

## Philanthropy and Collective Sharing

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Today I will present my thoughts on philanthropy as collective sharing. I will first examine the nature of philanthropy, and its relationship with the concept of ownership. In society, philanthropy is born together with private property. There is no need for philanthropy under a system of full public ownership. According to Marxist and Socialist theory, philanthropy is unnecessary and irrelevant in both primitive and communist societies. The outputs of primitive society were very limited; all could share in the fruits of the hunt. In communist society, philanthropy is also unnecessary. The government actively meets all needs. If disabled individuals need crutches or wheelchairs, the government provides them. In light of this, I feel philanthropy springs from a society of private ownership, and develops alongside advancing property rights and norms.

Second, I would like to speak about the relationship between philanthropy, communism, and collective sharing. Private and public ownership can coexist in society. The key question is how to conceptualize and deal with public property. Should government take a voluntary or a mandatory approach? The development of public property is related to the concept of communism. Plato's *Utopia* describes a communal society whose members share wives and children—a situation that most would find ridiculous in the modern world. Later philosophers, such as Saint-Simon and Owen, omitted this idea of shared wives and children in their conceptualization of communism. Marx further advanced communist theories. However, in many ways communism is incompatible with human nature; it often leads to widespread property loss and stunted social development. Why, then, did Marx propose such a system? I believe Marx's idea of communism is a counter to the imperfect system of private property. The latter system can lead to vast inequalities between rich and poor. Marxism lends a voice to the poor. It explains that when the rich ignore this voice, revolution can ensue. When this occurs, the rich lose all of their property, which is redistributed to others. In this way, Marxism contains the idea of philanthropy as collective sharing.

To effectively achieve collective sharing, some propose a “three pronged approach” to redistribution. First, income distribution takes place through the unfettered mechanisms of the labor market. Second, redistribution takes place through tax and financial policies. Finally, a second wave of redistribution occurs through philanthropy. Philanthropy is the culmination of this three pronged approach, as it achieves the ideal of collective sharing. The three modes of wealth distribution share one important characteristic: institutionalization. The key difference is that market-based income distribution and redistributive policies are imposed by the government; philanthropic redistribution is voluntary.

I feel that modern philanthropy is the new “revolution,” so to speak, among the wealthy. There are two types of revolution: traditional and contemporary. A traditional revolution involves the poor protecting themselves, and fighting against the mandates of the ruling classes for redistribution of property. The fight is ultimately centered on

property and wealth. However, contemporary revolution is exacted by the wealthy—I call this type the “Bill Gates” revolution. This revolution involves a willing redistribution of wealth by the privileged. Those who do not engage in philanthropy risk becoming targets of traditional revolution. Therefore, contemporary revolution is a fight for life, rather than money. However, the lack of appropriate policies and regulations compromise this contemporary form of revolution.

I would like to highlight some of the important differences between traditional and contemporary revolution. First, the targets are certainly different; while traditional revolution is a fight against others, contemporary revolution is a fight with ourselves. Second, the methods and motives behind these two forms of revolution are different; one is a fight for money, while the other asks for lives. Finally, the impacts are different: one leads to the overthrow of the ruling class; the other leads society forward, towards harmonious development. Although these two revolutions are quite different, under some conditions, they might be integrated. The rich can easily become the targets of revolution if they don't fundamentally change their attitudes and behaviors.

It is not easy to become revolutionaries in the modern era. Here, I want to emphasize three points: first, passion leads to wealth. This is the premise of revolution. If you are unable to create wealth, you cannot share wealth. Second, it is important to maintain a strong sense of mission and moral character. Without a mission, and without ethical boundaries, you will unlikely be willing to share your wealth. Ultimately, this can lead to traditional revolution. Third, society needs us to be actively involved in philanthropy. Personally, I believe the most effective way to engage in philanthropy is by creating family charitable foundations.

Last, I would like to highlight the importance of theory. A revolution must be armed with a theoretical weapon, which in my opinion is the Spirit of Capital. I have discussed the core content and framework of the Spirit of Capital on many occasions. Today, given our time constraints, I will not go into detail. In essence, the Spirit of Capital involves both creating and sharing wealth. In my opinion, this represents an important new perspective for the development of philanthropy.

We can use the Spirit of Capital to fundamentally develop capital, and the development of capital can lead to the development of humanity. Philanthropy is collective sharing. If we do not share, we risk traditional revolution. Contemporary revolution involves targeting yourself; for this reason, it is harder in some ways. Modern revolutionaries must be able to create wealth, adopt social responsibility, and embody strong moral character. If a society breeds more of these types of revolutionaries, it will have a promising future. These revolutionaries are outstanding philanthropists because they understand one truth: philanthropy is collective sharing.

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