

Rethinking the Development of the Discipline of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History"

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Abstract

Since the introduction of the subject "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History" in Program 08, the subject has made significant contributions to the improvement of the layout of Marxist theory and the development of ideological and political theory teaching in colleges and universities in more than ten years. However, in the process of development, it still faces challenges from various aspects. This paper analyzes the problems faced in the development of this discipline and the strategies to be adopted in response to them, starting from the background and purpose of the construction of the discipline of "Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History".

Keywords

Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History; Marxist theory; Academic Development.

1. Introduction

The discipline of "Research on Basic issues of Modern Chinese History" is an important part of the first-level discipline of Marxist theory. Since the establishment of "08 Program", the discipline of "Basic Problems of Modern Chinese History" has undergone more than ten years of construction and development, and has made significant contributions to the improvement of the layout of Marxist theory disciplines and the development of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities. However, in the process of development, the discipline still faces challenges from various aspects and the shortage of its own development. In this paper, we analyze the problems faced by the discipline of "Modern Chinese History" in its development, and study the strategies to be adopted to deal with them.

2. The Necessity of Building the Discipline of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History"

2.1. The Inevitable Measures to Build Marxist Theory System and Improve the Teaching Quality of Ideological and Political Theory Courses in Colleges and Universities

The discipline of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History" belongs to the first-level discipline of Marxist Theory, which is classified as a major category of law in terms of discipline attributes, and belongs to the category of postgraduate education in terms of academic level, and this program is not offered at the undergraduate level. The first-level discipline "Marxist Theory" was established at an earlier time, in 2005, when the Ministry of Education issued the "05 Program".[1] The second-level disciplines include: "Basic Principles of Marxism", "Studies on the Chineseization of Marxism", "Ideological and Political Education", "Studies on Foreign Marxism", and "History of Marxist Development". The first-level discipline of Marxist theory was formerly known as "Marxist theory and ideological and political education", which was a

second-level discipline under the first-level discipline of political science under the discipline of law. The separate setting of Marxist theory as a first-level discipline is both the need for the development of the Marxist theory system itself and the foundation for good ideological and political theory courses to lay a firm foundation for theoretical support of the curriculum. The discipline of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History" was established later than the other five secondary disciplines, and was approved by the Ministry of Education in 2008 ("08 Program"). [2] The notice clearly states that one of the reasons and purposes of establishing this discipline is to further strengthen and improve the construction of the first-level discipline of Marxist theory, and gradually form a disciplinary system of Marxist theory with clear research objects, perfect functions and scientific positioning. The establishment of this subject also directly serves the teaching service of the course "Outline of Modern Chinese History", which is an ideological and political theory course in colleges and universities. The course is designed to help students understand and internalize the basic events of modern Chinese history, the basic development process of society and the development experience, and to recognize and identify with the key issues of the "Four Choices".

2.2. It Is Conducive to Providing Theoretical Support for the Course "Outline of Modern Chinese History"

"Theoretical construction is the core of discipline construction." [3] In addition to enriching and completing the first-level discipline of Marxist theory, the second-level discipline of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History" also serves the teaching and research of the course "Outline of Modern Chinese History", which is an ideological and political theory course in colleges and universities. The four courses of ideological and political theory in higher education correspond to the four secondary disciplines under the first level of Marxist theory, namely: "Introduction to the Basic Principles of Marxism" ("Principles"), which corresponds to the major of "Basic Principles of Marxism", "Introduction to Mao Zedong Thought and the Theoretical System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics" ("Introduction") course, corresponding to the "Studies on the Chineseization of Marxism" major, "Thought and Moral Cultivation and Legal Foundation" ("Thought and Cultivation") course, corresponding to the "Ideological and Political Education" major, The course "Outline of Modern Chinese History" ("Outline") did not have a corresponding theoretical specialization before the construction of the discipline "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History", and the construction of the discipline lacks theoretical guidance, and the teaching quality of the outline course is not satisfactory. The construction of the discipline provides a theoretical research platform and lecture support for the outline course, which makes the ideological and political theory course in colleges and universities have a full and complete curriculum system.

