

Philosophical Thinking of Chinese-style Modernization

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Abstract: Marx and Engels, through the investigation of the western modernization movement, carried out the criticism of modernity and the study of the Russian modernization road, highlighting the non-homogenization of the modernization road of the universal logic. Chinese-style modernization is the embodiment of this special universal logic and the choice of modernization path based on special national culture. The particularity of Chinese-style modernization lies in the new form of human civilization that it points to, which is to create an organic "cultural life body" through "two combinations".

1. Introduction

The modernization of the West, as an "absolute right", is manifested as the domination of world history, and China has an inalienable task of modernization since modern times. However, the Chinese-style modernization has proved eloquently that modernization does not equal Westernization, and socialist modernization does not equal capitalist modernization. Just as Western modernization is rooted in the tradition of Western civilization, the development of Chinese-style modernization and the modern civilization of the Chinese nation is deeply based on the premise that the basic principles of Marxism are combined with the fine traditional Chinese culture. To understand the new cultural mission of Chinese-style modernization, we must first deeply understand the philosophical requirements of constructing the modern civilization of the Chinese nation. Every civilization is rooted in its own soil and embodies the extraordinary wisdom and spiritual pursuit of a country and a nation.

Chinese-style modernization has always stood on the right side of history and on the side of human civilization and progress. It has given modernization a new form of civilization based on the principles of Chinese civilization and human civilization, and created a new model for developing countries to pursue modernization. The Chinese-style modernization conforms to the specific national conditions and realities and reflects the development needs of The Times. It has set up a positive image for the vast number of developing countries in their quest for modernization, and provided Chinese wisdom and Chinese solutions for countries and nations that want to speed up

development while maintaining their independence. On the one hand, the construction of philosophy and social sciences with Chinese characteristics should get rid of the "apprentice state" of modernization for a long time and obtain "self-authorization" internally, in order to truly demonstrate Chinese characteristics, Chinese style and Chinese style. On the other hand, the construction of contemporary Chinese academic discourse system is a long-term historical task, and we must carry out "cultural combination exercise" in the persistence of foreign learning, so as to shape a new cultural life. "Let Marxism become Chinese, the excellent traditional Chinese culture become modern, and let the new culture formed through the combination become the cultural form of Chinese-style modernization [1]".

Therefore, "it is necessary to go beyond the external reflection of the abstract universality and into the reality of the present era, so that the theory of thought can grasp the specific reality in the socio-historical concretization [2]", which is an important academic orientation of the current philosophical research. This task is great because our age is undergoing such profound changes that it can be deeply understood and grasped only when such changes can be subject to academic theory and actively explored.

2. The Universality and Particularity of Modernization Road

"Since the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the universality and particularity of modernization and their mutual relations have been the most important topics for people to study the formation and development of world history [3]." The "modernization movement" occurred in the capitalist civilization stage dominated by the modern Enlightenment and the scientific revolution. Philosophers in this period always tried to find a preexisting and definite premise, and deduce specific philosophical categories from this premise. The pursuit of singularity and certainty inevitably resulted in the contradiction between theory and real historical movement. Based on the infinite openness of the actual historical movement, Marxist historical materialism criticizes the scientific and theoretical spirit of modern times, and proposes that the modernization movement is a process full of internal contradictions, which is characterized by diversity and universality.

Marx's criticism of modernity based on the study of the law of capitalist operation reveals the logical development of the universality and diversity of modernization. The essence of "modernity" is the historical reflection on the era of mankind since the Renaissance, and the object of reflection is the modernization movement since modern times. The formation of modernity is due to the enlightenment spirit of science and reason, and its fundamental characteristic is that it takes intellectual reason as the driving factor of historical progress. However, the history of modern times shows that the single standard of knowledge rationality is narrow and one-sided, which is not conducive to the development and perfection of human beings. Therefore, Marxist philosophy takes a critical attitude towards modernity and criticizes modernity through the reflection of Western modernization.

The establishment and development of historical materialism is based on the historical rationality constructed by the contradiction analysis of the modernization movement. Marx's practical philosophy is different from the way of thinking of natural philosophy. He regards the perceptual life world as the ontology of philosophy and the foundation of construction historicism. Starting from this premise, Marx examined the transformation process of western society from a political state to a modern state, and then launched a critique of civil society, criticized the alienated labor of capitalism and the alienation of human nature caused by it, and proposed that communist society should overcome the one-sidedness of scientific rationality, and finally realize the free and comprehensive development of human beings.

By taking human creation and human freedom as the basic content of the perceptual life world, Marx constructed the method of historical reason and historicism by analyzing the internal structure and operation law of modern society, and on this basis formed his weapon of criticizing modern society - historical materialism. According to the understanding of historical materialism, history is the totality of human social life, and it is people's cultural creation activities and experiential existence. In order for philosophy to face history, it is necessary to reveal historical facts themselves, rather than general abstractions of concepts and laws. In the late 19th century, Labriola proposed "the method of historical narration," which "fully understands history through all its concrete manifestations," and "shows the intersection and synthesis of phenomena and facts as they are. [4]" The proposal of this method makes the cultural connotation of Marxist historical materialism manifest.

3. There are Differences and Uncategorizable Particularities in the Modernization Paths of Countries with Different Cultures

Through thinking about the road of Russian modernization, Marx discussed the law of development in the period of human history toward world history, "highlighting a special universal logic [5]". Different from the process of modernization in Western Europe, the degree of capitalist development and cultural tradition in Russia have shown obvious particularities. Therefore, in this discussion, Marxist philosophers are concerned with the special position of national development and national culture in the process of modernization of Eastern countries. From the perspective of the development process of human civilization, various civilizations developed in different regions from the very beginning, and from this fact, we can judge that diversity is the basic fact of the development of human society. "In modern society, there seem to be many different, but equally valid and equally reasonable notions of the good, which constitute the characteristic conditions of modernity." [6] In fact, Marx and Engels' study of the Russian question is a study of the particularity and universality of Russian modernization, which combines the logic of capital and the development of the international communist movement.

