

The profound philosophical implications of the 'second combination'

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Abstract: The basic principles of Marxism and Chinese traditional culture have different origins, but based on their high degree of compatibility and room for innovation, we have continuously pushed forward the Chineseisation of Marxism and the modernisation of Chinese traditional culture, and realised the mutual achievements of the two. Accurately grasping the philosophical implications of the ‘second combination’ is an important perspective for understanding the ideological guarantee of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. From an ontological point of view, the essence of the combination of the two lies in solving the national crisis, stimulating the theoretical characteristics of the two, and promoting the realisation of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. From an epistemological point of view, the history of the combination of the two is a history of the CPC's deepening of the ‘three laws’ of the law of development of human society, the law of socialist construction and the law of Communist Party rule. From a methodological point of view, the combination of the two is the inevitable result of adhering to scientific thinking methods such as dialectical thinking, historical thinking and strategic thinking.

Key Words: Basic Principles of Marxism , The second combination , Philosophical implications

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‘The second combination’ is an important assertion of Xi Jinping's thought on socialism with Chinese characteristics for the new era. It provides a basic guideline for an accurate understanding of the ‘second combination’ in the new era. At present, academics have interpreted the historical logic, practical path, and value of the second combination, but the interpretation from the perspective of the philosophical foundation needs to be further deepened. Therefore, the philosophical analysis of the ‘second union’ from the three theoretical levels of union ontology, union epistemology and union methodology is of great significance for the in-depth promotion of the theoretical interpretation of the modernisation of Marxism in China.

1. The essential connotation of the 'second combination'

To explore the ‘second union’ from the perspective of ontology is to stand in a broad historical perspective and answer the question of what is the ‘essential’ force that supports and promotes the union of the two among the many reasons that contributed to the union of the two? That is to say, through sorting out the logic of the appearance of the combination of the two, to extract the essential connotation of the combination of the two. This is the first and foremost question that needs to be answered in order to explore the philosophical implications of the ‘second union’.

1.1 Resolving the national crisis is the fundamental driving force behind the emergence of the 'second combination'

After the Opium War in the 1840s, faced with the crisis of the end of the country and the annihilation of the race, all kinds of national salvation programmes were put forward, but all of them ended in failure. In order to save the nation, countless people rose up to search for a way out to save the country and the people. Various western ideas came into China successively, and people tried to get the inspiration from western culture to save the development of traditional Chinese culture, but the advanced Chinese people declared the failure of transforming the traditional Chinese culture with capitalist culture after going through the changes in the level of artefacts, systems and concepts. The October Revolution brought Marxism-Leninism to the Chinese nation and people. The competition and confrontation between Western cultures in solving the national crisis made it possible to combine the basic principles of Marxism with the Chinese

traditional culture. After the introduction of Marxism to China, the question of how to treat Marxism became a primary issue. The Chinese Communists, represented by Mao Zedong, put forward the concept of the 'Chineseisation of Marxism', which promoted the combination of Marxism with Chinese reality and the development of the Party's theoretical innovations. Although Mao Zedong did not explicitly put forward the thesis of 'combining the basic principles of Marxism with the excellent traditional Chinese culture', the excellent traditional Chinese culture itself is included in the 'concrete Chinese reality'. Therefore, it is itself a product of cultural introspection in the process of resolving the tension between the cultural crisis and the national crisis.

1.2 The theoretical characteristics of Marxism and excellent traditional Chinese culture are the inherent requirements for achieving the "second combination"

Although the way of thinking of Marxism and Chinese traditional culture are obviously different, both of them are essentially 'practical philosophy', and the benign interaction between Marxism and traditional culture has inspired the combination of the two. The formation and development of Marxist theory is a process of absorbing and learning from excellent traditional culture. On the one hand, Marx himself respected and attached great importance to traditional culture. It was on the basis of reading a lot of research results of his predecessors that Marx finished his works such as 'Capital' and 'The Poverty of Philosophy'. On the other hand, in the process of the formation of Marxist theory, Marx drew extensively on the achievements of the excellent traditional civilisation of the West. The continuous enrichment and development of the Party's innovative theories is a concrete manifestation of the Chineseisation of Marxism and a full manifestation of the mutual achievements of Chinese traditional culture and Marxism. It can be said that the development of Marxism is the process by which the inheritors enrich the theory of Marxism by absorbing the fruits of excellent culture.

