

Original Paper

Anaximander's Theory of Origin and Its Enlightenment to Marxist Political Philosophy

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Abstract

This paper aims to explore the enlightenment of the ancient Greek philosopher Anaximander's theory of origin to Marxist political philosophy. As one of the founders of Western philosophy, Anaximander's "indeterminate theory" and his theory on the origin and origin of the universe have had a profound impact on later philosophical thoughts. This paper analyzes Anaximander's theory of origin and combines it with the core viewpoints of Marxist political philosophy to explore the internal connection and enlightenment between the two, in order to provide a new perspective for the development of contemporary political philosophy.

Keywords

Anaximander, theory of origin, Marxist political philosophy, enlightenment

1. Introduction

Anaximander is an important representative of the Milesian School in ancient Greece. His thoughts have had a profound impact on Western philosophy. His "theory of indeterminacy" challenged the myths and traditional concepts of the time and emphasized the constant changes and evolution of nature. At the same time, Marxist political philosophy, as a scientific and revolutionary political theory, is committed to revealing the objective laws of human social development and exploring ways to achieve human liberation. This article will start from Anaximander's theory of origin and explore its enlightenment to Marxist political philosophy.

2. Overview of Anaximander's Theory of Origin

2.1 The "No Determined Theory"

Anaximander was the second representative of the Miletus School in ancient Greece. Based on his teacher Thales' idea of "water" as the origin of all things, he advocated that the origin of all things was

“Apeiron” (Li, 2020). Anaximander believed that there was nothing fixed in the universe, and everything was in constant change and motion. “Nothing” and “indeterminate” were the core concepts of their theories of natural origin (Deng, 2020).

He proposed that the origin of all things is not a substance with fixed properties, but an infinite, amorphous primordial substance, which he called "Apeiron". "Apeiron" means unlimited, boundless, unregulated, and amorphous, and is an existence that transcends finite and specific properties. Anaximander believed that everything in the universe originated from this infinite substance, and was constantly generated, destroyed, and transformed through its movement and conflict.

2.2 Cosmology and Evolution

Anaximander's cosmology emphasizes the autonomy of nature and the spontaneity of matter. According to Anaximander's interpretation, his concept of “indeterminate” already possesses the general philosophical abstract nature of the concept of “existence” (Wu, 2015). He believed that the universe is an infinitely moving and changing whole, in which all things are constantly generated and destroyed. In addition, he also made outstanding contributions to the theory of evolution, proposing that the earliest group of creatures in the world lived on the seabed and that humans evolved from a kind of fish. Although this view is only a guess and illusion, it is the earliest simple materialistic cosmology that attempts to use matter itself to explain the origin and state of the universe.

2.3 Social and Political Views

In addition to his contributions to natural philosophy, Anaximander also put forward views on human society and political systems. He believed that human society should follow certain moral and legal norms to ensure fairness and equality. He advocated the establishment of a fair system based on the law to ensure that everyone's rights are protected. This idea has a profound impact on later political philosophy and legal thought.

3. Basic Viewpoints of Marxist Political Philosophy

3.1 Historical Materialism

Marxist political philosophy is based on historical materialism and emphasizes the objective laws of human social development. Historical materialism is the cornerstone of Marxist political philosophy. This theory holds that the material mode of production is the decisive force driving social development. In different historical periods, the level of development of productivity determines the corresponding production relations, which constitute the economic foundation. The economic foundation includes not only productivity and production relations, but also the economic system and economic structure related to them, which are the material basis of social development.

The economic base determines the superstructure, i.e. the political and legal system, ideology and other social ideological structures. The superstructure is a reflection of the economic base. It serves the economic base and maintains its stability and development. The political and legal system is an important part of the superstructure. They regulate the behavior of social members through laws,

policies and other forms and maintain the operation of the economic base. Ideology is the ideas and values commonly accepted by social members. They influence the behavior and decision-making of social members to a certain extent.

Historical materialism is a doctrine that unifies the scientific dimension and the value dimension (Li, 2024). It further points out that with the continuous development of productivity, the old production relations will gradually become unsuitable for the development requirements of productivity, thus generating contradictions and conflicts. These contradictions and conflicts are the root causes of social change, and they drive society to develop towards a higher form. Social revolution is an important means to resolve these contradictions and conflicts. It creates conditions for the development of productivity by changing production relations.

3.2 Pursuit of Political Values

The political philosophy of Marx and Engels is not the political philosophy of Marx alone, but a political philosophy system jointly created and perfected by Marx and Engels (Jiang, 2024). The core value pursuit of Marxist political philosophy is to achieve human freedom, equality and liberation. This pursuit stems from a critical understanding of the profound contradictions in capitalist society. In capitalist society, the private ownership of the means of production has led to the concentration of wealth and power, forming serious class antagonism and exploitation. The working class has been deprived of the right to control the fruits of their labor, their labor has become a commodity, and they themselves have become appendages of capital.

In order to break this unequal social structure, Marxism advocates that the proletariat must organize and overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie through revolutionary means. This revolution is not only a political change, but also a fundamental change in the social and economic structure. The establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat is a necessary stage in the transition to a communist society. It marks the socialization of the means of production, that is, the means of production belong to the whole society, thus eliminating class differences.

