

*Original Paper*

# Study on the Relationship between “Modern Social Development” and “Human Development” in Marxist Perspective

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## ***Abstract***

*Modern social development and human development are intrinsically linked. It is widely recognized, especially by Marxists, that the progress of modern society and the development of human beings are mutually influential, mutually reinforcing and internally unified. Based on the Marxist perspective, this paper studies the relationship between modern social development and human development on the theoretical basis of the concept of human development, especially elaborates on a series of major theoretical and practical issues in the process of modernization and development, with a view to grasping the philosophical laws of modern social development and putting forward constructive opinions in accordance with the laws, thus promoting the free and comprehensive development of human beings.*

## ***Keywords***

*Marxism Modern, Social Development, Human Development*

The relationship between modern society and human development is an important and long-standing concern of philosophers. Human development includes both individual development and human development, each of which is closely linked to modern society. In Marxist theory, the promotion of comprehensive human development is the ultimate goal of social development. In the exposition of the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, the promotion of human development is also embedded as an important element. For example, five aspects of China's modernized social development were indicated in general terms at the conference, “a modernization that harmonizes material and spiritual civilization”, “common prosperity for all people”, and “taking the road of peaceful development It is a modernization that “harmonizes material civilization and spiritual

civilization”, “brings common prosperity to all people”, and “follows the path of peaceful development”; in essence, it requires “the unity of the comprehensive enrichment of things and the comprehensive development of human beings”, and “the synergy of high-quality development and the enrichment of the people’s spiritual world”. This series of important assertions closely links modernization and human development, puts the modernization theory of respecting people, relying on people, and for people into development practice, profoundly reveals the relationship between human beings and natural beings and social creatures in the process of modernization, as well as the relationship between human beings and the material world and the spiritual world, which is of great significance for enriching and developing the study of Marxist anthropology, and deepening the theory of Marxism. Promoting the comprehensive development of human beings has become the realistic goal of modern society in contemporary times.

## **2. The Ultimate Purpose of Modern Social Development Is Human Development**

According to the Marxist viewpoint, social development in the perspective of the materialist concept of history is not a simple extension of the development of nature in the social sphere, but a dynamic creative process, a mode of existence and a result of activity specific to human beings. (Feng, 2017, p. 401) In this respect, human development is dynamic and a means of promoting social development. The history of social development is in fact the history of human development, and human development is the ultimate goal of social development.

However, society is a pluralistic system, and social development is a multi-indicator concept. In the past, when we spoke of comprehensive human development, we departed to a large extent from the principles of Marxism and did not regard it as the ultimate goal of social development, but merely as a part of the pluralistic system of society and as a means of promoting development. On the contrary, the realization of social politics, economy, culture and modernization is pursued as an end in itself, which in fact reverses the relationship between ends and means and ignores the inherent unity of social progress and human development. For example, after the end of the Second World War in the 1960s and the rapid rise of the third world, many colonial and semi-colonial countries gained national independence and established sovereign States, and the issue of human development received great attention from society and the academic community. After national independence, countries accelerated their own development, transformed their socio-politics and culture, and continued to push forward the process of modernization. However, in the process of development, imperialist infiltration, unequal international cooperation and an irrational international order still existed, and the majority of developing countries suffered from slow economic development, stagnation of traditional social life among members of their societies, and stagnation of social development. More typical are some of the Middle Eastern countries that people often talk about. As we all know, around the Persian Gulf, there is a cluster of high-income oil-producing countries. As early as 1984, the per capita GNP of developed countries in the West had already reached \$11,000, whereas the per capita GNP of these oil-producing

countries far exceeded that of developed countries in the West, for example, the GNP of the United Arab Emirates was \$22,000 and that of Qatar was \$20,000. (Feng, 2017, p. 407) Despite this, these countries still cannot be called modern. The economy is dependent on imports and their own industries are very weak; the political life is clearly feudal, with military and tribal politics dominating. The main reason for all this is that the traditional way of thinking and acting has become a serious obstacle to people's comprehensive development and stride towards modernization, and once the resources are exhausted, the phantom of economic prosperity will disappear. Of course, we are not denying that there has been no change in the state of the people of these countries, but only that there has been no fundamental change and that the pace of their development has been slow.

