

The Philosophical Thoughts on the Theoretical Basis of China's Principal Contradiction in the New Era

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Abstract—The main contradiction of China in the new era is a model of specifically applying Marxist basic principles to solve problems, and it is another theoretical result of Marxism with Chinese characteristics. The historical evolution of the main contradiction theory in China from creation, development to innovation not only has an internal logical connection in thought, but also sparks the brilliance and philosophical wisdom of Marxist principles. To resolve the major contradictions in China in the new era, it is necessary to face, analyze and finally resolve the contradictions on the basis of discovering them, and adhere to the new development concept to promote social development.

Keywords: *major contradictions, new era, needs, development*

I. INTRODUCTION

The major judgment of the main contradiction in China in the new era is based on philosophy and science, which permeates the idea of materialist dialectics. It is not only the specific application of dialectical materialism, but also the concrete embodiment of historical materialism in China. It is the CCP's (the Communist Party of China) "mastery of the basic principles of Marxism, learning to use Marxist positions, viewpoints, methods to observe, analyze and solve problems" [1]; it is needed to "really understand Marxism" [2] and combine Marxism with China's current practice. It is the product of continuously deepening the understanding of the laws of socialist construction.

II. THE EVOLUTION AND DIALECTICAL NEGATION OF THE THEORY OF MAJOR CONTRADICTIONS IN CHINA

Since the founding of the CCP, it has been unremittingly exploring the main contradictions of Chinese society, both during the period of the new democratic revolution and during the period of socialist construction. Especially after the completion of the socialist transformation, the CCP is advancing through groping and moving forward in twists and turns with regard to the main contradictions in Chinese

society. The main contradiction was first proposed in the 8th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 1956, was redefined in 1979, and then officially appeared in the report of the 13th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 1987. It was emphasized again in the 1997 "15th National Congress" report, was reiterated in the "16th National Congress" and the "17th National Congress" in 2002 and 2007. In 2017, it was again estimated in the "19th National Congress". During this period, it has experienced many twists and turns both in practice and theory, and its historical evolution can be roughly divided into three historical stages: creation, development and innovation.

The first stage of the creation of the main contradiction theory (1956-1978): The "contradictory motivation theory" represented by Mao Zedong pioneered the exploration of the main contradictions in China, marking the initial formation of the theory of the main contradictions in China. China entered the establishment stage of socialist construction. The 8th National Congress of the CCP clearly stated for the first time that the main contradiction in China is already "the contradiction between the people's requirements for the establishment of an advanced industrial country and the reality of backward agricultural countries; the contradiction between the people's need for rapid economic and cultural development and the current state of economic and cultural failure to meet people's needs." [3]³⁴¹ The contradiction is mainly a specific, staged manifestation of the basic contradiction of productivity and production relations. Although the main contradictory expressions of the 8th National Congress are flawed, they were in line with national conditions. Due to the extremely complicated and ever-changing Chinese and international situation at that time, the setbacks encountered in the practice of socialist construction deviated from the main line, and the class struggle was enlarged, leading to Mao Zedong's misjudgment and misunderstanding in the end.

The second stage of the main contradiction development stage (1978-2012): "revolutionary motivation theory", "dual motivation theory" and "harmonious motivation theory" represented by Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao [4] practically, scientifically, openly, and developmentally explored the major contradictions in China, indicating that the theory of the main contradictions in China has gradually taken shape and is gradually perfected, entering a stage of simultaneous development of theory and practice. The "Decision" of the Sixth Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee clearly stated that the main contradiction in China is "the contradiction between the people's growing material and cultural needs and backward social production" [5]. In response to the current situation of China's productive forces, in order to resolve the main social contradictions, the CCP leadership generations combined historical materialism with China's national conditions, actively explored, sought for the driving force for socialist social development with Chinese characteristics, and developed productive forces based on actual conditions. At different historical stages, Deng Xiaoping's "revolutionary motivation theory", Jiang Zemin's "Dual Motivation Theory", and Hu Jintao's "Harmonious Motivation Theory" were formed respectively. A significant feature of this stage is the use of theory to guide practice and the combination and unification of theory and practice. The main contradictions in China have basically formed from the basic theory to the outline, and have been gradually advanced by Deng, Jiang, and Hu, gradually developing and becoming scientific.

