

# Abell's "Fair Development Model" and Its Enlightenment

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**Abstract**—Peter Abell, a British sociology professor at Surrey university, the representative figure of market socialism, who put forward "Fair Development Model" with efficiency, freedom, justice as the future society's important factor from "freedom" concept. Namely, the model must be in a competitive market economy condition with the production means' public ownership to achieve equal opportunity and distribution, person's ability maximum in production field to achieve "equal and positive freedom in production and consumption area", improve production's efficiency and distributive justice, meet human beings' needs, explore realization system, production mechanism, enterprise operating mechanism about positive freedom equalization, which can help us grasp about freedom's connotation, personal ability's maximization, enterprises' reform.

**Keywords:** Peter Abell, Fair Development Model, positive freedom's equalization, enlightenment

## I. INTRODUCTION

Peter Abell is British sociology professor at Surrey university and the representative figure of market socialism. In thinking about social development in the future, he set out "Fair Development Model" from "freedom" concept. He thought that the future society must have three basic characteristics such as efficiency, freedom, justice and he explored "positive freedom's" system about how to realize positive freedom's equalization. Namely, institutional basis -- combination with production means' public ownership and market economy; production mechanism -- positive free equalization and personal ability's maximization; business model -- labor partnerships taking care of employers and employees' interests. Those exploration can provide some reference and inspiration for promoting our country's economic re-take-off, enterprises' income distribution system reform, human beings' all-round development and Shared development.

## II. "FAIR DEVELOPMENT MODEL'S" CONNOTATION

"Fairness and efficiency are all societies' goals and the deep-seated reason behind them is equality and freedom's game. [1] Abell's "Fair Development Model" is designed based on that freedom and equality's concept. According to Abell's ideas, the future society must include three core values: "efficiency (productive and distributive), freedom

(positive and negative), and justice," [2]among which efficiency involves production and consumption which is social development's foundation; Freedom including positive freedom and negative freedom which is the guarantee for efficiency. Only by positive freedom in production field, can people's ability be maximized to promote efficiency; "social justice aims at realizing human beings' freedom, which is a historical "productive justice". [3] Only by realizing social justice, can equality in opportunity, consumption, property be guaranteed. "Fair Development Model" is bound to seek a way to balance the three values and realize their integration. This balance method inevitably involves many elements, some are unchangeable elements, such as natural abilities' distribution, and some are changeable elements, such as belief and motivation. Therefore, "Fair Development Model" can be roughly defined as, in a competitive market economy condition, by means of equal opportunity and ability equality, can we make people's production capacity maximize, namely "positive freedom" in production field maximizing productivity and continuously meet human's needs.

## III. "FAIR DEVELOPMENT MODEL'S" BASIC PRINCIPLE

"Fair Development Model's" basic principle is to construct an integrated development model with efficiency, freedom and justice on reflection about traditional distribution principle realizing active freedom's equality. Abell believed that traditional principles with "let everyone do his best and distribution according to his work" and "let everyone do his best and distribution according to his need" emphasized "everyone's ability", reflecting maximizing human capacity in production's field. The second principle reflected the consumption liberalization, linking consumption with demand, and satisfying demand. Therefore, the two principles fully embody "capacity's maximization" and "need's liberalization", which fully need to stimulate people's freedom. Abell believed that freedom should include positive freedom and negative freedom. The so-called negative freedom refers to "human beings' potential behaviors (whether they have necessary means to achieve them or not) that are not intentionally and pre-interfered by others". "All people are equal before the least restrictive laws"; positive freedom means "having resources provide basis for practical ability without the coercion of others". [4] From "human subject", "negative freedom is necessary for individual freedom; and freedom is governed by individual desires"; positive freedom is necessary to move towards practice freely.[5] It's clear that from freedom's object,

Abell thought negative freedom had the attribute of absolute freedom or virtual freedom, and lacked conditions and foundation to realize it. He pointed out that positive freedom in the production areas was person's capacity maximum in production field to put all people's ability into production relations, and promote productive forces development. "Distribution according to work" and "Distribution according to demand" are conditions for realizing active freedom in the consumption field so as to maximize consumption capacity and meet people's needs to the greatest extent. In order to realize active freedom, we need to consider capacity's scope, distinguish innate ability from acquired ability, and then consider how to allocate resources to acquired ability, which inevitably involves resource allocation and production efficiency. Therefore, the positive freedom in production field has become "Fair Development Model's" core. The positive freedom means human capacity's maximization and determines labor production efficiency and distributive justice, thus realizing the integration of efficiency, freedom and justice.

#### IV. "FAIR DEVELOPMENT MODEL'S" INSTITUTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

##### A. *The Institutional Basis for Realizing Positive Freedom's Equalization*

Abell pointed out that realizing positive freedom equalization must rely on the competitive market economy, stick to production means' public ownership, "combining market's efficient advantages in allocating resources with the value objectives of equality, democracy and freedom based on public ownership"[6] also rely on fair income distribution system and public management system. In his opinion, production means' public ownership is the most feasible way to implement equal distribution which can guarantee people to enjoy equal material wealth and fair opportunities to ensure human capacity's maximization to realize "positive freedom" in production field. Fair distribution is a means to achieve positive freedom in the consumption field which can provide balanced consumer goods and promote people to maximize their ability in the consumption field. In other words, it achieves positive freedom equalization in the consumption field. Public management is a democratic procedure to guarantee individuals' interests as labor providers. He thought that society must include Labor ability providers, capital providers, consumers. Market economy has incomparable characteristics improving economic affairs' efficiency, which provides an institutional guarantee for social development.

