Asian Social Science; Vol. 9, No. 3; 2013
ISSN 1911-2017 E-ISSN 1911-2025
Published by Canadian Center of Science and Education

The Great Open-minded Thinking by Deng Xiaoping and Its Contemporary Significance

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Received: December 1, 2012 Accepted: December 27, 2012 Online Published: February 28, 2013

doi:10.5539/ass.v9n3p202 URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ass.v9n3p202

Abstract

The major decision of Deng Xiaoping's Reform and Opening up is the inevitable development of history and the choice of the Chinese people. The large Open-mindedness which is the important component of Deng Xiaoping Theory is all-around, including both external opening and internal opening. It guides the great practice of China's Reform and Opening up more than 30 years, and has obtained the great achievement which attracts worldwide attention, and is a scientific theory we have to have profound knowledge and comprehensive understanding in. Deng Xiaoping large open-mindedness which is applying Marxist stand, viewpoint and method to solve specific problems, is essentially a Marxist methodology and the important spiritual wealth of Marxism, has significance for Party building and National development in the new century.

Keywords: Deng Xiaoping, the great open-minded thinking, contemporary significance

1. The Historical Background of the Great Open-minded Thinking by Deng Xiaoping

The significant decisions made in the reform and opening up were necessity of the history, the will of the common people and the need of the globalization era. Just as Comrade Hu Jintao said, "Reform and opening up is a critical choice that decides the contemporary Chinese destiny and is also a common choice of the 1.3 billion Chinese people." (Hu, 2008)

1.1 The Domestic Background

Our country's socialist economy stagnates for a long time, the lives of the people have not had the tremendous change for a long time. The one hand, since the founding of the past 30 years, our country takes the class struggle as the outline for a long time, and neglects economic development; On the other hand, as a result of the long-term self-seal, our country is isolated from the international community. These create our country socialist economy to be in the long-term stagnation and the slow development condition, the lives of the people have not had the distinct improvement, and moreover quite many people have not solved the food and shelter problem. the striking contrast between the advanced socialist systems and backward people's material life, has seriously harmed the image and cohesive force of Socialism.

The planned economy system of high degree of concentration makes the Socialism gradually lose the vitality and vigor. Founds a nation for dozens years, our country has practiced the planned economy system. This system will be successful in people revolutionary fervor surges upward, the economic scale small and other under the specific historic conditions. However along with the economic development volume increase, the economic structure complication and development objective multiplication and in the lives of the people demand diversification as well as the foreign relations complication situation, its malpractice revealed day by day. It manages too mach, is hard to arouse the work enthusiasm and initiatives of majority of the people, obvious contradiction of the backward in production with people's demand growths, making the Socialism gradually lose the proper vitality and vigor.

1.2 The International Background

Peace with developing into epochal theme. Since the 1970s, the cold war has tended to end, the world politics, economy and international relations have the great change, the peace with developing into the subject of time. Although the world has the oppositions and struggles of two systems, has the conflicts and instabilities of certain areas, but the development of economical and society becomes the primary problem that the key point of all

governments and people's generally attention and must solve fully. The focus of the international competition has changed from politics and military power into comprehensive national strength which based on economic and science and technology. International relations shifted from confrontation to dialogue, ideological struggle gave way to cooperation in the field of development. Under the new historical conditions, Deng Xiaoping through the opening to the outside world, his thought of the studying, the modeling and using the capitalism outstanding achievement has been advanced to a new stage.

The developing country economy develops rapidly. In the late 20th century, the internationalization of production, capital and financial circulation promoted various countries' economy to converge the world market. The developing country economy rapid development, especially Asia-Pacific region, the emerging industrialized country modernization advancement unceasingly accelerated, which created the development miracle that the common people praised. The rapid development of some peripheral national economies and surpass China, has had very tremendous pressure and impetus to our country, forces us to maintain independence and keep initiative, to rely on one's own effort to revive in the foundation, to adapt to the outside world, to join the trend of the reform and accelerating development.

