

Research on The Spread of Mao Zedong Thought in Russia

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Abstract: *Abstract: Mao Zedong Thought is an important guiding ideology of the Chinese Communist Party. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the field of dissemination of Mao Zedong Thought in Russia can be mainly divided into scholarly literature dissemination and left-wing inter-party dissemination. Its dissemination trends have also changed in the 21st century influenced by the class and cultural background of Russian scholars, the domestic political and diplomatic situation in Russia, and other factors. This paper will give an overview of the current situation of the dissemination of Mao Zedong Thought in modern Russia, focus on the analysis of numerous influencing factors, and look forward to the development prospects of the dissemination of Mao Zedong Thought abroad.*

Keywords: *Russia; Mao Zedong; current situation of dissemination*

1. Introduction

Mao Zedong Thought is a valuable theoretical weapon of the Communist Party of China, a complete thought developed by numerous Party theorists and revolutionary martyrs, including Mao Zedong himself, during the historical process from the establishment to the growth of our Party. It is not only an important guiding significance for the development of China's socialist cause, but also has great reference and theoretical value for the political and economic construction of all countries in the world. Also as a socialist country, Soviet scholars have conducted some research on Mao Zedong Thought. And as one of the former Soviet republics, the study of the spread of Mao Zedong Thought in modern Russia is also of great value. However, relatively speaking, due to the language barrier, domestic research on the dissemination of Mao Zedong Thought in Russia is relatively lacking. By interpreting the research results of Russian scholars and analyzing the spread of Mao Zedong Thought among left-wing political parties in Russia, the main tone of Mao Zedong Thought propaganda can be grasped. Such research not only has a positive effect on telling a good Chinese story and promoting the image of China, but also contributes to the construction of a community of human destiny.

2. The current situation of Mao Zedong Thought dissemination in Russia

In recent years, due to the warming up of relations between Russia and China, Russian scholars have gradually increased their interest in the study of Mao Zedong Thought and have published many research papers on it. In the political sphere, many left-wing political parties in Russia continue to struggle for political status. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation is the second largest political force in the Russian political arena, and the current situation of the spread of Mao Zedong Thought among political forces can be seen by collecting the publications of the organs of these parties and the interviews of their key figures.

2.1. Scholarly Literature

The Russian literature referring to Mao and Mao Zedong Thought from the end of the 20th century to the 21st century is relatively abundant. In addition to the direct writings of Russian scholars, some translators have translated the works of Chinese scholars into Russian. The most important publication of this literature is the journal "Social and Humanistic Sciences", followed by "Chinese Society and State" published by the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Social Sciences (PAH). The Russian scholars of this stage, classified by the perspective of research, interpreted the work from:

(1) historical perspective (2) political perspective (3) linguistic and literary perspective 4. philosophical, ethical, religious and other perspectives. The most prefatory and representative academic works are the following: "Mao and the People's War Strategy: Lessons from History" by A.A. Kovalev. This article focuses on "people's war" as an important concept in Mao Zedong Thought. He combines it with some of the historical facts of the War of Resistance against Japan and the War of Liberation, and his innovation is "The History of the Far East War in the European Perspective. In his analysis of China's ability to mobilize for war under the guidance of Mao Zedong Thought from a European perspective, he argues that "the revolutionary wars of the 20th century were a practical affirmation of Mao Zedong Thought, and that Mao's strategic thought has great value in extending to people's liberation movements around the world. The "Three Worlds" Theory in the Context of China's Modern Diplomatic Concept" by Y. Akhmadeeva combines the "Three Worlds" theory with modern Chinese diplomatic practice. In this article, it is mentioned that "the concept of three worlds was a wise political consideration in the early years of the founding of the new China, which sought an independent position in the bipolar pattern of the world." I.I. Burtsev, "The Pragmatic Features of the Vocabulary in Mao's Educational Quotations", in which the author deconstructs specific phrases of Mao's quotations from a pragmatic point of view and, on the basis of the translated text, concludes that "Mao's quotations use colloquial language to achieve a powerful emotional impact, which is the reason why Mao's quotations are still widely disseminated today. "

