Contemporary Chinese Marxism Solves the Difficult Problems of Ideological and Political Education in Universities

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Abstract. In recent years, ideological and political education in higher education is facing several difficulties in fields such as theoretical foundation, theoretical explanation and theoretical belief. These difficulties are rooted within and outside of ideological and political education of higher education. The nature of these problems is a reflection and refraction of contradictions or paradoxes of modernity. Only guided by modern Chinese Marxism, or known otherwise as the Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era proposed by President Xi Jinping, and stay committed to the development of the Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era, can we conquer these contradictions or paradoxes of modernity, crack difficulties faced in the ideological and political education in higher education and give full play to the theoretical value of “Cultivating Spirits and People”.

1. Introduction

Ideological and political education in higher education is of great significance. So far, educators in ideological and political education in higher education have paid great efforts to it and achieved relatively good results. Still, their efforts on this regard have never waned. However, ideological and political education in higher education is facing difficulties indeed. Only by the guidance of the Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era proposed by President Xi Jinping and focus on the devotion of the Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era, can we crack down on these difficulties.

2. No Shy Away from the Difficulties of Ideological and Political Education in Universities

After entering the new era, the CPC central committee with comrade Xi Jinping at its core paid great attention to the ideological and political education in higher education. Comrade Xi delivered many important speeches, stressed the crucial importance of ideological and political education in higher education again and again and called on the whole party to strengthen the initiative and confidence in the ideological and political education of higher education. The key aim of the ideological and political education in higher education is to guarantee the direction of socialism and cultivate builders and successors who enjoyed all-round development for the great cause of socialism. By staying committed to the guiding position of Marxism and devoting to the binging of personnel shouldering national rejuvenation, we can stick to the underlying principles, take a firm stand and stay true to our goal in the direction of the development of universities in the socialism with Chinese characteristics. It was not so difficult to find that it was not easy to do a good job at ideological and political education in higher education when we were studying this subject. Even educators of ideological and political education in higher education are making constant innovations and bettering the approach, there is still a long way for us. The reason is that ideological and political education in higher education is facing a lot of difficulties compared with other subjects, majors, undertakings and courses.
First, Cracking Down on the Theoretical Difficulties in Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education. It is known to all that Marxism is the theoretical foundation of ideological and political education in higher education. The difficulties could be seen in the following aspects.

To begin with, theories are highly abstract and could only be mastered with high-level theoretical thinking. Marxism or its theoretical system are composed of a series of abstract concepts, categories and principles in its special logic. That makes it difficult for untrained people to understand Marxism in an easy and simple manner.

Second, things have been through dramatic changes between the time of Marxism and the 21st century either from time or space. The huge gap in space and time have made it difficult for those with less knowledge in world history especially international communist movement history, philosophy, economics, anthropology and literature.

Next, the nature of Marxism is criticism and revolution. Marx, the founder of the Marxism, was a revolutionist to begin with. Even “it was fully proved scientific and true in China; the people-based and practicality were fully implemented in China and openness and epochal characteristic was fully demonstrated [1], it is of a certain difficulty to understand Marxism without deep revolutionary experience, rich life experience and rich hands-on experience.

Second, Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education is Facing one of the Global Challenges—Theoretical Explanation. As is known to all, ideological and political education are facing a lot of theoretical and practical difficulties that wait for China and the whole world to interpret. For example, how to guarantee the guiding position of Marxism in ideological front, cultivate and implement core socialist values, consolidate the common ideological foundation created by the party and Chinese people; how to improve reform and decision-making, promote the modernization of the national governance system and governance ability; how to speed up the construction of a strong socialist culture, strengthen cultural soft power, improve China’s say in the international community; how to improve the leadership and governance of the party, strengthen the ability to resist corruption and risk and build the party into a strong leading core of socialism with Chinese characteristics. All these questions require the students to understand and figure out in the deepest of their soul. And these questions are not something to be clarified easily by educators in the ideological and political education of higher education.