The Socialism movement receives the serious challenge in the entire worldwide and is in the temporary ebb tide periods. Facing harsh reality, Take Deng Xiaoping as representative's Chinese Communists have to earnestly summarize decades of the success or failure of Socialism practice and seriously reconsider the future and destiny of the Socialism from higher deeper and broader perspective, and break through certain outmoded rules, regulations and conclusions by the enormous theoretical courage and political courage, boldly carry on the theoretical innovation, proposed the brand-new ideological theory, promoting the cause of Socialism to continue to go forward.

2. Major Content of the Great Open-minded Thinking by Deng Xiaoping

The open-minded thinking by Deng Xiaoping is all-around, including both external opening and internal opening. Deng Xiaoping ever pointed out, “Opening includes two major contents, one external opening and the other internal opening”, namely, “one external economic opening and one internal economic invigoration.” (Deng, 1993, p. 98, 224)

2.1 The External Open-minded Thinking by Deng Xiaoping

The external open-minded thinking by Deng Xiaoping contains rich connotation, broad and profound, and mainly includes the following content.

In the first place, socialism has to absorb and utilize all advanced civilization achievements created by capitalism to develop and expand itself. Ever since the 11th central committee of the Chinese communist party, Deng Xiaoping made repeated elaboration on the necessity to learn the advanced elements in capitalism and say in anticipation the comprehensive development of the economic society in the socialism in the future through external opening with a capacious mind, advantaging of the socialist getting really embodied. He said, “China is a socialist country. Adhering to the socialism path, developing socialism economy to absorb foreign capital, cooperating in management can’t damage the sovereign rights of the socialist China. Instead, it can only help to develop socialism economy.” (Deng, 1984)

In the second place, it is necessary to make full use of both international and domestic markets and the two resources and realize rational and effective allocation of resources within a more extensive scope. Development of socialism market economy clamors for making full use of both international and domestic markets. In the meantime, distribution of the world resources is not balanced and there is no country that is able to possess all resources necessary for development of the national economy. The unique approach to resolve this contradiction is to open the national door, exchange mutual needed goods in a global scope, re-organize production elements and realize optimal allocation of resources. In this respect, the national situation of China decides that we have to make positive and full use of foreign capital and advanced technology to alleviate shortage of domestic construction capital, the status quo of laggard production and management technology and accelerate the pace of modernization construction of Chinese socialism.

In the third place, it is necessary to build special economic zones and develop export-oriented economy. This is an important measure for us to implement external opening ever since the 11th central committee of the Chinese communist party and is also the specific reflection of the external open-minded thinking of Deng Xiaoping in practice. It has been proved in practice that the idea and decision-making of establishing special economic zones is totally correct and has gained enormous success. Establishment of special economic zones not only have stimulated swift development of these areas, but have also played well the role as “a window” and have exerted

important demonstration, radiation and leading effect on reform and opening up and modernization construction. In order to further improve the external opening pattern, under the support of Comrade Deng Xiaoping, the central government formulates economic development strategy for coastal areas, which requires all the coastal areas to speed up opening and develop export-oriented economy. Comrade Deng Xiaoping's thinking about developing export-oriented economy is not only aimed for special economic zones, but also for coastal areas and the whole country. Ever since the 90s of the 20th Century, external opening has promoted from coastal areas to provinces and areas along the Yangtze River, border areas and inland areas, and all-around, multi-level and wide-ranging external opening pattern has been formed within a national scope. Comrade Deng Xiaoping boosted external opening step by step from coastal areas to inland areas, carried out economic development strategy for coastal areas and implemented all-around open-minded thinking, which played an enormous role in deepening the reform of economic system and pushing forward the modernization construction.