However, the Russian literature on Mao Zedong Thought also presents certain problems as far as the relevance of the topic is concerned. The number of direct research papers on Mao Zedong Thought is relatively insufficient, and according to the search results of the Russian-language literature search site Cyberleninka.ru, there are only 18 papers in which Mao and his thought are directly studied, two of which are also translations of papers from Chinese scholars. Most of the Russian-language literature that mentions Mao Zedong Thought focuses on the modern Chinese political and economic system or the historical changes in Sino-Soviet relations, and the depth and breadth of research on the main body of Mao Zedong Thought needs to be improved.

2.2. Inter-party communication among left-wing parties in Russia

Founded in June 1990, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPC), the largest left-wing party in Russia, grew rapidly in the early years of its existence but has been declining in power and size since the 21st century. Despite many setbacks since its founding, the party still holds the second largest number of seats in the Russian State Duma after the United Russia Party. The Russian Communist Party, which inherited most of the Soviet Union's legacy, remains a political force to be reckoned with, and it is still actively seeking the status of a ruling party. General Secretary Vladimir Djuganov has also made positive comments on the achievements of the CCP in recent years and has established close bilateral contacts with the CCP. Exploring the spread of Mao Zedong Thought within the Russian Communist Party is of great significance for strengthening the friendly ties and exchanges between the two parties.

Most of the documents on Mao Zedong Thought in Pravda, the organ of the Russian Communist Party, are transcripts of interviews compiled by party leaders after they were interviewed by journalists from the People's Daily. For example, Dzuganov's interview on July 1, 2021, "China offers the world the experience of revolutionary victory". In response to the reporter's question "How to evaluate Xi Jinping's thoughts on socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era," Dzuganov said, "The ideology and theories created by China in response to many challenges of the modern world are based on Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought and Deng Xiaoping Theory. The Chinese Communist Party has skillfully combined the basic principles of these theories with practice." On the one hand, the Russian Communist Party is highly positive about the theoretical achievements of socialism with Chinese characteristics and actively draws lessons from them. But on the other hand, Pravda suffers from the same problem as academia, a lack of direct research and interpretation of Mao Zedong Thought, and the Russian Communist Party leaders' relatively greater focus on the development of socialism with Chinese characteristics under the modern political system, and less thorough study of Mao Zedong Thought as a groundbreaking theoretical weapon.

At this stage, most left-wing parties, including the Russian Communist Party, have focused on the theoretical achievements of Soviet socialist construction. On June 9, 2000, a small Maoist party, the Maoist Party of Russia, was founded in Russia. This party is much ahead of the other left-wing parties in the study of Mao and his ideas. Their official website <http://maoism.ru/> has published several Russian translations of Mao's Selected Works and other works. Its main issue of concern is the movement of the Maoist wing of the Communist Party of India in the territory of India. However, the party is not registered

with the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation. However, some of the party's claims deviate somewhat from Chinese scholars' research on Mao Zedong Thought, and its findings should be viewed rationally and dialectically.

In general, Mao Zedong Thought is relatively popular in Russian academia, but not widely disseminated in the political sphere. However, as Russian-Chinese cooperation has become closer, new areas of discourse in the political sphere have gradually opened up in recent years.

3. Analysis of the causes of the current situation

The current situation of Mao Zedong's ideology has stabilized in the midst of changes in the political and economic spheres of Russia in recent years. In the background of the researcher, the changes in the domestic political and diplomatic situation in Russia are the reasons for this situation, among which the political turmoil has led to the reversal and swaying of the attitude of the Russian social subjects toward "socialism and Marxism" is the decisive factor.

