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## THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SINICIZATION OF MARXIST PHILOSOPHY AND THE FEATURES OF EUROPEAN MARXISM RECEPTION IN CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

*The sinicization of Marxism is the historical process of combining the basic theory of Marxism with the concrete practice of the Chinese revolution to form a sinicization of Marxism with national characteristics, national form and national content. Since the sinicization of Marxism was first proposed by Mao Zedong, in the great practice of leading China's revolution, construction and reform for a long time, the Communist Party of China has formed Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, the important thought of "Three Represents" and the Scientific Outlook on Development. These four theoretical systems reflect the distinct practicality. Since the mid-20th century, Western scholars have expressed two kinds of fallacies about Chinese Marxist philosophy: one is the "heretic" theory, that is, that Chinese Marxist philosophy is a "heresy" of Marxist philosophy; the other is the "replication" theory, that is, that Chinese Marxist philosophy is only a "replica" of "orthodox" Marxist philosophy. Both negate the fact that Chinese Marxist philosophy legitimacy of national identity. The legitimacy of the Chinese characteristics of Chinese Marxist philosophy is determined by the fundamental nature of Marxist philosophy, the proper attitude towards Marxist philosophy, and the theoretical goal of sinicizing Marxist philosophy. The most fundamental reason why Chinese Marxist philosophy has Chinese characteristics is that it is the philosophical expression of the Chinese way.*

**Keywords:** Sinicization of Marxist philosophy, Chinese Marxist philosophy, Chinese characteristics, philosophical expression of the Chinese way.

As a theory that has successfully guided China's practice for more than 100 years, it must have distinct characteristics. Among these characteristics, the most prominent is practicality, which is the demand of historical development and the characteristic of Marxist philosophy itself. The philosophical change must promote productivity change, and the combination of the two changes is another distinctive feature. Different theoretical achievements of different historical periods and different representatives have their own characteristics.

The practicality of the Sinicization of Marxism is embodied in the solution of major practical problems through research and a theoretical summary of the most vivid practical experience. Marxism emerges from practice, develops in practice, and is constantly supplemented, revised and perfected by new practices. In order to guide practice, Marxism must be integrated into real life, give full play to the role of theory in guiding practice and respond to the issues of the times, so that theoretical achievements can be transformed into principles and policies for state governance, and into real-life concrete practice.

This practical feature has both theoretical origins and objective causes. Theoretical origin means that both Marxist philosophy and traditional Chinese philosophy attach importance to practice, and the objective cause is China's practical needs.

In terms of theoretical origins, Marxist philosophy is itself a philosophy of practice, because "for the practical materialists, the communists, the whole problem is to revolutionize the existing world, to actually oppose and change the status quo of things" [4, p. 48]. That is, the principle of Marxist philosophy is applied into the practice of proletarian revolution to guide the labor movement. Although traditional Chinese philosophy focuses on introspection, it does not simply stop at abstract speculation, but still attaches great importance to practical rationality, which is reflected in individual practice and social practice. In individual practice, this characteristic is reflected in Confucian moral practice, Daoist freedom and Buddhist liberation practice. And these individual practices, especially Confucian moral practices, are extended to the

thinking beyond the individual to the origin of all things in the universe to achieve the integration of moral order and cosmic order. And ultimately these practices became a trace of "the Heaven", which is finally regarded as the origin of all things [1, p. 55]. "Heaven and human are one" has become an inevitable requirement, so to apply it back to social practice, it is required that the development of society conforms to "heaven", to the original law of the universe's operation, and to the harmonious development of human beings and all things.

From the perspective of historical conditions, when Marxist philosophy was introduced into China, China was in a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society, and the actual situation was far from that of Europe. The nature, object, motivation and members of the revolutionary practice at that time were different from those of the European labor movement. In this social situation, coupled with imperialist aggression, revolution is the most urgent task. Only by combining Marxism with the reality of Chinese society as soon as possible can we find the correct revolutionary path amid domestic and foreign difficulties. This requires that theory be integrated with practice, and the revolutionary struggle should be carried out in a realistic manner, without making mistakes of subjectivism. The consequences of breaking away from practice are very serious, Mao Zedong once summed up: "In the past, our party was ruled by subjectivism for a long time... These subjectivists called themselves the 'international line' and put on the coat of Marxism, they were fake Marxism" [7, p. 159]. Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping emphasized that theory should be linked with practice in various historical periods, and "learning Marxism-Leninism must be refined and effective", and the spirit must be investigated and researched, contact the masses, and then formulate correct lines, principles, and policies [2, p. 382]. This requires us to focus on the construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics, adhere to theoretical innovation, and adapt to changing social conditions and the requirements of the new era.

