



The Implication of Social Ideological Trend (The Trend of Thoughts Which Has General Influence on People and Society in Certain Period)

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Abstract. With the economic and social development and the resulting social structure adjustment and interest pattern changes, various social ideological trends in China are surging one after another, which have attracted the attention and research of the academic circles. However, there are still different opinions on the definition of social ideological trend. Therefore, clarifying its meaning is still an important issue in the current study of social ideological trend. Social ideological trend is a special form of social consciousness. To define it scientifically, the basic principles of historical materialism must be followed. According to the studies, social ideological trend refers to ideological trend that reflects the interests and requirements of a certain class or stratum in a certain historical period, is based on social psychological resonance, takes the ideological system as the core, is widely disseminated among the masses, and has a significant impact on social life. Also, social ideological trend is composed of three basic elements, such as broad social psychological foundation, popular ideological and theoretical core, and dynamic intermediary fusion mechanism, with the characteristics of social reality, dynamic transformation, extensive groupment and political tendency.

Keywords: Historical materialism · Social ideological trend · Implication

1 Introduction

Since the reform and opening up, various social ideological trends have surged in China, which have attracted extensive attention and research in the academic circles. At the same time, clarifying the social ideological trend is a primary problem in the study of social thought. Based on Marxist historical materialism, this study attempts to explore the implication of social ideological trend from the aspects of concept interpretation, content composition and basic characteristics. This is of great value and significance to correctly understand and lead all kinds of social ideological trends.

Fund: This study is supported by the phased results of Special Project of National Social Science and Ideology and Politic — “Research on the Influence of Internet Social Thought on the Formation of College Students’ Marxist Beliefs and Countermeasures” (19VSZ044) and the General Project of Humanities and Social Sciences of the Ministry of Education — “Research on Marx’s Thought on People’s Livelihood from the Perspective of Capital Criticism” (2019YJC710045).

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Y. Pogrebnyak and R. Hou (Eds.): ICLCCS 2022, ASSEHR 689, pp. 286–298, 2023.

https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-494069-27-5_33

2 “Concept Interpretation” of Social Ideological Trend

In terms of etymology, ideological trend is not original word, but synthetic word. “思潮” is generally translated as “trends of thought” or “ideological trend” in English; “潮” is translated as “trend”, which means tendency, trend and so on; and “trends of thought” or “ideological trend” means “tendency or trend of thought”. In Chinese, the trend of thought is composed of “思” (thought) and “潮” (trend). In Xu Shen’s “Shuo Wen Jie Zi”, “thinking is inclusive, following the heart and fontanelle.” According to the “original intention” of “思” (thought) = “heart” + “fontanelle (brain)”, “思” (thought) means the unity of mind memory and spiritual feeling, and contains the modern meanings, such as thought, thinking and mood. As for the word “潮” (trend), according to the explanation of the revised edition of “Etymology”, “the sea water rises and falls regularly, which is the tide.” It can be seen that “ideological trend” refers to “thinking, thought and mood fluctuate like sea water”, which is extended to the tendency of thoughts, as well as the transformation, transformation and change of ideological views.

Liang Qichao used “ideological trend” as a metaphor and made an authoritative interpretation of it. In 1902, Liang Qichao pointed out in his article “on the ideological trend of the times”: “today’s constant words are the ideological trends of the times. These are the best words to describe it. In a country with cultural development, citizens tend to follow the same direction due to the changes of the environment, the psychological appeal and the approach of thoughts, so they echo each other and surge like a tide. All ‘thoughts’ can become ‘tides’ and those who can become ‘tides’ must have considerable value and be suitable for the requirements of their times. Not every ‘era’ has ‘ideological trend’. The era with ideological trend must also be the era of cultural advancement” [1]¹. From Liang’s definition of the “ideological trend”, he not only revealed the general meaning of “ideological trend”, that is, “thinking, thought and feeling rise and fall like the tide”, but also revealed the necessary conditions for the emergence of social ideological trend, such as the changes of the times, the spontaneous social psychology and ideological resonance of the masses, etc. And this is of important reference significance for future generations to investigate the meaning and characteristics of social ideological trend. However, “the deficiency of Liang’s theory lied in that it only summarized the state of the transformation of ‘ideological trend’ in form and appearance, but did not reveal the internal reasons for the transformation of ideological trend” [2]. In other words, Liang Qichao was mostly confined to the field of pure academic research, but did not go deep into the field of social material life in which social ideological trend would produce. As a result, he could not distinguish the social nature (progress or backwardness) and fundamental direction (revolution or reactionary) of the ideological trend, but could only unilaterally believe that all social ideological trends had a certain value of the times, and the era of social ideological trends was the era of social change and progress.

