

# The Thought of Man's All Round Development and Man's Modernization -- Based on Marxist Viewpoint

Zhihong Sun\*

School of Marxism, Yanbian University, Yanji, China

\*Corresponding author

**Abstract:** The theory of human free and all-round development is an important part of Marxist theory, and it is also Marx's ideal goal for human development. It is an inevitable requirement for the development of Marx's theory of human studies and the realization of the ultimate concern for human beings to deeply tap the essence of Marx's theory on the free and comprehensive development of human beings. The modernization of human beings is a realistic problem faced by the development of modern people. From the dialectical relationship between the two, the all-round development of human beings is the ultimate goal of human modernization and the value guidance of human modernization; the modernization of human beings is the necessary stage of human development, which plays an important role in promoting the all-round development of human beings.

**Keywords:** Marx, the all-round development of human beings, human modernization

## 1. Introduction

The all-round development of man is an important part of Marxist thought. Marx did not make a systematic and clear exposition of the thought of human's all-round development, but interspersed it in the voluminous classical works. Through the analysis of the text, it can be found that Marx's thought of all-round development of human beings has an internal agreement with the modernization of human beings in the scope of modernization[1]. Therefore, to excavate the basic elements of man's all-round development and explain the dialectical relationship between man's all-round development and man's modernization are the key issues to be explored in this paper.

## 2. Theoretical connotation of Marx's thought of all-round human development

### 2.1 Logical starting point: real people

"The sum of all social relations" is the starting point of Marx's theory of all-round human development, and also the place where Marx surpassed the previous philosophers. In the study of human development in German classical philosophy, both Kant's "people-centered" theoretical system, Hegel's "human nature is labor" thought, or Feuerbach's emphasis on human nature, regard human as an isolated individual or an abstract and perceptual subject, ignoring the sociality of human as the subject of production activities. As a result, his theory on human development ignored the irreconcilability of class contradictions, and unilaterally expounded that individuals develop in isolation or in an all-round way at the level of what should be and ideas. Therefore, Marx emphasized in his criticism of Feuerbach and others: "We do not start from what people say, imagine and imagine, nor from what people say, think, imagine and imagine, to understand people with flesh and blood. Our starting point is people who are engaged in practical activities." On this basis, Marx returned "abstract man" to production activities, and proposed that the all-round development of man is the common development of every member of society, that is, "the free development of everyone is the condition for the free development of all people"[2]. At the same time, as a social existence, human's own development is constrained and restricted by social environmental conditions. Based on this, Marx objectively realized that the capitalist relations of production made the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat irreconcilable, and that the rule and oppression of capitalism were the realistic factors hindering "everyone's all-round development". Only by overthrowing capitalist rule and establishing a proletarian dictatorship by revolutionary means can people truly develop in an all-round way as themselves. And then endow the theory of human's all-round development with

scientific, realistic and revolutionary characteristics.

## **2.2 Basic content of human all-round development**

After clarifying the logical starting point of man's all-round development, Marx set out from the material basis and placed man in the social relations in which he lived. In the treatise on private property and communism in the Economic and Philosophical Manuscript of 1844, Marx viewed human activities, that is, the realization of human beings, as the process of being active and passive, and initially put forward that "human beings possess their own comprehensive essence in a comprehensive way, that is, as a whole person"[3]. This kind of possession is "passive in the way of human beings, and a kind of self enjoyment of human beings." In "German Ideology", Marx further proposed "to replace the rule of relationship and contingency over individuals with the rule of individual over contingency and relationship" "Get rid of a completely certain way of development." At the same time, it points out the dialectical relationship between free development and all-round development, that is, "the existing exchanges and existing productive forces are comprehensive, and only fully developed individuals can master them and turn them into free activities of these individual lives". Until the Communist Manifesto, Marx clearly put forward in his description of communism: "It will be such a union to replace the old bourgeois society with class and class opposition, where the free development of everyone is the condition for the free development of all people."

Therefore, the free and all-round development of human beings is, first of all, the exertion of subjective initiative under the restriction of objective factors, and the leap from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom in the active and passive activities of human beings; At the same time, the all-round development of people is to overcome the one-sided and one-way development caused by the old division of labor, which requires the common development of the same ability. In addition, the all-round development of people means that people get rid of the dependence on the old blood relationship and things, and realize the all-round development of their own personality. With the further development of social division of labor, the inequality of social status caused by labor differences has been eliminated, and human social relations have also broken the regional restrictions with the change of modern production mode, realizing equality and comprehensiveness.