The imitation and continuous breakthrough of the Soviet-Russian model runs through the process of the Sinicization of Marxism. Due to historical, geographical and

practical reasons, the progress and setbacks of China's revolution and construction are inextricably linked with the Soviet-Russian model. The Marxism that the Chinese people first came into contact with was "Russified" Marxism. Marxism studied for a long time was actually only the empirical theory of the Russian Revolution.

The breakthrough of the Soviet-Russian Marxist model enabled China to achieve the great victory of the new democratic revolution and the socialist revolution. During the period of the democratic revolution, the young Communist Party of China had to take the Russian-style revolutionary road under the guidance of the Comintern due to the lack of theoretical preparation and relevant experience in applying Marxism to solve the problems of the Chinese revolution. Due to the increasing tendency to dogmatize Marxism-Leninism, the resolutions of the Comintern, and the experience of the Russian revolution, ready-made formulas are used to solve practical problems of the Chinese revolution, the difference between democratic revolution and socialism is confused. The phenomenon of copying the Soviet-Russian model is becoming more and more serious and prominent resulting in three successive occurrences of "Left-leaning" errors, which almost completely ruined the Chinese Communist Party and the revolutionary cause under its leadership. Under the circumstances of the extremely severe revolutionary situation, some people in the party who held different attitudes towards the Soviet-Russian model began to learn to choose China's revolutionary path and had a fundamental disagreement with Chen Duxiu's left-leaning and Wang Ming's right-leaning erroneous thoughts.

Mao Zedong pointed out: "The study of the process of the sinicization of Marxism must be combined with the actual situation of our country". Through the examination of positive and negative practical experience and the convening of the Zunyi Conference, Mao Zedong's correct proposition was gradually recognized by the majority of comrades in the party, thus creating favorable conditions for breaking through the Soviet-Russian model. From the Sixth Plenary Session of the Sixth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China to the period of the rectification movement in Yan'an, the party, through profound reflection and conscientious summary of history, cleared up its dogmatic mistakes, completely broke through the Soviet-Russian model in theory and practice, and opened up the road of armed seizure of power with Chinese characteristics.

China broke through the Soviet-Russian model and made great achievements in China's socialist construction. At the beginning of the founding of the People's Republic of China, because the Party lacked relevant experience and necessary theoretical preparation and economic foundation for the arduous and complex socialist construction, and faced the all-round encirclement and blockade by some western countries headed by the United States at that time. The Party was in a very difficult situation and can only follow the construction model of the former Soviet Union, thus establishing a centralized and unified planned economic system based on the Soviet socialism, formulating a high-speed development economic construction policy, choosing heavy industry as the development focus and regarding the heavy industry and extensive development as the main means of growth. The determination of this system, policy and strategy promoted

the rapid development of social productive forces under the specific historical conditions at that time. However, with the improvement of the level of social productivity and the deepening of the complexity of the social and economic structure, the drawbacks of this construction model have become prominent, and it has become increasingly unsuitable and even hinders the development of productivity and social progress. Under such circumstances, Mao Zedong carried out a series of reforms and active explorations, trying to find a road for socialist construction suitable for China's actual situation. After the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, the second generation of the central leadership with Deng Xiaoping as the core resumed the ideological line of seeking truth from facts, formulated the basic line of "One Central Task and Two Basic Points" in the primary stage, and established a socialist market economy system, opened up a road of socialist construction with Chinese characteristics, and achieved another breakthrough in the Soviet-Russian model.

The nationalization of Marxist philosophy since the 20th century has also attracted the attention of many Western scholars. Since the mid-20th century, some Western scholars have conducted continuous research on the Sinicization of Marxist philosophy, especially Mao Zedong's philosophical thought, and expressed two very different views on Chinese Marxist philosophy.

