

An Exploration on Socialist Cultural Thoughts with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era

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Abstract: Socialist Cultural Thoughts with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era is a new thought of cultural development. It integrates the character of nationality, people, advance and inheritance, and conforms to the direction of Chinese cultural development, which entitles it to a profound theoretical origin, rich ideological connotation and distinct cultural characteristics.

Keywords: Xi Jinping; New era; Socialism with Chinese characteristics; Cultural thoughts

1. Introduction

On the basis of inheriting and developing the cultural theories of Marxism and Mao Zedong Thoughts, socialist cultural thoughts with Chinese characteristics in the new era are scientific theories constantly enriching and developing in the great practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics; they reflect and serve the concrete practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and together with the political and economic theories and ecological Civilization Theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, they have become the latest achievements of the Sinicization of Marxism, and therefore they bear the historical mission of realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

2. The Theoretical Origin of Socialist Cultural Thoughts with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era

Xi Jinping's socialist cultural thoughts with Chinese characteristics in the new era "originated from the Chinese nation's civilization history of more than 5000 years ... rooted in the great practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics."¹ It conforms to the direction of Chinese cultural development and has profound theoretical origins.

Firstly, socialist cultural thoughts with Chinese characteristics in the new era is an important part of the theoretical system of socialist culture with Chinese characteristics, which is constantly enriching and developing.

The concept of "socialist culture with Chinese characteristics" was first put forward by Comrade Jiang Zemin at the Congress celebrating the 70th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China on July 1, 1991. It mainly includes the ideology of cultural construction centered on socialist spiritual civilization, the

theory of cultural construction adhering to the direction of socialist advanced culture and the cultural development Strategies of promoting the great development and prosperity of socialist culture. cultural thoughts of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era is a cultural theory built on the basis of the above cultural construction thoughts. Meanwhile, it is an open theoretical system that keeps pace with the times. Its content and form will be enriched and developed with the development of the practice of socialist construction with Chinese characteristics in the new era.

Secondly, the excellent traditional Chinese culture is an important source of socialist cultural thought with Chinese characteristics in the new era.

General Secretary pointed out that "the Chinese nation has created a long-standing Chinese culture and will certainly be able to create a new splendor of Chinese culture".²

Advocating unity, pursuing harmony, paying attention to practicality and emphasizing morality are the basic characteristics of Chinese culture. They are the important theoretical sources of socialist cultural thoughts with Chinese characteristics in the new era. Here two aspects, pursuing harmony and emphasizing morality, are to be discussed.

China is a farming nation. People depend on heaven to eat. Under the guidance of the thought of "harmony between man and nature", the ancients pursued a peaceful and harmonious life and created a harmonious culture. "Harmony" is a state or an ideal that Chinese culture generally pursues. "Harmony" has always been the unremitting pursuit of Chinese traditional culture. Since ancient times, China has paid great attention to finding a kind of coordination and balance between man and nature, emphasizing not only man's understanding and respect for nature, but also his control and transformation

of nature. In terms of the relationship between people and society, people and people, Chinese culture shows a unique easygoing nature and maintains a relaxed mood of “letting nature take its course”. This very kind of easygoing nature works like a lubricant, eliminating conflicts and promoting social harmony.

“Advocating morality” is the common tendency of all schools in ancient China, resulting in a common characteristic of Chinese culture. The ancient saints of China such as Yao, Shun, Yu and even the three emperors and five emperors, are all described as models of morality. All dynasties emphasized benevolent governance and rule of virtue, and people’s virtues were given priority from the monarch to the officials. For people from all walks of life, moral requirements also come first... Ethics and morality have become the value orientation and code of conduct of the Chinese nation.

“Pursuing harmony” is an important source of socialist ecological culture with Chinese characteristics in the new era, and the emphasis on ethics in Chinese culture is an important source of socialist core values. “Pursuing harmony” and “advocating morality” reflect the value orientation of the Chinese people and condense the common value pursuit of all the Chinese people.

Thirdly, the outstanding achievements of human civilization are one of the sources of socialist cultural thoughts with Chinese characteristics in the new era.

All cultures have their own characteristics. Chinese culture has the characteristics of unity, continuity, inclusiveness and diversity.³ Among them, inclusiveness with active absorption of various cultural factors is an important feature. “Tolerance is great” is the essence of Chinese culture. Hundreds of schools of thought in Pre-Qin Dynasty learn from each other’s strengths and weaknesses; The Han culture actively absorbs the culture of the surrounding minorities as well as excellent foreign culture with a broad mind, so that all kinds of religious cultures can coexist in harmony in China. Since the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee, China has opened its mind to accept cultures from all over the world. Socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era. “China will be more open-minded... To make due contributions to the advancement of human civilization.”⁴

Xi Jinping’s socialist cultural thought with Chinese characteristics in the new era is the contemporary development of Marxist cultural view. It is the ideological and cultural theory that conforms to the development requirements of the new era and the global trend of development, and will continue to develop and innovate in the great practice of building socialism with Chinese characteristics.

