

Study on "Emancipating the Mind"

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Abstract

"Emancipate the mind and seek truth from facts" was seen as a manifesto for reform and opening up, It has restored the ideological line of Marxism to our Party. It can be seen that the importance of this proposition itself, it is related to the crucial line problem, deviating from this proposition is very likely to lead us back to the non-Marxist line. Therefore, I think it is still very necessary to study this proposition today. This paper sets out from the proposition itself of "emancipating the mind" to deepen the understanding of Marxism.

Keywords

Ideological; Marxism; Emancipating the Mind.

1. The Necessity of Emancipation

We usually think of Marx's teachings as three different disciplines, namely philosophy, political economy and scientific socialism. But the essence of Marxism does not lie in its "science of the understanding", that is, in its concrete conclusions, but in the part of Marxism that deals with the emancipation of man. Marxism is the doctrine of the liberation of man, that is, how to free "man" from "non-man" situations. The emancipation of the mind is an indispensable part of the general process of liberation which belongs to the liberation of man.

What about the "inhumanity" of thought, that is, the necessity of emancipation? In *The German Ideology*, Marx cut to the chase: "Hitherto men have always formed wrong ideas about themselves, about what they are and what they ought to be." Man, as the creator of thought, is in turn subservient to his own creation, and thought seems to be an entity independent of man's activities. In Germany, there was a group of philosophers who wanted to "free the mind", They argue that since people are "languishing" under the yoke of thoughts -- "illusions, ideas, dogmas, and imaginary beings"-- we can be liberated simply by changing them, criticizing them, or discarding them. What these philosophers have in common is that they all believe that people can be liberated only through the activity of thought, and that the real world is the product of the world of ideas.

We do not simply criticize the idealism error of "thinking determines existence" of the above philosophers, but more importantly, trace back to the origin of thought. How did thought happen? Marx believed that "The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men—the language of real life." It can be seen that thought, from the very beginning, is connected with the physical process of production, and has no history or development of its own. With the continuous development of human activities, significant changes have taken place in the way of production and labor, resulting in the separation of material labor and spiritual labor. Then thought has a chance to detangle itself from the actual process of human activity and begin "to the formation of 'pure' theory, theology, philosophy, morality, etc." Since then, thought seems to have become "inhuman" thought, which seems to be no longer dominated by the actual material production activities of people, but become a "pure" existence that can create things. Here, the mind seems to have completed its own liberation by taking a step ahead of the "liberation of man". Naturally, the creation of thought "at will" cannot be regarded as the

completion of "freeing the mind", because thought must be adapted to the actual existence to which it is directed. Rather, the creation of thought "freely" is based on the actual existence. But in the reflection of reality, thought will always encounter contradictions, because thought is far away from the real material life process of people. When we examine whether thoughts truly reflect existence, we must deeply think about thoughts and the actual material life process of people who produce such thoughts, that is, the perceptual activity process of people.

It is easy to think that our minds are free to go about their business "free" from actual human activity. But paradoxically, in a certain historical period, the thought of "freedom" can only imagine what is given by society. In the different era, there will be a dominant idea in people's minds. For example, in feudal society, the dominant ideas in people's minds are honor and loyalty, and in bourgeois society, the dominant ideas become freedom and equality. If we regard thought as a separate entity from man, then this development of thought in man's mind can reasonably be understood as the development of the so-called "absolute spirit" of thought outside man. This is clearly wrong. The change of "ruling" thought is not its own development, but the change of material relations in people's real perceptual activities, which is expressed in the form of thought. There is also a division of labor within the group occupying the dominant position in society. Some people are engaged in the work of controlling the material activities of the society, while others are engaged in the work of controlling the ideological activities of the society by "formation of the illusions of the class about itself". These two works together constitute the dominant idea, in which not only the producers of ideas are needed, but also the "active members" of the ruling class who do not produce ideas but directly exercise their ruling power in production. If "the ruling thought is separated from the ruling individual," then the thought becomes something external to the ruling individual. The change of people's thoughts in different historical periods has become the development link of "thought" itself, so the carrier of "thought" -- philosophers and thinking people should occupy a dominant position in human society.

