

Analysis of the Communist Party of China's Concept of World History During the Period of Chinese Socialist Revolution and Construction(1949-1976)

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Abstract: During the period of Chinese socialist revolution and construction, the the Communist Party of China formed an overall understanding of world history. The CPC grasped the development of world history from a diachronic perspective, and formed a cognition of the theme of world history. The CPC grasped the development of world history from a synchronic perspective, and formed a cognitive understanding of the horizontal pattern of world history. On the basis of understanding of the diachronic and synchronic nature of the development of world history, the CPC, in accordance with the basic requirements of China's socialist construction, put forward the ideas of "one side", "one line" and "one large area".

Keywords: The Period of Chinese Socialist Revolution and Construction, The The Communist Party of China, The Concept of World History.

1. Introduction

During the period of Chinese socialist revolution and construction, the Communist Party of China has made a diachronic and synchronic dual grasp of the development of world history as a whole, pointing out that war and revolution are the themes of world history, and the horizontal pattern of world history is reflected in the bipolar pattern from "middle zone" to "three worlds". On the basis of a dual grasp of world history, the CPC fully combines the requirements of socialist construction in the People's Republic of China and puts forward the ideas of "one sidedness", "one line" and "one large area". These ideas not only constitute an important part of the CPC's world history view, but also have a profound impact on socialist construction in the process of putting them into practice.

2. Historical Themes of War and Revolution: A Diachronic Grasp of the Development of World History

The historical theme is the core characteristic exhibited by social history in its own development process. This characteristic is stable and persistent, and overall influences the fundamental direction of historical development. During the period from the founding of the People's Republic of China to the end of the "Cultural Revolution", the CPC, inspired by the Soviet leaders' proposal that the world is "now in an era of war and revolution"[1], summarized the theme of world history development as war and revolution according to the actual development of world history. Through the correct exploration of the theme of world history, the CPC has achieved a diachronic grasp of the development of world history.

Firstly, the CPC believed that war was one of the main themes in world history. At the beginning of the founding of the People's Republic of China, the struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union became the most remarkable event in world history. The ideological and social

systems between the United States and the Soviet Union were tense and opposed, and the arms race continued to escalate, directly threatening the stability of the world situation. In the face of such a situation, the Third Plenum of the Seventh Central Committee of the CPC held in 1950 put forward the conclusion that "the possibility of world war III still exists".[2] This shows that after the founding of the People's Republic of China, war has become the basic judgment of the CPC on the theme of the development of world history. This judgment becomes increasingly firm over time. However, there are also differences in the degree of judgment here. Generally speaking, in the 1950s, although the CPC judged that war was the theme of the development of world history, it also repeatedly emphasized the possibility of peace. Mao Zedong proposed the possibility of peaceful existence based on the development of world peace and democratic forces and the impact of the two world wars on imperialism. Mao Zedong believed that at the same time as the possibility of the outbreak of World War III, the democratic and peaceful forces that could contain the war were also rapidly developing. As long as the communist parties of various countries in the world could unite these forces and promote their greater development, "the new world war can be stopped".[3] On the other hand, Mao Zedong summarized the reality of two world wars weakening the power of imperialism, and believed that if another world war broke out, not only would the United States not necessarily benefit, but West Asia, Africa, and Latin America would also break away from imperialism.[4] This possible unfavorable outcome will also contain the outbreak of war. In 1956, the 8th National Congress of the CPC also believed that due to the unprecedented development of peaceful democratic forces after World War II and the unpopular expansionist policies of imperialism, there was a possibility of achieving lasting peace in the world.[5]

However, after 1960, the CPC rarely mentioned the possibility of peaceful existence, but emphasized the possibility of war, and even believed that a world war was imminent. In 1960, Mao Zedong explicitly stated that the elimination of classes must be achieved through war, and only

through the war of class extinction can they be ultimately eliminated.[6] That is to say, class and war coexist in the process of world historical development. This idea, combined with the increasingly fierce competition between the United States and the Soviet Union, the rampant hegemony in the world, and the Soviet Union's attacks on China's border areas, as well as the outbreak of the US Vietnam War, further strengthened the CPC's belief that war was the theme of world history. In 1970, Mao Zedong firmly stated that the basic form after World War II was the US imperialism launching aggressive wars, and the people of the world constantly resisted these aggressive wars. Currently, the danger of a new world war still existed.[7]

