

# The Three Perspectives of the Marxist View of Mass History

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**Abstract:** *Marx made two important discoveries in his life: was the theory of surplus value, which exposed the evils of capitalism; the other was the materialist concept of history, which explored the mysteries of human society. Marx's mass view of history scientifically reveals the subject status and decisive role of the masses, and has been continuously inherited, innovated, enriched and developed in the long-term process of revolution, construction and reform in China. In fact, there are three dimensions in the Marxist mass view of history: the masses are the subject of history creation, the masses are the subject of cognitive activities, and the masses are the subject of social value. A comprehensive understanding and grasp of the three perspectives of the Marxist mass view of history has great theoretical and practical significance for the full implementation of the party's mass views and the party's mass line.*

**Keywords:** *Marxism; mass view of history; creation subject; cognition subject; value subject*

## 1. Introduction

There are two great discoveries in Marx's life: one is the theory of surplus value, which reveals the secrets of capitalist exploitation, and the other is historical materialism, which explores the mysteries of human society. The mass view of history is an important content of Marxist historical materialism, which was formed and developed during the process of Marx's creation of historical materialism.

The Marxist perspective on mass history is rooted in the objective and perceptive majority, the masses, and regards their labor practices as the driving force. Stemming from the inevitability of social and historical progress, as well as the varying levels of the connection between people and history, this viewpoint scientifically asserts that the true architects of change are the masses of people. For the first time, the mass view of history has truly thoroughly and scientifically demonstrated the historical subject status of the masses, confirmed that social existence determines social consciousness, and affirmed the decisive role played by the masses in the creation of history and the process of historical development. In fact, there are three dimensions in the Marxist mass view of history: the masses are the subject of history creation, the masses are the subject of cognitive activities, and the masses are the subject of social value[1-2].

## 2. Perspective of History: The masses are the main body of history creation

To observe the historical status of the masses from the perspective of the dynamics of social and historical development, that is, the role played by the masses in the process of social development. Stalin wrote: "If historical science wants to become a real science, it can no longer attribute the history of social and historical development to the actions of emperors and generals, and to the actions of 'aggressors' and 'conquerors' who ravaged other countries. The history of the producers of material materials, the history of the laboring masses, and the history of the peoples of various countries should be studied."According to the materialist interpretation of history, the history of human survival and development is rooted in the production of material materials. The main body of the production of material materials and its mode of production is the masses of the people. Therefore, from this perspective, the masses of the people are the main force behind the making of history and play a decisive role in the creation of history.

The role of the masses in creating history is consistent with the movement of basic social contradictions that promote the progress of society. In the process of resolving basic social contradictions, the masses of the people conform to the requirements of the development of productive

forces and advocate the transformation of the old social system and old ideas. The general will and actions of the people represent the direction of historical development, and the social practice of the people determines the outcome of historical development.

### ***2.1 The people are the creators of social material wealth***

The development of human history is realized through the development of the production of material goods, and the mode of production of material goods is not only the basis for the survival and continuity of human beings, but also the foundation of human history and the existence and development of human society, and the masses of the people are the main body of the production of material goods that can be carried out smoothly, and are the ultimate bearers of such production activities. The masses of the people not only produce the necessities for the maintenance of people's daily life, but also create the prerequisites of material means of life needed for political, economic, cultural and other superstructural activities. The working masses, including intellectuals, accumulated and disseminated production experience, improved and invented production tools, and pushed forward the development of the productive forces of society. The whole edifice of human history is built on the basis of the material wealth of society created by the masses of the people. Human society cannot survive and continue without the labor practices of the masses. As Engels pointed out, "Whatever changes take place in the upper strata of society not engaged in production, society cannot survive without a class of producers."

Therefore, from this point of view, the masses of the people create the entire material wealth of society. The material wealth of society comes from the masses of working people, and it is their continuous improvement of the tools of production, accumulation of production experience and improvement of production technology during the production process that enables the continuous development of the productive forces of society, thus ultimately promoting the development and progress of society as a whole, and the existence and development of human society cannot be separated from the material wealth created by the working people[3-5].

### ***2.2 The people are the creators of social spiritual wealth***

The people are not only the main body of material production activities, but also the main body of spiritual production activities. People's material production practices provide the necessary material conditions and facilities for creating spiritual wealth. The life and practical activities of the people are the source of the formation and development of all spiritual wealth and spiritual products.