So the thought that seems to be "free" is actually restricted, is restricted by the actual material production activity. The "unfreedom" of thought subject to physical activity lies in the fact that it is subject to the limitation of the thought producer himself and cannot penetrate the abstract and complex relations of production to reach the "thing itself". Therefore, the proposition of "emancipating the mind" has two meanings: Firstly, "emancipating the mind" is to start from the thought itself, so that the thought can be freed from the existing narrow limitations and outdated thoughts which do not meet the requirements of the development of reality; Secondly, "emancipating the mind" also means combined with the material conditions in which it is produced. The emancipation of the mind cannot be separated from the emancipation of real material life.

2. The Philosophical Basis of Emancipation

The thoughts that need to be liberated are those that are separated from the real material life, those that seem to be separated from the real perceptual activities of people and become independent existence, with their own history of development, and with mysterious meaning. Therefore, the two propositions of "emancipating the mind" and "seeking truth from facts" cannot exist independently. In order to "emancipate the mind", we must return to the reality of things themselves. Only when we reach the thought of things themselves can we call it the thought of truth.

As Marx put it in his Theses on Feuerbach: "The question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question of theory but is a practical question. Man must prove the truth, i.e., the reality and power, the this-worldliness of his thinking in practice. The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking which is isolated from practice is a purely

scholastic question." There are many explanations for this article, and we always understand this proposition from the level of subjective view and objective view. The position of practice is placed between subjective and objective, as a bridge of communication between the two, which is correct. But as the practice of testing knowledge, it is itself before the existence of knowledge. As the practice of people's perceptual activities, it has such effects because it is the perceptual activities of people themselves. In this process, the essential power of people is object-transformed into the world. Therefore, knowledge is here, belongs to people's activities and belongs to the real world. Thinking is only a reflection of the process of objective activity of human's essential power. If thinking is separated from this objective activity by the name of "rationality", thinking will become something of the "other shore" world, and then human thinking will not be "objective truth".

The problem is how to make thinking reach the "objective truth". According to the definition of traditional materialism, the so-called objective truth is the correct reflection of objective things and their laws, it seems that objective things and their laws themselves exist, and have nothing to do with human existence. If human knowledge reaches to the knowledge of the "objective thing" itself, our knowledge becomes "truth". This view maintains nothing more than the opposition between "man" and "objective things", the latter being separate from the former. This pre-Kantian interpretation of truth is of course untenable, and it is impossible to know whether objective things appear as they appear to man only in the action of his senses, and whether they are themselves as they appear to be in the concepts given to them by man. It is not that thought is subjective, it is still objective, but this objectivity is with respect to the human subject. We can only say that the truth of thought is the truth of man, and not the truth of everything itself. Marx accurately regards the truth of thinking as the reality and power of thinking and the truth of human activities in thinking. Therefore, we often say that human beings' exploration for truth is endless, not because thinking itself is constantly moving or objective things themselves have infinite knowledge, but because human activities themselves are in the endless process of objectification. The way in which objects are presented to people is completely determined by people's perceptual activity, the perceptual activity of historical accumulation.

When we understand the source of thought, then the task of the mind itself, as the subject of "liberating mind," becomes clear. Its task is to rid itself of all the "inhumanity" attached to it, all the erroneous tendencies that make it a separate entity from man. Perhaps we can borrow the slogan of the phenomenological movement of the last century, "returning to things themselves", and reasonably understand "liberating the mind" as "returning to thought itself".

3. The Political Foundation of Emancipation

Having said something about the theory of "Emancipating the Mind", let's look at how or why "Emancipating the Mind" is proposed as a result of the sinicization of Marxism. Let's take the time line back and look at the ideological liberation movements in modern China.