2.3. It Is A Powerful Rebuttal to the Wrong Trend of Historical Nihilism

The influence of historical nihilism in the field of ideological struggle is quite deep, and all kinds of anti-party and anti-China reactionary forces inside and outside the country are good at playing the distorted history card as a way to infiltrate the masses of our people, young students, and to undermine and subvert our state power. "'To destroy a man's country, we must first remove its history.' Hostile forces at home and abroad often just take the history of the Chinese revolution, the history of the new China to make articles, do everything possible to attack, scandalize, slander, the fundamental purpose is to mess with the people." [4] The collapse of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was in no small part due to the pernicious influence of historical nihilism in the ideological sphere, which took root in the minds of Soviet communists and led to a wholesale denial of the history of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, resulting in organizational centrifugation and disorganization. The sinister aspect of historical nihilism lies in the fundamental and comprehensive denial of the guiding ideological status and theoretical achievements of

Marxism, the legitimacy of the leadership of the CPC, and the development path of the new Chinese regime in the decades since the founding of the country, thus causing the new Chinese regime to capsize from within, and its harm is deceptive, concealed, pervasive, and persistent. Since its founding, the Communist Party of China has led the Chinese people through a century of revolution, construction and reform. The depth of its contribution to the great achievements of China's modern development in the past century and its dedication to the Chinese people's desperate pursuit of a happy and better life cannot be ignored. Relying on the discipline of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History", it is especially important to raise the sword in the field of ideology, guard the ideological security barrier, oppose the wrong trend of historical nihilism, and do a good job in the ideological and political field of young students to establish the flag, correct the wind direction, and keep the original heart.

3. Challenges and Dilemmas in the Construction of the Discipline of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History"

3.1. Misunderstanding of Disciplinary Attributes and Deviation of Pedagogical Research

The course "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History" is a second-level subject under the first level of Marxist theory, and the subject category is under the category of law. It goes without saying that this subject is a direct service to the construction of the discipline of Marxist theory and by its nature belongs to the theoretical discipline. The core issue of its theoretical construction and the purpose of its establishment are based on the "four choices", namely: "How did history and the people choose Marxism? How did history and the people choose Marxism? How did they choose the Chinese Communist Party? How did they choose the road of socialism? How did history and the people choose Marxism? It is a theoretical discipline with the four choices as its research thread. However, in the understanding and construction of this discipline, many people think of it as a history discipline, and many teachers and students often refer to the name of the major as "modern history" or even "modern history" for short. This is not only an inaccurate perception of the nature of the discipline, but also a subtle separation of the discipline from Marxist theory, which leads to a psychological conversion to the major of "Modern Chinese History" under the category of History, and a disconnection from the other five secondary subjects of Marxist theory. In academic research and teaching, both teachers and students are very likely to close this discipline to pure history, and focus on teaching and research using pure history research methods in research methods and teaching content, with the consequence that students in this major or research direction will also have a weakened sense of belonging to Marxist theory. In the subject area, the subjects that have a high degree of overlap with the content of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History" are not only "Modern Chinese History" under the first-level discipline of "Chinese History" under the discipline of History, but also "History of the Chinese Communist Party" under the first-level discipline of "Political Science" under the discipline of Law. In addition to the second level of "History of Modern China" under the first level of "Chinese History" under the category of History, the second level of "History of the Chinese Communist Party" under the first level of "Political Science" under the category of Law is also included. These two disciplines have been established for a long time and have a mature training system, which also makes the status of the discipline of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History" rather awkward.

3.2. Impacts and Challenges from Other Disciplines

Firstly, Compared with the other five secondary disciplines of Marxist theory, the discipline of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History" was established three years later, and the development time of the first-level discipline of Marxist theory was only 15 years, which

