**Relationship between Mao Zedong Thought and the Theoretical System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics**

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【Abstract】Since the 18th CPC National Congress, the relationship between Mao Zedong Thought and the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics has once again become the focus of social attention. Both are the localization of non-ethnic theories, and their sinicization process will reflect a high degree of Chinese characteristics. From the perspective of socialism with Chinese characteristics, the connection between the two is mainly manifested in the relationship between foundation and development, inheritance and development, origin and evolution, and there are also differences in their origins.

【Key words】Mao Zedong Thought, Theoretical System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, Relational Cognition

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The report of the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012 clearly pointed out that the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics is a scientific theoretical system that includes "Deng Xiaoping Theory, the important thought of 'Three Represents' and the Scientific Outlook on Development", and is "the persistence and development of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought". At the same time, it emphasized that the first generation of the CPC Central Leadership Group provided "valuable experience, theoretical preparation and material foundation" for the creation of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era. ① At present, how to scientifically handle the relationship between Mao Zedong Thought and the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics has become a hotly discussed topic in the academic community.

The Connotation and Characteristics of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics

From the perspective of time and space, socialism with Chinese characteristics must first be "in China" and must be in line with China's national conditions. That is, the region of occurrence is mainly China, and the time of occurrence is based on the chronology of Chinese historical facts. In terms of the process of the sinicization of Marxist theory, the party's important documents on Mao Zedong Thought have always placed Chinese practice in the first place. The "Report on the Revision of the Party Constitution" of the Seventh National Congress of the Communist Party of China clearly pointed out that it is a thought that unifies Marxist-Leninist theory with "Chinese revolutionary practice", and the "Resolution on Certain Historical Issues of the Party Since the Founding of the People's Republic of China" of the Sixth Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China emphasized that it is the product of the combination of the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism and "the concrete practice of the Chinese revolution". After the reform and opening up, from Deng Xiaoping Theory, the "Three Represents" important thought to the scientific outlook on development, China's national conditions have always been highlighted in the first place.

The positive and negative practices of China's revolution and construction have proved that socialism with Chinese characteristics can only be derived from China's national conditions. The two major losses suffered by the Party in the process of the New Democratic Revolution were almost all due to its divorce from the reality at that time. In 1927, the still relatively immature Party misjudged the Kuomintang controlled by Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Jingwei, and was suddenly killed under the right-wing capitulationist leadership of Chen Duxiu, who gave up the leadership of the revolution and the armed forces. In the fifth anti-encirclement and suppression campaign, the base areas and white areas were severely damaged under the left-wing opportunist leadership of Wang Ming, who was dogmatic and pro-Soviet. Copying the Soviet revolutionary experience and Western revolutionary theory could not solve the actual problems of the Chinese revolution at all. Under the guidance of the principles of encircling the cities from the countryside and persisting in the people's war, the Chinese Communists finally won the victory of the War of Resistance against Japan and the revolutionary war. In terms of social construction, the Great Leap Forward movement that ignored the laws of economic development and the Cultural Revolution that misjudged that the main contradiction in society was still class struggle brought immeasurable losses to the national economy, while the three major reforms and reform and opening up strongly promoted the rapid development of the national economy.

From the perspective of the meaning of the word, socialism with Chinese characteristics emphasizes the word "characteristics". The characteristics of socialism with Chinese characteristics emphasize the unique things of the Chinese nation and are exclusive. Chinese characteristics focus on the product of the combination of Western Marxist-Leninist principles with my country's revolutionary practice and construction practice. Deng Xiaoping once summarized: "Combining the universal principles of Marxism with the specific reality of our country, taking our own path, and building socialism with Chinese characteristics is exactly the conclusion we have drawn from summarizing long-term historical experience."② It can be said that its theoretical crystallization is the sinicization of Marxism, and its practical operation is national independence and modernization.

After the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, China insisted on building its own characteristics. In the second quarter of 2010, it surpassed Japan to become the world's second largest economy. China's experience in socialist construction has begun to attract worldwide attention and has gradually become an object of study and emulation by the Third World, especially the vast developing countries. Naming it with Chinese characteristics not only helps to distinguish it from the development models of other socialist countries, but is also the result of relying on its own strength to win the recognition of other ideological regimes in the international community.