The third stage of the main contradiction and innovation stage (2012-now): The "balanced motivation theory" represented by Xi Jinping made scientific judgments on the transition of the main social contradictions in a timely manner, marking the further enrichment, improvement and innovation of the theory of the main contradictions in China. Based on the development stage of socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era, the "19th National Congress of the CCP" states: "The main contradictions in China have been transformed into the contradictions between the people's increasing needs for a better life and imbalanced and inadequate development" [6]. The new expression of the "19th National Congress" on the major contradictions of China is a kind of further promotion and improvement on the basis of the development of the second stage. It is a new journey and a new starting point for the comprehensive construction of a well-off and modernized country in China.

The three stages have an internal logical connection in ideology. No matter which stage is an indispensable and important part of the theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The whole process has undergone three stages of affirmation, negation, and negation of negation. The two negations vividly reproduce the law of negation of negation. The latter stage is an extension and sublation of the former, both inheriting the basic spirit of the former stage and transcending the former stage. The final formation and scientific direction of the main contradiction theory in the second stage is based on the preliminary formation of the main contradiction in the first stage. After learning the

profound lessons of the "taking class-fight as the principle" in the first stage, there was the adherence to the basic line without shattering confidence. The second stage is the self-denial of the first stage. It is the CCP's correction of its own mistakes. The third stage of the "balanced motivation theory" is to further develop on the basis of the "harmonious motivation theory". The development of China requires not only green hills and clear waters, but also harmony between man and nature, harmony between people and people, making harmony more humane, concrete and operable. The "balanced motivation theory" is a dialectical negation of the second stage, a process of self-denial, self-development, and self-improvement. Highlighting the people-oriented thinking is closer to communism's exposition of "all-round human development"; understanding and analyzing people from the perspective of historical materialism as well as meeting people's needs can further improve the all-round attention and respect for people and their needs.

The historical evolution of the main contradictions has not only followed the objective reality of the major changes in the development of Chinese society and history, but also reflected the continuous and advancing with the times of the establishment, development and innovation of the main contradiction theory of Chinese society, confirming the law of negation of negation of dialectics.

III. THE THEORETICAL BASIS AND PHILOSOPHICAL WISDOM FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF CHINA'S MAJOR CONTRADICTIONS IN THE NEW ERA

Any contradiction is a dynamic process of development and change. It is necessary to look at the problem from a connected and development perspective and analyze the problem from a contradictory perspective. "Socialist society" is not a static thing, but like any other social system, it should be regarded as a society that is constantly changing and reforming." [7] The main contradictions of socialist society have different characteristics at different stages and are impossible to solidify, which requires dynamic investigation.

A. *The theoretical basis for the transformation of the main contradictions in China in the new era*

Recognizing the historical position and basic national conditions of China's current society is the theoretical basis for analyzing and judging the transformation of major contradictions in China. In terms of historical position, socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era. In terms of basic national conditions, after nearly 40 years of rapid development, the two sides of the old contradiction have been basically solved, that is, the "material cultural needs" side has been basically satisfied, and the "backward social production" contradiction has become history. As demand and supply change, new contradictions follow. The "need" of the main contradiction in the new era of society has been promoted to "the need for a better life", and the other side of the contradiction has been transformed into "imbalanced and inadequate development". This brand-new

research and judgment is the basis of the argument for the transformation of the main contradictions in China.