1.3 Road exploration is the value proposition of the 'second combination'

The people-centred development concept is the origin of the combination. As a staunch supporter and practitioner of Marxism, the CPC strongly guarantees the homogeneity of the combination. Since the introduction of Marxism into China, it has been facing the problem of how to deal with the relationship with traditional culture. The CPC's people-centred value stance has empowered it with a strong discernment of all kinds of erroneous tendencies, and it has insisted on using the Marxist stance, viewpoints and methods to analyse and grasp Chinese traditional culture as a whole, which has not only answered the question of the times of 'where is the Chinese society going', but also rectified the erroneous tendencies of cultural nihilism and cultural retrofuturism, and solved the problem of the relationship between Marxism and traditional culture. It also corrects the wrong tendency of cultural nihilism and cultural retrofuturism, and solves the problem of scientific treatment of traditional culture.

The scientific and truthful nature of Marxism can only be fully demonstrated when it is effectively applied in practice. The combination of the two can only be realised in the concrete practice of China's socialist construction. The practicality of Marxism is manifested both in the examination of the generation of 'real man' and in the identification of 'man' itself in the practice of bourgeois revolution. Therefore, the great practice of the Chinese Communists in searching for the road of China's development for more than a hundred years is the deep logic of the mutual realisation of the two, as well as an important manifestation of the convergence of the two.

2. Epistemological analysis of the 'second combination'

The viewpoint of practice is the primary and basic viewpoint of epistemology. It is from practice and through practice that one learns the basic laws of the movement and development of things. The 'second combination' is to take reflection on culture and civilisation as the basis, and apply a broad historical perspective to examine the practice of road exploration, so as to achieve an accurate grasp of the laws of road and theory development at the level of thinking and cognition.

2.1 The 'second integration' deepens the understanding of the laws of human social development.

On the basis of Marxism's basic law of the development of human society, the 'second combination' takes the characteristics of Chinese civilisation as a breakthrough, acquires the initiative of historical development, and carries the mutual achievements and mutual growth of the two, realising an effective solution to the contradiction of the 'ancient, modern, Chinese and Western disputes'. The two have achieved effective dissolution and transformation of the 'ancient-modern-Western controversy' and transformed the regular understanding of the development of human society and civilisation into a new theoretical advantage, which is a breakthrough in the development of history. It has transformed its understanding of the laws of the development of human society and civilisation into a new theoretical advantage, and has strategically constructed the process of the development of human society with the creation of a new civilisation, thus providing a new model for the development of human civilisation.

2.2 The 'second combination' deepens the understanding of the laws of socialist construction

Modernisation is a major issue in the development of every country in the world. The early development of capitalism has led to the monopoly of the modernisation discourse in the world for a long time. From the very beginning, China's modernisation quest has faced a very different historical situation from that of the western capitalist countries, which determines that the modernisation process will inevitably have different choices. In the process of modernisation, on the one hand, Marxist theory has provided scientific guidance for China's modernisation quest. Marxism reveals the relationship between national independence and modernisation from the perspective of social revolution, deeply criticises the dilemma of modernity in the development of capitalism, and points out the way forward for the development of modernity. On the other hand, Chinese traditional culture is rich in resources for solving the common challenges of mankind. The concepts of righteousness and benefit, the world view and values in Chinese traditional culture provide wisdom support for addressing the challenges in the process of global modernisation. The combination of the basic principles of Marxism and Chinese traditional culture has inspired the theoretical qualities of both, giving rise to the important theoretical symbol of Chinese-style modernisation.

2.3 The 'second combination' deepens the understanding of the governing laws of the Communist Party

The 'second combination' promotes the formation of a clear and firm sense of subjective self-awareness among CPC members. Subjective self-awareness includes both theoretical self-awareness and practical self-awareness. In the process of combining the two, the CPC's subjective self-consciousness takes the development of cultural self-consciousness as a carrier, promotes the development of theoretical self-consciousness with the development of practical self-consciousness, and undertakes the historical mission of cultural construction. Theoretical self-consciousness is the CPC's reflective cognition that focuses closely on 'how to treat Marxism' and takes itself as the object. Cultural self-consciousness is the practice of people, on the basis of recognising cultural traditions, reflecting on and pondering the development process by digging up and learning from cultural resources, so as to achieve scientific prediction of the development trend and grasp it accurately. Cultural self-awareness provides strong spiritual support for the development of political parties. 'The second combination' enriches the ruling resources of the CPC. The 5,000-year history of Chinese civilisation is rich in ideas, thinking and resources for governance. The Chinese Communist Party not only attaches importance to the values of the excellent traditional Chinese culture, but also continues to explore their power of modernity. The values and ideals of Chinese traditional culture have been internalised into the roots and soul of the Chinese nation, and have become the distinguishing features, sentiments and resources of the CPC. For example, General Secretary Xi Jinping, on the basis of the reasonable core of the traditional cultural idea of 'the people are the basis of the state', put forward the main concept of 'people-centred', which enriches the Marxist idea of the people.