In a broad sense, as long as a foreign theory is used to guide the growth and development of a nation, its process and results will inevitably be branded with the national color, thus forming national characteristics different from those of the country from which the theory was exported, namely the so-called national characteristics. In the long and arduous revolutionary process, the pioneers of the Chinese revolution, centered on Mao Zedong, based on China's national conditions, combined Marxist thought with the national conditions of the Land Revolution, the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the War of Liberation, and formed a systematic guiding theory of the Chinese revolution, namely Mao Zedong Thought. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, my country's social and economic construction has also experienced a great tortuous process. The Soviet model in the early days of the founding of the People's Republic of China laid a solid foundation for the establishment and development of all walks of life in the new China, but as time went on, some of the drawbacks of the original political and economic system became the ice that must be broken by the economic system reform. These reform measures and contents should become a major category of Chinese characteristics. In other words, the revolutionary struggle and economic construction process combined with China's specific practice are bound to be branded with the Chinese national color.

From the perspective of the nature of the process, socialism with Chinese characteristics aims to unswervingly adhere to the path of socialism and communism. Mao Zedong Thought and the socialist system with Chinese characteristics both emphasize that adhering to the socialist system and realizing the communist ideal are always the fundamental guarantee for the party and the state to lead the people of all ethnic groups to realize their common ideals. Politically, we must adhere to the four basic principles and the people's democratic dictatorship, the people's congress system and the political consultation system, and the ethnic regional autonomy and grassroots mass autonomy system. Economically, we must focus on economic construction, adhere to the liberation and development of productivity, establish a market-oriented market economic system, strengthen the control and influence of the state-owned economy in important industries and key areas related to the national economy and people's livelihood, and distribute income mainly according to work to ensure common prosperity. Culturally, we must strengthen the construction of spiritual civilization, advocate the policy of letting a hundred flowers bloom and a hundred schools of thought contend, advocate core values, and call on literature and art to serve the people and socialism. We must emphasize ethnic equality, oppose ethnic division, and guide religion to adapt to socialist society. We must emphasize strengthening and consolidating national defense and military construction, and unswervingly realize the reunification of the motherland. We must pursue an independent and peaceful foreign policy, adhere to the five basic principles of peaceful coexistence, and strive to maintain world peace and promote common development.

The dialectical unity of the two major achievements: the main relationship between foundation and development and the complementary relationship between intersection and complementarity

Mao Zedong Thought is the foundation and source of the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics is the inheritance and development of Mao Zedong Thought, which is the main relationship; at the same time, due to the commonality of the fundamental ideological sources and some research objects, the two have cross-cutting and complementary phenomena in some areas, which is the supplementary relationship. It is worth noting that, on the one hand, the two are not an either-or opposition relationship, nor are they similar to a complete genus-species inclusion relationship. There are intersections but also their own independence; on the other hand, as a secondary aspect of the contradiction, the supplementary relationship does not mean that it is unimportant in the cognition of the relationship between the two, and under certain conditions, it may rise to the main contradiction.

In terms of subject relations, Mao Zedong Thought is the foundation and source of the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics is the inheritance and development of Mao Zedong Thought. According to the law of the development sequence of things, it is necessary to "stabilize the country" and "secure the country" before "prospering the country", that is, to build the country and maintain stability before developing the economy. Mao Zedong Thought has made an indelible contribution to the founding of New China. Its germination, development and maturity mainly occurred from the early 1920s to the late 1970s. The first 30 years were dominated by revolutionary wars, and the second 30 years were dominated by social construction. In 1945, the Seventh National Congress of the Communist Party of China reviewed and passed the establishment of Mao Zedong Thought as the guiding ideology of the Party. After the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee, peace and development became the theme of the times. The guiding ideology centered on economic construction was born in the above background. Its emergence and development mainly began in the early 1980s and is still in the process of exploration and advancement. Marked by Deng Xiaoping's speech during his southern tour, the 16th and 18th National Congresses of the Communist Party of China, Deng Xiaoping Theory, the important thought of "Three Represents" and the Scientific Outlook on Development were successively written into the Party Constitution and established as the action guide for the construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

From the perspective of content composition, Mao Zedong Thought covers a wider range of issues and targets more extensive problems. On the one hand, it mainly answers the fundamental historical proposition of "what kind of revolution to carry out and how to carry out the revolution". Mao Zedong Thought mainly originated from the Chinese revolutionary period in the 20th century and is the first generation of collective wisdom that combines the basic principles of Marxism with the specific practice of the Chinese revolution. On the other hand, it steadily carries out and improves economic construction. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, Mao Zedong's main assertions in "On the Ten Major Relationships" and "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People" are still of reference significance today, but many decisions were not correctly implemented later.

The theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics was born during the reform and opening-up period. Facing the new international situation, it creatively answered a series of difficult questions, such as "what is socialism and how to build socialism". Among them, Deng Xiaoping Theory took the lead in solving the problem of the focus of national development, that is, adhering to reform and opening-up and economic construction as the center, and realizing the transformation from planned economy to market economy; the important thought of "Three Represents" focused on solving the problem of party building, that is, what kind of party to build and how to build the party itself; the scientific outlook on development focused on solving the problem of national development, that is, what is development, what kind of development to achieve, and how to achieve development. The three have their own focuses, and all serve the overall development of socialism.

As far as the complementary relationship is concerned, the key lies in correctly viewing and evaluating the economic construction issues during the Mao Zedong era. In fact, the key to inducing the contradictions and entanglements in the current academic community when dealing with the relationship between the two lies in how to view and evaluate the economic construction issues during the Mao Zedong era. The reason why it is difficult to deal with is that Mao Zedong Thought exists in the theory and practice of regime construction during the revolutionary period and national economic construction after the founding of New China. Some practices have repeatedly made mistakes, but the viewpoint theory is correct.

Adhere to the practice standard and the correct standard. There are two types of views that are not advisable when dealing with the relationship between Mao Zedong Thought and the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics. One type of view, because of the tortuous progress before the Cultural Revolution and the overall economic regression during the ten years of turmoil, completely negates or removes all social construction ideas in Mao Zedong Thought after the founding of the People's Republic of China; the other type of view attributes some failures caused by personal reasons too much to objective external factors, and then forcibly deviates from historical facts in order to artificially add and elevate them. The reason for these two phenomena is that the value and status of Mao Zedong Thought cannot be scientifically treated and evaluated. Scientific Mao Zedong Thought must first meet the practice standard and second meet the correct standard. If it has not passed the test of practice and has not been proven to be correct, it cannot be included in the category of Mao Zedong Thought. Mao Zedong's mistakes in economic construction and mistakes in his later years are both included in this category.

The achievements of economic construction in the past thirty years since the founding of New China cannot be easily erased. The completion of socialist transformation and the tortuous development in the ten years before the Cultural Revolution have still made great progress. Negative lessons are more conducive to breaking the old rules, and their experience summary should be more worthy of vigilance and reflection. Deng Xiaoping repeatedly emphasized on different occasions that Mao Zedong Thought should be upheld, "will always be held high", "not only today, but also in the future", and the great banner of Mao Zedong Thought should be held high. ③ In addition, as an objective scientific research, scholars and future generations should not deny the existence of the fact that their predecessors have taken detours just because they want to pursue perfection.

The deep rational distinction between the two major achievements: the diachronic evolution of names and the synchronic origin relationship

From a diachronic perspective, there is a dispute between the two in terms of historical evolution and name. The slogan of socialism with Chinese characteristics has gone through a development process from nothing to "something", from "construction" to "comprehensive construction" and "completion", and its context highlights the Party Central Committee's long-term high attention and strategic focus shift.

The development of the slogan of socialism with Chinese characteristics was marked by the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee. The previous development mainly went through two periods. In the early stage, the Soviet model was implemented, and China was fully pro-Soviet. With the direct help of the Soviet Union, China quickly established a national economic system. After the deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations, China resumed diplomatic relations with the United States, Japan and other countries, and sought independent development between the two poles of the United States and the Soviet Union. The subsequent development was roughly divided by the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. From the 12th to the 14th National Congress, it was characterized by "socialism with Chinese characteristics" and emphasized construction and development. Since the 15th National Congress, it has been clearly expressed as "socialism with Chinese characteristics", emphasizing comprehensive construction and goal completion. It is expected that it will continue to be in the stage of deepening development for a long time in the future, and the current landmark theoretical achievement is the scientific outlook on development.

It is more appropriate to use the terms traditional theory and contemporary characteristics. When discussing the relationship between socialism with Chinese characteristics and Mao Zedong Thought, contemporary scholar Mr. Sun Xianyuan proposed using "traditional characteristics" and "contemporary characteristics" to distinguish Chinese characteristics. He proposed that Mao Zedong Thought on socialist construction theory is China's "traditional socialism with Chinese characteristics" and Deng Xiaoping Theory is China's "contemporary socialism with Chinese characteristics". He then advocated using basic principles and non-basic principles, basic connotations and special connotations, and common connotations and unique connotations to clarify the relationship between the two. ④ However, from a practical point of view, it seems easy to cause confusion if both are named as characteristics. In fact, since traditional characteristics have become a tradition, it is better to directly use traditional theory to refer to or replace them.

