

Central China Rise and Ideological Construction

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Abstract: Central China rise is a hot issue of the current regional economic development in China, and as well the substantial measure to comprehensively promote the modernization construction and establish the socialist harmonious society. In addition to being an economic issue, Central China rise is rather more a socially comprehensive subject. Ideological concepts, among the factors affecting Central China rise, frequently dominate people's behaving patterns as well as affects economic growth in a deeper sense, tending to be of the most fundamental one.

Key words: Central China rise; ideological construction

Central China is located at the center hinterland in terms of China's economic geography including six provinces of Shanxi, Henan, Anhui, Hubei, Hunan, and Jiangxi, the major birthplace of Chinese nation. Here comes with enriched natural resources and human resources and as well the regional advantages of east-to-west transition, south-to-north through running, all-side attraction, and full-direction coverage. The six provinces in Central China meanwhile own typical characteristics of "Three-Old" and "Three-Prominence". The "Three-Old" refers to Old revolutionary base, Old agricultural region, and Old industrial base while the "Three-Prominence" means resource Prominence, contribution Prominence, and difficulty Prominence.

Facing to this growing opportunity, the premise for Central China rise lies in scientifically addressing various problems and contradictions occurred in the development by fully exerting its advantages. In addition to being an economic issue, Central China rise is rather more a comprehensive social subject. While clearly recognizing its own advantages, we need to distinguish the primary issues affecting the development of Central China itself and thereby explore the fundamental factors constraining its growth from in-depth perspectives. Ideological concept, among the factors affecting Central China rise, frequently dominate people's behaving patterns as well as affects economic growth in a deeper sense, tending to be of the most fundamental one. Comparing with East China, Central China has fallen behind in terms of the development since reform and opening up of China due to the constrains of traditional values and the traditional systems at a large extent, and its ideological concept transformation lags behind, too. On behalf of Central China rise, it must emancipate mind, update concepts, and break through the shackles from traditional ideas.

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1. THE DEVELOPMENT STATUS IN CENTRAL CHINA

There are plenty of favorable conditions to achieve Central China rise due to the various advantages in the counties in Central China region.

1.1 Central China's unique geographical position advantages

Central China regions are uniquely located at the central part of China and connect all sides with the advantages of east-to-west transition, south-to-north connection, and full nation coverage. In east central region connects Shandong, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang, next to the Yangtze River Delta Economic Zone; in west it borders Guizhou, Chongqing, and Shanxi, the bridge and link to transfer east industries to west as well as the only way for "transferring the gas from west to east", "transmitting the power from west to east", and inter-city broadband high-speed information highway; in south it connects Fujian, Guangdong, and Guangxi, next to the Pearl River Delta Economic Zone; and in north it borders Beijing, Hebei, and Inner Mongolia, etc, connects the Bohai Economic Rim centering Beijing and Tianjin, and is closer to the traditional industrial base in the northeast. Under the situation of the greater development of the east, south, and west as well as the greater transformation of the northeast in the new period, the central region is the bridge of connecting east, south, west, and north economic zones and as well the comprehensive hub of promoting regional economy coordinated development nationwide.

1.2 Central China's resource endowment advantages

There are various categories of mineral resources in Central China. In view of the development and utilization on already-explored mineral resources, the abundance of important and rare mineral resources in Central China is far superior to those in East China and the resource density is higher than West China with higher resource association as well, owning bright development prospects.

Central China regions own fairly enriched agricultural resources. Central China regions are located at subtropical and temperate climate regions with mild climate, adequate sunshine, plenty of rainfall, and as well own plains suitable for agriculture, mountain fields good for afforestation, grasslands appropriate for livestock husbandry, and lakes favorable for fishery, indicating a promising development future. Central China possesses unique tourism resources. The six provinces in Central China have uniquely formed natural landscapes, magnificent mountains and rivers, colorful local customs, countless scenic spots and historical sites, presenting highly enriched tourism resources.

1.3 Central China's human and education resource advantages

Being the birthplace of Chinese civilization, Central China regions own thick historical and cultural heritage with well-established and long standing traditional culture. In addition to indicating profound cultural and spiritual values, its precious historical heritage, rich cultural resources, and plentiful historical figures rather offer more powerful ideological motivations as well.

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1.4 Central China's economic foundation advantages

The five provinces of Hubei, Hunan, Anhui, Jiangxi, and Henan are well-known grain and oil production base, the important animal husbandry and fishery base, and the agricultural and sideline product production and output base in China. The stand or fall of the agricultural development in Central China, in a certain sense, plays a decisive role in primary agricultural products and food security in China. Central China regions are the important energy production and output base nationwide. Central China regions are of enriched energy resources, particularly known for their hydropower resources and coal resources; and the Three Gorges Dam in Yangtze River is the biggest hydropower station worldwide. Central China regions meanwhile are the important industrial material production and output base and the machinery manufacturing and partial hi-tech industry base in China.

2. FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES FOR CENTRAL CHINA RISE

Ineffective policy-driving force causes severe capital shortage in Central China regions, making it difficult to exert their advantages. For Central China, the most proud advantages of east-to-west connecting regional benefit, rich resource endowment, leading human and education superiority, and solid economic foundation, however have not currently functioned their roles that they are supposed to be. All-direction extended roads turn into the resource-loss channels and powerful science and education power just functions for others without profiting itself at all.

“Economic Development Report in the Central Regions of China” – the blue book of Central China development mentioned, in the discussion on Central China regional economic development overview, Central China regional economic development has following characteristics: A. Large total population with lower human resource development. Human capital reservation is relatively inadequate with severe brain drain as well, and the professionals educated in Central China migrate to southeast coastal cities in a great number. B. Smaller economy scale with lower economy share per capita also. C. Irrationalized economic structure; yet escalated industrialization process. D. Faster total fixed asset investment growth; but clear extensional investment spread. E. Preliminarily established city groups but lower development. F. Inadequate science and technology investment and lower technology output. G. Lower outside-world opening and small-scaled foreign capital utilization. H. Rich natural resources and inadequate use.

The reason Central China regions encounter these issues in their development process fundamentally lies in ideological views.

2.1 Ideological constrains

The reason Central China regions fall behind in ideological views and systems fundamentally rests with their long-standing and even deep-rooted constrains in terms of official-oriented practice, traditional planned economy idea, and small-scale farmer economy idea. In his article of “Ideological Views Rise First for Central China Rise”, Chen Wenke comprehensively overviewed these three aspects.

“Government-official-oriented” ideas. In addition to taking government-administrative power as the center for everything, these ideas as well have been showed as “Three-focusing and three ignoring”. The first one is focusing on official position in government and ignoring business activities. Some governmental officials even had given up official positions and engaged in commercial activities; they still “keep official positions” or “conduct business with government official salaries”, leaving people the impression of missing government official positions all the time. The second one is focusing on official positions in government and ignoring enterprises. Instead of appointing first-class professional talents to enterprises to demonstrate their competence, most entrepreneurs and others with bold visions and courage are promoted to governments to work as administrative officials like “Awarding them with official positions”. And the third one focusing on official positions in government and ignoring scholars. Most experts and scholars with prominent competence and high achievements are tended to be appointed with administrative

positions regardless of considering their actual administrative skills, which is in fact not beneficial for people's competence-position matching.

Traditional planned economy idea. Central China is the traditional revolutionary base, agricultural region, and industrial base. Since the planned economic system was established early and exited late, planned economic ideological inertia still exists to certain extent, which is concentratedly showed in two aspects. The first one is the inertia thought of "Waiting for, relying on, and asking for". Regardless of promoting new industrialization or developing agricultural Industrialization, it all has been accustomed to "Waiting for, relying on, and asking for" projects or policy support, instead of proactively fighting for projects from both domestic and overseas markets. The second one is the inertia thought of promoting reform through administrative means. It over focuses on administrative intervention power for instance in the issues from how to develop regional economic blocks and establish industrial clusters even to performance excellence selections and administrative division system changes; yet ignores the fundamental functions of market-orientation and market allocation resource elements.

Small-scale farmer economy idea. The Small-scale farmer economy idea has been deeply rooted in Central China regions with main representatives of "Small but full theory" or "Middle but full theory"; "Natural resource-oriented theory"; "Be content with little prosperity theory"; and "Be comfortable with middle status". The Small-scale farmer economy idea has been particularly demonstrated on some farmers with four major characteristics: the first one is the reluctance of opening one's own business; the second one is focusing on working and ignoring business activities or leaving farmland without leaving hometown, or leaving hometown without leaving farmland; the third one is be content with little prosperity; and the fourth one is inadequate spirits of bearing hardships and hard work as well as establishing business with hardworking and thrifty, and lack courage even if become large business owners.

2.2 Fallen behind ideas

Fallen behind market concept and business creation awareness. There exists a gap in terms of market concept and business creation awareness between Central China regions and coastal regions, which is particularly showed in following four aspects.

Focus on resources and ignore markets in development orientation. Instead of facing to market demands, they thoughtlessly stress local resources and use their own resources to determine development orientation in Central China development footholds, particularly in cornerstone industry selections and determinations. And this is completely different from the of "Zero resource" strategy of "Two ends go outside with heavy flows" imposed in plenty of places of the coast regions. The products produced by Central China regions thereby just focus on their resource advantages but can not cater markets and must fail to capture markets accordingly.

In terms of resource orientation, they focus on inborn tangible resources yet ignore postnatal intangible resources. For development resource elements, Central China regions tend to pay more attention on land, energy, mineral reserves, and labor yet ignore knowledge, technology, information, brand, and high-level talents, the postnatal intangible elements playing a more determining role than inborn tangible production elements in terms of regional economic development. And this is the reason leading to fewer knowledge brands in Central China regions; and in addition high-level professional educated in these regions migrate out of the regions like "making wedding dress for others".

