

An Inquiry into the Marxist Philosophy of the Red Flag Canal Spirit

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Abstract: The Red Flag Canal Spirit is a red spirit that emanate from the struggle about Lin County people to change the appearance of natural mountains and rivers in the period of socialist construction in China. It is a shining example that the Communist Party of China comprehensively applied the basic principles of Marxism (especially the philosophical principles) in combination with the actual conditions of Lin County, which was poor and backward and the water was as expensive as oil at that time. In the past, the whole county people were able to build a red flag canal to solve the problem of water shortage under the guidance of Marxist theory such as “seeking truth from facts and adhering to the mass line”; in the new era after the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of China, the international situation and the domestic situation are more complicated, we need to inquire the Marxist philosophy of the Red Flag Canal Spirit profoundly , in order to draw some methodological enlightenments for the new era and new tasks.

1. Introduction

During the Fourth Session of the 11th National People's Congress, Comrade Xi Jin ping pointed out that “the spirit of the Red Flag Canal is a centralized embodiment of the nature and purpose of our party. It will last forever and will never go out of date.”^[1] Therefore, in the new era, we should continue to learn the spirit of The Red Flag Canal, and take Marxist philosophy as the theoretical basis to earnestly comprehend its rich connotations.

2. The Marxist Philosophical Concept of the Red Flag Canal Spirit

Marxist philosophy can be divided into two parts: “dialectical materialism” and “historical materialism”. We analyze the spirit should also be based on these two parts.

2.1 The Red Flag Canal Spirit is a direct embodiment of dialectical materialism philosophy.

(1) The spirit is a vivid manifestation of dialectical materialism. Comrade Wang Quan shu once said that Yang Gui^[2] has a thorough materialistic attitude. He is extremely loyal to the party and the people and seeks truth from facts. In 1958, the false reports of grain production under the influence of the exaggerated atmosphere across the country were very serious. However, when Yang Gui of Lin County reported it, he dared to withstand the pressure and strive to seek truth from facts. He did not falsify the report, and always insisted that Lin County's wheat yield was 114 kg per mu. As a result, when many places have been levied too much food because of exaggerated reporting, Lin County can save more than 30 million jin of reserve grain in addition to the mass rations, which is reserved for the construction of the Red Flag Canal in February 1960. The basic food reserves have made the people of Lin County dare to fight the most resolute battles in the poor mountains during the most difficult three-year natural disasters.

(2) The spirit contains basic principles of materialist dialectics. Materialist dialectics believes that “the view of connection and the viewpoint of development are the general characteristics of materialist dialectics.”^[3] The process of constructing the Red Flag Canal is a

process of understanding the world and transforming the world with the viewpoint of “connection, development and contradiction”. The Youth Cave is located in the west of Lu Jia guai Village, Ren cun Town, Lin County, Henan Province. It is a main channel and the largest tunnel. Besides, it is one of the throat projects of the Red Flag Canal. ^[4] As the most critical part of the main stream during the Red Flag Canal project .It plays a decisive role in the smooth flow of the entire canal. The contact point of view in Marxist philosophical theory tells us that the whole is composed of parts, and the role of key parts often restricts the overall development. Therefore, although the Youth Cave is extremely dangerous and all the projects are built on hard quartzite, people must win this battle. The young people in Lin County are not afraid. After a year and five months of hard work, they finally cut through the Youth Caves, so that the main canal can pass through the water smoothly.

(3) The spirit is a vivid interpretation of the epistemology of dialectical materialism. Dialectical materialism epistemology believes that people's process of understanding specific things must undergo a cyclical process of repeated practice and repeated understanding in order to continuously raise the level of understanding. After the official start of the Red Flag Canal, there were many problems: the battle line was too long, it was not easy to lead; the relationship between the construction of the people in Shanxi province and the production and life of the local residents and so on ,these problems are difficult to deal with. In response to these problems, Yang Gui and the leadership team of the then county party committee repeatedly visited the masses to conduct conversations and inquiries, conducted in-depth thinking on practical issues, and paid attention to summarizing basic experience. Subsequently, the county party committee immediately organized a strategic meeting of PanYang to adjust the current operational methods to “concentrate power, fight annihilation, and stage assaults”. This effectively avoids those troubles ,such as the blind enthusiasm of the masses, and the front line is too long, people cannot immediately see the problem of lowering the water and leading to lower confidence.