The masses of the people also participate directly in the creation of the spiritual wealth of society, and the intellectuals of the people in particular play a very important role in the process of spiritual production and the creation of spiritual wealth. All the spiritual wealth of human society comes from the production and life practice of the people. Without the people's material production and the practical activities of material life, all human thought, art and other spiritual activities would become water without a source and wood without a root. The labor practice of the people is an inexhaustible driving force for the development of human spiritual civilization. If there is no need for the labor practice activities of the people, human spiritual and cultural creation activities will lose their original motivation and cannot be carried out.

### ***2.3 The masses are the decisive force for social change***

By creating social wealth, the masses of people simultaneously create and transform social relations, thus determining the direction of social development. By creating social wealth, the masses of people simultaneously create and transform social relations, thus determining the direction of social development. The change of social relations of production and social order depends on the level of development of productive forces, but the ultimate carriers of the productive forces of society are the masses; the change of relations of production and social order will not be carried out on its own initiative in connection with the development of the productive forces of society, but must be carried out with the help of the material power of the working masses. In specific historical conditions, contributing to the development of productive forces, the masses of people constantly improve the relations of production. The popular masses are the main force of social revolution and play a great role in the change of social formations. Therefore, in the final analysis, the broadest masses of people are the decisive force of social change. As V.I. Lenin emphasized: "It is the masses who determine the end of history." Also as Mao Zedong emphasized: "The people, and only the people, are the driving force

in shaping world history.”

Looking back at history, the establishment of a new social system is inseparable from the struggle of the masses to overthrow the old social system. When the masses of the people overthrow the old production relations and superstructure, and destroy all kinds of reactionary and decadent social systems and social forces, it is also the moment when the masses of the people complete social and political transformation. The first major nationwide peasant uprising of Chen Sheng and Wu Guang in Chinese history is a case in point. Initiated and carried out by the masses, this uprising dealt a serious blow to the Qin dynasty, reflecting not only the courage, fearlessness and creativity of the people, but also proving the unstoppable power of the masses. This fact shows that while the masses of the people support the existence of a regime, they also have the power to overthrow a regime, just as "water can carry a boat, but it can also overturn it." [6-7]

### 3. Epistemological perspective: the masses are the main body of cognitive activities

The mass view of history is an important content of historical materialism, and only from the angle of historical materialism can its rich content be better explored. However, Marxist philosophy is an organic unity of historical outlook, epistemology and value theory. Therefore, we cannot understand the mass vision of history from the point of view of history alone, but we must understand the mass vision of history from a broader point of view. In the past, people often separated the mass view of history from epistemology, which led to a less thorough understanding of the mass view of history.

First of all, Marxist epistemology is actually an epistemology based on practice, and the viewpoint of practice is the most fundamental and primary viewpoint of Marxist epistemology. Marx and Engels pointed out: "The production of ideas, ideas, and consciousness is initially directly related to people's material activities are intertwined with people's material communication and the language of real life. People's imagination, thinking and spiritual communication are still the direct product of people's material actions here. It is manifested in a certain nation's politics, law, morality, religion. The same is true for spiritual production in languages such as metaphysics." In addition, human cognition activities will evolve in line with changes in practice.

Secondly, people's practical activities promote the development of people's cognition. In the process of practice, many new topics or problems often arise that we need to solve, thus continuously promoting the development of human cognition. So Engels said: "Once the society has a technical need, this need will push science forward more than ten universities. "Practice can also provide tools and means for our comprehension activities, transform people's subjective world, and train and refine their cognitive abilities. Marx argued that "Changes in the environment and the alignment of human activities can only be seen and reasonably understood as practices of change. "That is to say, while people change the objective world, they also change their own subjective world. Engels made it more clear that the extent to which man learns to change the natural world is the extent to which human intelligence develops, and human intelligence develops according to how man learns to change the natural world.