Until the late May 4th New Culture Movement, with the communication of historical materialism in China, some early Marxists began to consciously explain the root of the change of social consciousness with the changes of social material conditions, so as to break through the limitations of Liang Qichao’s research on ideological trend. At that time, Li Dazhao, who initially became a communist, made great contributions to the early dissemination and sinicization of historical materialism in China. In May 1919, he set up a special issue of “Marxist research” in Volume 6, No. 5 of the “New Youth” to

help the supplement of the “Morning Paper” open up a column of “Marxist research” and publicize Marxist theory. Li Dazhao himself concentrated on explaining the essence of historical materialism through articles such as “My Idea of Marxism”, “Material Change and Moral Change”, “Explaining the Reason of Chinese Modern Ideological Change from Economy”, and “The Significance of Materialistic Conception of History in Modern History”, and began to observe and analyze the Chinese problems at that time by using the principles and methods of historical materialism. For example, at the beginning of his article “Explaining the Reason of Chinese Modern Ideological Change from Economy”, he made the remarks that “in every era, if there were changes in the economy, there would be changes in the ideology” and “economic changes were the important reasons for the ideological changes”, which scientifically revealed the social material and economic conditions for the emergence of social ideological trends. Although Li Dazhao did not make a clear interpretation of the social ideological trend like Liang Qichao, he profoundly pointed out a methodology to study the social ideological trend — historical materialism.

Of course, historical materialism is also the basic principle observed in the definition of social ideological trend in the commonly-used reference books in China. The new edition of “Ci Hai” (1979) defined “ideological trend” as (1) an ideological tendency reflecting the interests and requirements of a certain class or stratum in a certain historical period and (2) emerging thoughts and feelings”. The “Encyclopedia of China” (Philosophy Volume) (1993) held that social ideological trends were “ideological trends or tendencies that reflected certain interests or requirements of people in a specific environment and had a wide impact on social life”. Like “Ci Hai”, “Encyclopedia of China” not only regarded social ideological trend as “an ideological tendency reflecting the interests and requirements of a certain class or stratum in a certain historical period”, but also added the reaction of social ideological trend to social existence (social life), with more dialectical connotation. The interpretation of the same entry in “Modern Chinese Dictionary” (2005) was “the ideological trend that reflected the social and political situation at that time and had a great influence in a certain class or stratum in a certain period and (3) successive ideological activities”. It was slightly different from the “theory of ideological tendency” based on the “interest requirements” of social ideological trend in “Ci Hai” and “Encyclopedia of China”, while the “Modern Chinese Dictionary” focused on the “theory of ideological trend” based on the “political situation”. At present, when academic circles define “social ideological trend”, they mostly draw lessons from these two “biases” namely, the theory of ideological tendency and the theory of ideological trend.

Then, what are the differences between “ideological tendency theory” and “ideological trend theory” in specific details, and what are their “gains and losses”? Scholars such as Bu Desheng have described this in detail. According to Bu Desheng, “the word ‘tendency’ means being ready to move, but is still a potential state and has not formed a trend. Even if the social ideological trend is in the stage of enlightenment, the ideological theory has initially spread among social members. The theory of ideological tendency ignores the characteristics of social ideological trend, which has both social psychology and ideology and is active at these two levels, that is, it ignores the important role of “ideology” in social ideological trend.” Further, he believes that “although the theory

of ideological trend emphasizes the dynamics of ideological trend, social ideological trends must resonate with people's psychology, be recognized or accepted by people, and master a considerable part of people before they can be spread. Therefore, they all ignore the psychological basis of social ideological trends" [3]. Therefore, the "theory of ideological tendency" and "theory of ideological trend" have their own advantages and disadvantages and need to be dialectically integrated.

