

Humans as social beings - From “People first” to “People-centered”

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Abstract: Mr Ma perceived that humans gradually developed social existence through practical activities, strong social interactions, Mr Ma thought that society blending reality and existence could shape man into a generative social existence of sorts. Following that, humans might gain the ability to deconstruct the essence and connotation of society. The CPC owns the most Party members in the world and will insist on the road to socialist development and establish a “People first” scientific approach on development in accordance with the Marxist philosophy. The people-centered core connotation was successively proposed at the Third Plenary Session of the Sixteenth Central Committee of the CPC and the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China hosted by General Secretary President Xi, all of which regard people as the subject.

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1 Introduction

Marx, in Outline of Feuerbach, clearly mentioned, “Humans are the culmination of all social relations, and its essence isn’t the inherent abstraction of a single person”. Hence, humans are social products and would survive and evolve parallel to the survival and development of social relationships. Marx’s theory about real society emphasizes that human survival and evolution parallel that of society. Hence, Marxism is a typical historical

materialist conception about humans. The Marxist philosophy fully depicts the true meaning and importance of “People first” and its final value goal is to achieve all-round human development. Philosophy must serve the era by contributing to promoting the development of the present era and society as well as guide social practices. Philosophical wisdom can be used to reflect and criticize current theories and ideas. Hence, philosophy can transcend time and grasp the future and can reflect its ultimate care for humans.

In the new era, the connotation “People first” is understood from a new perspective. In this era, the Communist Party of China has formed the philosophical “People-centered” theory, which essentially inherits the “People first” theory. The people and the masses participate in the majority of social life and social movement. They are the most basic concepts within scientific socialism and historical materialism and are regarded as the starting point of the communist movement. The People Thought in the Marxism ideology is the theory about people or the masses. More specifically, it constitutes historical materialism. By learning and inheriting the Marxism People Thought, the collective leadership of the Party Central Committee represented by President Xi enriches the connotation of the Marxism People Thought with the development vision based on China’s historical background to promote the prosperous development of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

2 “People first” – A Short History

The “People first” expression is derived from the unification of society, which indicates that people can only depend on society to carry out practical activities.

People's activities can't be independent of society; the core of people's relations in practical activities is an external manifestation of people's practical activities. Outwardly, society is the summation of various social practical activities and various social human relations; in essence, it solidifies human social practical activities. Intuitively, society's substantiality and theoretical relation are consistent. On the one hand, they are two internally uniform certified concepts; on the other hand, the substantiality of society is essentially different from that of natural objects.

The society's substantiality wouldn't remain unchanged and contains certain relationships. From other perspectives, the human material life condition is not dependent on external arrangement and combination when constituting society. People carry out social life based on those material life conditions, which will directly impact the face of this society.

The encapsulation of relations between various material life conditions and elements utilized by humans in society constitutes society, and this indicates that society isn't the encapsulation of various substantive elements. Hence, people's social practices would promote the development of society after gradual solidification, indicating that society includes both substantiality and relation. To sum up, both the social critical theory and Marx's social theory assume that society solidifies individual and human activities as natural existence. Humans possess a generic universality, which indicates that humanity doesn't depend on nature and nature isn't dependent on humanity. From the perspective of social practice, nature belongs to the inorganic world of the human spirit and a part of human activity^[1]. Kiu Xiang in the Western Han Dynasty mentioned in Guanzhong, "The accomplishments of a conqueror start with the people. A country is stable if it abides by the people first management; otherwise, it is in danger." This highlights the importance of people first and was regarded as the premise for Duke Huan of Qi to achieve huge accomplishments and obtain a dominant position. Marx regarded humans as a social existence based on their realistic social practice.

The individual isn't an abstract person, and humans aren't individuals who are independent of society. A special individual who can own all sociality and a very rich social connotation. "Hence, humans own certain particularity, which has made humans become a real social existence. Humans always have a certain concept

or idea and carry out social practices with subjective initiative. On the one hand, humans can exist in society as intuitive and real social existences; on the one hand, they can also exist in society as the massing of human's live performance^[2]."

The "Individual" is the main component of "Society," which indicates that only "people first" can promote the social prosperity and development, while the premise and fundamental objective of social development are human. The "People first" concept is consistent with the theme connotation of promoting social, economic, and cultural development based on human development as mentioned in the nature and tenet of the Communist Party of China. Ultimately, the "People first" concept aims to achieve the free and all-round development of people. The Communist Party of China has inherited and always projects Chinese traditional culture based on actual conditions in China, integrates the Marxist theory with China's current state, and keeps a foothold in the thought that people are social existences to promote the development of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Marx emphasizes that just the solidification of individual social activities fully shows social substantiality and material strength, which governs people but not controlled by people is the product aggregation of people, which, in essence, is the social substantiality of society. On the one hand, social joint activities are often formed by people spontaneously instead of voluntarily, and gradually form such substantive "social force"; on the other hand, people don't understand such "social strength," and even regard it as a kind of alien existence. The social view of "substantialization" can shape because people don't understand such kind of social strength. Hence, people can truly alleviate the tense relations between individuals and society only by truly understanding social essence and society's substantialization, and excavating the essential connotation of Marx's philosophy based on the real activities of real people^[3-6].

3 From "People first" to "People-centered" - A Theoretical Upgrade

The upgrade of the "People first" theory into the "People-centered" theory is indicative of the people's new emotions or thoughts. People, or the masses, etc., frequently occurred in the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. Although the "People first" concept wasn't mentioned and was completely replaced with the "People-centered" concept, such condition also

fully highlights the mission, ideals, and concepts of the Communist Party of China in the new period. In this new journey, the Communist Party of China will insist on the guidance of view of the practice of Marxism and persist in people-centered various specific work, which reflects the upgrade and practice of “People first”.

