

The Linguistic Art Style of "The Communist Manifesto"

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ABSTRACT

The Communist Manifesto, as a Marxist programmatic document, not only has important theoretical value but also has a unique charm of language and art. This article mainly discusses the linguistic art style of "Communist Manifesto" with humorous imagery metaphors, smart language, exquisite and rigorous structure, rigorous argumentation, highly condensed generalization, and magnificent momentum.

Keywords: "The Communist Manifesto", Language, Art style.

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is the coat of thought. When advanced thought and beautiful language are combined, its charm is irresistible.[6] "The Communist Manifesto"[7], [8] is not only a serious ideological treatise, but also a beautiful political prose from the aesthetic point of view, and is a rare artistic treasure among human works at the same time. Only the use of language in it has reached a very high level, which is also an important reason for its eternal charm.

"The Communist Manifesto" is the greatest programmatic document of Marxism. Marx, the author of "The Communist Manifesto", is not only a giant of ideas, but also a great master of language. When people read Marx's works, they are not only admired by his thoughts, but also admired by his language. From the perspective of language art, "The Communist Manifesto" can provide the entry point for human beings to appreciate Marx's literary grace, comprehend Marx's thought and experience Marx's humanistic feelings.

2. HUMOROUS AND VIVID METAPHOR

"The Communist Manifesto" is not only profound in thought, but also vivid in language, with strong artistic characteristics. The beautiful words and phrases are as colorful as a gallery. This superb ability to use language and words comes

from Marx's and Engels' experience of life and their deep sympathy and concern for the working masses. At the beginning, "A spectre is haunting Europe, the spectre of communism." The spectre would write the manifesto of the revolution, and openly admit his communist identity! Marx called them "spectres", illustrating the state of communism in the past. Secrecy and lack of recognition kept the communists "wandering" like spectres. Here, it is a metaphor, clearly telling the proletarian situation about communism. And it has also made the foreshadowing for the later text: "it is high time that Communists should openly, in the face of the whole world, publish their views, their aims, their tendencies, and meet this nursery tale of the Spectre of Communism with a manifesto of the party itself."

When revealing the essence of capitalism [9], "the bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his 'natural superiors', and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous 'cash payment'. It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation. It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom – Free Trade." Such sharp and satirical sentences not

only shine the profound wisdom, but also show lasting appeal of beautiful lyric poetry, which makes people think endlessly. "No sooner is the exploitation of the labourer by the manufacturer, so far, at an end, that he receives his wages in cash, than he is set upon by the other portions of the bourgeoisie, the landlord, the shopkeeper, the pawnbroker, etc." The words "set upon" depicted the greedy nature of the bourgeoisie and the tragic plight of the proletariat vividly. As the manifesto of the proletariat party is vivid, the proletariat could better understand the essence of the bourgeoisie and all the reactionary forces, keep in mind the responsibility and mission of the proletariat, and strengthen the ideal and faith of communism.

3. ADROIT WORDING

The five shocked sentences in "The Communist Manifesto" are as follows: "they openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working Men of All Countries, Unite!" According to these sentences, the determination of Marx to overthrow the capitalist system can be seen. At the same time, the "essence" of Marx's rhetoric is reflected. It exists in the declarative sentence of "yes", with the obligatory tone of "yes" and the imperative sentence. First, the "public declaration" is an indisputable fact. Marx and Engels declared that this is a refutation of the fact. Second, "Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution" was an imperative. Whether the imperative content can be carried out or not, or whether the ordered person is willing to make it happen, it is an indisputable fact. When people feel dizzy, "the proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains." Then, there are questions, which are also the key to Marx's rhetoric and worthy of perusal. The third sentence actually expounds the fact that in addition to the fetters, poor workers should have other things. For the poor workers, life is a basic right, and they can maintain a humble daily life, with some freedom and a bit of private property. In Marx's opinions, individual workers are "proletarians" and the working class as a whole is "proletariat", fundamentally distinguishing the concepts of these two words. Marx and Engels did not use the neutral word "workers", but used the word "proletariat", highlighting the profound meaning of the word "proletarians". The "proletarians" were workers, but labors who had "nothing to lose but their fetters".