After sorting out the above literature, it is found that clarifying the connotation of social ideological trend is still an important topic in the overall research process of current social ideological trend. In terms of word composition, "ideological trend" is compared to the "fluctuation" of the unified existence of "brain knowledge (rational factors)" and "psychological feeling" (psychological factors). Liang Qichao's definition of "ideological trend" revealed the times, spontaneous thought, psychological resonance and mass of ideological trend, but ignored the social material living conditions that played a fundamental decisive role, which was doomed to be imperfect. Li Dazhao used historical materialism to explore the motivation of "social ideological trend", which set a benchmark for future generations to grasp social ideological trend scientifically. The "gains and losses" of "ideological tendency theory" and "ideological trend theory" in modern reference books on the definition of "social ideological trend" provide a valuable reference for people to comprehensively and dialectically understand the connotation of social ideological trend. Based on these reasons, it is believed that social ideological trend is an ideological trend that reflects the interests and requirements of a certain class or stratum in a certain historical period, is based on social psychological resonance and centered on the ideological system, is widely spread among the masses and has a significant impact on social life.

3 "Content Composition" of Social Ideological Trend

Grasping the "content composition" of social ideological trend is an indispensable step to understand the concept of social ideological trend. According to the basic principle of historical materialism, social ideological trend is the reflection of social existence in people's consciousness, which belongs to the category of social consciousness. In order to understand the "content composition" of social ideological trends, it is necessary to first clarify the position of social ideological trend in the social consciousness system.

The scientific theory of social consciousness was founded by Marx. Through the in-depth study of social history, Marx obtained scientific conclusions that "people's social existence determined people's consciousness" and "consciousness was the product of society at the beginning", and explained the status and essence of social consciousness in all social life. However, Marx did not make a more detailed discussion on the specific links that social existence determined social consciousness and the structural level of social consciousness itself. Later, Plekhanov, Russian Marxist pioneer, made up for this shortcoming and made an important exploration.

Plekhanov followed Engels' "theoretical teachings of the deceased" and put forward the famous "five factor formula", which further subdivided the structural level of social consciousness. In 1893, in a letter to Merlin, Engels pointed out a direction of "in-depth study of historical materialism" to future generations. He wrote: "this point

is not emphasized enough in works of Marx and me. We all have the same fault in this regard. That is to say, we all focus on drawing political, legal and other ideological ideas from basic economic facts and actions mediated by these ideas, and we must do so. But when we do this, we ignore the formal aspect for the sake of content, that is, what kind of ways and methods these ideas are produced by" [4]⁶⁵⁷. Inspired by Engels' "theoretical teachings of the deceased", Plekhanov devoted himself with great enthusiasm to the thinking of "how social existence determined social consciousness", the famous "five factor formula" on social structure was formed, including (1) the situation of productivity, (2) the economic relations restricted by productivity, (3) the social and political system developed on a certain economic basis, (4) the psychology of people in society, which is directly determined by the economy and partly determined by the whole social and political system developed on the economy, and (5) various ideological systems reflecting this psychological characteristic" [5]¹⁹⁵. Compared with the traditional division of social structure into four levels, such as social production, economic structure (the sum of production relations), legal and political superstructure, social consciousness form or ideology, Plekhanov added the level of "social psychology" among social productivity, economic structure (the sum of production relations) and legal and political and social superstructure. Plekhanov attached great importance to this "supplement" and believed that "without careful research and understanding of social psychology, the historical materialist interpretation of the ideological system was impossible" [6]²⁷². Only the "five factor formula" with the addition of "social psychology" can make the historical materialism become a monist formula. In Prikhanov's opinion, in the framework of the basic principle of historical materialism that social existence determined social consciousness — the "five item theory", "the first three factors" belonged to the category of social existence and were the three basic elements of social existence; "the latter two factors" belonged to the category of social consciousness and constituted the two basic forms of social consciousness, which endowed social psychology with importance. How is this importance reflected? According to Plekhanov, as the "fourth factor" of the "five factor formula", "social psychology" was an essential "intermediary link" between social existence and ideological system. That is to say, social existence should determine various ideological systems through social psychology. Similarly, various ideological systems should reflect and react on people's social existence through social psychology.

