

Sinicization of Marxism from the Perspective of Traditional Cultural Modernization

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Abstract

The relationship between traditional culture and the Sinicization of Marxism is a frequently discussed topic in academic circles, indicating that the relationship between the two is both very complex and of great value. Although the relationship between traditional culture and the Sinicization of Marxism is not "polar opposition or either", it cannot be simply understood as "predetermined harmony". In fact, the reason why traditional culture can meet Marxism and become a valuable resource for the sinicization of Marxism is due to the fact that it has undergone the process of modernization at both the theoretical and practical levels. In the process of modernizing traditional culture, it is easier to understand why the world's most advanced theoretical system met the oldest ancient culture and took root and blossom.

Keywords

Traditional culture; Modernization; Sinicization of Marxism.

1. Introduction

How to understand traditional culture and its modernization? On this issue, there is a research rationale in the current theoretical community that separates textual interpretation from historical interpretation. There is a view that traditional Chinese culture attaches importance to a person's moral level and underestimates his actual ability to do things, and then believes that this tendency will only weaken China's competitiveness in the world, so it is necessary to fully accept the baptism of Western culture in order to talk about a new modern Chinese culture. The contemporary analytic hermeneutic philosopher Paul Likour emphasizes that in the era of globalization, a culture must participate in the ranks of scientific, technological, and political rationality that often requires the simple abandonment of cultural traditions.[1] In fact, the above views or practices reflect narrow, linear and modern thinking. The process of Sinicization of Marxism clearly shows that major issues such as the national question and nationalism, globalization and regionalization, modernization and modernity, patriotism and internationalism are quite complex and sensitive. Globalization or modernization itself will not necessarily destroy traditional culture, but it will continue to open up new space for modernization due to the exchange and collision of different cultures. In addition, the fundamental misunderstanding of the above two situations lies in the fact that the text interpretation tries to give a solidified, non-historical concept and characterization of traditional culture, and believes that traditional culture is disconnected from modern society in historical interpretation, and it is taken for granted that traditional culture must be opposed to modern culture.

Chinese traditional culture is indeed formed under natural economic conditions and is inextricably linked with agricultural civilization. Some scholars believe that China's traditional culture is incompatible with the commodity economy and industrial civilization. This kind of view deviates from the historical interpretation of traditional culture, subjectively believing that traditional culture is incompatible with commodity economy and modern civilization:

traditional culture values righteousness over profit, which is contrary to the development of commodity economy; Traditional culture emphasizes familialism, which is incompatible with the promotion of democratic politics; Traditional culture advocates the concept of human nature, which hinders the construction of the legal system; Traditional culture advocates the concept of group supremacy, which conflicts with modernization's greater emphasis on human individual consciousness; Traditional culture adheres to the supremacy of morality, which is incompatible with the standard of productivity in modern social development, and so on. Here, regardless of whether the two inevitably conflict in terms of attributes, such as emphasizing righteousness over profit and commodity economy, human nature and the construction of modern subjective consciousness, etc., there is a problem in comparing moral concepts with specific historical activities alone. This contrasting approach ignores that morality and historical activity are not juxtaposed and relative, the former should reflect and serve the latter, and the connotation of moral categories changes with historical success. Not surprisingly, such conflictists naturally believe that there can be no innovation and transformation of traditional culture, and that traditional culture and modernization are incompatible and can only be completely abandoned. In fact, absolute conflict theorists understand traditional culture as solidified, ready-made, and existing, and do not understand that traditional culture is generated by history, and traditional culture cannot survive without modernization. It is in this sense that General Secretary Xi Jinping particularly emphasized that it is necessary to systematically sort out traditional cultural resources, so that the cultural relics collected in the forbidden palace, the heritage displayed on the vast land, and the words written in ancient books can all come alive [2].

The "generational" meaning of "tradition" requires us to understand traditional culture from the perspective of historical development. From the perspective of text interpretation, traditional culture refers to the utensils and objects, system designs, text classics, thinking concepts, etc. handed down from ancient times. What's more, they will trace their roots to the extreme and believe that they should be limited to the value traditions of the Chinese people. Text interpretation is indispensable, but it cannot be separated from historical interpretation, otherwise it will fall into cultural extremism or cultural conservatism. The historical interpretation, which includes textual interpretation, believes that "passing on from generation to generation" not only refers to the transmission of ancient things to modern times, but also refers to the "development from generation to generation" that Chinese transformed, enriched and reshaped in the process of transmission. In many cultural readers, it is emphasized that traditional Chinese civilization has a long history and tenacious vitality, and has not been interrupted despite frequent wars.

