

On the Theoretical Logic of the Popularization of Marxist Party Building Theory

—Based on the Perspective of Marxist Party Political Theory

Rong Zeng¹, Weifen Li¹, Qinhan Zeng^{2*}

¹School of Marxism, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Guangzhou, China

²Library, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Guangzhou, China

Email: *zengqinhan2020@163.com

How to cite this paper: Zeng, R., Li, W. F., & Zeng, Q. H. (2020). On the Theoretical Logic of the Popularization of Marxist Party Building Theory. *Open Journal of Political Science*, 10, 739-745.

<https://doi.org/10.4236/ojps.2020.104043>

Received: October 1, 2020

Accepted: October 27, 2020

Published: October 30, 2020

Copyright © 2020 by author(s) and Scientific Research Publishing Inc.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Open Access

Abstract

This article takes the Marxist Party Political Theory as the Research Perspective, aiming to examine the theoretical logic of the popularization of Marxist party building theory. The early dissemination of Marxist party building theory in China promoted the integration of Marxist party building theory with the reality of the Chinese revolution, opened up the process of popularization of Marxist party building theory in China, and formed the historical logic of the popularization of Marxist party building theory. With the spread and development of Marxist party-building theory in China, early communists such as Li Dazhao, Chen Duxiu, and Mao Zedong used the Marxist party-building theory to establish communist groups in various places, profoundly explaining whether a party should be built, what kind of party should be built, and a series of core theoretical questions such as how to build a party, scientifically answered the practical necessity and urgency of the times to build a strong party in the development of the Chinese revolution, thus constructing the practical logic of the popularization of Marxist party building theory.

Keywords

The Communist Party of China, Marxism, Party Building Theory, Popularization

1. Introduction

The popularization of Marxist party building theory was gradually formed in the process of proletarian revolutionary struggle and practice. It gradually deepened along with the spread of Marxist theory in China, realizing the construction of

the leading position of the proletarian party in the socialist revolution and construction. In this process, the dissemination of Marx and Engels's theory of proletarian party building in China opened the historical prelude to the popularization of Marxist party building theory. Lenin's theory of Russian Bolshevik party building based on the practice of the Russian Revolution became an important source of early Chinese Communist Party building theory. Li Dazhao, Chen Duxiu, Mao Zedong, Cai Hesen and others combined with the reality of the Chinese revolution, vigorously introduced, in-depth research and practical application of Marxist party building theory, and carried out the great practice of building the Communist Party of China on the basis of promoting the innovation and development of Marxist party building theory. The theoretical logic of the popularization of Marxist party-building theory in China has gradually formed.

Based on the above considerations, this article takes the practice path, theoretical logic, main characteristics and basic experience of the early communist group to construct Marxist discourse power as the research object. Vertically examine the historical context of the early communist group's construction of Marxist discourse power. Horizontally discuss the early communist group clearly aiming at the modernization and popularization of Marxism in China, and promote the practice path of combining Marxism with the labor movement, peasant movement, and student movement. The starting point is the essential characteristics of the Communist Party of China's ideological work line, guidelines and policies that are in the same line and keep pace with the times. The focus is the construction, improvement and development of Marxist discourse power. The goal is to summarize historical experience and provide historical reference and enlightenment for the continuous enhancement of the party's dominance and discourse power in the ideological field.

2. The Theoretical Origin of the Popularization of Marxist Party Building Theory

Marxist party building theory was a scientific summary and theoretical summary of the experience of proletarian party building. It was derived from the practice of proletarian revolutionary struggle. It was not only an important part of Marxist theory, but also a theory with a high degree of theoretical originality and practical guidance. In February 1848, the *Communist Manifesto* co-authored by Marx and Engels was published for the first time in London. In this immortal classic work, Marx and Engels solemnly proposed: Communists are the most determined and always driving part of the workers' parties in various countries; in theory, what makes them better than the rest of the proletariat lies in their understanding of the proletariat, the conditions, progress and general results of class movements. As a concentrated expression of Marxist party building thought, the *Communist Manifesto* comprehensively and systematically expounded the basic principles, methods and development laws of Marxist party building, and

provided ideological weapons and theoretical basis for the world proletariat to build a powerful party.

