Wu Ying: Refuting the theory that China is not socialist

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Summary: Looking from the aspect of Marx's "three-major social forms" theory of the historical development of human society (See Grundrisse), we can clearly see that the social historical development stage China is currently in, is actually the second major form of social development. Developed capitalist countries are also in this stage of development. Moreover, in terms of the level of development of productive forces, China is even lower than developed capitalist countries. Therefore, developing productive forces will be our top priority for a long time.

Historical nihilists not only falsely claim that historical materialism is historical nihilism in theory, but also adopt a historical nihilistic attitude in their research on the historical evolution of human society. They deny the rationality of the Chinese Communist Party leading the Chinese people in socialist revolution and socialist construction. They also adopt a historical nihilistic attitude in confirming the nature of real society, and even falsely claim that the nature of current Chinese society is capitalism or state capitalism. Such absurd claims must be refuted and cannot be allowed to disrupt people's vision and hearing.

The nature of current Chinese society is Socialism with Chinese characteristics. "Socialism with Chinese characteristics", as the name implies, is socialism built on the basis of China's unique historical and cultural traditions and the current economic, social and political foundations.

First of all, it is based on the basic guiding ideology of governing the country based on the socialist and communist theories founded by Marx. In terms of how to implement these basic guiding ideologies, we must proceed from China's objective reality. We cannot achieve everything in one step, nor can we sit and wait for conditions to mature. We must explore and build a development path that suits China's national conditions in practice.

**1. Theoretical Guiding Ideology for Socialist Construction in China**

The theoretical guidance for building socialism in China naturally follows Marx 's theory of socialism and communism. In brief, there are three main points.

First, the essential characteristic of communism is the elimination of the division of labor between brain and body. The elimination of the division of labor between brain and body not only marks the great enrichment of social material wealth, but also marks the fundamental disappearance of social classes and strata. As a result, human society has entered a harmonious society. Marx first expressed this idea in his work "The German Ideology", which marked the birth of historical materialism, but it was ridiculed by many researchers as Marx's romantic fantasy. However, as long as we examine the development of Marx's thought, we can observe that this is his consistent view. Marx expressed the same idea in his late works.

Second, socialism is the first stage of communism. Marx believed that communist society would be divided into two different stages, and socialism would be its first stage. Marx pointed out that in this stage, the traces of capitalist society should be removed in "economic, moral and spiritual aspects" to prepare conditions for the transition to communist society. However, how to prepare conditions for the transition to communist society varies from society to society.

Third, the transition of late-developing countries to socialism requires a long period of development. Marx wrote a series of documents on the realistic issue of whether Russia should take the capitalist road or the socialist road after the reform of serfdom in 1861. He first affirmed that late-developing countries like Russia could cross the "Caucasus Gorge" of the capitalist system and directly transition to socialism. He pointed out: "The coexistence with Western production that controls the world market enables Russia to use all the positive results created by the capitalist system in the commune without going through the Caucasus Gorge of the capitalist system." He specifically explained the conditions for Russia's transition to socialism, namely, absorbing all the positive results of capitalism, democratically transforming rural communes, and the need for a revolution to save rural communes. It can be seen from this that for late-developing countries, the transition to socialism, the first stage of communist society, still requires a long-term coexistence with capitalist countries and the introduction of the positive results of social production and social management created by capitalist countries.

**2. The reality of China’s socialist construction**

From the above examination of the theories guiding China's socialist construction, we know that China, as a late-developing country, first needs a transition period to socialism before it can move towards communism. The "characteristics" of socialism with Chinese characteristics are as follows.

**First, the positioning of socialism with Chinese characteristics is the primary stage of socialism.**

The construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics started from the unfavorable foundation of "a large country, a large population, and a weak foundation". Comrade Deng Xiaoping had a clear understanding of this. He never tired of warning us: poverty is not socialism, let alone communism. Therefore, "poverty is not socialism" has become an important proposition of socialism with Chinese characteristics! Focusing on economic construction and insisting on developing productive forces is the fundamental solution to China's poverty and backwardness. This is regarded as a major strategic judgment applicable to the long term.

**Secondly, the fundamental principle of socialism with Chinese characteristics is to adhere to the socialist development direction.**

Adhering to the socialist development direction is a basic principle adhered to by generations of Chinese Communist Party leaders. Deng Xiaoping, the chief architect of socialism with Chinese characteristics, has repeatedly emphasized the need to adhere to the socialist path. Xi Jinping has also repeatedly reiterated that China "will neither follow the old path of closed-door and rigid development nor the evil path of changing its flag and changing its banner", but will firmly follow the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

**Thirdly, we should learn from the excellent achievements of capitalist countries in the long-term coexistence with them and achieve catch-up development.**

First, we should adhere to the policy of opening up to the outside world. On the basis of summarizing China's historical development experience, Deng Xiaoping emphasized: "To invigorate the domestic economy and open up the economy to the outside world is not a short-term policy, but a long-term policy, at least 50 to 70 years."