1) The theoretical basis lies in "new"

The "new" here contains new contradictions, new era, new positioning, new goals, and new strategies. The first is the new era. With the leap of the times, China's national rejuvenation has gone from standing up, getting rich to becoming strong, which is a new historical position; the understanding of the laws of socialist construction has risen from "crossing the river by feeling the stones" to "top-level design", which is a new phase of awareness. The second is the "new" stage characteristics. The practice faces the new characteristics of the times of the new worldly affairs, national and party conditions. The world structure and order are being adjusted, and the global governance is relatively lagging behind; China has stepped into the world's second-largest economic entity, and the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects has become a tough fight. The party construction has made great progress, but it is still facing new tests. The third is the "new" main social contradictions. The major contradictions in China have undergone profound changes; the productivity develops; supply changes; living standards have improved, and demand has changed. The fourth is the new goal. It can be seen from the content of the new contradiction that the new goal of the new era is to better meet the "people's needs for a better life" and strive to achieve all-round human development. The fifth is the new strategy, which means that the program of action for upholding and developing socialism with Chinese characteristics is new. The "new" indicates that the original state of balance is broken, and the contradiction is mutated, thus creating a new balance.

2) The theoretical basis lies in the transformation of the content of the two main contradictions

To begin with, the content, level, quantity, and requirements of the "need" of the contradictory party are transformed. Under the premise that the "need" subject is still the people, the increasing "material and cultural needs" are transformed into "needs for a better life". Here, "increasing" is a dynamic reflection of "needs". As the "need" increases continuously, from the need of material culture to the need of a better life, the focus of need has changed. "Necessity" from the static state is rich in connotation, material, culture, spirit, politics, ecology, and public products; "growing" is a dynamic explanation of the need for continuous development, and it is constantly changing in terms of quantity, quality, and content; "the need for a better life" includes both "material needs" and "immaterial needs". Even if it is also a material need, as the times change, the specific content of material needs has also changed and upgraded. People pay more attention to not only private products, but also the needs of public products. The "better life" is broader and more profound than the "material culture". It also highlights the word "multi", that is, multi-faceted, changeable, multi-level, and diversified. It takes into account both commonalities and individual satisfaction; it reflects both the hierarchy of needs and the progressiveness of needs; it includes both survival needs and developmental

needs; the objects that meet the needs point to both the natural world and the social and spiritual fields [8]. It is on this basis that the main contradiction of the new era changes "material culture" to "better life" and deepens, extends and expands "needs".

3) The other side of the contradiction "production" has undergone transformation and "development"

It has transformed from "backward social production" to "imbalanced and inadequate development". The rapid development of productive forces and extremely rich social wealth have made China bid farewell to the era of scarce supplies and take off the hat of "lagging" productive forces. The word "lagging" no longer applies to today's big China, from "getting rich" to "getting stronger". The outstanding problem facing China today is imbalanced development. The "imbalance and insufficiency of development" restricts the satisfaction of needs. The "imbalance and insufficiency" here includes not only production but also demand; it is not only the imbalance and insufficiency of supply development but also the imbalance and insufficiency of demand development. In terms of social production, productivity and productive relations have changed significantly. Changes in productive forces have led to profound changes in the distribution system of production relations, the economic system, and even the ownership structure, which reflects in the "deep changes in the social structure, profound adjustments in the pattern of interests, and profound changes in ideas" [9]. In this process of change and adjustment, the imbalance and insufficiency in development will inevitably lead to the hierarchy of social structure, the differentiation of survival and development, and the disparity in living environment. Because the improvement of productivity level and the wealth of society are a complete unit, they are not completely applicable to each individual. The "improved" doesn't mean "very high", "rich" doesn't mean "sufficient", and moderate prosperity doesn't equal to all-round well-off society. The imbalance in social production includes both imbalances in the development of productive forces and imbalances in the areas of production relations such as distribution, resulting in imbalanced and inadequate development in regions, urban and rural areas, industries, and populations. Other regions are underdeveloped, some rural industries are relatively backward, and some people are poor. Different people need different levels of development, and even the gap is getting wider and wider, and the imbalance is prominent. From the point of view of expression, the rank of "imbalance and insufficiency" is "imbalance" first, and "insufficiency" is later, indicating that "imbalance" is more prominent and more severe than the problem of "insufficiency".