Since modern times, China has experienced a foreign movement to revitalize industrial science and technology and a revolutionary reform to improve its political system. Especially after the outbreak of the Second Opium War, a large number of patriots realized that only by mastering the advanced science and technology of the West, especially military technology, China could fundamentally achieve a prosperous and strong civilization. In 1898, the fiasco of the Sino-Japanese War declared that the path of the Western Affairs Movement was impassable, and China's decadent political system and the strategy of simple technological power could not bring China into modernization. At this time, the restorationists believed that only the introduction of Western constitutional systems could bring China on the road to modernization. Finally, the movement to change the law proved to be a "flash in the pan" in modern Chinese history. The Restorationists saw the advanced political management system of the West and advocated the implementation of law changes in many fields such as the economy, education, military, politics, and bureaucracy. In the absence of real modernization forces, it is ultimately only a reform movement that is bound to fail. The reason why the restorationists have not been able to gather strength and gain consensus is not so much that the inertia of the traditional old

culture is too stubborn, but that the narrow sense of identity of the public with traditional culture has not been broken. In addition to introducing a new culture conceptually or textually, a successful change or reform is crucial to modernizing an existing culture.

After the October Revolution, people with lofty ideals pinned their hopes on Marxism-Leninism. As the world's most advanced culture formed in Western Europe at that time, Marxism has always accompanied the historical process of China's revolution, construction, reform and opening up, and has blossomed and flourished on the land of China, thus opening up a historical interpretation path for the modernization of traditional Chinese culture. Traditional Chinese culture includes ancient traditions, modern traditions and modern traditions, and the evolution and innovation of each cultural tradition is inseparable from the changes in historical events, themes of the times and major tasks at that time. In order to accurately grasp the scientific connotation of traditional culture, we must adhere to the historical interpretation path of textual interpretation.

Marxism has a powerful ability to explain the laws of the world and the universality of history. Further, Marxism's explanatory capacity is essentially in terms of its practical ability. Marxist theory aims at practice, and uses practice to explain theory, not text to explain practice. According to Marxist principles, only when theory is mastered by the masses can it become a powerful force for transforming the world. Therefore, the modernization of traditional culture is the practical interpretation of traditional culture, and it is also the modernization process of the masses to grasp and use traditional culture. This modernization process is manifested in the historical docking of traditional culture and Marxism, which in turn promotes the modernization of traditional culture. With the continuous transformation of China's social modernization, it is possible to truly abandon the decadent and backward parts of traditional culture.

2. Modernization that is not modernity: how to inherit and develop traditional Chinese culture

The debate on the relationship between modernization and traditional culture has not separated from the three differences of conflict, non-conflict, and critical inheritance for thirty years[3]. If modernization is understood in the sense of "modernity," these differences probably never end. As mentioned earlier, modernization is a process of movement that is constantly enriched, more inclusive, positive and integrated into the world. Viewing traditional culture and modernization in opposition to modernization, then, is indeed a metaphysical way of thinking [4]. In this way, it is easy to understand how traditional culture is possible and why creative transformation and innovative development are needed. In contrast, modernity is people's understanding and reflection of modernization, and it is the "attribute" judgment of the phased achievements of modernization. When some people stand in a certain modernity or a certain stage of modernization with rigid thinking, on the other hand, the traditional culture that has not yet begun modernization or is relatively slow to modernize will conclude that modernity and traditional culture are in conflict. Studies have pointed out that the problem of modernity is manifested in the elimination of traditional beliefs and local knowledge [5].

2.1. Inheritance and development should be people-oriented

In contemporary China, it is necessary to talk about the modernization of traditional culture from the perspective of Chinese social transformation. Although Chinese society has thousands of years of profound people-based traditions, the actual social structure is still that "the laborer rules the laborer" and the "nobleman is light". The fundamental reason why feudal society for more than 2,000 years has fallen into a historical cycle is that the historical subjectivity of the broad masses of the people has not been respected and historical creativity has not been

released. In this historical context, people-oriented should be an important connotation of traditional cultural modernization. In other words, people-oriented is the true modernization of traditional culture. The Chinese Communists headed by Mao Zedong, proceeding from the basic tenets of Marxism, established "serving the people wholeheartedly" as the action guideline and value guideline of the Party and the government. Therefore, New China provides a basic institutional guarantee for the people-oriented modernization and transformation of traditional culture.