2.2 The Red Flag Canal Spirit reflects the basic content of historical materialism philosophy

(1) The spirit reflects the dialectical relationship between “social existence and social consciousness”. Lin County has always suffered from water shortages since ancient times. There is a phenomenon: nine years of drought in 10 years .The social reality that water was as precious as oil has been going on for many years determines the consciousness that people regard water as life. Children must take water from their names. In addition, when the local girls marry, they don't want to eat or dress well , but they only ask for water to wash their faces . These civil society ideologies not only reflect the current situation of the social existence of Lin County, which is extremely short of water, but also have a huge counter-effect on this fact: to channel water from Shan Xi province and completely solving the problem of water in Lin County.

(2) The spirit highlights the views of the masses and the mass line. The Marxist view of the masses holds that “the people are the creators of history.” Throughout the development of the history of human society, people have always played the most crucial role in decisive decision-making. The Red Flag Canal is the life channel and happiness channel for the people in the local county. It benefits the broad masses of the people. The reasons for its success include not only the correct leadership of the Lin County government which is represented by Comrade Yang Gui at that time, but also the unity and cooperation of the people and selfless dedication, what is the most important thing during the whole construction of the canal. In any case, the achievements of heroes are naturally indelible, but without the strong support of the people, it is absolutely impossible to win.

(3) The spirit contains a personal “life outlook and values”. When deciding to build the Red Flag Canal, the county party secretary Yang Gui was only 26 years old. When he took office, he led the working group to go to the countryside, and went deep into the villages and

townships to investigate the basic reality conditions of Lin County. When he learned that Lin County was seriously deficient in water, the economy was very backward, and the people were very difficult to produce and live. At that time, he made up his mind: no matter how much difficulty they encountered, they had to solve the problem of water in Lin County and let the masses lead a life with water. The construction of the Red Flag Canal caught up with the period-- three years of natural disasters in the country, and the production conditions were very poor. However, he was resolutely determined to lead the people to fight hard. Finally, under his leadership, 100 thousand people of Lin County fought hard in Tai hang Mountain for ten years, eventually built into a world-famous artificial long river -the Red Flag Canal. It has completely ended the history of “Water is as valuable as oil” in Lin County .He really did “to be an official, to benefit one side people.”

3. The enlightenment of the spiritual philosophy about the Red Flag Canal Spirit in the new era

(1) Adhere to the Marxist view of practice. The Marxist view of practice is a scientific materialist philosophy. It requires us to persist in seeking truth from facts when we do things, and everything starts from reality. Comrade Xi Jin ping pointed out in the report of the 19th National Congress that “our party maintains emancipating the mind, seeking truth from facts, advancing with the times, seeking truth and being pragmatic, and persisting in dialectical materialism and historical materialism”^[5] around the major issues brought about by the new era. Only by closely integrating the new requirements of the new era, the people of the whole country will continue to work hard and be aggressive, and we will be able to truly realize the Chinese Dream.

(2) Adhere to the dialectical and contradictory analysis methods of Marxism. The main reason why the Red Flag Canal can be successfully built is that the leaders insist on taking the path of Marxism. They know how to look at things from a dialectical perspective and concentrate on grasping the main contradictions to solve problems. At the moment, we must uphold the Marxist materialist dialectics, neither smug, stop, nor fear a series of new problems brought about by development. We must seize the main contradiction of unbalanced and inadequate social development in the new era, concentrate on doing great things, speed up the pace of regional coordinated development, strive for the realization of common prosperity for all, and win the great victory of building a well-off society in an all-round way.

(3) Adhere to the Marxist view of the masses. The Marxist view of the masses holds that the people are the creators of social material wealth and spiritual wealth, and the determining force of social change. The success of the construction about the Red Flag Canal is inseparable from the wise decision-making and correct leadership of the Lin County Committee, which is belonging to the Communist Party of China .But the more important thing is that the 100,000 people behind it .Without their collective efforts ,there will not complete such a masterpiece. Today, we are faced with a more complex international and domestic situation than ever before. The party and the people are faced with greater opportunities for development as well as for even more severe challenges. For this reason, we must keep in mind: always take the interests of the people as the most important thing. With all the heart, unity and cooperation, and work together, we can make great progress in the tide of the times and achieve greater victories.

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