Therefore, the sentence "the proletarians have nothing to lose but their fetters" is just a linguistic definition. However, the sentence itself hasn't played a role. There is a powerful force behind it. When reading the fourth sentence "they have a world to win", people will be shocked. With the role of "obligation words", it is necessary to use such sentence pattern to guide the proletarians' behaviours. "Obligation" is even stronger than "command". "Command" refers to the order sent by the individuals, which is an unshakable fact, but "obligation" is not. Marx uses the words "obligation" and "command" together in a very clever way, which makes people feel the gap in the crossing, and is also the subtlety of Marx's writing. The reason why an article is worthy of repeated deliberation for a long time is definitely that it can bring new experiences and insights after each reading, and can guide the present reality. These five short sentences are the most cited, which can be regarded as a classic among famous essays.

4. EXQUISITE AND RIGOROUS STRUCTURE

"The Communist Manifesto" begins with a lyrical sentence structure, spreads the meaning in the progressive logical advancement, points out the main theme, and opens the prologue like a classical drama. With the twists and turns, ups and downs in each chapter, there is a climax. First of all, it comprehensively and profoundly discusses the economic and political relations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariats standing at the height of the development history of human society, and draws the historical conclusion that "the demise of the bourgeoisie and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable". And the authors put the focus on "relations between the proletarians and the communists", in detail elaborated recent purpose, theoretical principles and the political objectives of the communists, effectively refuted the main ideological viewpoint of the bourgeoisie attacking, slandering and distorting the Communists at that time, and presented the basic political views of communism that what means will the Communists use to eliminate class, class confrontation and class domination and to realize that "the free development of individuals is the condition for the free development of all. Also, it made a comprehensive theoretical analysis of various non-Marxist socialist theoretical documents at that time, and explained the essential differences between the political propositions of the proletariat and that of the Communists. Finally, "The Communist

Manifesto" briefly described the political attitude of the Communists towards some radical democratic parties at that time, affirming that they "supported all revolutionary movements against the existing social and political system everywhere" and were willing to unite with these parties to fight for their political goals. At the end of the article, the revolutionary passion is at its peak, making people feel passionate. "Working Men of All Countries, Unite!" Marx did not use words "overthrow" and "recapture", but the word "unite". Marx cleverly used the word "unite" to connect with more groups and strive for more allies, facilitating the unity of everyone. In order to achieve the great goal of "having the world", Marx first showed a very life-like attitude of "union". Marx's combative manifesto ends with a tune of fraternity. Here human beings can feel the greatness of Marx, and what he brought to the world is justice and fairness. By the way, the main form of organization is united.

5. RIGOROUS LOGIC ARGUMENTATION

The use of language needs to be logical. Without logic, there can be no charm, let alone the logical conquest of argument. The important reason why "The Communist Manifesto" has great charm and attraction is its strong logic. This logic is intimately bound up with reality.

The logical starting point of "The Communist Manifesto" is that machines have turned people into slaves, tools, vassals. Under such circumstances, people have no status. However, important changes have taken place in the entire society since the World War II. In modern times, the technological revolution driven by mental labor has given us a new starting point for understanding the problem, that is to say, human beings have begun to return to the subject from vassalization and alienation.

In the process of argumentation in "The Communist Manifesto", Marx and Engels used irrefutable historical facts and impeccable arguments to "refute the myth about the specter of communism". In the section of the proletarians and communists, in response to the bourgeoisies' maintenance and censure of private ownership, "The Communist Manifesto" first uses the irony of "hard-earned, self-earned property" to expand the offensive of logical argumentation. In the argument for the elimination of capitalist private ownership, Marx and Engels conducted an in-depth analysis on the conclusion that the production relations of the bourgeoisie and the products of the ownership

system are determined by the material living conditions of the class by answering "the elimination of personal property earned by one's own labor" and "the private property of the modern bourgeoisie". When refuting the bourgeoisie's claim that "when private ownership is eliminated, all activities will stop and the trend of laziness will rise", an assumption is first made in "The Communist Manifesto". Assuming this condition is true, according to what the bourgeoisie said, it can only be concluded that "bourgeois society should have perished long ago because of laziness". As Marx and Engels said, "all these concerns can be summarized, that is, there is no capital, and there is no wage labor."