Mao Zedong Thought is the product of the traditional theory of Marxism in China. From the perspective of theoretical sources, both of them belong to the same ideological ideology as Marxism. If the coverage and pertinence of theories are used as the criteria, Mao Zedong Thought should be classified as traditional theory and basic theory, while the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics can be classified as contemporary characteristic theory and new development theory.

The theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics is the inevitable product of the development of Mao Zedong Thought. Its system results are specific ideological reflections of the specific national conditions of China at different stages of development. With the continuous advancement of the cause of building a socialist harmonious society, new theories with contemporary characteristics will inevitably emerge in the future. New theoretical terms will strive for new discourse space, and the original terms will inevitably face a process of elimination of the old and the new. This is the natural law of art that is constantly renewed.

From a synchronic perspective, Mao Zedong Thought and the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics have a source-tributary relationship. The living soul of Mao Zedong Thought is the source of the localized Chinese proletarian revolutionary theory and one of the sources of the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics. In addition to the consistency of the theoretical source and philosophical foundation, the two are mainly manifested in the following aspects:

First, the ultimate goal is the same. They are the same in terms of social development steps, path selection, and recognition of major contradictions. Ultimately, they are all for the purpose of winning national development and realizing the communist ideal. Secondly, the methodology is the same. The living soul of Mao Zedong Thought is the "standpoint, viewpoint and method" adopted by applying dialectical materialism and historical materialism to the revolutionary struggle, namely the three basic aspects of "seeking truth from facts, the mass line and independence and self-reliance", which are also applicable to the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics. ⑤ Finally, the specific content is interconnected and coherent, and is related and continuous in terms of social strategy, politics, economy, culture, etc.

The theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics has assumed the important task of guiding the concrete practice of contemporary socialist construction. When talking about the two historic leaps in the guiding theory of the Party, Jiang Zemin pointed out that the first was "the correct theoretical principles and experience summary of China's revolution and construction that have been proven by practice", namely Mao Zedong Thought; the second was "the theory of building socialism with Chinese characteristics", namely Deng Xiaoping Theory. ⑥ Due to the different times in which the theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics is located, the problems it focuses on solving are based on the meaning and construction methods of socialism. The themes and categories advocated have undergone fundamental changes compared with the period of Mao Zedong Thought. Deng Xiaoping Theory has opened up the road of economic construction, and the "Three Represents" is aimed at the issue of party building, while the Scientific Outlook on Development mainly talks about development issues under the current domestic and international situation.

The 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China established the Scientific Outlook on Development as the party's guide to action along with Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory and the important thought of "Three Represents". Compared with Mao Zedong Thought, these three are more specific in solving specific problems in thinking about how to carry out the new democratic revolution, socialist revolution and socialist construction. The latter two in particular are more professional in their expression.

Looking back, Marx and Engels did not fully outline the specific model of development of socialist countries after the victory of the revolution, and there was no ready-made experience to learn from for socialist construction. From the perspective of the creation of classic texts, although the interpretation will be endless, Mao Zedong Thought itself is already a perfect tense, and the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics will be in an open state pointing to the future for a long time. From this point of view, the fundamental position of Mao Zedong Thought in the Sinicized Marxist theory will become more stable.

(The author is the director of the Party Office and the School Office of Yancheng Institute of Technology and an associate professor; this article is a phased result of the 2013 Jiangsu Provincial Department of Education Higher Education Philosophy and Social Science Fund Project "Research on the Theory of Socialist Development with Chinese Characteristics", project number: 2013SJB710026)

【Notes】

①Hu Jintao, “Resolutely Advance Along the Path of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Strive to Build a Moderately Prosperous Society in All Respects—Report to the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China”, Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2012, p. 10.

② "Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping" (Volume 3), Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1993, p. 3.

③ "Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping" (Volume 2), Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1994, p. 172, p. 291.

④Sun Xianyuan: “The Relationship between Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Mao Zedong Thought”, Academic Circles, No. 4, 2010, pp. 34-42.

⑤ "Selected Important Documents of the Party’s National Congresses and Central Plenary Sessions since the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee" (Volume 1), Beijing: Central Literature Publishing House, 1997, p. 196.

⑥ Jiang Zemin, “Hold High the Great Banner of Deng Xiaoping Theory and Advance the Cause of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for the 21st Century—Report at the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China”, Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1997, p. 9.

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