One is the "heretic" theory of Chinese Marxist philosophy, that is, the theory that Chinese Marxist philosophy is a "heresy" or variant of Marxist philosophy. It is represented by American scholars Schramm, Meissner, Wakeman and others. These Western scholars believe that European and Soviet Marxist philosophy, the "orthodox" Marxist philosophy, is a mechanistic, economist dogma that does not recognize any role for the superstructure. They believe the Chinese Marxist philosophy, represented by Mao Zedong's philosophical thought, is more influenced by Chinese traditional culture and social reality, which attaches great importance to the important role of the superstructure. Therefore, compared with economic determinism and "orthodox" Marxism, Chinese Marxist philosophy is an unorthodox, utopian, idealistic, voluntaristic "heretic" or variant. Schramm believes that throughout the development of Mao Zedong Thought, the overall influence of traditional Chinese thought has become increasingly prominent and the most typical way of expressing its "Chinese national style" lies in emphasizing the role of moral values, the importance of education, and the subjective initiative of human beings [5, p. 221]. He pointed out: "The characteristic of Mao-style Marxism is that he pays more attention to the human will than the objective factors." Mao Zedong speaking of the high proportion of vagabonds in his troops, said that the only remedy was to strengthen political education to change the quality of these people. This perception that after a certain education, the rural homeless can become the vanguard of the proletariat is extremely voluntarism, which eventually led to the notion that the subjective can create the objective [5, p. 232]. Meissner believed that Mao Zedong paid attention to sticking to the materialist standpoint of Marxism, but also emphasized the special role of human will under certain historical conditions. This "voluntarism" dilutes the determinism of Maoism, the Chinese variant of Marxism that has come to be known, because Mao Zedong

not only emphasized the role of human subjectivity, but was even skeptical of the role of historical "objective laws". He said: "Maoism is characterized by voluntarism. It believes that people armed with correct thinking and consciousness can overcome material obstacles and transform society according to their own ideals and aspirations" [6, p. 189]. In conclusion, in the eyes of these Western scholars, there is a gap between Chinese Marxist philosophy and European and Soviet Marxist philosophy. Schramm even used the term "isolation" to describe Mao Zedong's Sinicized Marxism and its philosophy [5, p. 234].

The other is the theory of "replication" of Chinese Marxist philosophy, which holds that Chinese Marxist philosophy is nothing but a "copy" of European and Soviet Marxist philosophy. This view was actually put forward as the opposite in the process of arguing with the aforementioned "heretic" argument. Western scholars who hold this view include German scholar Witoff, American scholars Pever and Wald, and more recently Australian scholar Knight. But what Wittff, Pever and Wald are talking about is the whole of Maoist thought. For example, Wittff asserted that Mao Zedong Thought had no original contribution, it was merely a replica of Leninist thought, Stalin's position, and the position of the Third International. Unlike these people, Knight mainly made his arguments from the perspective of Mao Zedong's philosophical thought, so his views were the most representative. In order to refute the "heretic" theory of Chinese Marxist philosophy, Knight systematically examines the media and ways of Mao Zedong's acceptance of Marxist philosophy, especially Li Da's translation activities, which had a direct impact on the formation and development of Mao Zedong's philosophical thought. Knight pointed out that Li Da received and introduced to China some views from Marx, Engels, Plekhanov, and Lenin, and especially from Soviet philosophers and theorists in the early 1930s, such as "while the economic base still dominates in general, but there is a dialectical relationship between the economic base and the superstructure, in which the superstructure is capable of reacting to the economic base and thus having a certain influence on the general course and direction of historical change" [5, p. 234]. There is a clear pattern contained in the numerous Marxist works translated by Li Da. None of these works, without exception, equate Marxist social theory with a mechanism that claims the economic sphere is completely unaffected by various superstructures. They all assert that the economic base is the most important factor in history and social change, but they also recognize the interconnected and interactive nature of society, a premise of historical materialism; politics, law, culture, consciousness, art, literature, and philosophy are all seen as capable of acting in historical

change, just as they are capable of reacting to economic underpinnings" [3, p. 478]. In Knight's view, the so-called "gap" imagined by commentators between Chinese Marxist philosophy and European and Soviet Marxist philosophy does not actually exist, because if the orthodox Soviet philosophy prevailing in the 1930s is used as a criterion, Li Da's interpretation of Marxist philosophy is very orthodox, and through the intermediary of Li Da's dissemination and research on Marxist philosophy, Chinese Marxist philosophy represented by Mao Zedong's philosophical thought is completely consistent with orthodox Marxist philosophy. Knight believes that Chinese Marxist philosophy is not purely Chinese, and Mao Zedong's originality as a philosopher is "limited". Mao Zedong's philosophical views are not "new", and the genealogy goes back to the leading theorists of European and Soviet Marxism, so they are nothing more than copies or repetitions of existing views of European and Soviet Marxist philosophy [3, p. 479].