In a communist society, people will be free from class oppression and exploitation and achieve true freedom and equality. The freedom here is not abstract and formal freedom, but the freedom for everyone to develop their personality according to their own abilities and needs. Equality is no longer a false equality before the law, but substantive equality, that is, everyone enjoys equal status and opportunities in society. Liberation is to gain complete freedom from economic oppression and social inequality.

3.3 Normativity, Explanatory and Revolutionary Nature

Marxist political philosophy, with its unique normative, explanatory and revolutionary characteristics, provides a profound theoretical perspective and practical guide for understanding and transforming the world. Its normative nature is reflected in the guidance of political behavior. It not only defines the principles and values that political behavior should follow, but also provides a moral and rational basis for political decision-making. This normative nature makes political behavior more in line with the

overall interests of society and promotes the development of society in a more just and reasonable direction.

Explanatory is reflected in the in-depth analysis of political phenomena. Marxist political philosophy reveals the economic basis and social relations behind political phenomena through appearances, and clarifies the source and operation mechanism of political power. This explanatory power helps people understand the internal logic of political phenomena, recognize the nature of political struggle, and thus more clearly realize the necessity and possibility of social change.

Revolutionary nature is a prominent feature of Marxist political philosophy, which emphasizes that theory must be combined with practice to guide the proletariat and working people in their revolutionary struggle. This revolutionary nature is not only reflected in overthrowing the old social system, but also in establishing new social relations and modes of production. Through revolutionary practice, Marxist political philosophy has promoted the progress of human society, the development of social productivity and the comprehensive liberation of people.

4. The Enlightenment of Anaximander's Theory of Origin to Marxist Political Philosophy

4.1 Discussion on the Origin of Matter

The first person in the West to propose "indeterminate" was Anaximander. He believed that the origin of the material world is unlimited, and the world we live in is just one of many worlds (Yu, 2021). In Anaximander's view, "indeterminate" is still a kind of material "element" origin. The real difference lies in whether the origin is "fixed" or "indeterminate" (Wei & Lin, 2018). Anaximander's "theory of indeterminacy" emphasizes that the origin of all things in the universe is infinite, amorphous original matter. This view has enlightening significance for the discussion of the origin of matter in Marxist political philosophy.

Marxism believes that the origin of the world is matter, which exists objectively and does not depend on human consciousness. Anaximander's "theory of indeterminacy" further emphasizes the infinity and mobility of matter, providing a philosophical basis for Marxism's view on the infinity and development of the material world. In Marxist political philosophy, this in-depth exploration of the origin of matter helps us better understand the relationship between social existence and social consciousness, as well as the decisive role of the economic base on the superstructure.

4.2 Understanding of the Relationship between Nature and Society

Anaximander's cosmology emphasizes the autonomy of nature and the spontaneity of matter, which has enlightening significance for the understanding of the relationship between nature and society in Marxist political philosophy. Marxism believes that nature is the material basis for the existence and development of human society, and the development of human society cannot be separated from the constraints and influence of nature.

Anaximander's cosmology reveals the laws of movement and development of nature itself, and provides a philosophical basis for the Marxist view on the interaction between nature and society. In

Marxist political philosophy, this in-depth understanding of the relationship between nature and society helps us better grasp the laws of development of human society and how to promote social progress on the basis of respecting nature.

4.3 Thinking about Social Change and Development

Anaximander's social and political views emphasize the importance of justice and equality, and advocate the establishment of a fair system based on law. This view has enlightening significance for the thinking about social change and development in Marxist political philosophy. Marxism believes that the driving force of social change and development comes from the contradictory movement within society. The proletariat must overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie through revolutionary means, establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, and ultimately realize a communist society.

Anaximander's ideas on justice and equality provide philosophical support for the goals of social change and development in Marxist political philosophy. In Marxist political philosophy, this in-depth thinking on social change and development helps us better understand the historical mission of the proletariat and how to promote social progress and development in practice.

5. Conclusion

Anaximander's theory of origin has far-reaching implications for Marxist political philosophy. By deeply exploring the origin of matter, the relationship between nature and society, and social change and development, Anaximander's thought provides a new perspective and thinking for Marxist political philosophy, allowing us to examine and understand the core viewpoints of Marxist political philosophy from a broader and deeper philosophical background.

Anaximander's "theory of indeterminacy" emphasizes the infinity and mobility of matter, and provides a philosophical basis for the Marxist view on the infinity and development of the material world. This revelation makes us more deeply aware that the relationship between social existence and social consciousness, as well as the decisive role of the economic base on the superstructure, are all based on the infinity and development of the material world. Anaximander's understanding of the relationship between nature and society also provides a philosophical basis for the view on the interaction between nature and society in Marxist political philosophy. This makes us realize that in the process of promoting social change and development, we must fully respect and utilize the laws of nature to achieve sustainable development of human society.

Anaximander's ideas on justice and equality provide philosophical support for the goals of social change and development in Marxist political philosophy. This makes us more clearly realize that the historical mission of the proletariat is not only to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie, but also to establish a communist society based on justice and equality. Anaximander's original doctrine provides new inspiration and thinking direction for Marxist political philosophy, and provides important philosophical resources for us to promote the development and practice of political philosophy in contemporary society.

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