Plekhanov's "five factor formula", especially his "intermediary" theory of social psychology, had great contribution. He not only explained the form and way in which social existence acted on the ideological system, but also provided important enlightenment for future generations to continue to expand the structural level of social consciousness.

Inspired by Plekhanov, Chinese academic circles creatively bring social ideological trends into the category of social consciousness, regard it as the "middle" level between social psychology and ideological system, and form the "three-level" theory of social consciousness structure. As the research on the "three levels" of social consciousness is carried out in depth, the "basic component" of social ideological trend as the "level of intermediary consciousness" is gradually clear.

The popular understanding of the “constituent elements” of social ideological trend in academia is “comprehensive theory”. Most people believe that “as a certain ideological tendency, social ideological trend is a form of dynamic blending of theoretical consciousness and psychological consciousness [7], is based on a certain social psychology and supported by a certain ideological theory, permeates and runs through the two levels of social psychology and specific ideological theory, and is the expression of the dialectical synthesis of these two different levels of social consciousness” [8]. When it comes to the position of social psychology and ideological system in the composition of social ideological trend, the academic circles generally advocate the “imbalance theory”, holding that “social psychology in social ideological trend is important, but social ideology and theoretical viewpoint in social ideological trend are more important” [9], and “ideological system factor is the ‘hard core’ and symbol of social ideological trend” [10].

Combined with the academic discussion, the “content composition” of social ideological trend can be concluded into three organic components.

3.1 Extensive Psychosocial Foundation

The social psychology mentioned here is not a concept in the sense of general social psychology, but a category of philosophy and history. Plekhanov made the most comprehensive and profound exposition on it, which was mainly reflected in works such as the “collection of historical treatises of materialism”, the “development of monistic historical view”, and the “historical view of materialism”. However, unfortunately, when discussing social psychology, he did not give a clear definition of social psychology. From the general provisions, Plekhanov sometimes said that “social psychology referred to the subjective aspect of human life and the psychological aspect, namely, human spirit, human feeling and idea, certain mental and moral condition; [6]¹⁸⁶ in terms of class attribute, social psychology referred to “the main emotion and ideological state of a certain social class in a certain country at a certain time” [6]^{272–273}; from the form of expression, social psychology referred to “habit, morality, feeling, view, intention and ideal” [11]⁷¹⁵, and so on. To sum up, it is a direct and empirical reflection of social relations determined by productivity; it is a popular mental state in a specific era, country, nation, class and stratum; it is an unprocessed and chaotic spontaneous social consciousness; it takes habits, feelings, emotions, motives, ideals, moral fashion and aesthetic taste as the forms of expression; and it is characterized by simplicity, liquidity and volatility. These statements of Plekhanov provide important ideological support for later generations to explore the psychological environment of social ideological trends.

Taking Plekhanov’s theory of social philosophy and psychology as the resource, some commentators believe that “the popularity of a certain theory, the display of a certain ideological trend, and even the ups and downs of the whole social ideological trend have its source and surging psychological environment, its psychological situation of breeding and reproduction, that is, they have psychological tension foundation” [7]. In other words, surging social psychology is the necessary premise for the generation of social ideological trend.” Specifically, the mechanism of social psychology should go through the following links: the changes of productive relations caused by the development of productive forces are reflected in people’s psychology and effectively

changed; the stimulated social psychology forms a new social psychological intention in the division and combination, so as to produce psychological resonance; when the social psychological intention accumulates, expands and extends in a specific mass, and surges and develops in one direction, it will evolve into a social ideological trend. It can be seen that the latent social psychology is not only the premise and foundation of social ideological trend, but also the constituent elements of social ideological trend.

