The Philosophical Content and the Realistic Value Mountains, Rivers, Forests, Land and Lakes Forming a Community of Shared Life

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Abstract. This paper gives an account of the philosophical content and realistic value of the theory of *Mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes forming a community of shared life* by the Marxist dialectical and historical materialism. This theory fundamentally advocates Marx's nature preexistence principle of materialism, and indicates us to respect nature from the equality between human and nature. Moreover, we apply dialectics to clarify the interdependence between human and nature for the well-being of the mankind. Therefore, it is expected that this ecological thought of Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee, Chinese President and Chairman of the Central Military Commission, is of great practical significance to the reform of China's ecological system, ecosystem management and the China’s ecological civilization.

Introduction

The report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China illustrates the thought of coordinating mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes. In order to implement the spirit of the 19th National People's Congress report, the 13th National People's Congress adapts the State Council Machine Case at a meeting of the 13th National People's Congress, and sets up relevant authorities to coordinate forests, grasslands, wet land etc. Coordinating mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes is a complex and systematic work, which needs to combine the scientific top-level design and objective practice with the theory of *mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes forming a community of shared life*.

In 2017 and 2018, the "Incentive and Action Award" in the "Earth Guard Award" of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was awarded to the builders of the Sehanba mechanical forest farm in China, which is an affirmation to the result of China's ecological civilization. Hereby, it is of great value of the times to understand the theory that mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes form a community of shared life.

Proposing the Thought:

Mountains, Rivers, Forests, Land and Lakes Forming a Community of Shared Life

On November 9, 2013, the General Secretary Xi Jinping presents the concept of *mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes forming a community of shared life*, philosophically illustrating the dialectical relationship between human and nature. He stresses that mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes share a community of life, in which every nature elements are in a cycle and influence one another[1]. On March 14, 2014, at the fifth meeting of the Central Leading Group on Finance and Economics, it is emphasized once again that the construction of ecological civilization should follow the systematic idea that mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes share a community of life[2]. From May 18 to 19, 2018, President Xi Jinping attends the National Conference on ecological environment protection and delivers an important speech showing that mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes share a community of life, so we should give all overall consideration and
take all-round and all-regional measures to protect the mountains, the forests and the lake in a
unified manner and to establish a unified national restoration.[3]

China’s grassland area covers about 2.19 billion hm².[3] The amount of animal and plant species
is up to 170,000[4], most of which are located in China’s river source region and water conservation
area. Mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes, as a community of life, provide a material basis for
national parks, and this thought is of great significance the management of China’s natural
ecosystem and China’s ecological civilization.

The Philosophical Content:
Mountains, Rivers, Forests, Land and Lakes Forming a Community of Shared Life

Adhering to Marx's Nature Preexistence Principle of Materialism. Marx's ecological thought
affirms the priority and objectivity of nature, which includes both the nature that had not been
affected by human activities and the nature that has been imprinted the sign for human activities[5].
Marx's nature preexistence principle includes two aspects: On one hand, it refers to the nature’s
preexistence in time sequence, that is, nature is the first and the human is after. Nature is the mother
of the human being. On the other hand, it refers to the nature’s preexistence in logic, that is, the
existence and development of human society takes nature as the premise. Humanized nature is close
to nature. They have the objective reality and do not change with the human will. When the nature
is imprinted the sign for human activities and become humanized nature, the objective reality just
put on the "humanized mask", and won’t disappear[6].

The thought that mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes form a community of shared life is
based on natural preexistence principle. Nature is the space for human beings to live and a stage for
them to create life[7]. Xi Jinping believes that nature is the home in which human beings depend to
survive and human society will be meaningless when leaving nature. That is, a good ecological
environment is necessary to sustainable development of human and human society[8]. Hereby,
General Secretary Xi Jinping creatively states that mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes form a
community of shared life. It affirms and respects nature based on Marx’s natural preexistence
principle, and emphasizes the interaction of the elements in nature to realize the harmonious
coexistence between human and nature, thus pushing Xi Jinping's ecological thought in the new era
to the theoretical peak. We should actively cultivate ecological culture and ecological morality, so
that ecological civilization becomes the mainstream value of society and an important part of the
core values of socialism[9].

Xi Jinping’s ecological concept of the "Community of Life" affirms the preexistence of nature,
which is neither complete anthropocentrism nor complete non-anthropocentrism, but transcendently
regards human and other natural elements namely mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes as an
organic system, giving each element equal value and status to clarify the eternal relationship and
interdependence between each element within this organic system. Destroying the balance among
human and nature, to some extent, is destroying the survival and development of mankind.