As *Communist Manifesto*, the program of the allies of the proletariat revealed, the proletariat of various European countries launched independent political movements in the 1830s. These movements aimed to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie and establish a proletarian party with communist ideals. Through a profound summary of the proletarian movement in the 1830s and 1940s, Marx and Engels critically inherited all the scientific thoughts of their predecessors (Karl & Friedrich, 2012). While establishing the theory of scientific socialism, they creatively carried out the practice of proletarian party building. On this basis, they further elaborated on the theory of proletarian party building.

The history of the spread of Marxist party-building doctrine represented by the *Communist Manifesto* to China can be traced back to the article *Big Classmates* published in the *World Communique* in February 1899. This article, translated by British missionary Timothy Li and co-authored by Chinese journalist Cai Erkang, not only introduces the life and thoughts of Marx and Engels to the Chinese for the first time, but also points out the way the bourgeoisie plunders the world. That is, by opening up the world market, the life and consumption of all countries are incorporated into the world system.

In 1905, Zhu Zhixin, a bourgeois revolutionary, published *The Biography of a German Social Revolutionist* in the *Min Bao*. The article summarized the life and thoughts of Marx and Engels, and translated part of the *Communist Manifesto* and *Das Kapital*. This is the first time the Chinese have translated and introduced Marx's works. Afterwards, Ma Junwu, Liu Shipai, Jiang Kanghu, etc. continued to translate Marx's theory, and the thoughts on Marxist party building were published in various newspapers. The Marxist party building theory began to be recognized and understood by Chinese intellectuals.

3. The Basic Path of Popularization of Marxist Party Building Theory

The Marxist party-building theory spread widely in China after the May Fourth Movement broke out in 1919. During this period, under the influence of the May Fourth Movement, a large number of Chinese intellectuals took the initiative to study, translate and disseminate Marxist theories based on patriotism and revolutionary ideals. Represented by Chen Wangdao's translation and publication of the *Communist Manifesto*, the Chinese translation of Marx and Engels' works began to be published. It is true that the concept of proletarian party building in the *Communist Manifesto* has an inherent compatibility with the actual needs of the Chinese revolution. With the continuous spread of Marxist theory in China, the historical process of Marxist party building theory in China has also begun. In August 1920, the Chinese translation of Chen Wangdao's *Communist Manifesto* was officially published in Shanghai. When the first edition was printed, more than a thousand copies were printed, and they were sold

as soon as they were released (Edgar, 2010).

As the first Chinese translation of Marxist classics published in China, the *Communist Manifesto* made it the first time for Chinese people to see the full text of this programmatic document of the international communist movement, which contributed to the spread of Marxist party building theory and the early days. The growth of Chinese Communists has played an important role. When Mao Zedong talked about his transformation into a Marxist, he listed the *Communist Manifesto* translated by Chen Wangdao as the first of the three most influential works on him. He believed that by studying Marxist party building theory, he gradually formed his belief in Marxism. Lu Xun also believed that the publication of the Chinese translation of the *Communist Manifesto* promoted the spread of Marxism in China, and praised Chen Wangdao for doing a good deed to China.

After the May 4th Movement, Chinese newspapers and magazines translated and published the Communist Manifesto, as well as the translation and publication of the Communist Manifesto. Chinese intellectuals further understood the Marxist party-building theory, and they had an in-depth understanding of the proletarian party's revolutionary program and strategy. They believe that the violent revolution of the proletariat must be used to smash the bourgeois state apparatus, eliminate private ownership, establish a power controlled by the proletarian party, and implement the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is worth noting that the widespread dissemination of Marxism in China was carried out under the background of the May Fourth Movement. With a large number of early Chinese Marxists such as Li Dazhao and Chen Duxiu learning, researching, and translating Marxist theories, Marxist party-building theory has been further deepened in the historical process of popularization in China.