3.2 Popular Ideological and Theoretical Core

If the collection of “hidden social psychological factors” in society does not contain popular ideological and theoretical contents and lacks the guidance of ideological and theoretical theories, it will not be able to form social ideological trend. “Psychological resonance shows that there are common points in people’s psychological aspirations, but the common points are not the combination point after all, and the formation of social ideological trend obviously needs a combination of spirits” [12], which requires a relatively stable ideological and theoretical core.

In Plekhanov’s theory of social consciousness, the ideological system is a high level of social consciousness. Like Marx and Engels, Plekhanov understood the ideological system as a social consciousness summarized, refined, processed and systematized by professional thinkers. In this sense, when discussing the connotation of thought, Geng Yunzhi said: “what can be called thought should have at least several necessary conditions, such as (1) it is practical and targeted, and it is thinking about the actual problems that exist objectively, not wishful thinking; (2) it is systematic, it puts forward opinions on the occurrence, development, advantages and disadvantages of the problem and the methods to deal with it, and it is not a piece of nonsense; (3) thoughts that have a certain influence and do not have any influence in society cannot occupy a position in the history of thought” [13].

The “influence” of the ideological system is mainly reflected in its dynamic role. Marx has a famous saying that people often quote: “once the theory is mastered by the masses, it will also become a material force” [5]⁹. “Theory leading the masses” mentioned here refers to the role of the ideological system in arming people’s minds and psychology, and “turning into material force” refers to the influence of the ideological system on people’s practical activities. Furthermore, “as the highest level of social consciousness, social ideology should be transformed into material force to guide or influence people’s practical activities. In addition, it must be integrated with social psychology, enter people’s hearts, become people’s beliefs, and integrate into people’s daily consciousness through creating public opinion” [14]. In this process, when people’s thoughts, emotions and psychological activities “converge” along a certain trend under the call and shock of the corresponding ideological system, they will evolve into an influential social ideological trend.

3.3 Dynamic Mediation Fusion Mechanism

The formation of social ideological trend should have both extensive social psychological foundation and the guidance of ideological theory. However, social ideological trend is by no means the mechanical addition of social psychology and ideological theory, but

an organic synthesis active at two levels in a dynamic way. In order to understand its mechanism, it is necessary to clarify the internal relationship between social psychology and ideological system.

Plekhanov made a clear discussion on the relationship between social psychology and ideological system. He first emphasized the “decisive” role of social psychology in the ideological system, holding that “all ideological systems had a common source, that is, the psychology of a certain era” [5]¹⁹⁶, social people had a certain psychology, and the characteristics of this psychology determined all the ideologies they established” [5]⁷³⁴. In his works, Plekhanov also conducted extensive research on the social psychological basis of ideologies such as philosophy, religion, law, politics, especially art, and came to the conclusion that social psychology “determined” ideology. Secondly, ideological system or ideology has a significant reaction to social psychology. Plekhanov inherited the social ideology reaction thought of Marx and Engels and developed the interpretation approach that the ideological system reacted on the social psychology and then affected the social reality. In this sense, he believed that a certain ideological system would exert great influence on the social psychology at that time, making it change according to its own ideas, and then following the established direction to achieve the expected goal.

In the process of social consciousness activities, social ideological trend is a special form of social consciousness. What kind of “role” does it play? Scholars generally adhere to the “intermediary theory”. For example, Xiao Jinquan believed that although “social psychology” provided the initial materials for the “ideological system”, it was mostly scattered and piecemeal. If thinkers wanted to extract the ideological system from this simple and disordered daily consciousness, they must feel the rationality and the brilliance of thought from the realistic requirements and interests of the masses. Besides, the social ideological trend could make the rational accumulation contained in the social psychology clear and centralized, so as to provide an intermediary role for thinkers to construct the ideological system. On the contrary, if any ideological system wanted to integrate into the psychology of social members and form a strong spiritual force, it must first be transformed into the social ideological trend generally accepted by the masses [15].

The “intermediary” nature of social ideological trend determines that it is neither pure social psychology nor completely equivalent to ideological system or ideology, but a comprehensive social consciousness formed by the blending of the two. According to the dialectical law of the development of things, social psychology and ideological system, as the two sides of the contradiction, are often in tension, so as to promote the development of human social consciousness. In this process, social ideological trends exist at two levels in a dynamic way, and then “rise and fall”.