In contrast, in China, also a developing country, the Party has always adhered to the principles of Marxism, firmly grasped the people's most concerned, most direct and most realistic interests, and has strived to realize the comprehensive development of human beings and the overall progress of society by ensuring people's livelihoods in the spirit of "nailing down". 2012 to 2021, China's GDP accounted for more than 18% of the world economy. of the world economy exceeds 18%, the per capita disposable income of national residents has increased from 16,510 yuan to 35,128 yuan, with the average annual growth rate outperforming the economic growth rate, and the economic strength has realized a historic leap. Especially in 2020, we have formed the world's largest middle-income group of more than 400 million people on the Chinese land, joining hands with people of all ethnic groups across the country to embark on the road of comprehensive well-being, and writing a colorful chapter in the history of poverty reduction of mankind. Entering the new era, the people's aspirations for a better life have become stronger, with the public's needs gradually changing in the direction of diversification, multi-level, and high quality, and while focusing on "whether there is any", they are more concerned about "whether it is good". China has continued to promote early childhood education, education, employment, medical care, elderly care, housing and support for the weak, and has built the world's largest social security system, including pension, medical care and social assistance; new progress has been made in the construction of a healthy China, and the equalization of basic public health services has continued to be promoted; and China's per capita life expectancy has increased from 76.7 years in 2017 to 78.58 years in 2021, and is expected to rise from 76.7 years by 2021 to 78.58 years by 2021. China's per capita life expectancy has increased from 76.7 years in 2017 to 78.58 years in 2021; socialist cultural undertakings have flourished, and a public cultural system covering both urban and rural areas has been gradually established. According to the Human Development Report issued by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), China is the only country to have crossed over from the low human development group to the high human development group since 1990, when the UNDP first measured the human development index globally.

The different development paths of these countries have once again shown that the prerequisite for a country's modernization lies in its ability to modernize its people. When traditional ways of thinking, behaving and values constrain people's development, the social development of the country will

certainly be slow and distorted. Therefore, modernization is far from being as simple as generally imagined, people are the “cells” of the society, the comprehensive development of the society is consistent with the comprehensive development of people, a country to be among the ranks of modernization, in addition to a strong material foundation, but also to improve the basic quality of the members of the society, the development of human beings can not talk about the existence and development of the society, the ultimate goal of social development. The ultimate goal of social development is human development.

## **2. The New Strategy and Layout of Modern Society Have Enriched the Idea of Comprehensive Human Development**

Chinese-style modernization is an original modernization with Chinese characteristics, characteristics of the times and global influence, based on the actual development of China and adapting to the development changes of the times, closely connected with socialism with Chinese characteristics, always implementing the Marxist theory of comprehensive human development and adhering to the Marxist principle of comprehensive social progress. The understanding of the relationship between social development and comprehensive human development has been deepened with the development of the theory and practice of Chinese-style modernization, which is prominently manifested in the formation of new strategies, new layouts and other important assertions in the process of the development of Chinese-style modernization.

### *2.1 People-centered Thinking Is the Value of Promoting the Comprehensive Development of Human Beings*

Since the essence and purpose of social development is the development of human beings, it is inevitable that people-centeredness is required. To advocate people-centeredness means that we should aim at realizing the comprehensive development of human beings, start from the fundamental interests of the people, think what the people think, continuously improve people’s well-being and quality of life, so that the fruits of development can benefit all the people, and make the people’s sense of gain and happiness more fulfilling, more secure, and more sustainable. Since the 18th National Congress, a series of new concepts, ideas and strategies of governance have been formed around the “people-centered” development ideology. This requires us to adhere to the principle of doing our best, living within our means, and aiming to enhance people’s well-being and promote comprehensive human development. The recommendations adopted at the Fifth Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee even emphasized that “we must insist on being people-centered”, truly putting into action the concept of development for the sake of the people and relying on the people. In the new journey, we should rely closely on the people to create history, insist on serving the people wholeheartedly, stand firm on the people’s position, respect the people’s initiative, and put the people-centered development ideology into practice without any compromise. Ruling the country is always for the benefit of the

people, and we must always maintain the flesh and blood ties between the Party and the people, constantly strengthen the deep roots of national development, encourage common struggle to create a better life, and enable the people to lead a happier and better life. The important assertion of “people-centered” profoundly expresses the firm position on the people, closely links modernization and human development, and is highly suitable for the fundamental requirements of comprehensive social progress to ensure that the concept of promoting comprehensive human development takes root.

### *2.2 High-quality Development Is the Key to Promoting Comprehensive Human Development*

The human being, as a subject of consumption and at the same time a subject of production and innovation, is the basic supporting force of the economic system. The fundamental purpose of socialist production is to meet the needs of the people, which is also the fundamental impetus to promote high-quality development. For this reason, high-quality development should take the people-centered development ideology as the title, and grasp the worldview and methodology of this important idea. This means that adhering to the people-centered approach to high-quality development, we must always maintain flesh and blood ties with the people and strengthen the foundation of the people’s supremacy. In the decade of the new era, China has been implementing a problem-oriented spirit, focusing on serving the people, facilitating the people, and providing peace of mind for the people, and transforming the fruits of development into the quality of life with practical actions for the benefit of the people. With regard to the “urgent, difficult, worrying and hopeful” issues of the masses, it has been working with all its heart and strength to do a good job in such practical matters relating to people’s livelihoods as employment, education, social security, medical care, old-age pension, child care and housing, and to effectively improve the accessibility and equalization of public services; and with regard to the safeguarding of social justice, it has made efforts to narrow the gap between urban and rural areas in terms of regional development, and in terms of the standard of living and income of the population. Reaching out to the masses and the grassroots, we have continued to bring visible and tangible benefits to the masses, to meet their individualized, diversified and escalating needs, and to let them experience a genuine sense of happiness and security in their lives.

