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## Logical evolution of government theory of China's contemporary society

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### ABSTRACT

The theory of China society government is taken as an important part of China socialist theory system, in which its continuous development not only lies in collective wisdom of the ruling party but also reflects interests claim from most of the masses. Based on the theory development of China society government since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it may be found that the theory has gone through a logical evolution from unitary to multiple dominances, from dependent to independent subordination, and from one-way action to two-way interaction between dominance and subordination. Therefore, scientific analyses of such an evolution can really help people understand that China shows much respect for social development law and protects the masses' interests in its own growing process, and can also help people make sense of their individual rights and obligations, so that social development could be driven better into harmony.

### KEYWORDS

Contemporary china; Theory of society government; Predominance of government; Subordinate of government; Logical evolution.



## INTRODUCTION

When times comes into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a noun-“society government” has appeared repeatedly in the documents of both China’s ruling party and the State, and when newly-created models of society government come out continually, it has been shown that China’s socialism construction begins at a new growing stage, and it has also been foreseen that China’s developing focus begins to move from economy into society construction. Thus, from the analyses and conclusion of the society government in theory and practice will it be exposed that China’s society governing activities have experienced from an unclear to clear process, from an ignored and attended process, and from an unsystematic to systematic process; and that China’s society government theory has also experienced a logically evolving process from unitary to multiple dominance, from dependent to independent subordination, and from one-way to two-way interaction between dominance and subordination.

### LOGICAL EVOLUTION OF SOCIETY GOVERNMENT FROM UNITARY TO MULTIPLE DOMINANCE

According to Marxist historical viewpoint, society government must be seen as part of human social activity, of which its predominance should agree with a certain social, historical and cultural surrounding where both actual individual and organization, partaking in society administration and, recognizing and thinking about such an administration, must be a unification of “part and whole”. For this, the predominance of society government cannot be a unitary performance, but binary or multiple.

At the early period of new China, the first leading Mao Zedong-centered collective, as a ruling party, which would manage a country of scanty material, people’s poor living, social backward development, had to shoulder such important tasks of how to organize the masses for recovering economy and getting rid of poverty, it must mobilize all positive factors, unite all who can be united, and concentrate itself on improving production. To Mao Zedong’s mind, “it should organize most of people for politics, military, economy, culture, and many other fields, that old China’s social disorder could be overcome.”<sup>[1]</sup> In the field of society government, the State carried out a centralized leadership and a unified administration with urban and rural social members congregated by working unit and commune systems. In cities, “Governments must transform employment markets into state units by regulating a series of policies, by which, on the condition that a giant employment could be ensured, nearly all the urban laborers would be walled up in the ‘unit system’...each unit laborer must be affiliated to its own working unit, and subject to its unit administration.”<sup>[2]</sup> In countryside, Governments made good use of people’s commune system to get millions and millions of disbanded farmers into three-grade agencies of people’s commune led by Party organizations at all levels so as to carry out a unified management and production, overall arrangement and concentrated distribution of living material. By the way of grass-roots social organizations did the Party and State needed to keep every social individual nailed at various knots of political power system, and made them led and arranged by the Party and State. Accordingly, government as only a society administration dominance, enacted an all-sided control of social affairs.

At the early time of new China, it’s very effective that highly-concentrated society administration was employed to unite country people’s ideas and rebuild up social order. However, when social history goes forwards, especially into the times of reform and opening up, there must appear some shortcomings in the administration system. From the perspective of economy construction, Deng Xiaping pointed out: “Present administration power of economy system is too centralized, and must be planned to decentralize boldly; otherwise, it won’t be helpful for stimulating the enthusiasm of four factors-State, local governments, enterprises and laborers,” and “in social production, not only every workshop director, production team leader should be made responsible for production, and full of some production ideas; but also every worker, peasant must be made responsible for his own production, full of some production ideas.”<sup>[3]</sup> The decentralization of power made some possible system room for the masses. In addition, Deng Xiaping still attached much importance to a positive role that some people’s organizations, such as the CPPCC, would play in the promotion of social development, he said: “China’s socialist modernization continuously needs to be consulted, discussed with the CPPCC about the State policy, political activities, and economical problems in the four modernizations.”<sup>[4]</sup> And thus, it has been revealed that society government of this period was integrated with ideas of multiple management systems into which some people’s organizations could enter.