##### B. *Production Guarantee Mechanism for Positive Freedom's Equalization*

Positive freedom's equalization in production field is directly reflected in labor capacity's maximization in production field, which inevitably involves workers' participation in production process and related procedural guarantee so as to make human capacity's maximization. From workers' individual ability, Abell put forward that we should provide education and training to improve people's working ability, and thus change labor force's own elements, which is the premise and basis for people to play actively and

freely in production field. From workers' enthusiasm to participate in work, we must encourage individuals to participate in work by one-person-one-vote system to encourage human ability to maximize to realize "the goal of equality and freedom" through democratic management, [7]and enhance the connotation of positive freedom; From the state's macro-management, state should support the innovative working environment through macro-control, provide new investment motivation when the market is weak to maximize institutional effect. Of course, in order to highlight production's democratic problems, state should also minimize property rights for capital holders.

##### C. *The Enterprises' Operation Mechanism for Positive Freedom's Equalization*

As for the enterprise operation mechanism for Positive freedom equalization, Abell most appreciated labor-capital partnership, which combines both labor and capital's interests inside and outside the enterprises. He pointed out when Labor side and capital side managed affairs, they should determine labor inputs according to sharing risks principle to look for the common interests and set some incentive mechanism, security management and to work together for mutual benefit, promote all people to work more efficiently, improve labor productivity. Enterprises should pay more attention to workers' interests from internal mechanism to attract employees to participate in labor, achieve full employment, maximize each laborer's ability, at the same time also take into account owners' interests, not too much inflation, reduce inflationary pressure, stimulate economy stable operation. He thought that industrial partnerships can reduce the income gap enlargement, get equality in consumption, in addition, through a certain taxes, such as income tax(as long as the tax amount is reasonable ) realizing consumer protection system, which guarantees positive freedom in consumption.

#### V. "FAIR DEVELOPMENT MODEL'S" INSPIRATION

##### A. *Grasp Freedom's Practical Connotation Fully*

Freedom is socialist core value and our development subject. However, freedom needs multiple foundations' support, which cannot be separated from material guarantee and intellectual, which asks us to grasp freedom meaning fully. We can neither make freedom as a virtual concept, nor can get freedom for intuitive practice experience. That is, we should grasp freedom's connotation from human beings' practice comprehensively deepening and Chinese characteristics socialism practice and Emphasize the characteristics that " an autonomous activities" based on economic and social development and man's all-round development and potential's full release.[8] Abell's idea about negative and positive freedom that freedom is in practice, especially the freedom in production field and efficiency dimension so as to combine, justice, freedom and efficiency, which enlightens us that we should avoid freedom's empty generalization, virtualization, combine freedom with socialist core value and Chinese characteristics socialism , combine freedom with people's labor together, combine freedom the masses' demand, thus

giving more freedom connotation and practice, truly achieve people's liberty.

### *B. Attaching Importance to Personal Ability's Maximization*

Socialism enables "workers to liberate themselves and become free and equal", [9] which allows people to work in production field freely and maximize their abilities. Contemporary China has entered economic re-take-off and Shared Development era, which requires us to expand all kinds of resources constantly, have full people's participation in economic development activities, improve people's comprehensive quality and practical ability so as to create labor capacity maximization "to realize sharing labor fruits and sharing labor process".[10]However, in the current development, people still pay more attention to sharing labor results and neglect sharing labor process. The people's ability to participate in labor is not maximized, while too much attention is paid to income distribution's maximization. This phenomenon is likely to affect economic development and ultimately affect realizing Shared development. Abell's opinions about positive freedom to maximize a human labor ability gives us many inspirations, such as from resource allocation ,we should make more focus on individual acquired abilities to reduce talent ability and to pay attention to people's education training and other training, improving people's quality and ability, provide basic resources for economic development and sharing labor process; we should pay more attention to enterprise democratic system construction, provide more market investment environment so as to provide guarantee for Shared development.

### *C. Focusing on Enterprises' Reform Diversification*

Enterprises are the main cells in market economy and an important foundation in Chinese economy development. Now state-owned enterprises, private enterprises and foreign-funded enterprises are developing together, laying a solid foundation in Chinese economy development. However, Chinese enterprises' reform is still facing an important dilemma. We should actively promote " income distribution system's reform to improve socialist market economic system, and promote Chinese social economic long-term stable growth and balanced social interests' structure to realize Shared development".[11]Abell's design about the partnership between labor and capital, the benefit sharing system, cooperation enterprise can provide some ideas for our enterprises' reform, which enlightens us that we should focus on enterprises' reform, give full consideration to laborer, investors, macro policies, so as to maximize positive freedom in production field . At the same time, we also should fully focus on income distribution's fairness, especially equality of

opportunity and initial allocation fairness, public ownerships means, market competitive regulation and so on, thus reducing income gap, promote wealth distribution equalization, realize positive freedom in consumption field, so as to improve production efficiency for enterprise and distributive justice.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

Anyhow, Abell could focus on social development from achieving positive freedom in production field to maximize work ability and equal income distribution to construct the style with efficiency, freedom, justice to improve social development efficiency and distributive justice which helps us explore economy took off again, improve market economy system based on public ownership, pay constant attention to the reform about people's production freedom and income distribution system, strengthen enterprises' reform and maximize people's productive capacity to a greater extent, advance integration of Sharing labor process and sharing labor production to expand sharing development's scope.

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