3. The Content of Socialist Cultural Thought with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era

3.1. The position and role of socialist cultural construction with Chinese characteristics in the historical mission of realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation are clarified

Firstly, the construction of socialist culture with Chinese characteristics is an important part of the modernization of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

Cultural construction is very important for the development of a country. It represents the value orientation of a country’s society and the collective personality of the country and society. It is one of the important contents of the overall layout of socialism with Chinese characteristics—the five-in-one. It plays an important role in the prosperity of the country, the revitalization of the nation and the happiness of the people. “the country prospers as its culture revitalizes, and the nation becomes stronger as its culture strengthens.”

Secondly, socialist culture with Chinese characteristics is an important source of enhancing Chinese cohesion and creativity.

socialist culture with Chinese characteristics in the new era has absorbed all the outstanding achievements of civilization at home and abroad, and established a new socialist culture with completely new nature, structure and function. It provides a creative environment and soil for realizing the historical mission of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, as well as the power and source of creativity. It has strong cultural cohesion and creativity.

Thirdly, the socialist culture with Chinese characteristics is a powerful spiritual force to encourage the whole Party and the people of all ethnic groups to advance bravely.

“Culture is the blood of the nation and the spiritual home of the people.”⁵ Culture “can form a powerful force”. Since its establishment, the Communist Party of China has devoted itself to carrying forward and inheriting the excellent traditional Chinese culture, practicing and leading the advanced Chinese culture, “creating culture in practice and achieving cultural progress in historical progress”,⁶ and constantly creating new brilliance of Chinese culture.

3.2. The main objectives and tasks of socialist cultural construction with Chinese characteristics are determined

In different historical periods, the main tasks of cultural construction are also different. During the period of socialist construction, the main task is “to propagate socialism and communism among the working class, and to educate peasants and other masses with socialism appropriately and systematically”.⁷ In the new era of reform

and opening up, the main task is to build a socialist culture with Chinese characteristics, “with the goal of cultivating citizens with ideals, morality, culture and discipline, to develop... Socialist culture”⁸, promoting the great development and prosperity of socialist culture⁹, so as to create a beautiful home for the Chinese nation, provide intellectual support and construction pillar for the construction of Chinese characteristic doctrine, and constantly realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era. The cultural construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics bears the historic mission of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Its main task is to strengthen cultural self-confidence and promote the prosperity of socialist culture. On this basis, the construction of social culture with Chinese characteristics puts forward that “we should adhere to the road of cultural development of socialism with Chinese characteristics... Building a strong socialist cultural country.”¹⁰ Therefore, the Nineteenth National Congress put forward five aspects of cultural construction requirements: firmly grasping the leadership of ideological work; cultivating and Practicing Socialist Core values; strengthening ideological and moral construction, prospering and developing socialist literature and art; and promoting the development of cultural undertakings and cultural industries. It takes on the new cultural mission, carrying out cultural creation in practice, and realizing cultural progress in historical progress. That is, to realize the “cultural China dream”. “Cultural China Dream” is the goal of socialist culture with Chinese characteristics in the new era.

3.3. It has created a series of effective ways to strengthen the construction of socialist culture with Chinese characteristics

Xi Jinping’s socialist cultural thought with Chinese characteristics in the new era highlights the issue of what is socialist culture and how to develop it, which provides a fundamental basis for cultural construction in the new era. Firstly, we should firmly grasp the leadership of ideological work.

The report of the Nineteenth National Congress pointed out: “Promoting capacity-building of international communication... to improve the soft power of national culture.”¹¹ and further emphasized: “Strengthening the Party’s leadership over ideological work...” to consolidate ideological unity and unity of the whole Party and society. Secondly, it deepens the basic connotation of socialist core values.

To enhance the competitiveness of culture, we must lead the development of culture and social life with socialist core values. once pointed out: “the core socialist values we put forward ,... embodies the essential requirement of socialism... also exemplifies the spirit of the times.”¹²

The report of the Nineteenth National Congress further emphasizes the cultivation and practice of socialist core values, pointing out that socialist core values are the concentrated embodiment of the spirit of contemporary China and condensate the common value pursuit of all the people.¹³ We should give full play to the leading role of socialist core values and integrate them into all aspects of social development.

Thirdly, we should promote the development of cultural undertakings and industries to meet the diverse spiritual and cultural needs of the people.

Xi Jinping pointed out: “To promote the prosperity and development of literature and art, the most fundamental task is to create and produce excellent works worthy of our great nation and era.” In the report of the Nineteenth National Congress of the CPC, new arrangements were made to improve the modern cultural industry system and market system. It was pointed out that “we should improve the modern cultural industry system and market system, innovate the production and operation mechanism, improve the cultural and economic policies, and cultivate a new type of cultural industry”.

Fourthly, we should persist in promoting the construction of a community of human destiny.