After the 21<sup>st</sup> century begins, there have been great changes in China’s economical, political and social environment. To better confront such changes, the CPC Central Committee has decided to concentrate on “doing great things” by withdrawing from some trivial businesses. November 8, 2002, Jiang Zemin in the report of the CPC 16<sup>th</sup> Congress pointed out: “To improve grass-roots self-government organizations and democratic management systems...to ensure that people can directly exercise their democratic rights, are ways to administrate grass-roots public affairs and welfare.” Meanwhile, “To strengthen the leadership of trade unions, Communist Youth League, women’s federations and other masses organizations, to support their work in accordance with the law and their own regulations, will turn out to be a better bridge and linkage between the Party and the masses.”<sup>[5]</sup> When grass-roots self-government organizations and people’s organizations can perform collaborative management responsibilities, it has been shown that changes took place in the connotation of the dominance of society government. In March, 2005, Hu Jintao stressed: “Construction of socialist harmonious society is both to strengthen the responsibility for governments’ society administration, the leading role that governments play in the social administration, and to reform governments’ blanket way in order to improve society administration, congregate resources of society administration and enforce social self-government.... all kinds of social organizations, such as society leagues, trade unions, and social service agencies, should be developed and administrated effectively, should play a role in providing

services, presenting claims, and normalizing behavior, by which more effort will be put into forming a cooperative trend between social management and service.”<sup>[6]</sup> Therefore, the role that social organizations can play in the society government has been demarcated definitely. In November, 2012, the connotation of China socialist society government system was defined at the CPC 18<sup>th</sup> Congress, that is, “in the process of society government, Party committee will play a leading role, governments taking the responsibility, social organizations coordinating, the masses participating, and law ensuring.” Then, the mode of China’s society government has been formed, it is a multiple predominant form, in which the Party committee, governments, social agencies and the masses can function in their different ways.

The logical evolution of society government that changed from unitary dominant system into multiple embodies that China had gotten rational understanding of general law about society government. According to Marx, society is essentially the sum of production relation, “it is an exchange form restricted by productivity in all the historical periods, but meanwhile the form also can constraint productivity.”<sup>[7]</sup> But then progressing productivity does the production relation changes much slower. So it needs to be propelled objectively by a necessary exterior force, called “society government”. The general law of society government sees regulation of contradictory social interests as main duty so as to achieve positive adaptation of the governing dominance to the governed subordination. When productivity moves in lower development, by the means that laborers work together, collective interests can meet the needs of individual interests, in order that the contradiction could be settled down between the masses’ livelihood and the shortage of material production. At this time, the construction of unitary society government can consciously protect collective and public interests under the economic system of public ownership, which agrees with the reality of socialist economy construction. When productivity rises with individual need increasing day after day, various ownerships can be used to satisfy the personal special needs of individual with personalized goods and services so that the contradiction can be solved between the masses’ growing needs and the monotony of living material. And then, the construction of multiple dominant society government can give positive answers to both various interests of classified societies and special interests of individuals, which goes in agreement with the reality of developing harmonious society. From this point of view, the theory of China society government has been built, formed and developed on the bases of the rational analyses of general society government law.

### **LOGICAL EVOLUTION OF SOCIETY GOVERNMENT FROM DEPENDENT TO INDEPENDENT SUBORDINATION**

Marx defines “society” as an organ of social relations, “which is an intrinsic connection among all social relations that regard production relation as their turning axis, and which take root in all the historical activities based on material production.”<sup>[8]</sup> Here, “social relations” is a kind of common substitute, inclusive of economical, political, cultural, and spiritual relations that people work out by taking part in different activities. Among them, the economic can make a choice for others’ formation and development.