**Second, we should adhere to the market economy**. In order to break the erroneous and rigid understanding that "planning equals socialism and market equals capitalism", Comrade Deng Xiaoping never tired of saying: "Planning and market are both economic means"; "The distinction between capitalism and socialism is not a question of planning or market. ... Don't think that developing a market economy is the capitalist road. It is not the case. Both planning and market are necessary." Of course, China's market economy is not a Western liberal market economy, but a market economy that organically combines government regulation with market allocation of resources. The government regulates the market behavior of enterprises with policies, puts the relationship between state-owned enterprises and private enterprises in the right place, and provides a fair competition environment for enterprises of all levels and types.

**Finally, we should promote the construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics with the spirit of "cutting off one's own arm".**

The construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics is promoted in the process of continuous reform.

And every reform measure will touch the inherent power structure and the existing pattern of interest distribution. Therefore, in the process of promotion and implementation, resistance will inevitably be encountered. Especially after 40 years of reform and opening up, reform has entered a critical period and deep waters. Therefore, the "Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Several Major Issues Concerning Comprehensively Deepening Reform" adopted by the Third Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee solemnly declared: We must have a strong sense of historical mission, "dare to bite the hard bones, dare to wade through the dangerous shoals, break through the shackles of ideas and concepts with greater determination, break through the barriers of solidified interests, and promote the self-improvement and development of the socialist system with Chinese characteristics".

It is precisely because we foresee that the deepening of reform will touch the power structure more deeply and touch the vested interest groups, and we foresee that deepening reform will inevitably encounter multiple resistances. Therefore, Xi Jinping proposed to promote the implementation of reform measures with the spirit of "cutting off one's own arm".

It is precisely because of the scientific theoretical guidance and correct practical promotion that socialism with Chinese characteristics has achieved unprecedented achievements. China, which was once in a state of poverty, has grown into the world's second largest economy, and the living standards of nearly 1.4 billion people, accounting for 1/5 of the world's total population, have been greatly improved. The creation of this miracle has amazed the world!

**Refuting the fallacy that the nature of China's current society is not socialist**

While negating the history of the Communist Party of China and the People's Republic of China, historical nihilists have directed their attacks at socialism with Chinese characteristics, falsely claiming that socialism with Chinese characteristics is actually capitalism. The reason they put forward this fallacy is that the so-called socialism with Chinese characteristics cannot be found in Marx's theory of socialism and communism, that the market economy is a patent of capitalist society, and that the existence of multiple ownership systems, especially private ownership, is not a characteristic of socialism. So, let us carefully analyze it.

**1. Socialism with Chinese characteristics is the type of socialism that Marx argued could transcend the “Caudine Forks” of capitalism.**

Historical nihilists deny that the current Chinese society is socialist in nature, arguing that the theory of transition to socialism expounded by Marx was aimed at the developed capitalist countries at that time and that China, as a late-developing country, could not find any basis for implementing socialism in Marx.

As mentioned above, Marx's theory on socialism and communism has three meanings: the first meaning is the definition of the essence of communist society; the second meaning is that communist society contains two stages, the first stage is to prepare the material and spiritual conditions for the transition to the second stage, which is called socialist society; the third meaning is to recognize that late-developing countries can cross the "Caudine Forks" of the capitalist system and transition to socialism. However, this transition is gradual and can only be achieved after the necessary conditions are met. It can be seen from this that socialism with Chinese characteristics is the third meaning discussed by Marx, that is, socialism that crosses the "Caudine Forks" of capitalism. It is the socialist revolution and construction cause promoted in a late-developing country under the leadership of the Communist Party of China. It can be seen from this that the view that socialism with Chinese characteristics cannot find any basis in Marx's theory of socialism and communism is untenable.

Comparing with Marx's "three-form" theory of the historical development of human society, we can clearly know that the social historical development stage we are in now is actually the second major form of social development. Developed capitalist countries are also in this stage of development.

Moreover, in terms of the level of development of productive forces, we are even lower than Developed capitalist countries. Therefore, developing productive forces will be our top priority for a long time.

**2. Market economy is not the basis for distinguishing between socialism and capitalism.**

China’s current economic system is a socialist market economy with government regulation.