After Marxism was introduced into China, combined with the reality of China, a Marxism with Chinese characteristics was formed, which guided the development of Chinese society. At present, Western scholars still have some stereotypes about Sinicized Marxism. Western Marxism and Sinicized Marxism are the development of Marxism in different regions. On the basis of seeking common ground while reserving differences, what kind of dialogue and exchange are used between the two, and what aspects can they learn from each other to enrich and develop Marxism need to be further studied.

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#### ХАРАКТЕРИСТИКА КИТАЇЗАЦІЇ МАРКСИСТСЬКОЇ ФІЛОСОФІЇ ТА ОСОБЛИВОСТІ РЕЦЕПЦІЇ ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОГО МАРКСИЗМУ В КИТАЙСЬКІЙ ФІЛОСОФІЇ

*Досліджено, що синізація марксизму – це історичний процес поєднання основної теорії марксизму з конкретною практикою китайської революції для формування китаїзації марксизму з національними особливостями, національною формою та національним змістом. Проаналізовано процес китаїзації марксизму, уперше запропонований В. А. Мао Цзедуну, що розгортався в різних практиках і керування революцією, будівництвом та реформами Китаю. Упродовж тривалого часу Комуністична партія Китаю сформувала "Концепцію Мао Цзедуна", теорію Ден Сяопіна, "Наукову концепцію щодо розвитку Китаю". Ці теоретичні засади відображають чітку спрямованість – практичність. Починаючи із середини ХХ ст., західні вчені висловлювали два види тверджень щодо китайської марксистської філософії: 1) "єретична" теорія, тобто китайська марксистська філософія – це марксистська філософія; 2) теорія "реплікації", тобто китайська марксистська філософія є лише "копією" "ортодоксального" Маркса. Обидва підходи заперечують той факт, що китайська марксистська філософія – легітимність національної ідентичності. Легітимність китайсь-*

ких характеристик китайської марксистської філософії визначено фундаментальною природою марксистської філософії, специфічним ставленням до марксистської філософії та теоретичною метою китаїзації марксистської філософії. З'ясовано, що найбільш фундаментальна причина, чому китайська марксистська філософія має китайські особливості, полягає в тому, що вона є філософським вираженням китайського шляху.

**Ключові слова:** китаїзація марксистської філософії, китайська марксистська філософія, китайська характеристика, філософська експлікація китайського шляху.

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*Исследовано, что синизация марксизма – это исторический процесс сочетания основной теории марксизма с конкретной практикой китайской революции для формирования китаизации марксизма с национальными особенностями, национальной формой и содержанием. Проанализирован процесс китаизации марксизма, впервые предложенный В. А. Мао Цзэдуном, который развертывался в различных практиках управления революцией, строительством и реформами Китая. В течение длительного времени Коммунистическая партия Китая сформировала "Концепцию Мао Цзэдуна", теорию Дэн Сяопина, "Научную концепцию развития Китая". Эти теоретические основы отражают четкую направленность – практичность. Начиная с середины XX ст., западные ученые высказывали два вида утверждений по китайской марксистской философии: 1) "еретическая" теория, то есть китайская марксистская философия – это марксистская философия; 2) теория "репликации", то есть китайская марксистская философия является лишь "копией" "ортодоксального" Маркса. Оба подхода отрицают тот факт, что китайская марксистская философия – легитимность национальной идентичности. Легитимность китайских характеристик китайской марксистской философии определяется фундаментальной природой марксистской философии, специфическим отношением к марксистской философии и теоретической целью китаизации марксистской философии. В статье установлено, что наиболее фундаментальная причина, почему китайская марксистская философия имеет китайские особенности, заключается в том, что она является философским выражением китайского пути.*

**Ключевые слова:** китаизация марксистской философии, китайская марксистская философия, китайская характеристика, философская экспликация китайского пути.