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The Internal Logic of Adapting Marxism to the Chinese Context and the Needs of the Times and Constructing China's Independent Knowledge System

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Abstract. There is an internally unified logical relationship between adapting Marxism to the Chinese context and the needs of the times and constructing China's independent knowledge system. This process defines the theoretical substance, value orientation, and methodological foundation of an independent knowledge system at the level of fundamental direction. The history of the Communist Party of China's theoretical innovation reveals the historical logic through which theory develops and knowledge takes shape. Grounding inquiry in the practical questions of Chinese modernization and continuously answering the questions posed by the times constitute the practical driving force for original knowledge construction. Consolidating cultural subjectivity further endows the knowledge system with distinctive national characteristics. Taken together, these dimensions show that the construction of China's independent knowledge system is an organic unity of theoretical self-consciousness, historical initiative, practice-based creation, and cultural confidence. It is also the inevitable outcome of the vivid practice and innovative development of Marxism in China.

Keywords: adapting Marxism to the Chinese context and the needs of the times, China's independent knowledge system, internal logic, cultural subjectivity, theoretical innovation

1. Introduction

Constructing China's independent knowledge system is a major strategic task that contemporary Chinese philosophy and social sciences must undertake. General Secretary Xi Jinping has made it clear that "the priority of developing the philosophy and social sciences with Chinese characteristics is to establish an independent knowledge system" [1]. This important statement identifies knowledge independence as the core requirement of academic development and marks a fundamental pursuit in cultural development in the new era. At the same time, the adaptation of Marxism to the Chinese context and the needs of the times has continued to advance. The major proposition of integrating the basic tenets of Marxism with China's specific realities and with fine traditional Chinese culture has become increasingly prominent, providing an irreplaceable theoretical source and methodological guide for the growth of this knowledge system.

At a crucial stage in building China into a modern socialist country in all respects and advancing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through Chinese modernization, whether

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philosophy and social sciences can use an independent knowledge paradigm to interpret Chinese practice in depth and effectively guide progress in the times concerns more than academic prosperity itself. It also bears directly on cultural sovereignty and the independence of the national spirit. A deeper understanding of the internal logic between adapting Marxism to the Chinese context and the needs of the times and constructing China's independent knowledge system helps clarify, at the theoretical source, the fundamental principles governing knowledge production. It strengthens historical initiative in the process of construction and firmly establishes a problem orientation driven by practice, thereby consolidating the spiritual foundation of cultural subjectivity.

Revealing this logic is conducive to consciously overcoming path dependence on Western knowledge paradigms, to refining iconic concepts through exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations, and to providing an inexhaustible source of intellectual momentum for answering the questions posed by China, by the world, by the people, and by the times. Deepening this understanding has major theoretical value and far-reaching practical significance for accelerating the formation of academic discursive power commensurate with China's comprehensive national strength and international standing, advancing the creative transformation and innovative development of fine traditional Chinese culture, and continually opening up new frontiers in adapting Marxism to the Chinese context and the needs of the times.

2. Adapting Marxism to the Chinese context and the needs of the times defines the fundamental direction of an independent knowledge system

Marxism is the fundamental guiding ideology upon which the Communist Party of China and the People's Republic of China are founded. It establishes the scientific direction of academic research and sets the fundamental principles for constructing a knowledge system. Adapting Marxism to the Chinese context and the needs of the times is a historical process in which theory is integrated with reality. It continuously produces theoretical achievements that guide contemporary development and directly constitutes the core content of China's independent knowledge system. Engels once pointed out that "a nation that wants to rise to the pinnacles of science cannot possibly manage without theoretical thinking" [2]. Theoretical conviction makes intellectual independence possible, and theoretical self-consciousness gives rise to discursive autonomy. Every deepening of the adaptation of Marxism to the Chinese context and the demands of the times has promoted the knowledge system to a higher level and endowed Chinese philosophy and social sciences with a clearer sense of self. Only by upholding this fundamental direction can the independent knowledge system avoid the old path of closed and rigid thinking, avoid the wrong path of abandoning socialism, and demonstrate the enduring power of truth amid epochal transformations unprecedented in a century.

The theoretical framework provided by the adaptation of Marxism to the Chinese context and the demands of the era regulates the value orientation and problem consciousness of knowledge production. It requires all academic inquiry to respond to the concerns of the people and serve national rejuvenation. This theoretical system contains the standpoints, viewpoints, and methods of dialectical and historical materialism. It teaches us to extract Chinese theory from Chinese practice and guides us in using new categories to express new realities. General Secretary Xi Jinping has emphasized that "we must put forward original theories and views on the basis of studying China's conditions, and develop distinctively Chinese disciplinary, academic and discourse systems" [3]. This important statement defines the highest mission of contemporary scholarship. It shows that an independent knowledge frameworks is not a matter of supplementing or revising existing Western knowledge systems, but entails a fundamental reconstruction of knowledge paradigms. The adaptation of Marxism to the Chinese context and the needs of the times enables the knowledge

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system to renew itself continuously. It requires new theoretical generalizations in light of changing realities and promotes original scholarship capable of grasping the overall trend of the times and guiding its development. Only in this manner can the independent knowledge system break free from dependence on other knowledge frameworks and establish, at the theoretical source, the intellectual sovereignty of the Chinese nation. The establishment of this direction determines that China's knowledge system will move toward a new realm of spiritual independence, theoretical coherence, and practical efficacy.