### *2.3 The New Development Concept Is an Internal Driving Force for the Promotion of Comprehensive Human Development*

The new development concept is a concentrated embodiment of the epistemology and methodology of comprehensive human development. Based on the new stage of development, the complete, accurate and comprehensive implementation of the new development concept is of great significance to the realization of socialist modernization and the cultivation of a new form of human civilization.

First, it is conducive to promoting common development among diverse civilizations and injecting new connotations into the development of human civilization. Human civilization has developed in a pluralistic and diversified manner, with no distinction between superiority and inferiority, and all civilizations have their unique values. (Nurturing the new form of human civilization with the new development concept, 2021) “The diversity of human civilization is a fundamental

feature of the world and a source of human progress.” In other words, to realize the comprehensive development of human beings, it is necessary to meet diversified needs, and diversified needs in turn. This will inevitably lead to the diversification of civilizations. Therefore, human civilization should be committed to common development and prosperity, and any form of “clash of civilizations” or “superiority of civilizations” should be rejected. The new development concept advocates a new path of open and inclusive civilization development, which not only rejects arrogance and prejudice but also breaks down dogmatic understandings, greatly opens up new horizons for Chinese-style modernization and civilization, and injects new connotations into the development of human civilization, which will help to further promote the advancement of human civilization, safeguard world peace, and increase stability and positive energy for the promotion of the common values of all humankind.

Secondly, it is conducive to broadening the path of developing countries towards modernization and opening up a new path for the development of human civilization. The new development concept not only has distinctive Chinese characteristics, but also reflects the laws of history and the general trend of development, and has certain universality and global significance. It provides scientific theoretical references and advanced ideas for those countries and nations that want to accelerate their development and at the same time independently choose their own social systems and development paths, and offers brand-new choices for other countries in the world to solve their own problems, contributing Chinese wisdom. Adhering to the new development concept is conducive to breaking the mindset that modernization is equivalent to Westernization, refuting the myth that Western modernization is the only way out, providing a pioneering contribution to the realization of the transcendence of the Western modernization model, and distinctly presenting new inspirations, new ideas and new ways of modernization for developing countries, opening up a new path for the development of human civilization.

Thirdly, it is conducive to the development and progress of human society and promotes human civilization into a new realm. Different cultures do not develop in isolation and without contact with each other; rather, they move forward hand in hand through mutual exchanges, dialogues, learning and collisions. It is the right path to promote the development and progress of human society for different civilizations to learn from each other, exchange ideas, live in harmony and develop together. The new form of human civilization nurtured by the New Development Concept includes such connotations as realizing common prosperity, promoting comprehensive human development and building a community of human destiny, which highlights the concern for and grasp of the future destiny of mankind, and further enriches the theoretical spectrum of modernization in terms of value orientation, development mode and development path, which will have a far-reaching impact on the promotion of the development and progress of human society. It will have a far-reaching impact on promoting the development and progress of human society.

### 3. Achieving Human Development in the Process of Modernization

The report outlines and elaborates in depth the basic features and essential requirements of Chinese-style modernization, in which the economic, political, cultural, social and ecological conditions are the basis for the realization of comprehensive human development. Based on the people-centered development ideology, starting from the essential requirements of Chinese-style modernization, the character and adaptability of modern human beings will be cultivated in the process of promoting material, spiritual, ecological and social civilization, so as a new realm of comprehensive human development will be opened up.

#### *3.1 Realizing the Comprehensive Development of Human Beings in the Modernization of Common Wealth of All People*

Common wealth is the essential requirement of socialism and an important feature of Chinese-style modernization. Common wealth not only shows the improvement of people's living standard, but also centrally reflects the strong desire of all people for a better life under socialist conditions. Since the 18th National Congress, the Party has strengthened its understanding of the common prosperity of all the people from various aspects such as politics, economy, education, etc., firmly established the important position of realizing the common prosperity of all the people, maintained its determination, worked for a long period of time, and taken strong measures to ensure and improve the life of the people from multiple angles and by multiple means. At the same time, standing at a higher historical starting point of development, adhere to the precise poverty alleviation, as sharp as possible, to win the fight against poverty and build a moderately prosperous society in all aspects. Efforts have been made to solve the problem of unbalanced and inadequate development, and to vigorously improve the quality and effectiveness of development, providing a strong material guarantee for meeting the people's aspirations for a better life and promoting comprehensive human development.