The “People first” theory clearly emphasizes the importance of people and postulates that people possess pertinence and penetration, which is an indication of the most essential difference among the collective people. “People” also includes persons. First, people are composed of persons, while a person as an independent social existence constitutes people. The Communist Party of China is the only governing party in China and the Communist Party of China in carrying out various works to defend its people’s interests. Humans are a social existence. Marx thought the development of the whole society could truly be achieved only when man’s free and all-round development is realized.

The “People-centered” theory deeply explains the upgrade trajectory and connotation of humans toward people. General Secretary President Xi , at the Standing Committee of the 18th Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPC, mentioned that: “We fundamentally aim to meet the broad masses yearning for a good life through constant struggle. The Communist Party of China must insist on the reform and opening-up policy to promote the development and progress of social productive forces, and fully integrate the people of all ethnic groups in the whole society. In this manner, they will strive to solve the life issues of poor people so that the masses in society can jointly enjoy the achievements of China’s reform and opening-up and achieve common prosperity.” Later, “people” gradually replaced “human” and folk gradually regard people as the basic element of socialist development. General Secretary President Xi , at the 19th National Congress of CPC, fully emphasized the importance of “people-center” and thought it is the key emphasis of the Communist Party of China and the country in work in the new age.

“People” is deemed as a kind of extensive social construct in the current age. Ultimately, “People” is also a kind of social existence. At the beginning of founding the Communist Party of China, it deeply understood the Marxist’s view of people and historical materialism and thought that the individual’s free and all-round development is vital to social development and progress. The President Xi philosophy on

socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era proposes a people-centered new model based on the historical background after an all-round and profound understanding of people’s first thought, reflecting the superiority of the socialist system. Such superiority is mainly reflected in the following several aspects: First, historical rationality. More than 40 years after its reform and opening-up, China presents a super development model that has seen her produce remarkably great achievements in the development process of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Such great achievements of the reform and opening-up are closely related to China’s social and historical development rule. Second, fundamental support. Socialism with Chinese characteristics fully emphasizes the superiority of cultural achievements and the theoretical system of the socialist system in practice. The broad masses of the people can show strong enthusiasm and subjective initiative in the social development process under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, which is beneficial to strengthening the unity of all nationalities in China and truly achieving fairness and justice, prosperity, and development of Chinese society. Third, good growth. In the progress of reform and opening-up and modernization development, socialism with Chinese characteristics doesn’t remain unchanged. It reflects the connotation and features of the times, which fully presents good growth of socialism with Chinese characteristics^[7].

4 “People-centered” - Age requirement

The Marxist’s view of people criticizes and inherits the humanistic thought posited by Feuerbach. After deeply understanding the importance of Feuerbach’s humanism perceptions, the Communist Party of China proposed the people-centered philosophy for their governance work. In essence, it is the inheritance of the Marxist’s perception of people. “Three fundamentals” proposed by General Secretary President Xi elucidate the essential connotation of the Marxist’s perception of people on the one hand and profoundly elaborates the significance of people on the other hand. “The Communist Party of China must always carry out all kinds of work on the people’s stand. Its ultimate mission is to seek the welfare and happiness of the broad mass of people.” The most fundamental political stand of the Communist Party of China is the people’s position. The people’s position mainly includes the following aspects: First, the interests of the people

prevail over all other interests in society. All party members and cadres of the Communist Party of China must bear this purpose in mind. The Communist Party of China must deeply understand the relationship of the interests in different levels and possess the superb political skill to solve the contradictions between various interests. In essence, this is consistent with the aim of safeguarding the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the people. Second, create a happy life for the broad mass of people. The Communist Party of China guides the whole society to seek a happy life in its own organizational form. From the practice of historical development, Chinese people often cannot spontaneously achieve a happy life. General Secretary President Xi stressed that every communist must bear in mind the scale of their mission and fully understand the people's yearning for a better life. In the implementation process of various social undertakings and political work, we must strengthen the rational allocation of social resources centering on people, protect, and improve people's livelihood through the development and construction of the reform and opening-up policy, poverty alleviation, and democratic politics, so that the broad masses can enjoy the great achievements of China's reform and development, achieve common prosperity, and enjoy a happy life^[8-10].

In the new era, the Communist Party of China must adhere to the people-centered theory and the mass line. General Secretary President Xi has stressed several times that "the political position of the Communist Party of China is the position of the people. Only by fulfilling this can the Marxist Party be separated from other parties." As the creator and practitioner of history, the people deserve it in the process of social development and this gives the Party strength and power. The Communist Party of China cannot ignore the important role of the people in the ruling work of the Party. Only by adhering to the people-centered principles and combining the strength of all social levels, can we realize the unity of the nation, truly rejuvenate the great Chinese nation, build Chinese society into a communist society and seek a happy and better life for the broad masses of the people.

5 Conclusions

As a social being, people have always been dominated in the social development process. We can realize the rapid development and progress of society only when human beings in society fulfill their role to realize free and all-round development. This is essentially in line with the thrust of the people-centered theory. Economic construction is the priority of the work of the Party and the state in recent decades, but the people are the direct power source to promote China's economic construction and development, national prosperity, and development. Marx once stressed that people dominate social development and progress. People are worthy of social workers and creators. Every living and concrete person forms social relations in social practice. The culmination of which translates to social relations in society. Therefore, human history itself is a social existence. Every individual who participates in social practice is the subject of history. They gradually create a society in social practice, while people govern this society. Engels also mentioned, "Criticism does not create anything. Workers create society and create everything in social practice. Critical thoughts for criticism can only be ashamed".

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