Secondly, the CPC believed that revolution was also one of the themes of world history. While war was regarded as the theme of world history, revolution was also regarded as the theme of world history by the CPC. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the socialist camp further expanded. The socialist movements surged around the world. Not only did intense workers' movements emerge within imperialist countries, but large-scale national liberation movements also flourished in imperialist colonies. The call for national liberation and independence was deafening. In 1957, Mao Zedong pointed out the world historical situation of "the east wind overwhelming the west wind" and believed that the power of socialism had surpassed capitalism. After the 1960s, the struggle for hegemony between the United States and the Soviet Union intensified, the Vietnam War intensified, and hegemonism escalated. Sino Soviet relations gradually evolved from the deterioration of inter party relations caused by ideological disputes to the deterioration of national relations, and even some areas went wrong. The CPC said that the whole world history was in the midst of "great turbulence, great differentiation, and great reorganization". With the confirmation of the actual situation, the CPC was more convinced that revolution was the theme of world history. In 1963, during the debate with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the general line of the international communist movement, the CCP believed that as an expression of the overall laws of world historical development, the international communist movement line should not be unilaterally attributed to "peaceful coexistence", "peaceful competition", and "peaceful transition", but should call on the proletariat of the world to unite against imperialism and achieve complete victory in the world revolution.[8] In 1966, the Eleventh Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee of the CPC believed that: "At present, we are in a new era of world revolution", and "the revolutionary movements of people in all countries are booming"[9]. In 1970, Mao Zedong once again emphasized that "the main trend in the world today is revolution"[10]. These expressions clearly demonstrate the CPC's high affirmation that revolution is the theme of world history.

3. From the "Middle Zone" to the "Three Worlds" under the Bipolar Pattern: A Synchronic Grasp of the Development of World History

The synchronic grasp of the development of world history is another important aspect of the CPC's overall grasp of world history. If the CPC's diachronic grasp of the development of world history is mainly manifested in exploring the theme of the development of world history, then

their synchronic grasp of the development of world history is mainly to explore the horizontal pattern of the development of world history under the theme of war and revolution. In this regard, the basic view of the CPC is that the horizontal pattern of the development of world history is shown as the pattern from "middle zone" to "three worlds" under the bipolar pattern.

The bipolar pattern centered on the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union is the overall horizontal pattern of world history under the themes of war and revolution after the founding of the People's Republic of China. After World War II, the signing of the Yalta Agreement directly led to the formation of a bipolar pattern. The United States and the Soviet Union have long been in a standoff, gradually forming a division and confrontation based on ideology and social system between the capitalist camp centered on the United States and the socialist camp centered on the Soviet Union. Although the socialist camp "ceased to exist" and the capitalist camp "disintegrated"[11] in the late 1960s, the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union persisted for a long time. It is under the general pattern of the bipolar pattern centered on the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union that the CPC has successively summarized its horizontal patterns of "middle zone" and "three worlds" according to the specific situation of the development of world history.

In 1946, Mao Zedong had already proposed the concept of the "middle zone". Its basic connotation is that there is still a vast area between the United States and the Soviet Union, which includes many capitalist countries and colonial and semi colonial countries in Europe, Asia, and Africa. The reactionary forces in the United States will first face opposition from countries in the middle ground before attacking the Soviet Union.[12] This statement was also the CPC's understanding and generalization of the horizontal pattern of world history in the 1950s. However, due to the rise of the global national independence movement and the deepening of internal conflicts between the two camps, the tendency of allies within their respective camps to seek independence and autonomy has become increasingly prominent. In the 1960s, Mao Zedong proposed the concept of "two intermediate zones". The first intermediate zone refers to the vast number of economically backward countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, while the second intermediate zone includes capitalist countries in Europe, North America, Canada, Oceania, and Japan.[13] The countries located in the 'middle ground' also have different natures.[14] The existence of "two intermediate zones" under the bipolar struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union was the basic understanding of the horizontal pattern of world history by the CPC during this period.

In the 1970s, world history went through "great turbulence, great division, and great reorganization", with the strong hegemony of the Soviet Union, the challenges posed by the economic recovery of Europe and Japan to the United States, and China's increasing international status. Mao Zedong believed that world history began to show a development pattern of "three worlds". Among them, the First World was the United States and the Soviet Union; The centrists, Europe, Australia, and Canada were part of the Second World; Asia except for Japan, Africa, and Latin America were the Third World.[15] In 1974, Deng Xiaoping's speech at the sixth special session of the United Nations General Assembly further elaborated on the connotation of the "Three Worlds",

believing that the United States and the Soviet Union, located in the First World, and were "the largest international exploiters and oppressors of our time, and the source of new world wars". In the Second World, some countries still maintained colonial relations with Third World countries, but all Second World countries were controlled to varying degrees by First World countries. These controlled Second World countries often demanded liberation from control, national independence, and sovereignty integrity. The Third World countries that had long suffered from colonialism and imperialism were striving to oppose oppression and seek liberation, and were the revolutionary driving force that propelled the wheels of world history forward.[16]

4. The Development of the CPC's World Historical Concept under the Requirements of Socialist Construction

On the basis of a diachronic and synchronic grasp of the development of world history and an overall understanding of the theme and horizontal patterns of world history, the CPC has further combined the basic requirements of socialist construction and formed a more focused concept of world history under the construction scenario, which is mainly reflected in the ideas of "one side", "one line" and "one large area". These thoughts not only constituted an important part of the CPC's concept of world history, but also profoundly affected the socialist construction at that time because they directly guided the formulation of policies.