Third. Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education is Facing the Difficulty of Realizing the Aim of Education. Everybody knows that the ideological and political education in higher education is about the knowledge, acquire knowledge and apply knowledge. But the problem here is not about the knowledge but how to address issues in belief, spirit and values. How to provide the right direction for higher education institutions, lay a solid ideological foundation, provide values to lead and cultivate a great number of qualified builders of socialism with Chinese characteristics and reliable successors? The only way to realize those is to stay committed to the guidance of Marxism, unwaveringly disseminate the scientific theories of Marxism, cultivate and uphold core socialist values, promote the harmony and stability in universities and breed outstanding academic atmosphere. To achieve this goal, the ideological and political education in higher education institutions need to lead students to realize the trend of development in China and the whole world, uphold confidence in the path, theory, system and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Students should uphold the faith and confidence to strive for the great cause and common aspiration.

3. The Root of these Problems Faced by Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education Need to be Explored

Modern theoretical and practical issues have been gradually transformed to the issues of the educatee in their daily life, thus posing challenges to ideological and political education in higher education. We have found that these problems lie within and out of ideological and political education in higher education after delved into research and analysis. If these problems lie within the ideological and political education itself, that’s because there are difficulties in theories, explanation and values in the process of ideological and political education. If these problems are
not derived from the ideological and political education, that’s because ideological and political education is difficult in itself, which reflected the modern contradictions of capitalism.

**To begin with, the modernity creates epic-like achievements.** In the modern world, everything people are striving for, living on and enjoying is the benefits of the modernity. The formation, development and expansion of modernity have brought an accumulation of material and spiritual wealth; improvement of man’s strength, social progress, development and prosperity. Every country, people, and region cannot avoid the integration and transformation of the modernity. Marx has predicted that countries with relatively advanced industry demonstrated the future to countries with less advanced industry\(^2\). Industrialization and modernization have become the irresistible trend of history.

**Second, the modernity contains the paradox of complexity.** The modern society is changing all the time, bring us great historical development in human production, financial crisis and ecological crisis, the optimization and distribution of resources by the market economy and money worship and chaos and insanity created by GDP-orientation; multi-polarization, economic globalization, social informatization, cultural diversification and uncertainties of unilateralism and hegemonism. The formation and evolution of modernity were always accompanied by conflicts between modern time and pre-modern time, modern time and post-modern time; difference and confrontation between modern and tradition, theory and practice, material and spirit, truth and value and Sein and Sollen. The difference and confrontation have brought mental entanglement, cognitive bias, absence of belief, dislocation of ideals and decline of morality. This is why we should focus on ideological and political education in higher education and the real cause of difficulties faced by ideological and political education in higher education.

4. Difficulties in Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education Must be Addressed

We need to stay true and complete socialism with Chinese characteristics and promote the modernization of national governance system and governance to address problems in ideological and political education in higher education. We need to realize leaping development in ideological and political education in the higher education institution. We need to constantly renew our targeted goals and timeliness. We need to tackle both the symptoms and root causes by integrating the current and future conditions. The great dreams could only be achieved by carrying great struggle, developing great project and advancing great cause. Gradually, we will eliminate the modernity of capital and its contradictions. In this way, we would solve the problems in ideological and political education in higher education. At the same time, we need to fully demonstrate the theoretical charm of contemporary Chinese Marxism and Marxism in the 21st century. We need to convince people with straight-forward theory and eliminate several issues on ideological and political education brought by the modernity of capital.

**First, Convince People with “the Role of Party” and Institutional Advantage.** In the modern Chinese Marxism, the Chinese Communist Party leadership is the most important essential characteristic of the socialism with Chinese characteristics and the biggest advantage of the socialism system with Chinese characteristics. Uphold the party’s leadership. Let the party play its core leadership role of working from an overall perspective and coordinating the efforts of all quarters. It fully demonstrates that the Chinese Communist Party can serve its maximum function, constraint logic of capital and let the logic serve the realization of the “Two Centenary Goals” in the primary stage of socialism.