Historical nihilists use China's market economy as an excuse to falsely claim that China is currently building a capitalist system, not a socialist system. This fallacy is of course untenable. First of all, the premise of their fallacy is that they believe that the market economy is a patent of capitalism, and that as long as the market economy is implemented, it is capitalism. They even forget that since the Great Depression of 1929, capitalism has been influenced by Keynesian economics, and the government has intervened to get out of the economic crisis and achieved nearly 30 years of economic prosperity after World War II. Government intervention and planning have become an indispensable part of the capitalist market economy.

Similarly, socialist countries have introduced market economic reforms to varying degrees based on the needs of promoting economic development, and the significant economic achievements have made people recognize that socialism also needs to introduce a market economy. Even Harvard University's development economics textbook points out: "Capitalism and socialism... These two economic systems are not pure and pure. All market economies are managed by the government, and for this reason, these market economies are sometimes called mixed economies." In fact, Marx has hinted at the necessity of developing a market economy in his requirements for the transition of developing countries to socialism. When Marx mentioned that Russia could directly introduce advanced technology, he pointed out that a set of exchange institutions such as banks and credit companies were formed in the development of the market economy in the West over several centuries, and it was impossible to introduce them all at once. Moreover, as for the second largest social form in which China and Western capitalist countries are currently located, Marx summarized its characteristics as "the independence of people based on the dependence of things", and the dependence on things is the dependence on the market and money. Secondly, as the primary stage of socialism, socialism with Chinese characteristics must take the development of productive forces as its top priority, and the market economy can stimulate individual creativity and optimize resource allocation through competition, rewards for the good and punishment for the bad, and the survival of the fittest; therefore, the market economy will be a powerful driving force for our development of productive forces in a long period of time. Of course, our market economy is a socialist market economy.

It is both an economy that conducts universal exchange in the market and a market economy that is regulated by the socialist government. It is a market economy that is designed to avoid serious polarization to the greatest extent possible. Of course, this places higher demands on the government's ability to regulate the market.

It can be seen from this that denying the socialist nature of modern China on the grounds that socialism with Chinese characteristics implements a market economy is completely groundless and untenable.

**(III) The implementation of multiple ownership systems in the economic system is not the basis for distinguishing socialism from capitalism.**

Based on the actual needs of economic development, China implements socialism with public ownership as the main body and multiple ownership systems coexisting.

Historical nihilists deny that China is a socialist country on the grounds that China currently implements multiple ownership systems, including private ownership. This fallacy cannot stand! First of all, Marx believed that ownership is determined by the division of labor, and it is the division of labor between the brain and the body that produces private ownership and class, and only in the second stage of communist society can the division of labor between the brain and the body be truly eliminated, thereby eliminating private ownership. However, at the current stage of development in China, it is impossible to eliminate the division of labor between the brain and the body, and there are no conditions to eliminate private ownership. Secondly, as mentioned earlier, the development of productive forces will still be China's top priority for a very long period of time. To develop productive forces, it is necessary to mobilize the enthusiasm of the majority of people. The implementation of multiple ownership systems is precisely to mobilize the enthusiasm of the majority of people for production, especially to mobilize the enthusiasm of private, individual, and foreign-funded operators, so as to promote the rapid development of productive forces and prepare material conditions for the elimination of the division of labor between the brain and the body.

Of course, there is a question of how to strike the right balance in this process. In the process of advancing socialism with Chinese characteristics, on the one hand, we must take safeguarding the fundamental interests of the broad masses of the people as our goal and gradually improve their living standards; on the other hand, we must focus on formulating policies to promote rapid economic development and mobilize the entrepreneurial enthusiasm of operators, managers, and entrepreneurs. This requires our party and government to maintain the fundamental purpose of being honest and serving the people, and to have "great wisdom" to implement positive and innovative decisions and specific policies, so as to advance the unprecedented construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics from victory to new and greater victory.

As China's reform and construction enters the deep water and critical period, the comprehensive deepening of reform will usher in another round of deep social transformation. Some historical nihilists who believe in the "universal values" of the West are trying to obstruct the advancement of socialism with Chinese characteristics and make China regress to the capitalist system they yearn for. One of their usual means is to discredit socialism with Chinese characteristics and falsely claim that China is now practicing a capitalist system. It is necessary to clarify the essence and connotation of the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics from a theoretical perspective, eliminate the clamor of those with ulterior motives, and resolve various doubts among the people. This is not only a need to distinguish right from wrong, but also a necessary move to further strengthen the faith of the broad masses of people and actively participate in the cause of building socialism with Chinese characteristics.