3. The history of the Party's theoretical innovation profoundly explains the historical generation of an independent knowledge system

The century-long history of the Communist Party of China is a history of continuously advancing the adaptation of Marxism to the Chinese context and the needs of the times, and also a history of continuously constructing China's independent knowledge system. General Secretary Xi Jinping has pointed out that "the history of the CPC has been a process of constantly advancing the adaptation of Marxism to the Chinese context, and of constantly promoting theoretical innovation and creation" [4]. This historical process bears witness to the ideological self-consciousness of a great political party, gives rise to knowledge forms with a Chinese style, and unfolds a magnificent course in which theoretical creation and knowledge construction resonate with each other. During the period of the new-democratic revolution, Chinese Communists created Mao Zedong Thought. It profoundly answered the question of the distinctive path by which a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country could move toward socialism, and it laid the initial knowledge foundation for Marxism adapted to the Chinese context. This pioneering achievement proves that the independence of a knowledge system arises from a scientific grasp of a country's specific realities and from the organic integration of general laws of historical development with the particular laws of Chinese society. Theoretical creation never emerges from nowhere. An independent knowledge system is always gradually generated in the process of answering major questions of the times and continuously takes shape through the summary of practical experience.

During the periods of socialist revolution and construction and the new period of reform and opening up, our Party successively established Deng Xiaoping Theory, formed the Theory of Three Represents, and developed the Scientific Outlook on Development. These theoretical achievements constitute a grand chapter in adapting Marxism to the Chinese context and the needs of the times, one that is both continuous and responsive to the times. Each major theoretical innovation opened new space for the development of philosophy and social sciences, giving rise to novel concepts and analytical categories grounded firmly in China's practical experience. Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era marks a new leap in adapting Marxism to the Chinese context and the needs of the times. It is the Marxism of contemporary China and of the 21st century [5]. As the concentrated expression of theoretical innovation in the new era, it has raised China's independent knowledge system to an unprecedented height. With a broad historical vision and profound theoretical insight, this Thought systematically answers major questions of the times, including what kind of socialism with Chinese characteristics should be upheld and developed in the new era and how it should be upheld and developed. It builds the main framework and core meaning of the knowledge system. Emerging from the depths of history, China's independent knowledge system embodies the wisdom and creativity of successive generations of Chinese Communists. It is an epic of theoretical self-strengthening and a monument to intellectual independence. History clearly shows that every historical breakthrough in adapting Marxism to the Chinese context and the

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needs of the times is directly transformed into a structural renewal of the knowledge system and profoundly reshapes the spiritual outlook of Chinese scholarship.

4. Grounding inquiry in practice and answering the questions of the times drive the innovative construction of an independent knowledge system

Practice is the source of theoretical innovation and the fundamental driving force for constructing an independent knowledge system. General Secretary Xi Jinping has pointed out that "the life of a theory lies in innovation," and that innovation is the perpetual theme of the development of philosophy and social sciences as well as the requisite of social, practical, and historical progress [3]. China's independent knowledge system does not depend on purely scholastic conceptual deduction. It draws nourishment from the great practice of Chinese modernization and identifies its questions in the struggles of hundreds of millions of people for a better life. China is undergoing the most extensive and distinctive practical innovation in its history, which provides exceptionally rich soil for theoretical creation and knowledge construction. The continuous improvement of the socialist market economy, the in-depth development of whole-process people's democracy, the vigorous advancement of building China into a country with a strong socialist culture, and the steady promotion of common prosperity all urgently require philosophy and social sciences to offer theoretically grounded explanations. They also call for China's independent knowledge system to provide systematic answers. Questions are the voice of the times. What questions are addressed and what concerns are answered directly determine the direction and quality of a knowledge system. Taking China's realities as the starting point, putting forward original theoretical views, and constructing its own academic propositions, academic ideas, and academic discourse constitute the internal mechanism by which the independent knowledge system continues to grow.