reflects that this discipline still suffers from insufficient research time, less research content, and shortcomings compared with other disciplines. The shortcomings of this discipline are still obvious compared to other disciplines. Secondly, The four secondary subjects of Marxist theory corresponding to the four ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities have extremely different weightings in the number of enrollment of Marxist theory graduate students. The situation of colleges and universities that offer Marxist theory as a major and enroll in secondary subjects, the number of students enrolled in "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History" is only in single digits, and very few of them can reach a large number of training. In contrast, the number of students enrolled in "Studies on the Chineseization of Marxism" and "Ideological and Political Education" has mostly reached over ten digits. In terms of the candidates' applications and the favorability of their choice of majors, the discipline of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History" is not dominant. The different proportional enrollment size of each secondary discipline also affects, to some extent, the research results of each discipline in Marxist theory; Thirdly, The two subjects "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History" and "Studies on the Chineseization of Marxism" overlap considerably in terms of both the content of their studies and the ideological and political theory courses to which they correspond. The content of "Outline" and "Introduction" also overlap considerably. In the undergraduate ideological and political theory courses, the credits of "Principles", "Thought and Cultivation" and "Outline" are only three, and the credits of the "Outline" course are still the result of the adjustment in the past two years, which used to be only two credits, but the credits of the "Introduction" course are as high as six credits. In teaching, if the students have a high school liberal arts background, such students have already learned systematic knowledge and general knowledge of modern Chinese history in high school, and they lose their sense of freshness when they face the "Outline" class. This, coupled with the high number of credits and the fact that the theoretical system has never been studied systematically before, has exacerbated the importance students attach to the "Introduction" class and the lack of attention to the "Outline" class. The lack of attention and neglect, the teaching in the classroom will also counteract the research and construction of the corresponding secondary discipline of Marxist theory; Fourthly, with the development of the times, theoretical issues and the construction of the ruling party itself have become new hot topics, and the new great project of party construction has received more and more attention from society and academia. Nowadays, many universities and social science institutes have added their own secondary subject "Party Construction (0305Z1)" to the admission catalogs of Marxist theory and master's degree, and the research content and training program of this subject also include the part of Chinese Communist Party history in modern Chinese history. The partial overlap of research contents and the current trend of the Party and society as a whole to attach great importance to party building have driven a large number of researchers and students to choose this newly established second-level discipline, there are even some universities that no longer offer the discipline and research direction of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History", but shift the enrollment and training focus of the discipline to the party building direction, which is even more unfavorable to the development of the discipline.

3.3. Few and Incomplete Doctoral Authorization Points in the Discipline

Whether a discipline has a PhD program and whether it can successfully enroll and train doctoral students is an important reference mark to measure the academic capacity of the discipline and the level of student training in higher education research units and institutions. Prior to 2010, 12 of the 21 institutions of higher education (including the Party School of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the Academy of Social Sciences) that had been granted the right to confer doctoral degrees in Marxist theory had already started the enrollment management and cultivation of doctoral students in this discipline. By the end of

2020, there are 88 universities (including Party schools and social science institutes) with doctoral degree authorization points in the first-level discipline of Marxist theory, and 17 universities (including Party schools and social science institutes) with doctoral degree authorization points in the second-level discipline. However, there are only 44 universities and research institutions with doctoral degrees in the discipline or research direction of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History", and the number of doctoral degrees and training directions has shrunk significantly compared with the number of first-level doctoral degrees. This reflects the lack and inadequacy of the discipline's knowledge development system, which is an important factor that hinders the research and development of the discipline.

4. To Strengthen the Construction and Teaching of the Discipline of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History"

4.1. Grounded in the Fundamentals, Adhering to the Marxist Materialistic View of History

The materialistic view of history is the highest level of Marxist methodology and the fundamental guiding principle that the Chinese Communist Party has always adhered to over the past 100 years since its founding. The century-long development of the CPC is also the century-long development of the materialistic view of history in China. The brilliant and splendid achievements created by the CPC, the Chinese nation and the Chinese people during this century-long struggle all testify to the correctness and guiding nature of the Marxist materialistic view of history. The centenary of the founding of the Communist Party of China is also an important point where the methodology of the materialistic view of history shows its importance and inheritance. The materialistic view of history is the guiding ideology of the Communist Party of China and the Chinese people, with the Communist Party of China as the leading force, have to exert the guiding and building power of its materialistic view of history. The construction of the discipline "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History" should also be based on the materialistic view of history, and through the use of the methodology of the materialistic view of history to study the development of modern history of Chinese society, the discipline system should be constructed with a global perspective. The teaching of the course "Outline of Modern Chinese History" for this discipline is also based on the use of the materialistic view of history for pedagogical analysis and problem study. By using the correct methodology of the Marxist materialistic view of history to lead students in the cultivation of a correct view of the country and the nation, they will be able to correctly judge and fully understand the history of the revolution, construction and development of the Party and the country, the revolutionary path, the construction path and the development path. By studying history through a correct view of Party history, young students can fully understand and appreciate how the Chinese people chose Marxism, the Chinese Communist Party, the road to socialism, and the road to reform and opening up in the course of historical development. At the same time, this is also the goal of the discipline of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History" to answer the key questions of the "four choices".