Finally, practice is the sole criterion for testing the truth of cognition. Truth is not self-proclaimed. "Whether man's thinking has an objective truth or not is not a question of theory, but a question of practice. One should prove the truthfulness of one's thinking in practice, i.e. the reality and power of one's thinking, the here-and-now nature of one's thinking. "That is to say, whether cognition has Truth can neither be verified from the cognition itself, nor can it be resolved from the cognition object, and can only be verified in practice. Marx pointed out that: "Whether man's thinking is objectively true or not is not a question of theory, but a question of practice. Man should prove the truthfulness of his thinking in practice, that is, the reality and power of his thinking, the here-and-now nature of his thinking. "The fact that Marx reduced the question of truth to a question of practice is also an apt illustration of the fact that practice is the source of the only criterion for testing the truth of understanding. The test of truth by practice usually cannot be accomplished overnight, but must be tested by history. For practice is always concretely expressed as a myriad of individual, historical practical activities. Therefore, we must regard the test of truth by practice as the practice of the entire human race, that is, the practice of countless individual, historically developed, and social practices as a whole, that is, the practice of the broad masses of the people. As Mao Zedong emphasized in "On New Democracy," "There is only one truth, and who actually discovers the truth does not rely on subjective exaggeration, but on objective practice. Only the revolutionary practice of millions of people is the measure of truth." [8]

#### 4. Axiological perspective: the masses are the main body of social value

If the epistemological perspective of the historical view of the masses consists in revealing the subjective position of the masses in the activity of cognizing the world, the value-theoretical perspective of the historical view of the masses consists mainly in revealing the subjective position of the masses as the subject of interests and values in the history of human society. The masses are not only the creators of social history, but also the interests of society. The people are both the main part of creating social history and the main part of social interests, and the people are both the main part of creating social value and the main part of evaluating social value. Uncovering the ideological connotation of the mass conception of history from the perspective of value theory has broader theoretical significance and practical relevance.

The Marxist view of mass history always insists on taking the fundamental interests of the people as the starting point. Marx and Engels asserted: "All movements in the past have been movements of a minority or of a minority in the interests of a minority. The movement of the proletariat is the independent movement of the great majority, in the interests of the great majority." Lenin also pointed out that "the question of material interests underlies the whole worldview of Marxism." He emphasized that "all speeches and actions of the 'Communists' must be in line with the greatest interests of the broadest masses of the people and be supported by the broadest masses of the people as the highest standard." "Another distinctive sign that we Communists are different from any other political party, is to have the closest contact with the broadest masses of the people. To serve the people wholeheartedly."

As the creators of history, the people are the main body of social value. This is the value orientation established by historical materialism for the people. Centering on this value orientation, Marxism sets the ideal goal of liberating all mankind, freeing the proletarians who account for the majority of the population from shackles, gaining the whole world, and living a beautiful life of freedom, equality, and happiness. In the union of free people in the future society, industrial workers and toiling masses are the subject rather than the object and object, and the purpose rather than tools and means. The people are both the starting point and the end point, both the original intention and the ultimate goal. Marxism always takes the liberation of all mankind as its highest goal. General Secretary Xi pointed out: "The people's aspiration for a better life is the goal of our struggle." Adhering to the guidance of Marxism, we organically integrate development for the people, rely on the people for development, and share the fruits of development with the new concept of governance. In the process of development, overall thinking and great practice, a people-centered development idea has been formed, which reflects a firm belief in Marxism and highlights the value status of the people as the main body of society. The history of the contemporary development of the Marxist concept of the history of the masses fully reflects the lineage and up-to-date nature of Marxist theory.

#### 5. Conclusion

Thus, the people are not only a prerequisite for the Marxist concept of mass history, but are also conditioned to respect the objective laws of historical development and their own essential power - labor practice - to exert a synergistic influence on history and move it forward. The masses of people are also the decisive factor of history, constituting the main body of the development of human history, and ultimately creating everything in history. Therefore, the reason why Marx and Engels created the view of history of the masses is based on their respect and belief in the masses of people. In the new era of socialist thought with Chinese characteristics, only by truly adhering to the Marxist mass view of history and the party's mass line can our party unswervingly stand firm on the mass stand and firmly rely on the broad masses of the people. Only the masses can always be in touch with the people, share weal and woe with the people, and work in unity with the people, so as to solve the urgent problems encountered in the development of our country's society. Only in this way can the Chinese nation achieve great rejuvenation and build a prosperous, democratic, civilized, harmonious and beautiful socialist modern power, and finally realize communism and the complete liberation of all mankind.

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