6. HIGHLY CONDENSED GENERALIZATION

The greatest truths are the simplest, which is same as the text. "The Communist Manifesto" was guided by profound philosophical thoughts, and carried out at the height of human social development. With a strategically advantageous position, it shows the proletarian party's programmatic literature with highly condensed and concise language. This charm comes from Marx's and Engels' promotion and thinking of social history and practice in the philosophical category, with philosophical conciseness and speculation. In the chapter "bourgeois and proletarian", "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." Starting from the word "hitherto", this sentence summarizes the history of the whole human society, and is the scientific expression of Marx's historical materialism. There is no class for the beginning of human beings. As there is the concept of society, there are differences among social divisions of labors. With different social divisions of labors, different interest groups form. With the material satisfaction of production and life, different interest groups will inevitably produce different classes in order to safeguard the interests of the group, and the struggle between the classes becomes a means for the satisfaction of interests. The highly refined and general language formed by Marx and Engels in thinking about social practice is sonorous and powerful, grasping the essence through phenomena.

"The Communist Manifesto" was circumspect in expounding the Communists' aims: "Communists disdain to conceal their views and intentions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose

but their chains. They have a world to win." There are many concise languages in "The Communist Manifesto". It ends as impressively as it begins. "Working Men of All Countries, Unite!" Behind the beautiful language, people can see the strong generalization of "The Communist Manifesto". In addition, "The Communist Manifesto" analyzes the various and complex social phenomena, and constructs a concise theoretical model, and then expresses it with one or two vivid sentences. Therefore, the theory in "The Communist Manifesto" is not just a rigid theory, with strong persuasion, driving force, emotional appeal.

7. GRAND MOMENTUM

Marx and Engels lived in an era full of passion and creativity — grand and luxurious commercial buildings, romantic and unrestrained painting art, expressive and infectious symphony and so on, have a subtle influence on Marx's and Engels' creative style. "The Communist Manifesto" begins with symphonic grandeur. "A spectre is haunting Europe – the spectre of communism."¹[1] Without profound literary foundation, this kind of writing techniques can't be seen. And "The Communist Manifesto" described the positive role of the bourgeoisie in history with irresistible force. "The bourgeoisie runs all over the world"²[2]. Their footprints could be seen all over the world, land and sea, and they subverted and changed distant countries and new continents. With improved means of production, convenient transportation and low-cost goods, the bourgeoisie realized the purpose of "conquering the whole country". The bourgeoisie destroyed all with great strength and conquered "the most tenacious xenophobia of barbarians"³[3]. The purpose of Communists is open and sharp-cut. The Communists want to form a class, "overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie, seize power by the proletariat"⁴[4] and finally eliminate private ownership. "Let the ruling class tremble at the Communist revolution." "The proletariat is fearless in this struggle, and the proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have the world to win." In order to achieve this goal, the sentence "Working Men of All

Countries, Unite!"⁵ [5] at the end of "The Communist Manifesto" make people passionate. "The Communist Manifesto" is full of the beauty of power, which is a force of justice and a force representing the future and destiny of all mankind.

8. CONCLUSION

One gets different impressions of a mountain when viewing it from the front, sideways, at a close range or from afar. Only by observing things from many aspects can we grasp the whole picture of things. "The Communist Manifesto" is the most important classic work of Marxism with epoch-making significance for human society. Reading "The Communist Manifesto" from the perspective of writing art, people's spiritual world has obtained great aesthetic enjoyment of theoretical expression art. According to Greek proverbs, there are three green shoots growing from the soil of wisdom, namely, good thoughts, good words, and good deeds. "The Communist Manifesto", an outstanding theoretical document of Marxism, is a shining model worthy of extensive study nowadays and in the future. In order to study the scientific thought and appreciate the language art of "The Communist Manifesto", it is necessary to make a better action, which is the origin of Communists.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Yi Zhang is responsible for the overall design and outline writing of the thesis; Mengqi Zhang contributed to abstract introduction; Shuoyang Zang did the writing of the sixth part of the thesis; Junfei Bi made the overall layout and proofreading of the paper.

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