

# Cognition and Reflection on Marx's "Consistent History and Logic"

Gao Yuan

*Jilin University of Finance and Economics, Changchun, 130000, Jilin, China*

**Abstract:** *Marx's "consistent history and logic" means that history itself has logic to follow, and people can continue to understand and grasp the logic of history. History and logic are two sides of the same body, and the two achieve dialectical unity in the social reality movement. According to the requirement of "consistent history and logic", people today must re-examine the theory itself from the highest point of the development of practice, retelling that the origin of the relationship between history and logic lies in the relationship between thinking and existence, and the purpose of philosophy is to focus on existence with thinking, and the so-called focus means that people not only have to be able to correctly understand the world, but also to actively transform the world.*

**Keywords:** *the logic of history; the history of logic; dialectics; cognition and reflection*

## 1. Introduction

When human beings are in a changing world and trying to grasp the ins and outs of this world, the problem of the relationship between history and logic is already hidden in the process of human reflection on their own destiny and the pursuit of truth. On the one hand, it is the real surprise and panic experienced in the perceptual, changing, and chaotic world of phenomena; on the other hand, it is the deep desire and belief in the absolute truth of reason, eternity, and logic. Human life is often deep in the struggle between these two aspects and it is rare to reach completion. It is in the continuous back-and-forth of these two aspects that Marx has made another innovation in "consistent history and logic". In this process, Marx also gave out the scientific attitude and scientific methods that should be possessed when exploring the three dimensions of the past, present, and future of mankind's own destiny.

## 2. The basic connotation of Marx's "consistent history and logic"

### 2.1 The logic of history

Marx's view of history has an extremely significant feature, that is, Marx believes that the process of history has its logic. There are two meanings here: first, the process of history itself is regular; second, this regulation can be recognized and grasped by people. The law of the development of human history revealed by Marx is historical materialism: First of all, the formation of human history is based on the production of material subsistence that meet the needs of human survival. This comes from a simple empirical fact that people must live first for making history, and they must first carry out material production for living. Secondly, human society is constantly developing in the process of contradictory movement between productivity and production relations, economic foundation and superstructure. Since productivity is not freely chosen by man but inherited from previous social forms, man must create history under a certain set of conditions, which makes the forming history always subject to the provisions of the previous historical link. Finally, by understanding and grasping this law, Marx regards the realization of communism as an inevitable requirement for the development of human history.

### 2.2 The history of logic

The "logic" in the proposition "history and logic are consistent" is actually the historical law that Engels pointed out to be grasped at the height of thought, and it is manifested as the process of thought. This also includes two meanings: first, logic is rooted in history and is a theoretical reflection of the

process of history; second, because history is continuously generated, people's understanding and grasp of historical laws will continuously deepen and revise with the development of history. Therefore, Marx emphasized that we cannot simply passively accept the result of historical movement, but must continue to question the origin of this result and identify the correlation and difference between different stages in the historical development process. At the same time, Marx also requires to reveal why people's current historical stage must lead to self-denial and the various real possibilities of the next historical stage exposed in this inevitable trend of extinction?

### ***2.3 The dialectical unity of history and logic***

In fact, neither the logic of history nor the history of logic have independent and pure expressions, and the grasp of "the consistency of history and logic" can never be separated from the understanding of social reality. This social reality is in the context of Marx, the shallow understanding points to the current society, but the deeper understanding should point to the most basic material interest relationship among people. When Marx faced the ever-growing history to tell the real problems of life, he always started from the material interest relationship among people. In almost all of the writing process of Marx, it is not difficult for us to find that he asks to examine the latest situation of the material interest relations among people in societies from "the most tenacious facts" and constantly adjust his theories to solve new situations and new problems that have emerged in the course of historical struggles. In Marx's own words, "It is not to look for a certain category in each era, but to always stand on the basis of actual history, not to explain practice from the perspective of ideas, but to explain conceptual forms from the perspective of material practice. "

## **3. How does thinking hit existence**

Since the birth of philosophy, the content of philosophical discussion seems boundless, but it has never been divorced from people's understanding of their own living world. The supreme purpose of this philosophy is to make thinking exist in the center. It means that the thinking arising from existence can not only correctly understand existence, but also lead the creation and construction of existence in practice, to achieve the grasp of truth in the three dimensions of human history, that is the past, present, and future, and realize the dialectical unity of history and logic. In this process, it requires continuous adoption of revolutionary attitudes and revolutionary methods.