4.2. Building the Characteristics of Our Discipline with A New Perspective of "Interdisciplinary"

Exploring the kernel laws of related disciplines and specialties, and making the disciplines draw on each other's respective achievements are new trends in academic research and new hot spots for policy support nowadays. The creation of cross-disciplines is a necessary requirement for the development of society and the development of disciplines. At the same time, among the existing disciplines, their knowledge is not unique, and they are bound to communicate and integrate with other disciplines. The various secondary disciplines under the primary subject

of Marxist theory are each with their own disciplinary characteristics, but are cross-fertilized with other disciplines. The discipline of "History of Marxist Development" is closely integrated with modern Western history; "Studies on the Chineseization of Marxism" is integrated with contemporary politics and the latest policies of the central government; "Ideological and Political Education" Marxist theory is combined with pedagogy and political science, and "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History" is a combination of Marxist theory and modern Chinese history. The discipline of Marxist theory cannot be viewed in isolation; its own development has proved that only the integration and adaptation of Marxism with the different socio-historical stages of China in various periods can save China, and only by combining Marxist theory with China's reality and coordinating it with the historical path of China can it become a correct theoretical system to guide the practice of China's development path. We analyze the organization, construction, and governing laws and experiences of the Communist Party of China under the conditions of its 100-year history of founding, and analyze the degree of its integration in the basic development of modern Chinese history, so as to realize the deepening of the disciplinary content and the research object of "Research on basic issues of modern Chinese history" through the theoretical fervor of party history research under the period of the centennial of founding. Therefore, the discipline of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History" does not conflict with the first-level discipline of Marxist theory, and at the same time, through the characteristics of its own historical research, it can intermingle with other disciplines such as "Modern Chinese History", "Communist Party History" and "Party Construction". so as to realize its own unique disciplinary charm and better complement and improve the construction, development and innovation of the Marxist theoretical system.

4.3. Strengthen the Construction of Talent Teams in Professional Fields and Improve the Discipline Training Hierarchy

Firstly, To strengthen the construction of high-quality research talents for the study of "Research on basic issues in modern Chinese history". A highly qualified and professional team of discipline leaders and researchers is the soul and benchmark of the discipline's professional development and research. Since the establishment of this discipline, there has been a lack of specialized personnel for discipline construction and teaching, and because of the late establishment of this discipline, research experts and talents with professional background and seniority in this discipline are extremely scarce. Most of the teaching staff and researchers in this discipline were born in "Chinese Communist Party History" and "Modern Chinese History", and their disciplinary perspectives and research paradigms cannot meet the needs of this discipline in the Marxist perspective. Therefore, young scholars and teachers who have been trained in their own disciplinary backgrounds should be valued for their human resources and given an appropriate bias in terms of research resources and relevant projects, while researchers with existing interdisciplinary backgrounds should be given systematic training in professional methodology on a regular basis to track the frontiers of the disciplinary theory of "Research on basic issues in modern Chinese history"; Secondly, The construction of doctoral units is emphasized at the level of academic training. The proportion of doctoral programs in the first-level discipline of "Marxist theory" among universities with doctoral authorization is not low, but the proportion of universities with doctoral programs or research directions in the discipline of "Research on basic issues in modern Chinese history" is greatly reduced. The construction of doctoral programs in this discipline should be emphasized in order to systematically and specifically cultivate talents in the theoretical system of this discipline. Thirdly, Play the leading and infectious power of party and government leaders in discipline construction. The discipline is closely linked to party building and party history matters, and has a consistency of objectives with the content of party history education and propaganda. The subject cannot rely solely on textbooks and subject teachers in teaching and

research. In the process of cultivating teaching infections, in addition to the regular practical activities such as visits to red bases, performances of red songs and dances, and screenings of classic red films and dramas, the guidance of local party and government leaders should be brought into play. Colleges and universities should make full use of the local party and government human resources, regularly invite local party and government leaders and party school teachers and scholars to the students of this major, teachers for party theory and practical education, so that teachers and students can actually infect the party theory and party history, which is far from the educational effect achieved by a single classroom teaching.