B. The philosophical wisdom for the transformation of the main contradictions in China in the new era

The theory of transformation of the main contradictions in China in the new era is not only the product of the transformation of Marxist worldview into methodology, but also a major theoretical achievement of the Sinicization of

Marxism. The ideological glory and philosophical wisdom of Marxist principles are shining everywhere.

1) The transformation of the main contradictions in China in the new era contains the philosophical wisdom of change and unchanged in dialectics

The "new era" and "transformation" here emphasize the "change", however, the "unchanged" is hidden behind the "change". What has changed is the main contradiction, what remains unchanged is the basic national conditions, and the dimensions of their examination are different. The "change" of the main contradiction is from the perspective of the development stage, and the "unchanged" of the basic national conditions is from the perspective of the historical stage. The judgment of the "change" of the specific content of the two main contradictions in the new era is based on the "unchanged" of the basic national conditions (primary stage), that is, "the basic national conditions of China that is still in and will be in the primary stage of socialism have not changed for a long time. China's international status of the world's largest developing country has not changed." [6] The "change" and "unchanged" are dialectical. Whether it is a major contradiction or basic national conditions, the key is to see how people understand and grasp it. The "change" and "unchanged" are both absolute and relative. The "change" emphasizes a state of absolute movement, which is a change in the nature of a thing or a local qualitative change, and is the prerequisite for the development of a thing; the "unchanged" emphasizes that a thing is in a relatively static state and that the quantity changes without changing the quality, rather than an invariable fixed state. There remains unchanged in the changes in the main contradictions, and there remain changes in the unchanged basic national conditions. As far as the main contradiction is concerned, what is "changed" is the content, level, structure and requirements of demand and supply, and what is "unchanged" is the contradiction between demand and supply. If you deny "change", you must deny the need for level improvement and change and deny the "needs for a great life" fact, you will fall into the metaphysical invariant theory and fall into historical nihilism, which will deny China's achievements in socialist construction for more than 70 years. As far as the basic national conditions are concerned, the "unchanged" in the primary stage is also relative, not absolute unchanged. The initial stage is a staged positioning of the entire process of a socialist society. Emphasizing the "unchanged" means that there is no qualitative change in the nature of the stage. It doesn't mean that it will always stay in the initial stage. On the contrary, for decades, socialist construction has been developing and changing for the purpose of "change" and for the purpose of finally getting out of the initial stage "unchanged" [10]. The development process in the primary stage is "change", but the accumulation of quantity and change of quantity without changing the quality. When the accumulation of this quantity reaches a critical value or breaks through the critical point, this invisible "change" will transform into a dominant "change".

2) The transformation of the main contradictions in China in the new era flexibly uses the philosophical thinking of the method of contradiction analysis

A comprehensive interpretation of the scientific conclusions of the transformation of the major contradictions in China in the new era requires both qualitative analysis and quantitative inspection; the major and minor aspects of the major contradictions, and the characteristics of the changes between them need to be analyzed; it is necessary to pay attention to both the quantitative expansion of the two sides of the contradiction and the part qualitative changes in the process of quantitative change.

The first is a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the main contradictions. From the qualitative prescriptive analysis, "China" among the main contradictions in China has been determined. China is a socialist country, so the nature of a socialist society has not changed; China is China, so the basic national conditions have not changed. From the quantitative prescriptive analysis, although China has achieved three historic leaps of standing up, getting rich, and becoming stronger, as far as the historical stage is concerned, China is still in the primary stage of a socialist society and has not changed. People are unwavering in upholding and developing socialist construction with Chinese characteristics, which has not changed. The three leaps are only partial and qualitative changes in the process of quantitative change. Emphasizing the "imbalance and insufficiency" of development is precisely based on qualitative and quantitative analysis, which not only sees achievements, hopes but also problems and gaps. Getting rid of the hat of "lagging behind" is a kind of achievement, but still, the "underdeveloped" is a problem; the change from "underdeveloped" to "developed" is both hope and distance. The underdeveloped and developed are qualitatively different, and the backward and underdeveloped are quantitatively different. Now, China has only made partial and qualitative breakthroughs in the process of total quantitative change. The "unchanged" said is from the perspective of overall qualitative change, and the "change" said is from the perspective of part quantitative change. It is improper to equate qualitative change with quantitative change.