Fundamentally speaking, the root of social consciousness movement does not come from itself, but from social existence, that is, people’s social relations determined by productivity. For example, when discussing the formation of social psychology, Plekhanov believed that “social psychology was always subject to its economic purpose, always suitable for it and always determined by it” [11]⁷¹⁵. When talking about the changes of social psychology, Plekhanov believed that “every new step in the development of productive forces put people in the practice of their daily life in a new relationship... This new and unprecedented situation was reflected in people’s psychology and effectively

changes it” [11]⁷¹⁹. In fact, this further answers the social and historical reasons why social psychology and ideological system are often in an “unbalanced” state, as well as the “integration” of the two, that is, the root of the flow of social ideological trend.

4 “Basic Characteristics” of Social Ideological Trend

4.1 Social Reality

“Consciousness can only be a conscious being at any time, and people’s existence is their real life process” [5]⁵²⁵. This judgment fundamentally penetrates the “internality” of consciousness, that is, all consciousness comes from and serves the “process of human real life” — social reality. Social reality is the real starting point for exploring all consciousness phenomena. Any abandonment, alienation and weakening of attention to social reality is bound to put social consciousness and its root causes into “illusion”.

Social ideological trend belongs to the category of social consciousness. There is no other way to explore its origin except to “people’s real life process”. What is the most basic thing directly related to “social reality”? In Marx’s opinions, “among these practical relations, economic relations are of decisive significance, and they constitute a red line that runs through and is the only one conducive to understanding” [4]⁶⁶⁸. Obviously, Marx regarded “economic relations” as a basic existence that ran through the social reality and was directly related to it. Further, this shows that what directly affects people’s ideological tendency and psychological situation is “communication relationship” among people determined by “material production”, that is, people’s economic relationship or material interest relationship. “Because people’s material interest relationship exists directly and widely in people’s actual social life, which can be intuitively felt by people, so it is easier for people to make a rapid response in the form of social ideological trend” [16]. It can be seen that the social ideological trend originates from the material interest relationship directly related to people’s social life, and is related to specific social and economic relations.

Therefore, in reality, “people’s social psychology is stimulated by some practical contradiction or induced by some ideological theory, making it in a floating excitation situation, venting the hidden emotions, beliefs and customs on the surface, appealing the long-term precipitated feelings, intentions and requirements to words and deeds immediately, and making people’s whole thoughts and emotions agitated” [7]. The combination of this psychological trend and the corresponding ideological viewpoints naturally forms a social ideological trend with extensive influence and communication power.

4.2 Dynamic Transformation

“People’s consciousness changes with the changes of people’s living conditions, people’s social relations and people’s social existence” [4]^{50–51}. Of course, the social ideological trend as a specific phenomenon of consciousness is no exception, which is embodied in the following aspects.

First of all, social ideological trends change with the change of environment. The “environment” here refers to the “social and historical conditions” in a certain period,

which is composed of the social and economic structure determined by the productive forces. According to Plekhanov's understanding, "if the development of productive forces causes some essential changes in the social and economic structure, the psychology of these classes will also change, and the spirit of the times and nationality will also change" [6]²⁷³. Naturally, the social ideological trend combined by specific social psychology and corresponding ideological theories will also change its form, update its content, or be finally eliminated.

Secondly, social ideological trends have a process of ups and downs. According to Liang Qichao's understanding, a certain social ideological trend "started with little potential power, risen and reached the full degree, fell after obsolescence, and gradually declined" [1]¹. In short, there are four stages of "enlightenment, heyday, transformation and recession". Fundamentally speaking, the reason why social ideological trends show the characteristics of rise and fall is the dynamic change of its content. Social ideological trends are the reflection of real social contradictions. In the process that social contradictions are constantly produced and solved with the development of society, social ideological trends are bound to appear as a process of rising and falling tide.

Finally, the constituent elements of social ideological trends are often in a state of "surging". According to the above, social ideological trends mainly include two components — social psychology and ideology. In different periods, the role of social psychology and ideology varies. In one stage, there may be more social psychology, while in another stage, there may be more ideology. In this way, the social ideological trend will change constantly under the interaction of social psychology and ideology, or become the spring tide or even the dominant social ideological trend because it meets the needs of social reality, or gradually disappear because it no longer conforms to the historical trend.