Although Marx regards capitalization and the logic of capital as the fundamental characteristics of modernization, in his later years, he has clearly pointed out that there are differences and unclassifiable particularities in the modernization paths of countries with different cultures. In theory, after the 1870s, after the writing of *Capital*, Marx had a more systematic theoretical vision and more mature theoretical tools, which provided important ideological support for thinking about the modern road of Russia. In practice, the vigorous development of the international communist movement provided an empirical prototype for Marx to think about the modernization path of Russia. Marx's exploration of the Russian modernization model is not only related to the practical problem of the choice of national modernization path, but also involves the theoretical judgment of whether the Western modernization model has universal adaptation. In February 1881, Zasulich wrote to Marx on the question of rural communes in Russia, and in the first draft of Marx's reply, Marx referred to rural communes in Russia as "unique in their historical circumstances." [7] In view of the particularity of the Russian rural commune, Marx pointed out that this form of public ownership existed simultaneously with the capitalist mode of production, and that the productive forces created by capitalism could provide ready material conditions for the large-scale common labor of the commune. Therefore, "it is able to possess all the positive results created by the capitalist system without passing through the Cavdin Gorge of the capitalist system."

Although this "crossing the Kaftinian Gorge" statement was deleted from Marx's official reply, Marx made a point of stressing in his later writings that the modernization model discussed in *Capital* was limited to Western Europe and did not include a particular modernization sample such

as Russia. This question is more clearly answered in the preface to the Russian edition of the Communist Manifesto. On the one hand, Marx affirmed the drive of capital logic to the modernization of Western Europe, but also took into account the special modernization process of different types of countries. Marx's thinking on the special modernization type provides theoretical support for the path choice of Chinese-style modernization. Marx criticized modernity by examining the modernization path of Britain, and his thoughts on the modernization path of Russia in his later years reflected his thoughts on the different paths of different types of countries toward modernization. Thinking about the modernization path of Russia not only involves the modernization path of the later countries, but also questions whether the logic of capital is universal. Only by presenting the particularity of the modernization path of different types of countries and the practical possibilities can we discard the logic of capital. Chinese-style modernization is the internal embodiment of this logic.

4. The Cultural Appeal of Chinese-style Modernization

In a sense, the modern history of the world is the history of the transformation of human society from tradition to modernity. According to Mr. Luo Rongqu's viewpoint in "A New Theory of Modernization: The Modernization Process of the World and China", the driving force of modern social changes in Western Europe mainly originates from within the society. In his important work, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Weber mainly focuses on the role of the Protestant ethic formed by the Reformation in Western Europe in the development of modern capitalism. But Weber does not deny the "fundamental importance" of economic factors in social change. Of course, while affirming the decisive role of commodity economy in social development, Marx did not oppose the important role of cultural factors in the occurrence of social change. In his later years, Marx clarified that when he created historical materialism in his early years, the purpose of emphasizing economic factors was to draw a clear line with idealism. The starting point of all Marx's theories is man, and man is the carrier of culture and civilization.

Based on Marx's investigation of the particularity of modernization, it can be judged that the uniqueness of Chinese traditional culture is precisely a potential to surpass Western modernization. Chinese culture has expanded the definition of modernization and transformed the modernization process in world history from a homogenous relationship to an inclusive relationship of diversity. Of course, this is not a task that can be accomplished by the original ecology of Chinese culture, but must be combined with the basic principles of Marxism in China and *The Times*, and draw on the excellent achievements of capitalist civilization to form an advanced socialist culture. Through the realization of the historic combination of the world development of human civilization and the special national culture, a new form of human civilization in line with the common value of all mankind will be created. China's modernization needs to maintain an open attitude of mutual learning among civilizations, which is an important condition for the realization of China's modernization. This requires an active grasp of the historical initiative, simultaneous absorption of the achievements of capitalist civilization, but also rooted in the fine traditional culture of the Chinese nation. The new form of human civilization pointed to by Chinese-style modernization is a new civilization in the dimension of "human", which must not only preserve the roots of national culture, but also realize the commensurability of human culture. While highlighting national characteristics, we must also deeply care for the common destiny of mankind. Only in this way can we show all the universality and particularity of Chinese-style modernization.

5. Conclusions

The exploration of the Chinese-style modernization path has enriched the choice of paths for

developing countries to pursue modernization. The proposition of "Chinese-style modernization" creatively places China's modernization practice in the historical coordinate of the evolution of human modern civilization, examines and elevates it to a new civilization form, and demonstrates the world historical significance of Chinese-style modernization. "Chinese-style modernization" is an objective description of modernization practice, reflecting the universality and particularity of China's modernization road. It not only has the common characteristics of the western modernization mode, but also a new path beyond the modern western capitalism. It is a modernization narrative that transcends modern civilization and capital logic, and is generated based on the internal evolution of Chinese traditional culture, with the ultimate goal of realizing communism.

The study of Marx and Engels on the path of modernization in Western Europe and Russia highlights the special universal logic, whose practical purpose is not a homogenized universal mode, but a diversified path choice based on particularity. The Chinese-style modernization road presents a special universal logic, which contains cultural mechanism. The new form of human civilization pointed to by Chinese-style modernization is the dynamic manifestation of synchronic symbiosis. The great judgment of "Chinese-style modernization" reveals the "new" and "special", which is a modernization narrative beyond the integration of civilization and capital logic, and a modernization road with a distinct new cultural direction. Its key characteristic is socialist culture.

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