The second is an analysis of the particularity of the main contradictions. The contradiction analysis is the fundamental method for the materialistic dialectics to understand and transform the world. The process of the development of things determines that the development of things is composed of different stages in the whole process. The different stages have different characteristics and different contradictions, and different aspects of the same stage have their own characteristics. The main transformation of contradictions in the new era is the manifestation of the particularities of the contradictions and the requirements of the development stage. From standing up to getting rich, from getting rich to being strong, from the new period to the new era, from the era of shortage economy to the era of surplus economy, with the development of productive forces, the main contradictory conditions have changed. The specific

content and emphasis of the contradiction between demand and supply have changed. The basic demand has risen to developmental demand. The focus of supply is no longer on productive supply, but on developmental supply. The main contradiction in society has been transformed from the contradiction between production and need in the past into the contradiction between development and need today, and from the contradiction between the relationship of man and nature into the contradiction between man and man. The stage and particularity of the development of things determine the inevitability of the transformation of the main contradictions in the new era.

3) The transformation of the main contradictions in China in the new era follows the philosophical perspective of universal connection and eternal development

The transformation of the main contradictions in China in the new era reveals the connection and development process of Chinese main contradictions, which not only maintains continuity but also reflects innovation, both responding to history and positioning the future. It not only continues the construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics, but also creates a new chapter in socialism with Chinese characteristics. It is not only a historical response to the achievements of socialism construction in China for more than 60 years, but also a precise positioning of China's future development direction and goals. [11] The time definition of the new era indicates that the main contradiction is a specific and effective historical stage, which will develop with the changes of the times and the development of society, and should be judged in time and actively responded. From the perspective of time node, the new era is different from the new period. The conditions of the main contradictions in the new era have ceased to exist. The state of connection has been changed. Both sides of the main contradictions in the new era have changed. It is inevitable that new things will replace old things.

IV. THE WAY TO SOLVE MAIN CONTRADICTIONS IN THE NEW ERA AND PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS

The purpose of knowing the world is to transform the world. Discovering, confronting and analyzing contradictions are more conducive to solving them. Contradictions are the source and driving force for the development of things. To resolve the major contradictions in China in the new era, efforts should be paid to face and analyze the contradictions on the basis of finding them, use the materialistic dialectics flexibly, adhere to the new development concept, finally resolve the contradictions and promote social development.

A. Persisting in the key theory and never letting go of the main contradiction

Contradictions are everywhere. There are contradictions in everything. The construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics also consists of a large group of contradictions. Faced with a complex and complicated system of contradictions, there is only one major contradiction, and you

can't go about several tasks at a time, otherwise, you may feel lost in a fog and there is nothing you can do. It is necessary to be good at grasping the key points, grasping the main contradictions without relaxing, so that people can suit the remedy to the case and find the best solution. The main contradictions in China in the new era determine the direction, nature, and path of China's development. They are the focus of all contradictions. Concentrating efforts to resolve the main contradictions in China in the new era is an important leadership and working method of the CCP. The "new era" marks the new historical directions of main historical contradictions, means new missions and new requirements and means not only developing the economy in an all-round way from the perspective of the overwhelming majority of the people, but also vigorously improving the quality of social development for the all-round development of people. It is needed to adhere to the "people-centered" from beginning to end. From the contradictory expressions of "people" and "development", it can also be seen that "development" here is only a means and the purpose of development is to serve the people. In order to meet the people's "needs for a better life" and solve major contradictions, it is necessary to adhere to the new development concept of "innovation, coordination, greenness, openness, and sharing".