At the early period of new China, China used to build society by political movements of the masses, which, to some degree, confused a ruling function of the State politics with a function of society government. Mao Zedong believed “the problem about ownership being basically solved, the most important one should be government, ... because this is a problem of relation among people.”<sup>[9]</sup> How to deal with such a relation essentially lies in enforcing an education of political ideology. Summing up why victory could be won in the revolutionary war, Mao Zedong said “There was a powerful work on revolutionary political ideology, which was a key factor that helped us to conquer enemies.”<sup>[10]</sup> According to Mao Zedong, political work can be actually useful for both revolutionary mobilization and society government. So, political work on ideology, to his mind, “must be a prerequisite for the completion of economic and technological work, ... as long as we soften political and ideological work a little bit, economical and technological work must really go astray.” Thus, he pointed out: “All the working units, including civil and military agencies, factories, countryside, shops, schools, army, parties, governments, the masses organizations and so on, must be extremely strengthened with politically ideological education, so as to raise the level of cadres’ and the masses’ politics.”<sup>[11]</sup> For that, governmental key work was political construction, and social construction existed as a subordination of political domination.

In 1978, after the beginning of the reform and opening-up, the Party’s working focus came back to economic construction, in which all the problems were discussed about economy-centered construction. Deng Xiaoping believed that there could not be a construction without social steadiness, so a basic task about society government was to keep society steady. Surely, there were two sides: (1) Deng Xiaoping emphasized that construction of socialist spiritual civilization, as for working contents of society government, needed to be achieved better. He said: “During the construction of China socialist society, we are sure to adhere to the development of material civilization and spiritual civilization, we are sure to adhere to ‘Five Stresses, Four Points of Beauty, Three Ardent Loves,’ we are sure to educate all the people in China to be promising, moral, cultured, and disciplinary.”<sup>[12]</sup> (2) as to working ways, Deng Xiaoping advocated: “Concentrated leadership must be integrated with democratic government.” He also stressed what the Central could exercise ruling power was about both macro-political essence and absolutely correct socialist road, but as to some concrete micro-administrations, the administrative power “could be boldly devolved as planned”, “local governments, enterprises, and production teams should be allowed to share more management autonomy.”<sup>[13]</sup> From this, it can be seen that governmental working focus was economy construction. Therefore, social construction had to be at the service of economic construction, society government, degraded to the second working focus, being subject to economic management,

Then, when political and cultural reforms started successively, some topics about the establishment of a modern system of society government could be discussed continuously. In October, 2003, the CPC Central Committee's Decision About Many Issues of Perfecting the Socialist Market Economy System was passed at the Third Plenum of the CPC 16<sup>th</sup> Congress, which pointed out that "governmental social administration and public service should be further perfected later, so that strong institutional guarantee could be given for building a moderately prosperous society." At this time, society government formally turned out to be a governmental obligation, really equal with economy and culture administrations. In 2007, "society construction", as an independent chapter in the report of the CPC 17<sup>th</sup> Congress was narrated, which stressed that advancing society construction must go with "perfecting society government and keeping society united and safe." The 2012 CPC 18<sup>th</sup> Congress discussed quite further some relations among social construction, government and service, of which the connotation and function of society government was made clear. In the aspect of society construction, government needs to carry out two important functions, namely, society administration and public service. The former is coordinating various relations, the latter is supplying products. The former is about "social dominant bodies' orderly, safe participation in society government. Interior organization of society construction can be regulated and transfigured much more by means of avoiding and resolving some negative elements (such as social contradictions, public safety) in order to be at the service of people's living." At this point, a systematic frame of modern society government began to take shape, and society construction, when separated from economy construction, proved to be an independent subordination. Such a logical evolution that a subordinate of society government can change from dependent to independent subordination has demonstrated that China has already mastered a scientific law of building modernized society. Marx pointed out: "present society is not a solid crystal but a changeable, a usually changing organ."<sup>[14]</sup> Just under the conditions of socialist system, the construction of socialist modernization is a change and upgradation from traditional to modern social organization of all the fields. The traditional society was a monotonous society that ran around the construction of economic relation that concealed other social relations, and revealed that individual's economic interests only went with a kind of living desire. Modern society is taken as an establishment of better organic relation, in which economic relation is seen as its basic existence while the other social relations can go well as independent existences. So, the aim at building modernized society is to achieve an organic unity among "material, politics, culture and ecology", and to realize a harmonious development in the construction of economy, politics, culture, society, and ecology in socialist society. From this, society construction, as an independent subordinate that broke away from political and economic construction, has turned out to be an inevitable fruit that is actually picked up from a law of society modernization.