Ideological and political education in higher education must be clear that the capital logic could not be abolished in the primary stage of socialism, it could only be mastered, controlled and maintained. And that need us to tap into the institutional advantage of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The solution or the determining factor of the contradiction of modern society (the principal contradiction) mainly relies on the political superstructure, especially the ruling party’s governance ability. The Chinese Communist Party has already demonstrated its political leadership, thought-leading ability, organizing power, and rallying power in socialism with Chinese characteristics. The party even determined the decision of China’s development path, designing of
the social basic system and the innovation of social operation model. In this way, the Communist Party of China has laid the foundation of important political prerequisite and methodology for us to surpass the modernity of capitalism.

**Second, Convince People with “Double Revolution” and Coordination Effect** The logic of “Revolution” is still the basic logic in this era. If the capital logic could not be abolished in the primary stage of socialism, it could only be mastered, controlled and maintained. We need to promote the double revolution of self-revolution and social revolution, thus providing institutional, structural and mechanism guarantee to control capital logic. So, the CPC needs to clean, complete, reform and improve itself. The party needs to be bold enough to treat its illness by scraping bones and the courage to cut its own wrist to lead the social revolution and conduct many great struggles with new historical significance.

The ideological and political education in higher education must be clear to carry out comprehensive and in-depth reform and develop in-depth and breadth. With the consolidation and completion of the socialist system with Chinese characteristics and the modernization and the promotion of the national governance system and governance ability, the capital logic would be confined in a certain scope and level, instead of becoming a wild horse without a leash. In this way, we have laid the institutional foundation and important methodological foundation for surpassing the modernity of capitalism.

**Third, Convince People with “Core Values” and Wide Coverage.** President Xi Jinping has pointed that “the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics could only be pushed forward if we could do a good job at the material and spiritual civilization, strengthening national material and spiritual power, and improving material and spiritual life of Chinese people.” In addition, we are still in the age when capital logic is still of some reason. That means we need the anchor of common thought and ideal more than ever. We need to build a common spiritual home. To make sure that Chinese people won’t be abducted by capital logic, we need to gather synergies with core socialist values, provide spiritual motivation and moral nutrition for the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics by building Chinese spirit, Chinese value and Chinese strength. We need power from faith, belief and confidence because we could only master, control and maintain the internal tension of capital logic in the primary stage of socialism rather than abolish it.

Ideological and political education in higher education must be clear that socialism with Chinese characteristics laid down the value orientation of “socialism with Chinese characteristics” and “People”. In the spring of 2020, we have won the battle against COVID-19. It fully demonstrates the great power of the Chinese spirit, thus providing the important spiritual foundation and methodological foundation for surpassing the modernity of capitalism.

**Fourth, Convince People with “People-Centred Principle” and Efficiency Conversion.** The first and highest principle in Xi Jinping’s Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era System is “People-Centred Principle”. If the capital modernity belongs to the economic social form with economic-orientation, in which people pursue only economic and profit growth. However, in the social form centred on “people-orientation” and “socialized people” of socialism with Chinese characteristics (though at the primary stage), we would satisfy people’s growing need for a better life. President Xi Jinping innovated “people-orientation”, uplifted the principle of “full-rate production” to humanistic laws following the Marxist logic of “full-rate production”. That is the law of people-orientation instead of capital law and profit first principle under capitalism.

Ideological and political education in higher education must be clear that “people orientation” has paved new grounds for Marxist “people position”, “people-subject thought” and “sharing”. In this way, we have laid a material and methodological foundation to surpass the capitalist modernity.

5. **Conclusion**

All in all, we will definitely conquer difficulties in ideological and political education in higher education and pave new grounds in the ideological and political education in higher education course, major and profession as long as we face up to the difficulties in ideological and political education in higher education, deeply understand and seize the root of such difficulties and be good
at using contemporary Chinese Marxism—Xi Jinping’s Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era and the 21st century Marxism.

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