In the fourth place, he proposed the strategic idea of "two overall situations". Namely, coastal areas should speed up external opening to make the vast region that possesses a population of more than 0.2 billion to develop rapidly so as to drive better development inland areas, which is an issue concerning the overall situation. Inland areas need to show consideration for and take care to preserve this overall situation. On the contrary, when coastal areas are developed to a certain extent, they are asked to exert more strength to help inland areas in their development, which is also an overall situation. Then, coastal areas also have to abide by this overall situation. As the core content of the strategy to govern the country by Deng Xiaoping, the idea of "two overall situations" has provided theoretical evidence for the strategic decision making of social and economic development step by step from eastern areas to western areas and has played an extremely prominent role in promoting the reform and opening up. The process of the reform and opening up in China has exactly proceeds in accordance with deployment of Deng Xiaoping's idea of "two overall situations", that is, from partial to whole and driving southeastern coastal areas with Shenzhen and Pudong and driving the whole country with Shanghai, Guangdong and Beijing; from eastern areas to western areas and gradually promoting economic and social development of the whole country. In the 80s of the 20th Century, the Pearl River Delta charged ahead and took a leading role in development; in the 90s, the Yangtze River delta followed the steps; in the 21st Century, the great development of western areas and revitalization of northeastern areas took off together and there was only a board of chess all over the country, pushed by the tide with distinct gradation.

2.2 The Internal Open-minded Thinking by Deng Xiaoping

Internal opening is to oppose to and constrain all kinds of monopolies, smash the state of separation among different areas and industries, facilitate flow of resources between different industries and areas and all kinds of systems of ownership with the effect of market mechanism and optimal allocation of these resources and promote formation and development of the unified domestic market in which the competition mechanism plays a full role.

The objective of internal opening is to eliminate monopoly, break blockage and form a great domestic market with integration of competition, opening and unification. With development of construction practice and changes of international and domestic conditions, disadvantages of the former Soviet Union type of planned economic system implemented in China in which authority was highly centralized to the central government appeared day by day. On one hand, objectively, the traditional system led to fragmentation and segmentation of all sections and regions and monopoly of all industries and sections. All regions and sections governed themselves, and the phenomenon of blind investment and blind construction was common, leading to continuously aggravated issue of isomorphism and assimilation of regional industrial structure. On the other hand, the above phenomenon led to regional blockage and market segmentation and overflow of local protectionism. For example, different regions got involved in the war of resources due to short supply of resources; a great variety of trade barriers and administrative barriers were built; monopoly and blockage was implemented in resources, technology, talents and commodity; all kinds of illegal means were taken to protect the interests of local areas, etc. All the above measures not only led to jam of channels for commodity circulation and inability to flow freely of all kinds of commodity and production elements, but also caused advantages of all regions, industries and enterprises unable to be complemented, leading to waste of a mass of resources. All the above issues seriously influenced higher level development of the national economy. Regarding the serious results caused by these issues, after a profound analysis of the experiences learnt from the socialist construction after building of the nation, Deng Xiaoping emphasized in "decision on economic system reform", "All domestic areas, including coastal areas, inland areas, border areas, urban and rural areas and all industries and enterprises have to break the blockage, open the door and vigorously promote horizontal link, according to the principle of enhancing advantages and avoiding disadvantages, a great variety of forms, reciprocity and mutual benefit and common development", so

as to form a large domestic market with integration of competition, opening and unification. Thus, it can be found, internal opening is a responsive policy proposed to cope with disadvantages of the traditional economic system, a weapon to thoroughly reform and remould the economic system and an important means to promote healthy development of the national economy.

The essence of internal opening is to invigorate the economy internally and mobilize enthusiasm of the people all over the country. Under the traditional system, functions of government and enterprise were not separated in the economic life and the country exercised too sweeping and rigid control over enterprises, so enterprises didn't have the decision-making authority; commodity production, value rule and the role of market adjustment were ignored; the phenomenon of egalitarianism in distribution was serious; the economic pattern and operation means were too single. All the above phenomena seriously constrained playing of people's enthusiasm, initiative and creativity, as a result of which the national economy was lacking in vitality. Considering the above status quo, Comrade Deng Xiaoping pointed out, "Generally speaking, our economic reform is to invigorate economy internally and open to the outside world externally. Internal invigoration is also to be open internally and to mobilize enthusiasm of people all over the country through opening. Once the rural economy is open, enthusiasm of the 0.8 billion of farmers will be mobilized. Similarly, urban economic opening should also mobilize enthusiasm of all circles in enterprises and the society." (Deng, 1993, p. 135) The train of thought and tactics of "internal invigoration" not only greatly stimulated enthusiasm of the vast majority of common people and strengthened vitality of the national economy, but have also led the economic system in a historical transformation from the traditional planned economic system to the socialist market economic system.