### ***3.1 Dialectics is a dynamic process***

The core of Marx's historical materialism is a view of universal connections and eternal development of the world. On the one hand, Marx found the foundation of reality for the vain self-consciousness, that is, the perceptual basis of human beings, which gave the life movement a real carrier and a reliable measurement standard for the historical process; on the other hand, Marx broke the isolation of the past and opened the future dimension to history. Only when mankind gives all the content of the historical process in the three time dimensions of the past, present and future, can people truly grasp the ins and outs of mankind's destiny. In this sense, it can be said that Marx's dialectics is the most radical and therefore the most symbolic of freedom. Because the past dialectics lacked the foundation of reality and the dimension of the future, philosophers can only use it to explain the world and rationalize the real world. After Marx rebuilt the dynamic process of dialectics, the key to all life issues is to clarify historical premises, change the existing world, and perceive future destiny. At this time, man is no longer simply a material engulfed by history, man is the active creator of the historical process, and man is the helm of his own destiny.

### ***3.2 Thinking and existence are identical to people***

The fundamental reason why dialectics is a dynamic process is that it is a living dialectic and a humanistic dialectic. Man is a finite object that exists in the objective world. Although man is superior to animals in terms of rationality, this rationality is limited. People first summarize the world of existence they live in through personal experience, so that they obtain a logic that is applicable to a certain range, and then people use this logic to construct the future world. Later, with the expansion of practice, the logic that was previously applied in a small area may not be applicable when people's living world continues to expand. Therefore, people need to summarize the logic that can encompass a larger world to lead the future. In this process, thinking and existence always collide and break through

the original boundaries and move forward, and what can command the struggle between thinking and existence at the same time, is neither thinking nor existence, but a living person. People is always struggling painfully between thinking and existence, but this painful struggle is the meaning of life.

### ***3.3 Truth lies in practice***

Although thinking and existence are identical to people, the two are not directly identical. Existence cannot directly produce thinking, nor can thinking directly produce existence. It is practice that connects the two to people. Only in practice can people produce thinking and existence in the center of thinking. Only in practice can people discover logic in history and lead history with logic. People should prove the truth of their thinking in practice, that is, the reality and power of their thinking, and the nature of their thinking. In practice, thought not only tells the life of a person who has already been shaped, but also leads practice to create the future of mankind by telling the major limitations of the already shaped life. The relationship between history and logic is rooted in the basic problems of thinking and existence, and is unified in the practice of human existence. Only when we truly stand in a new historical position facing the real world that is actually happening and constantly changing, can we keenly discover the past future trends revealed by this era and the spirit of this era. And under its guidance, it actively make self-understanding and self-improvement of human civilization.

## **4. Conclusion**

To sum up, Marx's "consistent history and logic" has its specific connotations. Therefore, each generation stands in their time to re-understand and grasp history, and renew and revise logic; each generation cannot simply passively accept established concepts or results, but must constantly inquire about their origins, and at the same time truly dig into the experience of life to discover that the logic rooted in the continuously generated history contains rich realistic possibilities, real generativity and the openness to the future, Finally, in the highly sensitive grasp of social reality, he glimpsed the limitations of history and the opportunities and methods to advance history, and consciously intervened in the current practical activities to create history. Through the reflection on this theory, we can see that in the dialectic approach, Marx has a profound insight: man is not only self-consciousness, the complete liberation of all human feelings and characteristics is the real freedom of man. Mankind can't just be satisfied with "interpreting the world", but must actively "transform the world" so that history can move toward the freedom of people with reliable perceptual standards, and realize the leap from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom.

## **References**

- [1] Yu Yongjun. *Marx's Theory of the Unity of Logic and History [D]*. Shandong Normal University.
- [2] Shen Yiqing. *Unification of History and Logic: Methodological Principles of Marx's Text Research [J]*. *Academic Explorataion*, 2018, 000(003):10-15.
- [3] Meng Jie. *Critical Reflections on the Principle of Consistency between Logic and History: with Reference to Certain Debates on the Political Economy of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics [J]*. *Research on Financial and Economic Issues*, 2019, 000(001): 13-19.