## **2.3 Realization conditions: communist society**

Marx believed that the all-round development of people was the main feature of the advanced stage of communist society[4]. First of all, in the communist society, the high development of material productivity and the full flow of social wealth have laid the material foundation for the all-round development of people. Before entering the communist society, the imperfection of productive forces and the relative scarcity of material wealth made people's basic needs not be fully met. The content of people's needs also focused on material needs, the space of spiritual needs was squeezed, and the comprehensiveness of needs was limited. In the communist society, the material conditions are extremely rich, and the diversified needs of people in production and life can be met, so as to realize the all-round development of needs. Secondly, Marx believed that in the communist society, the drawbacks of the old division of labor had been eliminated. In the case of abundant resources in various fields of society, people could no longer be confined to a profession, but could choose to "do this today and do that tomorrow" according to their own interests. This has created favorable conditions for the all-round development of human capabilities. Third, in the traditional agricultural society, due to the limitations of the mode of production, the development of individuals in the society depends on kinship and clan relations. In the capitalist society, human development has entered the stage of "dependence on things". In the communist society, with the further optimization of the mode of production, people can get rid of all kinds of dependence and bondage and realize the all-round development of free personality. Finally, in the communist society, the differences of social labor have been reduced and eliminated, and the social status of individuals has been truly equal, so that human social relations can achieve all-round development.

## **3. Modernization of people**

### **3.1 Basic connotation of human modernization**

The proposition of human modernization was clearly put forward in the 1980s. From the perspective of the theoretical background, human modernization originates from the explosive growth

of productive forces after the industrial revolution, which promotes rapid social change. Human itself is in transition and transformation from tradition to modernity due to social change. From the perspective of theoretical roots, human modernization originates from the rise of western modern chemistry theory. After the industrial revolution, a few capitalist countries gradually began to enter the transition process from traditional agricultural society to modern industrial society, while the rapid development of productive forces created repression and distortion[5]. This kind of "the appreciation of the world of things is in direct proportion to the depreciation of the world of people" makes western schools realize the fact that capitalist society uses people as tools for development, and then begin to explore the path of human development. Starting from Nietzsche's rebellion, Husserl, Heidegger, Fromm and Marcuse successively emphasized the subjectivity and creativity of individuals from the perspectives of phenomenology, existentialism and psychology, laying a foundation for the study of human modernization. However, whether it is Heidegger's theory of co-existence or Marcuse's one-way view of human beings, while greatly emphasizing that human beings, as value subjects, break away from instrumental rationality, it inevitably separates human beings from society and pushes them towards the road of extreme irrationalism.

Until the 1960s, Engels made a clear definition of human modernization, that is, the transformation of human psychology, thought and behavior from traditional people to modern people. At the same time, Engels conducted research on six developing countries, trying to explore the common characteristics of the modernization of people in different countries. It is undeniable that Engels' long-term exploration and his proposal and definition of human modernization have clearly opened the precedent of human modernization research, and have made an important contribution to the exploration of human development issues using the modernization theoretical framework. However, Engels' definition of modernization only stays in the "transformation of thought, psychology and behavior", ignoring the essence of human as "the sum of all social relations". There are certain limitations. At the same time, Engels' neglect of the differences in the cultural history and development process of various countries in his attempt did not solve the separation between individuals and society, but pushed the modernization model of people in various countries to the "convergence theory".

In a word, in the process of participating in, leading the development of modernization and being shaped by the modern social environment, people realize their own transformation from tradition to modernity, and constantly break through the limiting factors to achieve development and innovation, that is, the unity of creativity and regularity. In this process, people are concrete, social and historical. At the same time, as a person engaged in productive activities, human modernization is not only the development of individuals, but also the modernization of everyone who is connected with each other in productive activities. Therefore, we must combine the historical characteristics and realistic factors of our own development to explore the path of human modernization.

### ***3.2 Characteristics of human modernization***

Human modernization is a historical and complex process, characterized by gradualness, definiteness, difference and unbalanced development. First of all, people are concrete and historical. People are concrete and historical. The essence of people comes into being in practical activities and is constantly changing and updating in new practices[6]. Therefore, human modernization is not a simple, static and one-sided node, but a complex and specific process. It is the gradual dissolution and transformation of traditional factors in new practice and the emergence and development of modern factors. From the perspective of its development time, it is long-term. At the same time, from the perspective of historical materialism, there are still many factors hindering the development of human modernization in today's modern space. Social wealth has not yet fully flowed, the slavery of things to people has not been completely eliminated, and the free personality of people has not yet been fully realized. Therefore, promoting human modernization cannot be achieved overnight, but step by step. Secondly, man is both a natural being and a social being. As a physical entity in nature, human activities are restricted by natural relations and laws. As a social being, human nature depends on social history and is restricted by social environment. All practical activities that human beings engage in cannot be carried out without neglecting the social and historical basis, nor can they be completely separated from the social environment in which they live. Therefore, the modernization of human beings has a definite character. Third, human modernization begins with the modernization of society. In the process of modernization, affected by the natural environment, historical culture and the process of world modernization, there is a certain gap in the time and degree of modernization in different regions. Therefore, under the influence of economic foundation, institutional environment, social consciousness and different education of social members, different individuals in different regions and

the same region also have different characteristics in the degree of human modernization. At the same time, from the perspective of regional development, the development of a region urgently needs a large number of talents as support. The environmental advantages and system dividends adopted by some regions to introduce talents will promote the concentration of talents to some regions, resulting in uneven development between different regions. From the perspective of human modernization, the development of a city needs not only a large number of mental workers, but also sufficient manual workers, both the vitality of young people and the stability of the elderly. Therefore, the "filtering out effect" of the preferential policies adopted by the region on some people will also promote the unbalanced development of human modernization.