3. The Contemporary Significance of the Great Open-minded Thinking by Deng Xiaoping

The great open-minded thinking of Deng Xiaoping not only considers the future, but also faces the future, containing abundant creative thinking. In essence, the great open-minded thinking of Deng Xiaoping is a kind of methodology of Marxism, a means that utilizes the standpoint, viewpoint and method of Marxism to analyze and resolve specific problems and an important spiritual wealth of Marxism, which has important manifestation significance to establishment of the Communist Party of China and the national development in a new century.

First of all, we have to know about Marxism with a broad mind, firmly believe in the belief of socialism and unswervingly conduct reform and opening up. As the time and space change and the history evolves, when we adhere to Marxism, we also have to develop Marxism, take in the new thinking achievements of human being in their research of Marxism and firmly believe that the guiding position of Marxism will absolutely not be swayed and that the belief that socialism will certainly win will absolutely not be swayed. This is a general trend of the historical development determined by the human social development, a truth proved by Chinese revolution and construction practice for more than 90 years. Just as Comrade Deng Xiaoping said, "No matter how weak our party was in the past and no matter what kind of difficulties we have encountered, we have always had a powerful struggling strength, just as we have the belief of Marxism and Communism. With the common ideal, we have our iron discipline. No matter in the past, at present or in the future, this is our actual superiority." (Deng, 1993, p. 143) The great open-minded thinking of Deng Xiaoping gives us such enlightenment that we should be good at unifying the minimum program and the maximum program, both entertain an ideal and consider the reality, play no tricks to establish the business, struggle in a thoroughgoing and hardworking manner, do what should be done at the current stage step by step and firmly push forward reform and opening up and modernization construction. The historical experiences and the basis of the dialectical theory of the open-minded thinking support each other mutually in terms of the above issue and the modernization construction and reform will never be conducted in a closed state.

At the beginning of the external opening, there were some comrades both inside and outside the Communist Party of China who held doubts and were afraid that external opening might foster capitalism. Regarding this fact, Comrade Deng Xiaoping clearly expressed that, "Our open policy will not foster capitalism." He pointed out, "Implementation of the policy of external opening might cause some part of capitalism elements to enter China. Nevertheless, the power of socialism was even greater and socialism would achieve greater development. The ratio of socialism would always occupy the superior position." (Den, 1998, p. 308). Besides, at the beginning of 1992, Deng Xiaoping pungently pointed out in his South Tour Speeches, "When all has been said about the reason why the reform and opening up can't take its step and dare not make a breakthrough, the fact remains that we are afraid that if we are afraid we might take the path of capitalism if there are too many capitalism elements. The crucial issue is whether we have the surname "capitalism" or the surname "socialism". The major standard for our judgment should be to see whether it avails development of productivity in the socialist society, strengthening the comprehensive national power of the socialist country and improvement of the life level of people." (Deng, 1993, p. 326) He also emphasized that external opening was not an expedient,

but instead a long term strategic policy and basic national tactics, so it was necessary to carry it through unswervingly. He repeatedly emphasized that the opening policy in China would remain unchanged for a long time and even if it changed, it would only become more open. It has been proved by practice that the policy of opening is correct.

Then, we need to adhere to the thinking route of liberation of thought and coming down to the earth and push forward theoretical innovation of Marxism. No matter in internal invigoration and in external opening, liberation of thought and coming down to the earth is a primary requirement. Comrade Deng Xiaoping mostly opposed to imprisonment of rules and regulations as he was deeply aware of their danger. "The four modernizations will not be realized if we do not break mental stagnation and do not vigorously resolve the thought of cadres and the common people." (Deng, 1994, p. 143) "If a party, a country and a nation start everything from the book, with mental stagnation and prevailing of superstition, then it can't go forward and its vitality will cease and the party and the country will perish." (Deng, 1994, p. 143) Coming down to the earth has broken mental stagnation and initiated the reform and opening up, making the earth of the nation present an entirely new appearance. In 1992, Comrade Deng Xiaoping ever said emotionally that, "Our success in the reform and opening up does not come from the book, but from practice and from all coming down to the earth." Whether we can further carry forward the spirit of coming down to the earth and establish and implement the scientific outlook on development in a new era, to a certain extent, determines the future and destiny of our party and our country.