3. Methodological analysis of the implication of the "second combination"

Dialectical materialism and historical materialism are both the full expression of the Marxist position, point of view and methodology, as well as a scientific methodology. The discussion at the methodological level focuses on the reflection on the scientific thinking method implied by the combination of the two, which is specifically expressed at the three levels

of dialectical thinking, historical thinking and strategic thinking. The method of thinking is the micro level of methodology, which is not only necessary for a deep understanding of the connotation of the ‘second combination’, but also a practical need to promote the continued development of the ‘second combination’.

3.1 Adhere to dialectical thinking and achieve integration in the dialectical unity of consolidating the foundation, cultivating the essence, and exploring innovation

The CPC adheres to dialectical thinking, starting from China's specific national conditions, and stimulates development with the compatibility of the two. Only by integrating the resources of Chinese traditional culture into the process of the Chineseisation of Marxism can the affinity and identity of Marxism be enhanced, and the guiding role of its scientific theories be better utilised. Adhere to dialectical thinking and correctly deal with the relationship between particularity and universality, especially in the process of combining the two, and guard against the tendency of narrowing, dwarfing and simplifying the excellent traditional Chinese culture.

Adhere to dialectical thinking and correctly deal with the unity of regularity and purposefulness. On the one hand, Marxism is a scientific theoretical achievement, and Chinese excellent traditional culture is the common cultural foundation of the Chinese nation. The important premise of the combination of the two is to follow the law of their respective development. From the theoretical way of thinking and the practical way of behaviour, Marxism has been given a deep cultural foundation and development prospect. On the other hand, the combination of the two is not only to manifest the soul of Marxism, but also to reflect the modernity and civilisation of traditional Chinese culture. Therefore, the combination of the two propositions not only follows the law of social and historical development and meets the requirements of conformity, but also meets the practical needs of people to transform the objective world and meets the requirements of purposefulness, which is a process of integration of purposefulness under the premise of conformity.

3.2 Adhere to historical thinking and achieve integration based on scientific understanding of historical practice and summarization of historical experience

Historical thinking is a method of thought and work in which problems are observed and analysed on the basis of history, reality and the future, and the laws of history are grasped. Adhering to historical thinking in analysing and explaining the major proposition of the ‘second combination’ is essentially a matter of exploring the historical logic of the formation and development of the combination of the two. In the process of realising the combination of the two, adherence to historical thinking is specifically manifested in the Party's grasp of the laws of history.

In the process of learning from and absorbing the dogmatism of Marxism, the CPC has further strengthened its understanding of the significance of the combination of the two. The CPC attaches great importance to the contemporary value of Chinese traditional culture, fully explores the function of Chinese traditional culture in regime building, and constantly explores ways of creative transformation and innovative development of Chinese traditional culture to promote the development of the Chineseisation of Marxism.

3.3 Adhere to strategic thinking, maintain strategic determination in problem awareness and historical initiative, and promote the combination of the two

Strategic thinking is a method of thinking that grasps the development trend and inner connection of things from the overall situation, the long term and the general trend. Strategic thinking is needed to further promote the ‘second combination’.

Since the 18th CPC National Congress, General Secretary Xi Jinping has made a series of important expositions on the creative transformation and innovative development of the excellent traditional Chinese culture.

The ‘second combination’ is not only a regular summary of the Chineseisation of Marxism, but also an inevitable requirement for promoting the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation through Chinese modernisation. By combining history and reality, unifying theory and reality, and integrating inheritance and innovation, it traces the depth of China's path, expands the evolution of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and guides the direction of human social development with the uniqueness of the modern civilisation of the Chinese nation.

The ‘second combination’ reflects the CPC’s profound understanding of the Chineseisation of Marxism and Chinese Marxism. Through deeper inquiry into the laws governing the relationship between culture and civilisation, it activates cultural development and road exploration with a new cultural vitality, achieving a high degree of unity between the laws of history and the logic of civilisation, as well as an organic fusion of theoretical autonomy and theoretical self-confidence.

4. Conclusion

In summary, the ontology, epistemology and methodology of the ‘second union’ are interrelated theoretical systems. Ontology is the logical starting point of epistemology, epistemology is the ideological premise of methodology, methodology is the practical transformation of ontology and epistemology, and the three are united in the concrete practice of the combination of the two, which together constitute the philosophical foundation of the practice of the ‘second combination’.

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