On the eve of the founding of the People's Republic of China, Mao Zedong put forward the idea of "one side", whose core essence was to lean towards the socialist camp led by the Soviet Union in diplomatic choices. The proposal of the "one-sided" ideology is undoubtedly inspired by the historical experience of "Sun Yat sen's 40 years of experience and the Communist Party's 28 years of experience"[17], but at the same time, it also has a profound world historical background. Since the CPC judged that the theme of world history at that time was war and revolution, and the whole world history presented a horizontal pattern of a bipolar pattern with the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union as the core, it was necessary to choose one of the two camps in order to ensure the national security of the People's Republic of China and strive for a peaceful socialist construction environment as much as possible when it was unable to find a way to survive and develop outside the bipolar pattern. In front of the two camps with obvious ideological and social system divisions, the CPC inevitably needed to choose to turn to the Soviet Union, which had long received its assistance and shared a common ideology, and joined the socialist camp.

After the idea of "one side" was put into practice as a direct guide for specific policies, it not only ensured the external security of the People's Republic of China to a considerable extent and provided a relatively peaceful external development environment, but also, due to the alliance relationship within the same camp, the large amount of economic and technological assistance provided by the Soviet Union directly helped the socialist construction of the People's Republic of China. However, the implementation of the idea of "one side" inevitably restricted the world exchanges of the People's Republic of China, putting it in a long-term ideological confrontation and limiting its scope of

world exchanges to a greater or lesser extent by an ideological boundary. This limitation on the scope of global communication has had an overall impact on the socialist construction of the People's Republic of China. For example, although Mao Zedong called for "learning from foreign countries" and "learning from the strengths of all nations and countries"[18]. Zhou Enlai said at the 8th National Congress of the CPC that the economic and technological scope between socialist countries was constantly expanding. In the context of the increasingly peaceful international situation, the economic, technological, and cultural connections between the People's Republic of China and other countries in the world would inevitably develop day by day. The idea of pursuing development behind closed doors is also wrong.[19] Despite having such a clear understanding in terms of ideology, under the intentional or unintentional constraints of ideological boundaries, the final result shows that during this period, the People's Republic of China was basically in a closed door state for development, lacking communication with other countries in the world, especially developed Western countries. After the rupture of Sino Soviet relations, communication with the Soviet Union also basically stagnated. This greatly restricted global communication constrained the political space of the People's Republic of China and its economic and technological cooperation with other countries on a global scale, and ultimately hindered the socialist construction of the People's Republic of China. Deng Xiaoping also said when summarizing historical experience in the future: "To some extent, we were still isolationist, which had brought us some difficulties. It is not enough to engage in construction behind closed doors, and we cannot develop.[20]

From the late 1950s to the early 1960s, with the deterioration of Sino Soviet relations until the break of diplomatic relations and the rise of China's international status, the CPC abandoned the idea of "one side". In the 1960s and 1970s, the CPC became increasingly convinced that the theme of world history was war and revolution. The CPC deeply felt that hegemonism was rampant and believed that the world revolution has already flourished, and even a world war was not far away. World history presented a horizontal pattern of "three worlds" on the basis of the horizontal pattern of "two intermediate zones". These understandings ultimately led Mao Zedong to propose the ideas of "one line" and "one large area" in the 1970s. The core connotation of these ideas is that in the process of containing the increasingly strong threat and spread of hegemonism, China cannot confront it alone, but must seek to establish an international united front and strive to unite countries located in the "two middle zones" or in the "second world" and "third world".

Unlike the idea of "one side" that excessively values ideology, the ideas of "one line" and "one large area" are no longer completely confined to ideological boundaries, but place national security above ideology, choosing to unite countries with different natures but common interests to ensure the national security of the People's Republic of China. The joint attitude towards countries of different natures means that the CPC has begun to show its intention to gradually break away from ideological constraints and establish diplomatic relations with capitalist countries. This is essential for breaking through the narrow world communication dilemma before, expanding the spatial scope of world communication, and seeking a more favorable world environment for socialist construction.

However, the limitations of the "one line" and "one large area" ideas themselves also had some adverse effects on socialist construction at that time. The fundamental purpose of the ideas of "one line" and "one large area" is to resist hegemonism, which inherently contains a confrontational mindset. Therefore, confrontational thinking will also affect socialist construction in the process of putting the ideas of "one line" and "a large area" into practice. Due to the CPC's recognition of the rationality of confrontational thinking, it became even more convinced that the world was in an era of war and revolution at that time. Under this belief, in order to promote the world revolution and prepare for the upcoming world war, the CPC must make efforts to assist the world revolution and prepare for war, such as providing excessive support to the national liberation movements of third world countries, and carrying out the construction of the Third Front under the policy of "entering the mountains, dispersing, and digging holes" to prepare for the outbreak of war. This disrupted the pace of construction and even led to a temporary halt in economic development, ultimately affecting socialist construction.

5. Conclusion

During the period of socialist revolution and construction, the CPC made an overall grasp of the development of world history from both diachronic and synchronic aspects, and formed an important part of the CPC's world history view in that period. The CPC has pointed out that war and revolution are the themes of world history, and the horizontal pattern of world history is shown in the bipolar pattern from "middle zone" to "three worlds". On this basis, the CPC fully combined with the requirements of new China's socialist construction and put forward the ideas of "one side", "one line" and "one large area", which had a profound impact on socialist construction.

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