#### **LOGICAL EVOLUTION OF SOCIETY GOVERNMENT FROM ONE-WAY ACTION TO TWO-WAY INTERACTION BETWEEN DOMINANCE AND SUBORDINATION**

While analyzing the relation between modern bourgeois society and the political state, Marx pointed out that civilian society and the political state would separate from a feudal community under the conditions of capitalist private ownership, thus "the state can coexist with the civilian society, and can enjoy an independent existence."<sup>[15]</sup> This shows that modern society is a binary society consisting of both the state and the civilian society. The state pays attention to general interests while the civilian society special one, but both of them differentiate and interact mutually.

At the early time of new China, when summing up some basic experience about Chinese revolutionary victory, Mao Zedong said: "Our experience, concluded to be one, is the people's democratic dictatorship led by the working class (organized by the CPC) on the base of an alliance of workers and peasants."<sup>[16]</sup> To his mind, only because "there are still foreign imperialism, domestic reactionaries and classes"<sup>[17]</sup>, dictatorship agencies of the state must be enforced further, and besides, internal "democracy" among people would still need to be maintained by the state power. When discussing how to correctly deal with internal contradictions among the people, being quite different from antagonistic contradictions, the people's internal ones are "just the people's internal disputes" which "can be resolved only by democracy, only by discussion, criticism, persuasion and education,...when people are efficient at production, learning, and are orderly in making a living, they need to ask of their own governments, production organizations, culture and education agencies leaders to give out rather compulsory administrative commands of all kinds. There will be a society in disorder without such commands,...This is quite complementary to the way that the people's internal contradictions are resolved by persuasion and education."<sup>[18]</sup> At this point, the administrative commands are both a key means of exercising dictatorship and a main way of guaranteeing democracy. Later, just because of a prevailing emotion of "impatience" in the socialism construction and a serious influence exerted by terribly wrong ideologies that "takes class struggle as a key guiding principle", administrative approaches only working better, the state power went up to a highest concentration, and the so-called society government fell into a state of top-down one-way communication and control.

After the policy of reform and opening up was set up at the Third Plenum of the CPC 11<sup>th</sup> Congress, on the one hand must social ills of the traditional society government be cured, on the other hand must negative influences exerted by commodity economy and western ideas be resisted. So, main task of the state was keeping society steady. In the "stability overriding everything" situation, although the state paid much attention to the construction of system about society government, yet it couldn't then regulate society orders on a large scale. Deng Xiaping advocated that reform "needs to be carried out in order under the leadership of the CPC", and that it was on the base of perfect and healthy management systems that country's economic management authority could be devolved in order. He concerned about the construction of society management mechanism, and, as to government system, he put more emphases on "accountability system", and brought up:

“as for any task, as well as any program, it needs to be accounted for fixed duty, fixed personnel, fixed quantity, fixed time and so on.”<sup>[19]</sup>As for the construction of democratic supervision mechanism, Deng Xiaoping pointed out: “It needs to effectively protect the democratic rights, including democratic elections, management and supervision, of workers and peasants as an individual.”<sup>[20]</sup>These measures taken at that time made social vitality largely liberated, and made a large room of system for the growth of civil society in China. However, as civil society grew at its early forming and developing stage, it seemed to be not enough in strength, and civilians were generally short of social participation consciousness. Thus, at that time, society in China was still a government-led one, a one-way evolution mode without an essential change.