Deng Xiaoping theory is the Chinese contemporary inherited and developed Marxism. On one hand, Deng Xiaoping changed the belief of Marxism into a kind of open-minded thinking and practical activity so as to make Marxism manifest more live and powerful vitality in a new era. It starts out from the reality, corresponds with the development rule of objective things and stands up to test of practice. Deng Xiaoping ever said, "When we conduct reform and opening up, we place out focus of work on economic construction, neither losing Marxism, Leninism nor Mao Zedong Thought. We could not lose our old ancestors! The critical issue is that we have to make it clear what is socialism." (Deng, 1993, p. 369) On the other hand, in the developmental history of Marxism, Deng Xiaoping put forward, for the first time, the concept of socialism opening to the outside world and proposed the systematic external open-minded thinking. He clearly pointed out, "In order for the socialism to gain advantages comparable with capitalism, it has to boldly absorb and refer to all civilization achievements created by the human society and take in and refer to all advanced operation means and management means that reflect modern socialization production rules in all contemporary countries, including developed capitalism countries." (Deng, 1993, p. 373) Furthermore, from the very beginning, he firmly believed that external opening was not an expedient, but a long term basic national policy.

The open-minded thinking of Deng Xiaoping clearly tells us that no one can exhaust his knowledge in truth, so persistence in Marxism requires us to continuously open new approaches to know about the truth. Development of Marxism is the best persistence in Marxism. Realization of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation in a new era requires us to guide new practices with the developing Marxism and expand the undertakings of socialism in the process of innovating Marxism.

Finally, we have to keep close pace with the step of the times and concentrate on combination of basic Marxism principles and specific Chinese practices. The open-minded thinking of Deng Xiaoping was formed on the basis of scientific summary of the characteristics and features of the global economic development and our historical experiences and socialist modernization construction and has distinct characteristics of the times. The two scientific conclusions of "The world today is an open world" and "Development of China can't go without the world" are the important footstone of the entire reform and opening up system of Deng Xiaoping. He made a scientific analysis of the necessity of internal opening and external opening by considering difficulties encountered in the process of the socialist modernization construction. China is a large agricultural nation that has grown out of the semi-colonial and semi-feudal society in which the economy and culture are relatively laggard and the prominent problems existing in the process of modernization construction are serious shortage of capital, laggard technology and management and relatively insufficient resources. In order to realize the strategic target of the modernization construction, we have to unswervingly implement external opening and internal invigoration, make good use of international market and domestic market and these two resources and vigorously develop socialist productivity.

It has been proved by practice that the struggling history of the Communist Party of China is, as a matter of fact, a history of "combining". In 1984, Comrade Deng Xiaoping mentioned in his meeting with the president of the Republic of Maldives Gayoom, "The success of Chinese revolution is that Comrade Mao Zedong combined Marxism-Leninism with the reality of China and took our own path. Even now when we construct the country, we also prefer to combine Marxism-Leninism with the reality of China and take our own path." (Deng, 1993, p.

94-95) Through “combining”, Deng Xiaoping has pioneered as the precedent of socialist market economy. The new times requires new “combining” and how the “combining” proceeds concerns what kind of flag we will hold and what kind of path we are going to take. Deng Xiaoping pointed out, “We firmly believe in Marxism only on the precondition that it has to be combined with the reality in China. Only Marxism combined with reality in China is the real one we need.” (Deng, 1993, p. 213) Hence, in the 21st Century when globalization is further deepened, we need to exert all our efforts to do a good job of “combining”, hold the great banner of Marxism high, attempt to realize all-round and well-off society, stride forward towards a modernization powerful nation and fully manifest the powerful vitality of socialism and the long-range development prospect.

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