Affirming the Concept of Connection and Development in the Materialistic Dialectics. Xi
jinping declares that dialectic materialism is the world view and methodology of the Chinese
Communists, and we must apply dialectical materialism world view and methodology to realistic
problems and enhance the ability of dialectical strategic thinking to improve our ability to solve the
basic problems of China's reform and development[10]. Xi Jinping considers ecological
construction from the view of general connection and systematic development to illustrate the
importance of ecological thought as a whole, stressing the need to deal with ecological issues with
the pace the times. The material transfer between life and nature is omnipresent and they limit each
other while having a close relationship to form an organic system where each element deviating
from the normal direction of development will affect the whole system. Hereby, nature and human
are in one community of shared life. If any component of the organic system is destroyed, it will
inevitably affect the integrity, stability and coordination of the whole. However, as the most
dynamic component of this system, human beings are the most likely to destroy the coordination of
human and nature, leading to environmental pollution and ecological destruction.
Xi Jinping believes human and nature are not completely opposites from the perspective of dialectical unity: Human beings exist in nature, belong to the nature, and obtain the necessities from nature. Contrarily, human have no scruples in the exploitation of natural resources for their own use, which has caused serious damage to nature. Hereby, these two attributes of human beings make the dialectical relationship of human beings and nature both opposite and unified. As Xi Jinping always warns us, regard the ecological environment as your eyes to cherish and take the ecological environment as your life to value[11]. This tells us to respect and conform to nature, and we should put the development of mankind into the community of to rate the problem and leave a homeland of a blue sky, green plants, clear water for future generations.

Remain True to the People-Oriented Aspiration of Historical Materialism. History is created by the people and people are the decisive force to push the history forward, which is the core of the Marxist view. The Communist Party of China respects the creativity of the people and abides by true heart and origin. Xi Jinping's ecological civilization thought supports the mass point and firmly advocates the people-centered ecology to show that a good ecological environment is the most inclusive of people's well-being[12]. The people are the creators of history and the participants in the construction of ecological civilization. In order to move to a new era of ecological civilization, the people must play the main role. General Secretary Xi stressed that the ecological career requires people to participate, to establish and to utilize together. Only when the whole society determines to protect the eco-system can we truly achieve ecological civilization[13]. People are planners, protectors, participants and beneficiaries in the construction of a shared ecological civilization, where people’ s sense of happiness and security will also overflow when their needs of the beautiful ecological environment are constantly being met.

Xi Jinping’s theory of mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes forming a community of shared life not only clarifies the relationship among the various elements of nature, but also closely links the development of human society with the ecological environment. Humans can transform nature dynamically, but they can never escape from this community of life. Human beings are the main force to transform nature, so if human regard themselves as a member of the community , the various elements in nature namely mountains, forests, land and lakes will give full play to its role for the benefit of mankind. Hereby, Xi Jinping's mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes forming a community of shared life essentially provides a general guide for the transformation of nature, eventually resulting in the free and comprehensive development of mankind.

The Realistic Value:
Mountains, Rivers, Forests, Land and Lakes Forming a Community of Shared Life

Providing Theoretical Logic for Ecological System Reform. If we practice the principle of community of life, we must adjust and deploy from systematic construction to institutional reform. As is emphasized in the Marx's ecological thought, one should respect the laws of nature, act according to the laws of nature, and transform nature in a mild way[13]. Accordingly, the report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China concludes that the system construction of ecology is the core of Xi Jinping's ecological civilization. It focuses on ecological culture remodeling, ecological responsibility distribution and ecological system construction and is very principled to solve the current ecological problems and build socialist ecological civilization.

Coordinating the Management of the System of Mountains, Rivers, Forests and Lakes. Mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes form a community of shared life. We combine natural ecosystems, namely forest ecosystem, wetland ecosystem, grassland ecosystem, farmland ecosystem and desert ecosystem, with human-oriented rural social system and urban social system to form a regional-scale ecosystem. The life community is basically a complex of natural and social ecosystem. It includes forest ecosystem, wetland ecosystem, grassland ecosystem, farmland ecosystem, desert ecosystem and human-oriented rural social system, urban social system as its subsystems. It is necessary to manage the ecosystem, which is beneficial to maintain the diversity, integrity and stability of ecosystems and to achieve the sustainability of resources and the
harmonious coexistence between man and nature. In the process of managing the ecosystem, coordinating the management of the system of mountains, rivers, forests and lakes is one of the most effective methods. Hereby, the Life Community thought is the theoretical basis of coordinating the management of the system of mountains, rivers, forests and lakes. It embodies the values of sustainable development of economy and social environment and is a civilized form recognized by the international community.

**Enlightening the Construction of China’s Ecological Civilization.** Decades of reform and opening-up (1978-2019) in China have brought about great changes. We are increasingly powerful on the world stage and progressively shoulder the responsibility to fight with environmental pollution, global warming, etc. In May 2018, Xi Jinping announces at the National Conference on the Protection of the Ecological Environment that we should make full use of the solid material foundation accumulated over the past years of reform and opening-up to promote the construction of ecological civilization.

The theory of *Mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes forming a community of shared life*, as a part of Xi Jinping's ecological thought, has gone through coordinating regional development to building the beautiful China and finally to set up the community of human destiny. The theory of *mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes forming a community of shared life* guides China's ecological civilization construction and accelerates the process of socialist modernization.

**Conclusion**

The thought of ecological civilization is a significant part of Xi Jinping's theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era. China has always attached great importance to the construction of ecological civilization, especially since General Secretary Xi Jinping has further advanced the construction of ecological civilization. He presents a series of new theories, cracking the difficult problems in the construction of ecological civilization[15]. Specifically, the thought that mountains, rivers, forests, land and lakes form a community of shared life highlights the Marxist view of nature, dialectically deals with the opposite unity of human and nature. It coordinates the management of the ecosystem for China's ecological civilization construction and contributes to the harmonious coexistence between man and nature to realize people's all-round development.

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