#### *3.2 Achieving Comprehensive Human Development in a Modernization That Harmonizes Material Civilization with Spiritual Civilization*

Satisfying the people's spiritual and cultural needs and promoting the coordinated development of material and spiritual civilizations are the proper meaning of Chinese-style modernization. High-quality development provides the material prerequisites for realizing comprehensive human development, while enriching the people's spiritual world is the cultural force for promoting Chinese-style modernization. Therefore, the promotion of modern social development on the new journey must be down-to-earth and long-lasting. It must adhere to the economic construction as the center of the construction of material civilization, while at the same time persevering in the construction of spiritual civilization. It should promote the widespread dissemination of core socialist values, guide the cultivation of sound personalities, take into account the differentiated and diversified cultural needs of the people, constantly stimulate the vitality of cultural creativity, enhance the degree of civilization and the richness of the spiritual life of society as a whole, and work actively for the promotion of the

all-round development of human beings, so as to infuse spiritual nourishment and strengthen the power of spirituality to satisfy the people's need for a better life.

### *3.3 Realizing Comprehensive Human Development in the Modernization of Harmonious Coexistence between Human Beings and Nature*

Human beings are part of nature, and nature also provides a beautiful ecological environment for human beings. In the Chinese-style modernization of today, human activities have been approaching the limit of the carrying capacity of resources and the environment, the disharmony between human beings and nature has become increasingly prominent, and the construction of modernization of harmonious coexistence between human beings and nature is an inevitable choice to meet the challenges of the times. This requires human beings to respect, adapt to and protect nature, and to make new strategic plans for development from the historical height of the evolution of human civilization and from the perspective of harmonious coexistence between human beings and nature.

### *3.4 Achieving Comprehensive Human Development in the Context of Modernization along the Path of Peaceful Development*

In the era of globalization, all countries are interdependent and in solidarity with one another, and the building of a community of human destiny on a global scale with a view to consolidating the greatest common denominator of the international community in the search for peace, the pursuit of development and the promotion of cooperation has become China's positive initiative to the world to build a community of harmony and coexistence and has won the positive response and support of the majority of the world's countries. Human beings are living in the same global village, in the same space and time, and are increasingly becoming a community of destiny in which you have me and I have you. At present, the world is in the midst of historic changes, the international order as well as the global governance system are undergoing profound and complex changes, protectionism and unilateralism are on the rise, the world economy is in the doldrums, the growth of international investment and trade is sluggish, the global industrial chain supply chain has suffered a huge impact due to the new Crown Pneumonia outbreak, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, etc., and the world is facing great challenges to its peace and development, so only by mobilizing and uniting the strengths of the people of various countries around the world can we form an effective response to the global crisis. Only by mobilizing and rallying the strength of people from all over the world can we form a synergy to effectively deal with global challenges. Standing in a new historical position, China has actively advocated the building of a community of human destiny, put forward a Chinese proposal to promote changes in the international order and system, and joined hands to work together to build a better world in which "each country has its own beauty, the beauty of the people is the beauty of the people, the beauty of the people is the beauty of the people, the beauty of the people is the beauty of the people, and the world is the commonwealth of the world". From this perspective, the concept of a community of human destiny is a transcendence and innovation of the traditional theory of international relations, fully reflecting that building a community of human destiny is a state of indivisibility and linked destinies gradually formed



by all countries in the world, which is a historical process and a long-term goal, and is bound to have a far-reaching impact on the development of international relations in the future, and has an important significance in promoting world peace and prosperity, and in fostering the progress of the whole human society. It is of great significance.

“The green hills are together with the clouds and the rain, and the bright moon has never been two homes.” Humankind has only one Earth, and it also has only one common future. (Gong, 2022) Whether it is to deal with the crisis at hand or to create a better future together, humankind needs to focus on the progress of all humankind, comprehensively understand and accurately grasp the theoretical characteristics of the community of destiny, work together in the same boat, unite and cooperate, and stand on the right side of history as we move forward in building a community of destiny for humankind, promoting the sustainable development of human society, and jointly building a better world.

#### 4. Conclusion

Modern social progress and comprehensive human development are dialectically unified, with the realization of comprehensive human development being the ultimate goal of modern society, and social progress providing economic, political, cultural, social and ecological conditions for comprehensive human development. The inherent unity of modernization and comprehensive human development is embodied in the strategic layout of Chinese-style modernization in the new era. The coordinated development of both theory and practice implies the common values of all mankind, brings a new way for mankind all over the world to realize modernization, freedom, and comprehensive development, and elaborates China's propositions and conveys Chinese experience and wisdom in order to solve the common problems confronted by mankind, and then realize the harmonious development of the whole world. It has elaborated China's propositions and conveyed China's experience and wisdom in solving the common problems faced by mankind and thus realizing harmonious development throughout the world.

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