3.1. Influence of class and cultural backgrounds of contemporary researchers

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, the government's ideological intervention in the academic world became weaker, and following the massive decline of censorship, many scholars with different political views, class affiliations, and cultural backgrounds emerged in the academic world. Researchers representing left-wing and right-wing political forces had many different views on issues such as "socialism and Marxism". Almost all of them were critical and reflective of the Soviet model due to the unprecedented political and economic crisis that preceded the collapse of the Soviet Union. Some right-wing scholars of bourgeois origin were active in suggesting that "Marxism and socialism are obsolete". Influenced by Western "liberal" thought, these scholars have unilaterally questioned and criticized the theoretical achievements of many socialist countries, and even deliberately avoided research and discussion on these topics. Many left-wing scholars who had long been engaged in the study of socialism and Marxism, on the other hand, actively summarized the lessons of the failure of the Soviet model while critically reflecting on it, and naturally compared the Soviet socialist path with other socialist regimes. As the largest socialist country after the Soviet revolution, China's ideology and philosophy of state building has been a hot topic of inquiry for Russian left-wing scholars in the post-Soviet era, and many theoretical achievements, including Mao Zedong Thought, have been affirmed by left-wing scholars.

In the 21st century, after Russia's overall socio-cultural development stabilized and regained its status as a cultural power, the research results of scholars of the Middle School gradually dominated the academic world. After the reform of the Russian scientific research and education system, these scholars hold the power of academic discourse and are able to look at Mao Zedong Thought dialectically, which leads to the conservative caliber of research papers on Mao Zedong Thought in Russia in the 21st century.

In general, changes in the trend of thought in academia are closely connected with the political position of the researcher and the national or international political situation. Modern Russian academic research on Mao Zedong Thought is based on the one hand on the inheritance of previous research results and on the other hand on political needs.

3.2. The political changes in Russia have brought the study of communist theory to a standstill

In the early years of Yeltsin's rule, he demanded the cessation of all communist activities in Russia, which dealt a huge blow to the leftist parties after the collapse of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The political discourse was almost monopolized by the right wing, and the "neo-liberalism" brought by the West became the dominant ideology. 1991-1993 was a period of devastating destruction of the organizational and ideological foundations of the Russian left-wing parties, and this negative impact is still felt in the Russian Communist Party. After the dismissal of officials in the propaganda department, many publications such as *Mars*, *Pravda*, and *Komsomolskaya Pravda* changed from the initial propaganda of communist values to the export of capitalist values and European and American-style democracy. Right-wing parties such as the Union of Right-Wing Forces and the Yablus Group advocated radical social reforms and called for wholesale imitation of Western models. During this period, the study of communist theory, including Mao Zedong Thought, came to a complete standstill.

Although the Communist Party of Russia returned to the top in 1995, winning 157 seats in the Duma

parliament and becoming the largest party in Russia at the time, its internal ideological differences and organizational fragmentation were not destined to keep it strong for long. After Vladimir Putin's presidency, the United Russia party became absolutely dominant. The Russian Communist Party has since split into a number of fragmented left-wing parties, including the Leninists, the Russian Renaissance Party, and the Fatherland. In the context of Russia's multi-party system, the left-wing parties were too busy fighting internal battles and striving for political interests to consider the ideological line and program issues as fundamental to their founding, which led to a one-sided and insufficient study of Mao Zedong Thought. Even if some politicians briefly mentioned Mao Zedong Thought in interviews, they did not deepen their understanding and thinking about it. The Russian Communist Party considers itself the orthodox successor of the Soviet Union, but is incapable of making bold reforms in its organizational and ideological lines in accordance with the changes of the times. The incomplete reflection on the Soviet history in its political conception and the obsessive desire to return to the political and economic system of the Soviet era have made the Russian Communist Party lose its position among the younger generation and reduced it to one of the opposition parties in the form of political activities. Theoretical research and ideology were conservative and retiring, abandoning some of the Marxist-Leninist tenets and affirming the Orthodox religious background of the party's members. The Russian Communist Party did not innovate on the basis of Soviet research findings on Mao Zedong Thought, not only because of the breakdown of the one-party political system. The influence on academic ideology disappeared, but also because of the blind pursuit of the Leninist and Stalinist political line, which conservatively focused only on the Soviet Union's theoretical heritage, but also because of the relative weakness of the Russian Communist Party's political power and the need to focus on competing for political positions with right-wing political parties.