In terms of project orientation, they focus on state invested projects and ignore private investment projects. For various types of projects associated with local development, Central China regions rather pay more attention on the major projects from central government, province, and city yet ignore a large number of minor projects from privately accumulated forces; and do not use minor private projects to make up investment insignificance of state projects.

In terms of investment promotion tendency, they focus on the promotions for overseas and the places beyond the provinces and cities of their own while ignore the promotions for their province-wide places, causing the result of "attracting son-in-law in and kicking the son out".

3. THE IMPORTANCE OF IDEOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTION IN CENTRAL CHINA RISE

3.1 Ideological construction is indispensable for Central China rise

Marxism believes that superstructure is determined by economic basis yet superstructure applies huge reaction to economic basis. Mao Zedong pointed out: “We agree it is true that material substance determines spiritual one and social existence determines social consciousness in general historical development; meanwhile we however as well agree and must admit the reaction of spiritual substance, the reaction from social consciousness on social existence, and the reaction from superstructure on economic basis.”³

Superstructure can be divided into political superstructure and ideological superstructure, and the former refers to national machine, national power, and political structure while the latter primarily refers to ideology. Social ideology is determined by social economic basis and as well constrained by political superstructure; it meanwhile plays important reaction on social economic basis and national power operation, and ideological construction is just the reflection of this reaction. Ideological superstructure as well plays important reaction in Central China rise. Ideological construction forges spiritual pillar and agglomerate spiritual motivation, playing an important role in Central China rise.

3.2 Ideological construction serves Central China rise

Human spiritual power is an element can not to be neglected in the historical joint-force to push social development. Marxism believes that productivity is the ultimate decisive element in social development; and human being is rather dynamic and dominating element in various productivity elements. In other word, human being owns ideological motivations and spirits, the basis that productivity is of the most revolutionary and active characteristics. Based on this point, Marxism classical writers play high attention on human spiritual function and they thereby use the concept of “Human will” to express human ideological motivations, psychological factors, and behavioral effects, and believe even if the individual will does not mean zero also. Engels pointed out brilliantly: “The history is created like this: the ultimate result is always generated from the confrontations among plenty of individual wills, and every single will among which however becomes the pattern it became through plentiful special living conditions. There are thereby countless intertwined powers and countless parallelograms of power, and a combined power is then generated, or the historical result that can be regarded as an outcome of the power as a whole functioning unconsciously and involuntarily. Since the wish of any single person will be hindered by another person’s wish, and then the final occurred result is the thing that nobody expected. Therefore the history so far always proceeds like a natural process, yet in fact is essentially subject to the same a law of motion. However, the wills of various individuals – every single individual among which wants to gain something of his physique and outside but after all the economic conditions (either his personal or general social), to make what he has been yearning for – regardless of failing to achieve his person wish, merge together into a total average number, a total combined power; however it can never make conclusion from these facts that these wills are zero. On the contrary, every single will contributes to the combined power since it is included in the combined power.”⁴ Here fully recognizes the function of “Human will”, certainly including recognizing human beings’ ideologies, behaviors, and their efforts. Ideological construction is able to inspire human action motivations and change human ideologies, and certainly owns its social service function that can not be neglected. Through changing people’s ideologies and inspiring their action motivations, ideological construction effectively serves Central China rise.

³ Mao Zedong Selections, Volume One, page 326

⁴ Marx and Engels selections, Volume Four page 697

3.3 Ideological construction is the cultural foundation for Central China rise

As everyone knows, economy, politics, and culture can be compared as the three “Gears” closed connected on social body, and they mutually connect and interactively act. Mao Zedong once said: “Certain culture (the culture regarded as ideology) is the reflection of certain social politics and economy, and in turn applies great influence and effect on the certain social politics and economy; yet economy is the foundation, and politics is the concentrated reflection of economy. This is our fundamental idea regarding the relations between culture and politics and economy and the relation between politics and economy. Then, certain ideological politics and economy determine the ideological culture that belongs to that type of ideological politics and economy first; the ideological culture in turn applies influence and effect on the certain ideological politics and economy.”⁵

Economy, politic, and culture are even more inseparable in Central China rise process. CPC 17th National Congress Report points out: “Currently, culture increasingly turns into the important source for national cohesion and innovation, and more and more become the substantial element of comprehensive national power competition; and enriching spiritual and cultural life is increasingly growing into Chinese people’s well-wished desire.”

Both CPC and the state attach great importance to cultural construction and stress “The great rejuvenation of Chinese nation must be accompanied by Chinese culture prosperity”, “More consciously and more proactively promote greater culture development and prosperity”. The mind emancipation and idea transformation in cultural construction turn into the top issue in Central China rise, yet ideological construction is exactly the foundation to address this issue. Regardless of reform and opening up or innovation and development in Central China rise, all of them can not be separated from the mind emancipation and idea transformation for the people in Central China, and ideological construction thereby grows into the fundamental guarantee of Central China rise project.

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⁵ *Mao Zedong Selections*, Volume Two, page 663-664