B. Persisting in the two-point theory and coordinately handling the relationship between the primary and secondary contradictions and the primary and secondary aspects of the contradiction

In a complex system of contradictions, both the primary and secondary contradictions and the primary and secondary aspects of contradictions are coexisting, intertwining, penetrating, affecting, restricting, and interacting with each other. It's hard to tell the absolute difference, and it's possible to transform into each other. In the huge social system, the contradictions people face are not only constantly changing, but also countless, and may even have a butterfly effect that affects the whole body. It is necessary to see both major and minor contradictions in the change and see both primary and secondary aspects of contradictions. It is necessary to adhere to the two-point theory and grasp both points. It is necessary to handle the relationship between the major and minor contradictions and the relationship between primary and secondary aspects of contradictions. Whether it is the major and minor contradiction or the primary and secondary aspects of the contradiction, the characteristics of its intermingling, restricting and penetrating are becoming more and more prominent and more and more obvious. It is necessary to use contradictory perspectives, developmental perspectives, and connected perspectives to deal with problems and oppose "concentrating on one thing only". The new development concept is rooted in such a philosophical foundation. Aiming at the "imbalance and insufficiency" of development in the main contradiction, the concept of coordinated development is proposed. It is suggested to highlight the coordination, oppose balance, emphasize harmony and co-ordination, and advocate bringing out one's strengths to make up for one's weaknesses, rather than

bringing out one's strengths to avoid one's weaknesses. It is necessary to make up for shortcomings and resolve contradictions, and highlight the balance, integrity and system of development. It is required to coordinate not only the relationship between man and nature, but also the relationship between man and man; it is necessary to promote the all-round development of man and the all-round progress of society.

C. Persisting in the dialectical unity of the "key theory" and the "two-point theory", advancing on the whole, and making breakthroughs in key points

To deal with the main contradictions of the new era, it is needed to unify the two-point theory and the key theory. The two points are the two points of key points, and the key point is the key point in the two points. It is necessary to promote as a whole and make breakthroughs in key points; it is necessary to make overall plans and coordination as well as focus on the key issues and grasp the main contradictions and the main aspects of contradictions. It is necessary to be problem-oriented, find a good starting point, and focus on solving major contradictions with purpose. The main contradiction plays a leading and decisive role in the contradiction system and is in a dominant position. To resolve the main contradictions in the new era, the focus is to solve the "development" problem on both sides of the contradiction. One side is the all-round human development, which is manifested by the growing need for "a better life". Adhering to the people-oriented principle and solving the people's "needs for a better life" is the basic approach and objective requirement for all-round development of people. Persisting in "people-oriented" is the focus and value orientation of the CCP's work. The other side is asynchronous development, which is manifested by "unbalanced and inadequate development" that can't meet the development needs of the people. The people are the subject of value and the development is the object of value. The object of development is to meet the needs of the subject of the people, and the subject of the people is the center of the development of the object. Therefore, the focus of the CCP's work should be to break the restrictions on "unbalanced and inadequate" development, and change conditions to make it more balanced and adequate. It is needed to adhere to the guidance of methods, implement the new development concept of "innovation, coordination, greenness, openness, and sharing", and strive to solve the issues of development momentum, balance, harmony, internal and external linkages, and fairness and justice, thoroughly solving the problem of "imbalance and insufficiency" in development. The five development concepts are organically unified, form a joint force, promote the whole, and suit the remedy to the case to make up for the shortcomings. It is necessary to not only make the cake bigger, but also strive to divide the cake well, meet the people's needs for a better life, ensure the morality and continuity of distribution, and open up a new realm for everyone to share.

V. CONCLUSION

In the new era, the theory of the main contradictions in China has a thick historical logic and a solid practical logic, as well as a solid theoretical logic. It is not only a major theoretical achievement of the Sinicization of Marxism, but also a model of turning the world outlook of Marxism basic principle into a methodology.

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