4.3 Extensive Groupment

"People are the producers of their own ideas, thoughts, etc." [5]⁵²⁴. Consciousness is of the person, any social consciousness is a subjective consciousness, and social ideological trend is a group consciousness produced under certain objective conditions.

Firstly, social ideological trend is based on a continuous mass movement. According to Liang Qichao's statement, "all ideological trends of the times were always formed by continuous mass movements" [1]¹. It is clear that the "thoughts" generated by "environmental changes" are not necessarily "trends". Only when this kind of "thought" or "ideological tendency" meets the common interests of a certain group and triggers a "sustained mass movement", can a "tide" be formed. Therefore, a "sustained mass movement" is not only the carrier of a "ideological tendency" into a "tide", but also a force to promote the development of the "established" social ideological trend. Once a mass movement has ceased, the social ideological trend will also recede.

Secondly, social trends are based on the consciousness of large groups of people. Social ideological trends are not the thoughts, opinions and ideas of a single person and different from the general group consciousness. And social ideological trend is a kind of group consciousness with a common social psychology and ideological orientation and "a group consciousness in large scale with a wide range of subjects, transcending space-time boundaries, group boundaries and regional boundaries" [14].

Finally, social ideological trend is transmitted by diverse groups. In the process of spreading social ideological trend, it is not confined to one group, but is a consciousness that encompasses a variety of groups. Social ideological trend is not only a comprehensive reflection of social life, but also a dynamic reflection of social life. This means that social ideological trend is like a river, gushing and expanding between different groups, seeking the right soil for it to grow and flourish.

4.4 Political Tendency

“Politics is the concentrated expression of economy” [17]⁴⁰⁷. “The most important decisive interests of all classes can only be met through fundamental political transformation” [18]. According to Lenin’s two sentences, the economic interests that have a fundamental decisive role in a class and stratum are often “concentrated” in politics and finally realized through the path of “political transformation”. Then, the social ideological trend oriented towards the realization of the interests of specific social groups will show a distinct political tendency when expressing interest demands.

Material interest is the nerve in people’s social life, widely exists in people’s daily life and can be directly experienced by people. When there is a major change or transformation in society, its internal material interest pattern will change accordingly. In order to protect their own interests and express their demands, different interest groups will respond quickly in the form of ideological trend. “This direct correlation with real life not only determines that the social ideological trend has the characteristics of being outspoken and straightforward, but also determines that it must realize the realistic interaction with social life in the way of social cognition” [19]. In other words, social ideological trends not only have a more concentrated sense of direction to express interest demands, but also have a more clear social intervention to realize interest demands.

The fundamental solution of all social problems, especially the problem of material interests, ultimately comes down to the use of political power. Politics, as the concentrated embodiment of economy, is an important way to realize economic interests. If social ideological trends want to change the current situation or adjust or reform the current situation to realize the interest demands of specific groups, they will inevitably be transformed into people’s political behavior at the practical level, that is, to strive to promote to the center of state power and affect the process of social and historical development.

Of course, the political orientation of social ideological trends is not exposed all at once, but increasingly exposed with the gradual expansion of the spread of thoughts. If it is not effectively contained, it will be strongly expressed in an extremely sharp form. Therefore, social ideological trends have their own characteristics because of their different fields, but their common feature is that they are rich in obvious political tendencies.

5 Conclusion

To sum up, the social ideological trends are the ideological trends that reflect the interests and requirements of a certain class or stratum in a certain historical period, are based

on social psychological resonance, take the ideological system as the core, are widely disseminated among the masses, and have a significant impact on social life. The social ideological trends include three important components: the broad social psychological foundation, the popular ideological and theoretical core, and the dynamic intermediary fusion mechanism. It is an indispensable prerequisite for deepening the research on the Internet social ideological trends to clarify these content directions of the network social ideological trends.

Authors' Contributions. This paper is independently completed by Wenyi Liu.

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