In the course of socialist modernization, Deng Xiaoping fully affirmed that the broad masses of the people are the main force promoting historical development, and held that many new things, new creations, and new experiences in reform and opening up were put forward by the masses in practice. This provides a subjective guarantee for the people-oriented modernization and transformation of traditional culture, which is the great release of the main initiative. On November 15, 2012, General Secretary Xi Jinping led the new members of the Politburo Standing Committee of the CPC Central Committee to make a collective appearance. At the meeting, General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that "the people are the source of our strength" from the height of the fate of ruling and national rejuvenation. It can be said that the people are the creators of history, and the masses are the real heroes. Xi Jinping stressed that if the whole party firmly establishes the mass viewpoint and adheres to the mass line, the party will gain a solid ruling foundation and have a steady stream of forward momentum; Otherwise, the Chinese Communist Party will lose its ruling position. In his speech at the opening ceremony of the spring semester of the Central Party School in 2012, Xi Jinping regarded serving the people wholeheartedly and sincerely seeking the interests of the people as the supreme interests and core values of Chinese communists[6]. This well highlights the purity of the Party and the supremacy of the people, echoing Mao Zedong's idea of building a Party that is ideologically and organizationally pure on the eve of the victory of the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression 67 years ago.[7] The victorious convening of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China has closely linked the Chinese dream of realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation with the strategy of modernizing and strengthening the country. Vigorously promote the modernization of the national governance system and governance capacity, cultivate the people-oriented advanced socialist culture with Chinese characteristics, provide a governance guarantee for the people-oriented modernization of traditional culture, and mark that the modernization of traditional culture has become an important part of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

2.2. Inheritance and development should be guided by the problems of the times

"The era is the mother of ideas". "Era" is not a simple concept of time, and we need to properly handle China's major contradictions with the world. Therefore, we cannot talk about the modernization of traditional culture in isolation from the historical reality and the requirements of the times. Only by proceeding from the issues of the times and focusing on modernization, modernization and globalization can we excavate the positive and excellent content of traditional culture. At the beginning of the popularization of Marxism, Mao Zedong emphasized the indivisibility of internationalist content and national form.[8] At the meeting to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the birth of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, General Secretary Xi Jinping stressed that in order to realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, we must have a broad historical vision, grasp the general trend of the world, and be good at listening to the voice of the times[9].

"The times are guided by the problems of the times, which not only better promotes the modern transformation of Chinese society and Chinese culture, but also realizes the eraization and globalization of traditional culture. Today, the whole country has set off a craze for Chinese

studies, Confucianism, and cultural self-confidence. In the process of strengthening Marxist research on history and culture, we must persist in taking a scientific attitude toward the world significance of traditional culture and prevent cultural conservatism. The fundamental mistake of cultural conservatism lies in not understanding the relationship between China and the world, and not understanding that culture needs to be inherited and developed.

When the motto of the world trend, General Secretary Xi Jinping once again stressed that in order to realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, we must have a broad historical vision, grasp the general trend of the world, be good at listening to the voice of the times, and constantly promote innovation at all levels, in order to write a new chapter in the development of the Chinese nation[10]. It can be said that only by realizing the modernization of traditional culture guided by the problems of the times can we have the confidence, background, and color to write a new chapter in the development of the Chinese nation. Mother of Thought".

2.3. Inheritance and development should be driven by revolutionary practice

In 1938, Mao Zedong first proposed the "Sinicization of Marxism" in the political report of the Sixth Plenary Session of the Sixth Central Committee. In 1951, Mao Zedong personally revised it to "Marxism concretized in China." The "revision" after 13 years is mainly due to the enrichment and deepening of the development of practice. The successive formulation of these two propositions shows that the Sinicization of Marxism has been accompanied by the deepening of the revolutionary practical activities of the masses of the people to transform the subjective and objective world, and is not only the application of Marxist theory in China, but also the concrete enrichment and development.

Under the conditions of Chinese history and culture, this enrichment and development has its own special meaning. When Chinese history finally chose Marxism, the Chinese Communists put forward for the first time the concept of unity of knowledge and action based on practice in terms of ideological understanding, ending the cultural tradition of thousands of years of light labor and heavy labor. At the same time, this also found the broad masses of the people, the real historical subject, for Chinese society to quickly bid farewell to traditional society and establish a modern society. Without the main body of revolutionary practice, society will not automatically realize modernization, and excellent traditional culture will not be able to obtain historical inheritance and development.