“Community of Human Destiny” is a diplomatic strategic thought first put forward by Comrade in the report of the Eighteenth National Congress. In 2015, delivered an important speech at the 70th United Nations General Assembly, pointing out: “In today’s world, countries depend on each other and share weal and woe. We... Create a community of human destiny.”¹⁴

The report of the Nineteenth National Congress stresses that we should “be builders of world peace... the maintainer of international order”,¹⁵ and contribute China’s wisdom and ways to world peace and development. It’s exciting and resonating.

The proposal of community of human destiny is of great significance. It is the concrete embodiment of the Chinese culture’s thought of “tolerance is great”. It is also an important way to deal with world crisis and a new way of thinking for the common development of all mankind.

The proposal of community of human destiny is significant. It is an important way to solve world crisis and resolve the risks and challenges; it is a concentrated reflection of the important principle of adhering to the road of peaceful development; it is a new way to seek common development of all mankind; it is a concrete embodiment of the Chinese culture’s thought of “tolerance is great”; it is a grand blueprint to promote mutual learning, common aspiration and create a better future for mankind hand in hand.¹⁶

4. The Characteristics of Socialist Cultural Thought With Chinese Characteristics in the New Era

First, adhering to the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and centering the people.

Communist Party of China is a political party of the people, always putting the interests of the people in the Supreme position. "To cultivate all the attributes of a person in society, and to regard him as a person with as many attributes and connections as possible, so as to produce a person with as wide a need as possible—as a complete and comprehensive social product as possible."¹⁷ Great cause requires great practice, and the people are the main body of great practice. History has repeatedly proved that the people are the main force of historical development and social progress, and the creator of advanced productive forces and culture. Starting from the cultural needs of the people, we should take the support, disapproval, joy and dissatisfaction of the people as the basic criteria to test the effectiveness of cultural construction, constantly promote the innovative development of cultural concepts, contents, forms and means, and constantly enhance the attractiveness and appeal of socialist culture with Chinese characteristics.

Second, it not only upholds and develops Marxism, but also attaches importance to cultural innovation and breakthroughs.

The vitality of Marxism lies in its methodology principle of understanding the world from the basic position of the proletariat, and in its current and open character of keeping pace with the times. Cultural thought of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era not only inherits the basic cultural theory of Marxism, but also enriches and develops the cultural theory of Marxism in guiding ideology, basic principles, main contents, methods and approaches. Besides, it enriches and develops the theories of cultural construction in the new era and the historical mission of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. This is of great significance for enriching and developing Marxist cultural theory, and also for opening up a new situation of socialist construction with Chinese characteristics in the era of innovation, realizing the goal of two hundred years of struggle, and promoting the development of human civilization.

Zhang Dainian, a contemporary philosopher, put forward the viewpoint of "comprehensive innovation". He believed that Chinese culture was "the integration of the universal truth of Marxism and the excellent tradition of Chinese culture", "the integration of the excellent tradition of Chinese culture and the advanced achievements of modern western culture", "the integration of Confucianism, Taoism, Mohism and Legalism".¹⁸ The socialist culture with Chinese characteristics in new era is formed in the cultural tradition and constantly renewed and developed under the restriction of the cultural tradition.

Xi Jinping's cultural theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era is a theory of innovation and development. The fundamental point of his theoretical innovation and theoretical breakthrough lies in opening up the dimension of cultural construction and cultural criticism based on practice. Socialist cultural thought with Chinese characteristics in the new era is a new idea of cultural development under the background of the new era. It is in line with China's national conditions, in line with the fundamental interests of the vast majority of the people, and has a strong cohesion and leadership. It is highly unified in nationality, popularity, advancement and inheritance. It opens up a new road for the development of socialist culture with Chinese characteristics, inherits and develops Marxism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, the important thought of "Three Representatives" and the scientific concept of development. It is the ideological and theoretical system that constantly innovates in the practice of great struggle, great project, great cause and great dream.

Third, it embodies the ultimate concern of the world.

Xi Jinping's cultural theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era is always concerned about the practical character of human social development and human destiny, and the realistic concern for human social development and human destiny. Globalization brings not only opportunities for development for more nations, but also unprecedented risks. In the process of globalization, developed countries, with their first-mover advantages such as capital and technology, leave developing countries in an unfair situation, suffering from exploitation of resources and funds, and faced with more risks. This further widens the gap between developed and developing countries. The centrally and marginally polarized and unequal international order and world system aggravate the differences between the rich and the poor countries. With the further development of globalization, the role of culture in the development of human society is becoming more and more prominent. In today's era, clarifying the cultural logic of globalization has become the first problem to be solved in Marxist cultural theory.

Xi Jinping's socialist cultural thought with Chinese characteristics in the new era is far-sighted, meeting the needs of globalization, and advocating the community consciousness of human destiny. "Community of Human Destiny" is put forward by the Communist Party of China in the new era. It reflects the interdependent concept of international power, the concept of common interests, the concept of sustainable development and the concept of global governance, and shows the Chinese nation's world mind and the lofty feelings of the ultimate concern of the world.

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