China's practice in the new era displays unprecedented depth and complexity. It requires the knowledge system to transcend existing explanatory frameworks and drives Chinese scholars to undertake genuine theoretical exploration and knowledge innovation. General Secretary Xi Jinping has called on scholars in philosophy and social sciences to write their papers on the land of the motherland. This inquiry strikes at the very core of the epistemological ethics underpinning knowledge production: academic research must be rooted in Chinese realities, absorb and digest Chinese experience, and form Chinese theory. If the distinctive worldview, values, historical outlook, and civilizational outlook embodied in Chinese modernization cannot be transformed into systematic independent knowledge, China will be unable to occupy an active position in the global academic landscape. It is precisely in the process of answering the questions posed by China, by the world, by the people, and by the times that new fields of knowledge are opened and new concepts and categories are proposed. The more urgent the need of practice for theory becomes, the more critical the construction of an independent knowledge system will be. This practice-based problem orientation gives the knowledge system strong explanatory power for reality and guiding power for the future. It ensures that Chinese scholarship is no longer a passive annotation to history and reality, but a forward-looking force that promotes social progress. Practice has no end, and neither does knowledge construction. From this, the adaptation of Marxism to the Chinese context and the needs of the times gains an enduring impetus for innovation.

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5. Consolidating cultural subjectivity shapes the distinctive qualities of an independent knowledge system

Cultural subjectivity is the spiritual premise for constructing China's independent knowledge system. It means that a nation has reached a mature state of self-confirmation and self-direction in knowledge production. General Secretary Xi Jinping has pointed out that confidence in one's culture is a broader, deeper, and more fundamental form of self-confidence [6], and that "with cultural subjectivity, there will be a firm self in the cultural sense" [7]. These important statements inject strong cultural self-consciousness into the construction of an independent knowledge system. They reveal that the roots of knowledge independence lie deeply in cultural selfhood and require Chinese scholarship to establish its own value standpoint, way of thinking, and aesthetic pursuit. Behind every knowledge system there are specific cultural presuppositions and value judgments. Knowledge construction that loses cultural subjectivity will either degenerate into imitation and reproduction of others or become rootless abstract deduction. As Gao Qinghai observed, for a society and a nation to stand up, economic strength is certainly a necessary foundation, but it is not the key. The key is first to stand up in thought; a nation that cannot stand up in thought cannot truly become the master of its own destiny, even if it is rich in gold [8]. The emphasis on adapting Marxism to the Chinese context and the needs of the times and integrating it with China's finest traditional cultural heritage is precisely aimed at consolidating this subjectivity within a broad cultural time and space. This integration enables Marxism to speak in a Chinese voice, allows Chinese civilization to radiate new theoretical vitality, and endows the independent knowledge system with profound historical depth and strong cultural appeal.

Consolidating cultural subjectivity means maintaining theoretical clarity and cultural composure amid global knowledge flows. It requires that China not be led by Western knowledge paradigms and that it accelerate the formation of academic discursive power commensurate with its comprehensive national strength and international status. General Secretary Xi Jinping has emphasized the need to hone the ability to formulate iconic concepts and create new concepts, domains, and expressions that can be readily understood and accepted by the international community [3]. An independent knowledge system is the systematic integration of such iconic concepts. It observes China and the times, and, standing on Chinese soil, proposes Chinese solutions to common problems facing humanity. Such a knowledge system is by no means closed or exclusionary. It advocates exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations, explains Chinese practice with Chinese theory, and elevates Chinese theory through Chinese practice, thereby adding distinctively Chinese wisdom to the treasury of human knowledge. The firm establishment of cultural subjectivity enables China's independent knowledge system to display an independent and steadfast spiritual character. It embodies the vigor and renewing virtue of Chinese civilization and will surely build, in the global academic landscape, an intellectual peak belonging to the Chinese nation. The ultimate completion of an independent knowledge system is the true standing up of culture in the realm of meaning and the deepest intellectual support for national rejuvenation.

6. Conclusion

Seen in this light, the construction of China's independent knowledge system is, fundamentally, an inevitable requirement for upholding and developing Marxism in the new era. It provides intellectual support for advancing Chinese modernization and serves as an important marker of the Chinese nation's attainment of spiritual autonomy in the course of civilizational rejuvenation. This undertaking requires adherence to the scientific guidance of Marxism while remaining firmly

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connected to China's historical and cultural traditions. It also requires facing squarely the major questions raised by contemporary Chinese practice, rather than being content with the simple application of existing knowledge paradigms. Only by taking China as the central reference point and the times as the point of reference, and by continuously distilling Chinese experience, interpreting the Chinese path, and constructing Chinese discourse through the integration of theoretical innovation, practical creation, and cultural inheritance, can a knowledge system with subjectivity, originality, and a distinct character of the times truly take shape. Looking ahead, as the adaptation of Marxism to the Chinese context and the needs of the times continues to open up new horizons, China's independent knowledge system will also mature in the process of responding to the questions posed by China, by the world, by the people, and by the times, thereby providing deeper and more enduring intellectual strength for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

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