"Practice is the source of theory". Theoretical innovation should be transferred by revolutionary practical activities to transform the subjective and objective world. In the innovation of practice, theory and culture, the Sinicization of Marxism promotes the modernization of traditional Chinese culture with the development of practice. Seeking truth from facts, emancipating the mind, advancing with the times, seeking truth and being pragmatic, never forgetting the original intention, and really doing solid work are the symbolic achievements of the Sinicization of Marxism. In the beginning, these were core concepts in traditional Chinese culture. These concepts were finally elevated by the Chinese Communists to the Party's ideological line and methods through the great practice of revolution, construction, reform and opening up by the masses of the people. This process is precisely the inheritance and development of Chinese traditional culture under the conditions of modernization, and it is also the modernization and development of Chinese society.

3. The Modernization of Traditional Chinese Culture: The Basis for the Development of Marxist Sinicization Theory and Practice

In the basic attitude toward Marxism, there is still a confrontation between "in China" and "China" today. Some scholars pointed out that Marxism gained the recognition of national cultural identity in China due to its active participation in the creation of the modern tradition

of Chinese philosophy, the integration of various philosophical trends in China at that time, and the reshaping of the spiritual life of Chinese [11]. In fact, Marxism did not just participate, but reshaped Chinese philosophy or culture and opened up modern traditions. The modern tradition is prescribed because of the intrinsic needs of Chinese society. The Sinicization of Marxism is the result of the modernization of traditional Chinese culture and the "new unification" of traditional culture. This modern tradition has come from the modern tradition, which is embodied in the continuous enrichment and development of Marxism at the theoretical and practical levels.

If we insist on Marxism's participation in China's modern cultural tradition, it also shows that they are two things. To be precise, without the Sinicization of Marxism, there would be no modernization of traditional Chinese culture. In reality, the Sinicization of Marxism led to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation; Culturally, the Sinicization of Marxism has opened up the great revival of traditional Chinese culture. According to Mao Zedong's definition of "combination" of the Sinicization of Marxism, the Sinicization of Marxism in practice and theory means the modernization of Chinese society and traditional culture that promote each other, and the modernization of Chinese traditional culture is the cultural consciousness of the theory and practice of Sinicization of Marxism.

3.1. The modern inheritance of traditional culture is the historical development of the Sinicization of Marxism

Some scholars emphasize that Chinese traditional culture is embodied in the national spirit of self-improvement, generosity and peace, emphasis on harmony, patriotic unity, diligence and bravery, honesty and friendship, national symbols such as language, customs, architecture, music, and dance, as well as the emotional experience of human touch, family affection and friendship [11]. In fact, the Sinicization of Marxism has promoted China step by step from tradition to modernity, and has given traditional Chinese culture, including various national spirits, symbols, academic resources, knowledge systems, and emotional experiences, with new connotations of the times in theory and practice. Realizing the modernization of traditional culture is the primary condition for the discovery, protection and inheritance of traditional culture, otherwise the culture will wither due to the gradual loss of vitality, and eventually can only "lie" in the museum.

During the 5,000 years of Chinese civilization, during which it has undergone several epochal developments, it is bound to continue to open up a new unification along with the theoretical and practical development of Marxism in China. Today, in sharp contrast to the original intention of the state to attach great importance to traditional culture, it arbitrarily tampers with traditional cultural classics in order to increase ratings, and demolishes cultural sites in order to pursue short-term commercial benefits. These phenomena show that there are still problems in our modern people's attitude and inheritance methods of long-standing traditional culture, lack of modern scientific attitude towards traditional culture, and in the process of promoting the development of cultural industry, the pursuit of economic benefits is much higher than the pursuit of social benefits. In terms of national development strategy, China has proposed to change from a country with cultural resources to a cultural power. In fact, the key to becoming a cultural power lies in effectively integrating existing cultural resources. It should be said that this effective integration is embodied in the modern transformation of traditional culture under the guidance of Marxism from content to form, from theory to practice, and from part to whole.