Since the beginning of new century, when summing up the experience of over 20 years of reform and opening up, the CPC Central Committee found that although the strategy of “economical construction goes before social development” was helpful in the accumulation of social wealth, and in the improvement of people's living standards, it, to a certain extent, harmed a balanced development of society due to the enlargement of a gap among people's internal stratified classes with people's internal contradictions outclassing increasingly, which caused by some problems about social fairness. The Party and government had to begin the construction of socialist democracy. In 2002, an aim at “making society more harmonious” was worked out at the CPC 16<sup>th</sup> Congress, in which expansion of grassroots democracy should be seen as “a basic work of developing socialist democracy.” The aim required that the people's direct and legal exercise of their democratic rights should be ensured, so that they can participate in the management of grassroots public affairs and public welfare.” This viewpoint showed that the CPC Central Committee started to think of and research “a government mode of social stratification”. At the same time, the Party and government, positively listening to and receiving from the masses views and suggestions about “people's livelihood”, put more effort into solving the problems that the people most concerned about. To this end, Hu Jintao took “people-oriented” as an essential requirement of “scientific development”, he also required that “the problems that the masses urgently required to solve should be taken as the focus of our work, ... we must be active to expand employment, to make every effort to improve the social security system, to gradually rationalize distribution relations and, to accelerate the development of social undertakings.”<sup>[21]</sup>When it came to working ways, Hu Jintao emphasized that “ways of mass work must be improved, of which law, policy, economy, education, consultation and the like should be employed comprehensively” so possibly as to “do the mass work carefully, deeply, and practically”. He required that “all levels of cadres, especially leading cadres, surely sticking to work principles-working for the people, working pragmatically, working honestly, and surely carrying on working styles-struggling for the truth, working modestly and cautiously, working hard, can listen to the masses' voices of claims, understand the aspirations of the masses, and concern for the masses' sufferings, and actually solve practical difficulties for the masses.”<sup>[22]</sup>So far, the masses' positive enthusiasm for participating in public affairs has increased significantly, the mode of binary interaction between the State and society has been advanced in order in the governmental work at all levels.

Society government in a logical evolution from one-way action to two-way interaction between dominance and subordinate shows that China's ruling party has mastered a scientific ruling law. As for the ruling party, dealing with the relation between the state and society is dealing with the relation between the ruling party and the masses. As a Marxist ruling party, the CPC always puts the masses' essential interests in the first place, always persists in executing the policy on the masses line in practical work and, always invests more effort into solving some problems that the masses most concern about. At the early time of new China, the masses' basic interests largely consists in the maintenance of people's dominance, it's reasonable to use “people's democratic dictatorship” as a form of state power to realize the maintenance of people's political rights. During the time of reform and opening up, the people's basic interests is increasing living standards, it's reasonable to use the form of developing socialist market economy to realize the guarantee of people's economic rights. Since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the people's basic interests is both a public participation and a realization of social fairness, it is reasonable to use the form of advancing the construction of socialist democratic politics to realize the protection of people's democratic rights. For all of these, society government in a logical evolution from one-way action to two-way interaction between dominance and subordination shows that the CPC, on the base of political party's scientific ruling law and, on the base of outstanding changes in people's basic interests, is very active in regulating the mode, means, ways of society government.

In short, both under the guidance of Marxist theory and according to the reality of social construction and development is the theory of China society government a reasonable generalization and classic summary made by the CPC from the whole process of Chinese social historical development. The logical evolution of China society government goes through a process from unitary to multiple dominances, from dependent to independent subordination, and from one-way action to two-way interaction between dominance and subordination, which reveals a common rule of the historical development of human society, embodies an effort and attempt that the CPC members make to overcome cognitive limitations on the dominances of society government, and exposes a theoretical self-awareness and practical self-discipline with which the CPC strengthens its own civilized construction. In future, the CPC will make every effort to build up a resource-saving and environment-friendly society. There will be more multiple dominances and public participations in the society government, there will be a greater deal of concentration on stronger construction of grassroots society government and service system, so as to increase service function in rural and urban communities while strengthening the functions that enterprises, institutions and people's organizations can play in society government and service, so as to guide social agencies into a healthy orderly development while fully guiding the masses to an essential participation in society government. Thus, there will be much more and, much fairer chances for each individual in society to take part in the society government.

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