When the May 4th Movement broke out in May 1919, the *New Youth* opened up the column *Marxist Research Special*. Its volume 6, No. 5, published 7 articles introducing Marxist theory, namely Li Dazhao's *My View of Marxism (Part 1)*, Gu Zhaoxiong's *Marxism Theory*, Huang Lingshuang's *Criticism of Marxism Theory*, Chen Puquan's *Marx's Struggle Career*, and Chen Qixiu's *Marx's Historical Materialism and the Problem of Chastity*. These articles introduced Marxist philosophy, political economy and scientific socialism in a concentrated and systematic manner. Among them, Li Dazhao's *My View on Marxism* is regarded as the pioneering work of the Chinese to analyze and expound Marxist theory in a more systematic manner. In this article, Li Dazhao gave a special introduction to scientific theories and systems such as historical materialism, surplus value theory and scientific socialism, and expounded the Marxist theory of stage struggle in light of the reality of the Chinese revolution. When Li Dazhao elaborated on the theory of class struggle, he also directly quoted the sentence in the *Communist Manifesto*, thinking that class struggle was initially manifested as a competition for economic rights and later as a political competition. From the perspective of the development of human society, Li Dazhao pointed out that

the theory of stage struggle is the fundamental way to solve the intricate and practical revolutionary problems (Li, 2013).

4. The Theoretical Path of Popularization of Marxist Party Building Theory

In May 1919, the *Morning News* also opened a *Marx Research* column to commemorate the 101st anniversary of Marx's birth, and published a series of translations of Marx's original works such as *Marx's Historical Materialism* and *Labor and Capital*. It needs to be pointed out that the host of the *Marx Studies* column of the Morning Post is also Li Dazhao. If *New Youth*, as the main position for propagating Marxism after the May Fourth Movement, profoundly affected modern Chinese intellectuals, then the *Morning News*, which was widely influential and circulated at that time, strongly promoted the historical progress of the popularization of Marxism.

At the same time, in July 1919, Mao Zedong founded *Xiangjiang Review* for Xinmin Society in Changsha, Zhou Enlai established Juewu Society and founded *Juewu* in Tianjin, and Qu Qiubai founded *New Society* in Beijing. According to statistics, about half a year after the May Fourth Movement, more than 200 publications were created throughout the country to promote Marxist party building thoughts. The publication of these theoretical articles and the development of group activities strongly promoted the popularization of Marxist party building theory in China. These measures have effectively promoted the popularization of Marxist party-building theory in China and made ideological and organizational preparations for the founding of the Communist Party of China. After the May Fourth Movement, with the spread of Marxist party-building theory, a group of intellectuals with preliminary communist ideas formed in China. As the first person to spread Marxism in China, Li Dazhao successively published articles such as *My View on Marxism*, *The Victory of the Common People*, and *The Victory of Bolshevism* in newspapers to promote the in-depth dissemination of Marxist party building theory in China.

At the same time, as the commander-in-chief of the May Fourth Movement, Chen Duxiu used practical actions to rescue students arrested during the May Fourth Movement, but he was arrested and closely monitored by the reactionary police of the Beiyang government. In order to put the Marxist party-building theory into practice and promote the founding of the Communist Party of China, in February 1920, Li Dazhao personally sent Chen Duxiu out of Beijing and went to Guangdong. After that, the two established the early organizations of the Communist Party of China in Shanghai and Beijing respectively, and achieved a good historical story of South Chen Bei Li, meet to build a party.

The October Revolution in Russia in 1917 was of great significance, not only to the historical development of Russia, but also to the development of the world and the Chinese revolutionary movement. Mao Zedong pointed out that the sound of the October Revolution brought us Marxism-Leninism. The October

Revolution helped advanced elements from all over the world and China, using the proletarian cosmology as a tool to observe the destiny of the country and re-considering their own problems. Follow the road of the Russians, this is the conclusion (Mao, 1991). Mao Zedong's explanation of the huge influence of the Russian October Revolution on China reflected the important position of the party-building experience of the Russian Communist Party in the historical process of Marxist popularization, and revealed the theoretical logic of the popularization of Marxist party-building theory.