3.2. The modernization of traditional culture must adhere to the ideological method of seeking truth from facts

Cultural modernization is a natural process of history, that is, the eraization and modernization of culture is not transferred by human will. Some scholars emphasize that the cultural situation of each era will be different from the previous one; In the new era, cultural values that have become divorced from reality in the past become anachronistic will become anachronistic.[12] Indeed, "pushing the old into the new" and "revolutionizing the old and innovating", as the keywords for comprehensively deepening reform today, reflect the law of cultural innovation and development in the context of social development. Fundamentally, culture, although not social life per se, is a reflection of social life as a whole. Then, cultural modernization requires that culture can not be separated from social life, but can also lead social life. To properly handle the relationship between the two, we must adhere to the ideological method of seeking truth from facts.

At every critical stage of history, the Communist Party of China has relied on seeking truth from facts to promote cultural and social modernization. Seeking truth from facts, as the ideological method and work style of a Marxist political party, is also an innovative method of respecting objective reality to achieve cultural modernization. In *On New Democracy*, Mao Zedong answered politically, economically, and culturally where China would go at a turning point in history. The opening chapter points out that only the attitude of "seeking truth from facts" and the spirit of responsibility can achieve the liberation of the Chinese nation.[13] Similarly, Deng Xiaoping, proceeding from facts, proposed the creative use of Marxism to solve the China problem. Faced with the theme of peaceful development, Deng Xiaoping re-established the ideological line of seeking truth from facts in the whole party, thus opening up a brand-new cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The solemn manifestation of neither following the "old road" nor taking the "evil road"[14] reflects the cultural self-confidence of the Chinese Communists in the creative transformation of traditional culture. Xi Jinping put forward the "four self-confidences" and emphasized that the most fundamental is cultural self-confidence, focusing on China's unique cultural traditions, historical destiny and basic national conditions, and firmly following the development path suitable for China's characteristics[15]. Here, the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping as the core promotes cultural modernization by seeking truth from facts, and strives to establish cultural self-confidence and cultural consciousness of "integration" in the hearts of the whole Party and the people of the whole country. In a country with a special culture and history, the most urgent task to realize the creative transformation and innovative development of traditional culture is to implement the ideological line of seeking truth from facts.

3.3. The modernization of traditional culture must put human construction in the first place

As far as the main body and purpose of construction are concerned, cultural undertakings are people's undertakings, and the key to cultural modernization is human modernization. It is precisely because social modernization requires the modernization of people that cultural modernization has become more urgent than ever. Traditional Chinese culture attaches great importance to people, and the "people" it speaks of are people who "the people are the foundation of the state" and people who "take benevolence as their own responsibility". This is very different from the modern society's demand for social people rather than political people, practical people rather than moral people. Under modern conditions, individuals must be people who have truly returned to society and grown up with practice. This is exactly what Marx emphasized, communist society achieved the appropriation of the essence of man by eliminating private ownership, and truly turned man into a social person [16].

It was precisely in order to create such people and a truly modern culture that the Chinese Communists insisted from the very beginning of proceeding from China's actual problems and Marxist revolutionary theory to build a brand-new people's republic. The newness of this country and society is reflected not only in the absence of political oppression and economic exploitation, but also in the cultural advancement of civilization due to the domination of new cultures.[17] At present, the Party Central Committee regards the all-round development of Party members as its own responsibility, and focuses on solving the "four winds" problem within the whole Party. The reason why the building of the party's work style has been repeatedly emphasized is that the work style has a bearing on the party's image, especially on whether the party can lead the construction of advanced culture. Xi Jinping stressed that solving the "four winds" problem can create better conditions for the solution of other problems within the party[18]. The key to the so-called "better conditions" refers to providing people with "both ability and political integrity" for modernization and cultivating leaders, responsibilities and vanguards of modernization.

Certain leading cadres are seriously divorced from the masses and have degenerated from public servants serving the masses into "masters" of the masses. Party members captured by bureaucracy are no longer servants of the people in the true practical sense, but people who are detached from social practice and stand tall. As the British cultural critic Raymond . Williams pointed out that culture describes particular lifestyles, expressing certain meanings and values in institutions and everyday behavior . The construction of work style is fundamentally related to the construction of people, and the cultural modernization construction with this as the breakthrough point not only determines the depth and breadth of the party's cause and the modernization of the country's governance ability, but also helps to shape a positive and progressive lifestyle, and turn the socialist system with Chinese characteristics into a more mature and stereotyped way into changing the words and deeds of the masses.

4. Conclusion

In short, the modernization of traditional Chinese culture embodies the dialectical unity of Marxist theoretical logic and practical logic, and the specific theoretical logic behind it is the enrichment and development of Marxist theory, and the practical logic is the dual development of the theory and practice of the Sinicization of Marxism.

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