The collapse of the Soviet Union left Russia completely without the mass base of a socialist state. The change in the nature of the regime and ideology was the direct cause of the lack of awareness of Mao Zedong Thought in the Russian political circles.

3.3. New changes in Russia's diplomatic situation in the 21st century

The Yeltsin government subjectively hoped that Russia could join the Western camp at one time, but the result was not satisfactory. After Putin came to power, Russia is facing a situation of joint siege by the West. Especially after the Crimea crisis in 2014, the West has increasingly increased economic sanctions against Russia, forcing Russia to tilt its foreign policy to the East, which has led to more inter-party exchanges between the Chinese Communist Party and the Russian political parties. In addition to the above-mentioned bilateral exchanges between the two communist parties, the United Russia Party has also conducted many theoretical and practical exchanges with the Communist Party of China, as the ruling party of both countries has exchanged a series of experiences in party building work and the results of various conferences over the past 20 years. The creative theory of party building in Mao Zedong Thought is of great significance to any political party. The exchange of experience in party building is an important political way to spread Mao Zedong Thought.

In addition, in recent years, China and Russia have established strategic partnership in various fields, and the cooperation and exchange in the academic field has been increasing in recent years. 2020 and 2021 are the "Year of Scientific and Technological Innovation" between China and Russia, and the sharing of resources of academic papers and the strengthening of cooperation between research institutions and universities in both countries are important objective factors for the dissemination of Mao Zedong Thought. The year 2020 and 2021 is the year of scientific and technological innovation in Russia and China. During these two years, the number of Russian-language literature on Mao Zedong Thought has increased considerably. Many Russian universities are also paying attention to the construction of "Oriental Studies" and "Sinology", and such famous universities as Moscow University School of Asia and Africa, St. Petersburg State University, Novosibirsk State University and Far Eastern State University are promoting Chinese language teaching. In addition, a large number of Russian and Chinese academic journals are introduced to each other or supported in their publication work, for example, the aforementioned "Chinese Society and State" is published with the financial support of the Chinese Embassy in Russia.

4. Prospects for the dissemination of Mao Zedong Thought in Russia

As the largest republic of the former Soviet Union and its most direct successor, Russia's communist theory research system is more complete than most countries in the world, but to a certain extent it has

been branded as "Soviet". The study of Soviet East communist theory has been overwhelming. The disintegration of the Soviet Union has changed this situation to some extent, and the weakening of ideological influence on academic research has created favorable conditions for the introduction of foreign ideological research themes. Academic activity is an excellent medium for the dissemination of Mao Zedong Thought. In order to inject new energy into the Russian academic community and open up new research topics, it is necessary to expand academic exchanges between Russia and China on the study of communist theory. From a social perspective, after the massive ups and downs of the late 20th century, Russia's social situation has stabilized. Compared to the still developing Third World countries such as India, Russia's communist parties no longer have the possibility of spreading Mao's ideology (e.g., rural encirclement of cities) through armed struggle similar to that of the Communist Party of India (Mao), which is a result of Russia's relatively more developed economic situation and sound parliamentary political system. Therefore, strategic cooperation and inter-party exchanges between Russia and China will be the main medium for the dissemination of Mao Zedong Thought in official channels, and policy support from China is also a positive factor for expanding the dissemination of Mao Zedong Thought. In addition, in the modern society with the rapid development of new media, the dissemination of Mao Zedong Thought will no longer be limited to paper media such as books and newspapers, but will also be an important way to tell the Chinese story and promote the Chinese experience through new media such as Internet, TV and movies. Against the background of rapidly warming Sino-Russian relations, the dissemination of Mao Zedong Thought in Russia means not only the unilateral export of Chinese experience, but also the theoretical import of advanced Russian intellectuals, and this two-way information flow creates a highly valuable interactive system for the new cooperation between China and Russia and the construction of the community of human destiny.

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