4.4. Integrating Xi Jinping's View of Party History into the "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History"

General Secretary Xi Jinping made a public speech at the mobilization meeting of party history education and especially emphasized "the need to establish a correct view of party history." [5] This is the first time that the General Secretary publicly put forward this important statement under the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China, which has profound significance and theoretical connotation. Since the 18th Party Congress, the General Secretary Xi Jinping has made a number of important speeches and discussions on the historical perspective regarding the evaluation of historical figures, historical events, and historical processes in different periods of the Party, forming many important views on the Party's historical perspective of the Communist Party of China, as well as providing guidance on the line and methodology for research and teaching in this discipline. For example, when analyzing the various historical figures in the Chinese Communist Party, it is important to evaluate and analyze them in the specific historical and social conditions in which they lived. Likewise, this method and principle must be followed in order to make an objective and accurate evaluation of historical figures in the course of the development of modern Chinese history. The materialistic view of history and the principle of seeking truth from facts, as shown in the important statement of "two cannot be denied" put forward by the Chinese Communist Party in the period before and after the reform and opening up, are also important methodologies for studying the basic issues of modern Chinese history. Infiltrate the content system of this discipline with Xi Jinping's view of Party history, and stimulate the internal potential of this discipline with correct ideas, through the valuable historical materials accumulated in the century-long development of the Chinese Communist Party, Xi Jinping's view of Party history is organically integrated into the long-term research and teaching of this discipline to promote the optimal development of the "Research on issues in modern Chinese history."

4.5. The Important Value of "Research on Basic Issues of Modern Chinese History" in the Process of Party History Education in Colleges and Universities

Universities are important bases for research, study and propaganda of Party history, and are the front-row bastions for realizing the objectives and tasks of ideological and political theory courses to educate people. Teaching the theory and content of Party history to young students in universities is an important action at the current historical intersection of the "two hundred years" goal. Although the majors of "History of the Communist Party of China" and "Modern Chinese History" can conduct systematic, professional and specialized studies on the history of the Communist Party of China and the history of China's modern economic and social development, they both belong to specialized disciplines, and their own professional and academic attributes are strong. However, both of them are specialized disciplines, and their own professional and academic attributes are strong, and the target audience is basically limited to students and teachers of this major. The number of universities and research institutions that can offer a specialization in "History of the Communist Party" is also very small, and they cannot cater to students of different majors or meet the needs of all teachers and

students. Party history is also a topic of study in the party courses conducted by universities, and although the party courses are open to students of different majors, the audience can only focus on a very small percentage of party members. Neither the special "Communist Party History" major nor the party class education can make the party history education universal and comprehensive. As a result, the discipline of "Research on the basic issues of modern Chinese history" has become more and more superior as a professional carrier of Party history propaganda and education. Unlike the specialization and niche of "Chinese Communist Party History" and "Modern Chinese History", The ideological and political theory course "Outline of Modern Chinese History", which corresponds to the course "Research on Basic Issues of Modern Chinese History", can provide full coverage of Party history education to all students of different majors in universities, popularize the knowledge of Party history education, and introspect the purpose of Party history education, the major of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History", which is the support of the discipline, can play a huge influence and support force in the propaganda and education of Party history that is incomparable to other disciplines. Therefore, "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History" should make full use of the boom of Party history education and the inclusion and coverage of Party history knowledge in the discipline itself to enhance the status and attention of the discipline, and fully integrate the function of Party history education into the teaching of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities in terms of teaching design and research. This is of great value and practical significance to the promotion of party history research and education, as well as to the development of the discipline of "Research on Basic Issues in Modern Chinese History".

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