#### **4. Dialectical relationship between man's all-round development and man's modernization**

##### ***4.1 The overall development of people is the ultimate goal of human modernization***

People are social people. People change themselves in adapting to and transforming the social environment. At the same time, society is a human society, and people are the main body of social development. The transformation of social environment by people is to create favorable conditions for their own development. Therefore, people themselves are the value goal of social environment construction and development. To deny the value target status of human's all-round development means to deny the subject role of human and regard human as a tool to promote material development. Human modernization will become "instrumentalization" of human. On the whole, the essence of human modernization is the performance of human development in a specific historical stage, while the proposal of human modernization is the correction and rectification of the pattern of "seeing things but not people", which blindly pursues the accumulation of material wealth after the industrial revolution. In the early days of capitalist society, the industrial revolution promoted the whole society to run at a high speed like a huge machine by optimizing the tools of labor. At this time, people were placed in a specific production position as "labor factors", and their subject status was completely lost. The human personality and their own development needs were replaced by "the needs of material wealth growth". This model is essentially "the slavery of things to people". With the further development of society, the disadvantages of this "thing dominates man" model are gradually exposed, the spiritual world of man is increasingly deficient and empty, the independent thinking and creativity are gradually disappearing, and the social construction is also weak. Therefore, we must correctly recognize the role of the value goal of the all-round development of human beings, so that it can lead the healthy development of society and human modernization.

##### ***4.2 Human modernization is the necessary stage of human all-round development***

In reviewing the restriction of the development level of productive forces on freedom, Marx pointed out that "the basis of all freedom obtained so far is limited productive forces". Human freedom is the freedom within the scope of social productive forces. In the Critique of the Gotha Programme, Marx further pointed out that: "At the advanced stage of the communist society, after the situation of forcing individuals to obey the division of labor like slaves has disappeared, so the opposition between mental labor and physical labor has also disappeared; after labor has become not only a means of livelihood, but also the first need of life itself; with the overall development of individuals, their productivity has also increased, and all sources of collective wealth have fully flowed, only then can Only then can we completely go beyond the narrow vision of bourgeois rights, and the society can write on its own banner: from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs! " It can be seen that the realization of free and all-round development of human beings is a long-term historical process, which depends on the support of greatly improved productivity under the communist society. As the main body of social production, man's own modernization construction has a leading and promoting role in the development of productive forces. Therefore, the free and all-round development of human beings must go through the modernization stage of human beings, and complete the transformation of human beings from tradition to modernity.

At the same time, Marx pointed out that man is a man at a certain historical stage, and human activities, that is, the realization of man, is a process in which "active and passive" are unified. Therefore, in the process of man's modernization, we must affirm the role of society in shaping man. Denying the difference of social environment will make the modernization model of people in different regions fall into the "convergence theory". Human modernization is a process in which people adapt to social modernization under the shaping and restriction of social conditions, constantly exert their

subjective initiative, break through the constraints of social conditions, and lead modernization. In shaping and being shaped, human beings enrich and improve their modernity, and finally realize their free and comprehensive development.

## 5. Conclusion

The theory of man's free and all-round development is an important part of Marxist theory, and it is also Marx's ideal goal for human development. It is an inevitable requirement for the development of Marx's theory of human studies and the realization of the ultimate concern for human beings to deeply tap the essence of Marx's theory on the free and comprehensive development of human beings. The modernization of human beings is a realistic problem faced by the development of modern people. From the dialectical relationship between the two, the all-round development of human beings is the ultimate goal of human modernization and the value guidance of human modernization; the modernization of human beings is the necessary stage of human development, which plays an important role in promoting the all-round development of human beings.

## References

- [1] Marx, Engels. *German Ideology (Excerpt)* [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2018: 17.
- [2] Marx, Engels. *Complete Works of Marx and Engels: Volume 3* [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2002: 337.
- [3] Marx. *1844 Manuscript of Economics and Philosophy* [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2004: 85.95.
- [4] Marx, Engels. *Complete Works of Marx and Engels: Volume 25* [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2001: 22.
- [5] Marx, Engels. *Communist Manifesto* [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2014: 83.
- [6] Zheng Yongting. *Human Modernization* [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2006: 96.