After the outbreak of the October Revolution, major newspapers and periodicals including Beijing's *Morning Post*, Shanghai's *Shenbao*, the *Republic of China Daily*, Tianjin's *Ta Kung Pao* and other major newspapers reported in succession. The major media introduced the Russian Revolutionary Party and its leaders, which making Lenin, Bolsheviks, and Radical Party a hot vocabulary in the news media, aroused widespread concern among Chinese intellectuals.

Among many media articles, the series of articles published by Li Dazhao, *A Comparative View of the French-Russian Revolution*, *The Victory of the Common People*, and *The Victory of Bolshevism* have a wider spread and the greatest influence. These articles deeply promoted the spread of the experience of the Russian Communist Party in China.

Similar to the important role of newspapers in the early introduction of Marxist party-building theory into China, the introduction and dissemination of the party-building experience of the Russian Communist Party in China were also inseparable from the extensive coverage of newspapers and media. Various newspaper articles and theoretical books promoted the spread of the experience of the Russian Communist Party in China. On the one hand, these experiences mainly included building an independent party led by the proletariat, must adhere to the guidance of Marxism to the proletarian party, must adhere to the revolutionary program and strategy, and must regard democratic centralism as the party's fundamental organizational principle. On the other hand, these experiences were not only a systematic and theoretical summary of Lenin's experience in party building of the Russian Communist Party, but also reflected the innovation and development of Marxist party building theory and reflected the theoretical logic of the popularization of Marxist party building theory.

Various newspaper articles and theoretical books have promoted the spread of the Russian Communist Party's party-building experience in China. These experiences mainly include: It is necessary to build an independent party led by the proletariat, to adhere to the guidance of Marxism to the proletarian party, to adhere to the revolutionary program and strategy, to regard democratic centralism as the party's fundamental organizational principle.

5. Conclusion

In short, this article clarifies the theoretical logic of the popularization of Marxist party building theory through a historical investigation of the formation of party

building theory. With the spread and development of Marxist party-building theory in China, early Chinese Marxists represented by Chen Duxiu, Li Dazhao, Mao Zedong, etc., used the Marxist party-building theory to create communist groups in various places, and profoundly explained whether a party should be built. A series of core theoretical questions, such as what kind of party to build, and how to build a party, scientifically answered the practical necessity and urgency of the times to build a powerful party in the development of the Chinese revolution. These theoretical achievements and practical results opened up the foundation of China. The great practice of the Communist Party has constructed the practical logic of the popularization of Marxist party-building theory.

The process of the popularization of Marxist party-building theory in China showed complex and evolving practical characteristics. Among them, there were three controversies between Chinese Marxists and anti-Marxists during the May Fourth Movement represented by debates on issues and ism, socialism, and anarchism. It is not only a theoretical dispute in the form of academic dialogue and political controversy as its characteristic, but also a concentrated discussion on the practice of Marxist party building theory in China, which strongly promoted Marxist party building theory to practice in China.

Acknowledgements

This research is financially supported by China National Social Science Fund Project “Yan’an Cultural Association and the Construction of Marxist Discourse Power” (2019BDJ032); The 13th Five-Year Plan for the Development of Philosophy and Social Sciences in Guangzhou “Guangzhou Communist Group and the Construction of Marxist Discourse Power” (2020GZYB51).

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

- Edgar, S. (2010). *Westward Journey* (p. 147). Beijing: Oriental Publishing House.
- Karl, M., & Friedrich, E. (2012). *Selected Works of Marx and Engels* (Vol. 1, p. 413). Beijing: People’s Publishing House.
- Li, D. Z. (2013). *The Complete Works of Li Dazhao* (p. 10). Beijing: People’s Publishing House.
- Mao, Z. D. (1991). *Collected Works of Mao Zedong* (p. 1471). Beijing: People’s Publishing House.