Before the reform and opening up, our country also experienced two large ideological liberation movements. The first was the New Cultural Movement and the resulting "May Fourth Movement", which took the western modern cultural "science" and "democracy" as weapons to carry out a fierce impact on the feudal autocratic thoughts that had bound the Chinese thought for two thousand years. The "May Fourth Movement" greatly promoted the ideological liberation of the Chinese people, thus creating good conditions for the spread of Marxism in China, and making ideological preparation for the establishment of the Communist Party of China. The second ideological liberation movement was the Yan 'an Rectification Movement in 1942, which was a general liquidation of the "left" leaning line represented by Wang Ming and established the correct ideological direction of combining the basic principles of Marxism-

Leninism with the reality of China. The third is the reform and opening up that we are all familiar with, at the closing ceremony of the work conference of the CPC Central Committee on the eve of the Third Plenary session of the Eleventh Central Committee, Deng Xiaoping made a report named "emancipate the mind, seek truth from facts, unite to look forward", this report became the declaration of reform and opening up.

All previous ideological liberation movements have taken a certain "old thought" as their goal of liberation, And the proposition of "emancipating the mind" is aimed at the "Two Whatevers" (a dogmatic belief holding whatever chairman Mao said must be correct).As a guiding ideology, "Two Whatevers" re-metaphysics people's way of thinking. Its essence is "thinking in absolutely incompatible opposition". Its thinking characteristics are: "His communication is 'yea, yea; nay, nay'; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. "Its concrete expression is that everything happening in real life is abstracted into two opposing aspects, one of which is great, glorious and right, while the other is completely regarded as wrong, backward and reactionary. However, real problems are often complicated, and when it is necessary to think deeply about specific real problems, people give up their thinking about real problems, and leave their decision to those who claim to have the "right thought". This is comprehensive restoration of the idealist view of history, The "right thought" itself is an invisible entity, they are presented by the leader or else "who represent the 'concept' in history, into the 'thinkers', the 'philosophers', the ideologists, who again are understood as the manufacturers of history, as the 'council of guardians', as the rulers".

This way of thinking greatly fetters people's activities and suppresses the huge potential of people's perceptual activities. Under the guidance of the "Two Whatevers", Mao's ideas were taken to be absolute truths, It is "a prescription or formula for every historical age. "All the problems that people encounter in real life should be answered by the speech of leaders, which makes people judge people's real activities from the established thought premise, which will inevitably lead to the split between thought and reality. Thought itself has been separated from people's practical activities and actual development process into pure nonsignified abstraction, and abstraction itself has no value when it leaves the history of reality, and thought itself will witness its weakness in the contradiction with reality.

True thought must demand that it be consistent with the reality of human life. Therefore, emancipating the mind is to seek truth from facts, which inevitably requires changing people's thoughts according to the changing real and perceptual activities of people, so as to change people's activities themselves. It is a process of dialectical development and interaction. It is under the leading call of "emancipating our minds" that our social development is full of vitality, and people's material and spiritual lives have been greatly improved.

On the major theoretical issues, it has gradually broken through the shackles of the original dogmatism system and answered a series of questions given by The Times.

4. Conclusion

"Emancipating the Mind" does not appear as a finished proposition, it is a proposition that develops continuously with the development of real material production activities. Today's China is a country in the process of modernization, which has not yet been completed. In the process of modernization, man and nature and the relationship between man and society have undergone great changes. With the rapid development of modern science and technology, people's ability to transform nature has also been enhanced. After the disintegration of the natural economy, individuals realized "socialization" under the principle of capital, and the principle of market economy filled all people's social relations with its powerful power. From this also appeared the unlimited exploitation of nature, and the "materialization" of social relations with people. This kind of contradiction between man and nature, man and society in

the process of modernization constitutes the "modernization problem". The task of theory given by The Times requires people to put forward new theories from the reality of modernization to face the increasingly complex modern society, which requires us to further emancipate our minds on the new social basis. China's modernization process is extremely different from that of the West. We have completed in a few decades the way that the West walked hundreds of years ago. Solutions to China's problems can only be produced in the course of China's actual modernization. Therefore, we must adhere to Marxist theory, seek truth from facts and emancipate our minds.

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