

Theoretical Prospect and Time Explanation for the Thought of All-Round Development of Human Beings

SU Lan^{[a],*}; SU Chun^[b]

^[a]Lecturer, Department of Education, Jiangxi Normal University, Nanchang, China.

^[b]Lecturer, Department of Education, Nanchang Normal University, Nanchang, China.

*Corresponding author.

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Abstract

The all-round development of human beings is a lofty ideal for mankind as well as the value orientation of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The thought of all-round development is theoretically traced through its connotation and social condition; and its historical prospect is presented from view of historical development. On this basis, contemporary explanation is carried out for the thought of all-round development of human beings through its uniqueness and diversity, freedom and creativity, specificity and relativity, its theoretical prospect is dynamically presented and a foundation is laid for a further exploration into the practice dimension for all-round development of human beings.

Key words: All-round development of human beings; Theoretical prospect; Historical development

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INTRODUCTION

Proposal of CPC Central Committee on Formulation of the 13th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social

Development, which was deliberated and approved in the fifth plenary session of 18th CPC Central Committee, stated that we shall uphold the people-oriented development thought and take as the starting point and standing point of development increasing people's well-being and promoting all-round development of human beings. This is the core idea of the 13th Five-Year Plan. The thought of all-round development of human beings has rich value connotation and practical implication, and highlights the people oriented humanistic consciousness and time significance in the historical period of building a moderately prosperous society.

1. THEORETICAL RETROSPECT FOR THE THOUGHT OF ALL-ROUND DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN BEINGS

The thought of all-round development of human beings is the lofty ideal for communism and an important part of the basic principles of Marxist educational thought. Through tracing and summarizing the theoretical evolution of the thought of all-round development of human beings, it will be beneficial for us in properly acquiring concept concerning all-round development of human beings and for it to be better guided. Under the background of capitalist society, Marx and Engels put forward the theory of all-round development of human beings, in order to counter the then lopsided and deformity one. In addition, this theory was developed in struggling for the right of education for the working class under capitalist conditions. They pointed out that, for people to be fully developed, separation between their intelligence and physical strength, a consequence of some kind of abnormal intelligence and body resulting from the old division of labor must be overcome (Marx & Engels, 1979, p.402).

1.1 Connotation of the Thought of All-Round Development of Human Beings

The thought of all-round development of human beings is rich in connotation and can be interpreted on three levels. The first level is all-round development of “individual”, which implies the overall development of labor capacity of the individual. Engels pointed out a society organized in accordance with the principle of communism will allow its members to fully play their talents in all aspects (Marx & Engels, 1972, p.223). The thought of all-round development of human beings is an important part of the contents of Marxist philosophy. The second level refers to all-round development of mankind. By making survey on quantity of “people” as subject, it will be indicated that the thought of all-round development of human beings by Engels emphasizes overall development of not only a specific individual, but also the mankind. As people are socially connected, the development of individual will promote social development and reciprocally the social development will also promote appearance of the “new people”. Engels also pointed out in Principles of Communism that all members of a society shall be allowed to be fully developed (Ibid., p.224). Therefore, for the communism, this lofty ideal, to be truly realized, both the individual and mankind must be fully developed. By making analysis from the perspective of “people” as subject of thought of all-round development of human beings, its object is both the individual as subject and all human beings that is the mankind. However, this has not yet reflected all connotation of all-round development of human beings. Therefore, in the third level, the thought of all-round development of human beings is further interpreted with its content. In Capital, Marx stated that labor force or labor capacity is understood as sum of physical strength and brainpower that exist in the body of human beings, that is living human body, and that are used whenever people produce some kind of use value (Marx & Engels, 1979, p.190). This assertion contains three levels of contents: Its fundamental connotation implies that physical strength and brainpower are fully developed and used; based on this, physical strength and brainpower of human beings are fully integrated and unified; and finally, as the development of human beings’ ability in all respects moves forward gradually to a direction of deftly acquiring and applying all laws of natural and social development, they become citizens in the realm of freedom (Jin, 1992, p.170). In addition, all-round development of human beings also includes development in morality, aesthetic and other aspects. As a total man, people possess their own overall essential in a comprehensive way and their elements for all-round development of human beings are complete and harmonious.

1.2 Social Condition for All-Round Development of Human Beings

The all-round development of human beings is the lofty ideal and great goal for all mankind, since it implies the

complete liberation of mankind. To realize this idea, it will need to go through a long process as well as request many social conditions. The first one is the development of productivity, which is the fundamental condition. To realize all-round development of human beings, it is necessary for society to create a highly developed material condition, so as to lay the material foundation required for all-round development of all members of the society. The continuous development of social productive forces reduces the labor intensity of social members and shortens their labor time. This fundamental condition will provide a solid foundation for all-round development of human beings. The second one is the development of production relations. Among all social relations, the relations of production are the most fundamental ones that play a decisive role for all-round development of human beings. To have the means of production owned by society by liberating it from the shackles of private ownership will open up a broad road for all-round development of human beings. To enable the possibility of overall development of all members of the society, the private ownership of means of production must be changed. The third condition is the scientific development of education. The combination of productive labor with intellectual development and physical education is not only a way to improve social production, but also the only way to train fully developed people (Marx & Engels, 2009, pp.339-340). By highly integrating the education and social production of labor, people’s brainpower and physical strength will be improved, thereby enhancing their labor capacity. In addition, the improvement of brainpower and physical strength will play a positive role in fostering morality, artistic talent, and hobbies and interests of human beings. The fourth one is the development of social needs. The all-round development of human beings is also closely related to the needs of society. In The German Ideology, when discussing Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci and other artists, Marx and Engels pointed out that it was emerging bourgeoisie’s objective needs to vigorously create revolutionary public opinion for acquiring economic and political rights and the bourgeoisie’s objective needs to express their self-desire, emotion and subjective demands that boosted the development of literature and art under the then social context, thereby promoting all-round development of human beings. The fifth one is the development of social environment. Social environment is a general name for relevant macro factors including social and political environment, economic environment, legal environment, cultural environment and others, which are created by individuals through social labor. Social environment has a significant impact on individual’s career and even the development of human beings. It is a sign of the development of human civilization, and the essential factor that affects all-round development of human beings.

2. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE THOUGHT OF ALL-ROUND DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN BEINGS

The thought of all-round development of human beings was developed by Marx and Engels on the basis of absorbing, borrowing from and critically inheriting the outstanding historical and cultural thoughts of mankind. As early as ancient Greek period, Aristotle had proposed a thought on education in the slave society that highlighted the harmonious development between physical education, intellectual education and moral education to promote the unified development of mind and body in human beings. In the period of the European Renaissance, some bourgeois thinkers, in opposing the imprisonment of religion on people's mind, put forward humanistic doctrines that emphasized people first, promoted freedom of individuality and focused on multi-sided development. With the development of these thoughts, several modern bourgeois educators, such as Comenius and Rousseau, had further enriched this theory and put forward an idea of "harmonious development" of physical, strength, brainpower and moral education. French utopian socialist Saint Simon first proposed the concept of all-round development of human beings. He said that in 15th century, in addition to amazing achievements in physics, mathematics, art and handicraft industry, European people also worked enthusiastically in several most important and extensive departments within the reach of human understanding; they were fully developed people, and were this kind appeared for the first time since ancient times (Wang, 1979, p.265). On the basis of critically inheriting the outstanding thoughts of the predecessors, Marx and Engels put forward the theory of all-round development of human beings, officially use the concept of "all-round development of individual" for the first time in German Ideology that pointed out that all-round development of human beings referred to the full development of their own ability in all aspects. Then, their thought of all-round development of human beings was interpreted more systematically in Communist Manifesto, Capital and Anti-Duhring. Advance with the times is the most important theoretical quality of Marxism, and it's thought of all-round development of human beings, in combining with social practice in China, has also made great progress. In modifying General Programme of the Party Constitution in the 18th National Congress of CPC, the "promote all-round development of human beings" had been added after "continue to meet the increasing material and cultural needs of people on basis of development of production and growth of social wealth". This is a process in which material and spirit promote each other to develop the continuously (Hu, 2016).

3. CONTEMPORARY EXPLANATION OF THE THOUGHT OF ALL-ROUND DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN BEINGS

The thought of all-round development of human beings is rich in connotation, and its theory evolves in practice. Therefore, its connotation need to be further understood by combining the background of the times and the particularity of social practice.

3.1 Uniqueness and Diversity

The subject of the thought of all-round development of human beings is "people" and is the pursuit of ideal for the development of human beings. The essence of human beings is the sum of social relations. Therefore, the all-round development of human beings shall be carried out throughout social practices and shall be achieved and developed in this process. We shall first objectively recognize people's born differences and the differences developed in the process of social practice and then respect these differences and base on this to recognize the development of human uniqueness. In addition, people's need is not just material satisfaction. Its diversity will be reflected in the political, cultural, ecological and other aspects. Human beings differentiates all other animals from the infinity and extensiveness of their needs (Marx & Engels, 1982, p.130). At present, due to rapid development of productive forces, the shortening of labor time and the improvement of educational conditions and so on, people have sufficient time to learn science, art and other valuable content required for their development from the outstanding cultures in history, so that more uniqueness and diversity can be achieved for individuals.

3.2 Freedom and Creativity

The all-round development of human beings is the result of free choice and active creation by subject according to the will of individuals. It is the awakening of self-consciousness and self-created richness, and has freedom and creativity. This development does not succumb to some kind of external compulsiveness, and can be managed by individuals. As each man is trained in a various aspects and takes different social functions as a way of alternating activities, they are able to give full play to their talents and creativity in a variety of productive labor positions as well as in other areas of social activities (Jin, 2003, p.319).

3.3 Specificity and Relativity

The all-round development of human beings is not an abstract and unreachable human ideal, but a specific and historical result. Specificity means that all-round development of human beings shall be defined under the context of present national conditions as the background, and presented with historical and specific goals in the

specific stage of socialist development. Making survey from the point of view of individual development, we have moved towards the goal for mankind of all-round development of human beings. To a certain extent, however, since currently China is still in the primary stage of socialism, it will still need time to realize the overall development of human beings. Therefore, the current all-round development of human beings shall be investigated in a dynamic social and historical stage. It will be comprehensive relative to the past development while having a weakened comprehensiveness when placed in a higher social and historical stage. So it is relativistic. The all-round development of human beings is a gradual process in which it develops from low to high stage; and in addition, it is also a never-ending process that lasts for lifelong time.

The all-round development of human beings is the important content of Marxist theory, and is the important theoretical foundation for the thought of “people first” in today’s society. It is also the ultimate value orientation of socialism construction with Chinese characteristics. In the historical period of building a well-off society in an all-round way and in the development period of the implementation of the 13th five-year plan, we will uphold the all-round development of human beings of Marxist and thus provide scientific theoretical guidance for the all-round development of human beings. Furthermore,

under the new historical conditions, we shall adhere to this theoretical guidance and develop the socialism with Chinese characteristics, so as to provide a solid realistic foundation for all-round development of human beings.

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