the diversification and deepening of philosophical research.

8. CONCLUSION

Through comparative analysis, this study found that both inherited the basic principles of Marxism on a theoretical basis, but there were significant differences in specific applications and development directions. Soviet Marxism paid more attention to practice and political application, while Western Marxism tended to theoretical innovation and cultural criticism. This difference is not only reflected in theoretical texts, but also in their different interpretations and responses to social reality. Although this study

has achieved certain results in comparatively analyzing the theoretical development of Soviet Marxism and Western Marxism, there are still some shortcomings. Next, we can expand and deepen from the following aspects. First, we can strengthen the study of specific practical cases of Soviet Marxism and Western Marxism at different historical stages, and reveal the actual effects and limitations of their theoretical applications through empirical analysis. Secondly, the geographical scope of the study can be expanded to examine the development of Marxism in other regions in order to more fully understand the diversity and complexity of Marxism on a global scale. In addition, the potential contributions and challenges of Marxist theory in dealing with globalization, technological change, and ecological crises can be explored in conjunction with contemporary social issues. In the context of globalization and informationization, Marxist philosophy faces new development opportunities and challenges. With the changes in social structure and the advancement of science and technology, Marxism needs to innovate theoretically to respond to the new social reality. In the future, Marxist philosophy may pay more attention to interdisciplinary research and combine the latest achievements in sociology, political science, economics and other fields to form a more comprehensive and dynamic theoretical system. In addition, Marxist philosophy also needs to strengthen attention to individual subjectivity and explore the dialectical relationship between the individual and the collective, freedom and equality, in order to adapt to the needs of a diversified and personalized society.

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