

MAO ZEDONG'S THOUGHT AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY¹

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Abstract: The 70-year practice of New China shows that our party has, permanently, attached importance and strengthened the leadership of ideological work, which is an essential factor for the Chinese nation to achieve the leap from standing, wealthy to powerful, and consolidate continuously the ruling position of the party. The successive leadership collectives of the party have explored and innovated the theory of socialist ideology in different periods of the history of China in light of the international and domestic situation, providing the CPC with a scientific theoretical basis and action guidelines for breaking through ideological barriers in its long-term rule. Mao Zedong made significant historical contributions to explore the road to new Chinese socialism, institutional design, theoretical innovation and ideological construction. The purpose of this study is to combine the basic principles of Marxism with the specific reality of China, creatively put forward the basic principles and basic directions of national ideology construction, and systematically elaborate the essential connotation, guiding ideology, primary objectives, fundamental nature and realization path of socialist ideology construction. This study shows that the first theoretical leap of the localization of Marxist ideology in China has laid a solid foundation to build a scientific and complete country and a scientific and complete national ideology system.

Keywords: Mao Zedong. Political Institutions. Socialist Ideology. Marxism-Leninism.

¹ This work by Path Analysis of Network Ideological and Political Work in Colleges and Universities Based on Network Security Governance (2021SJB0830).

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<https://doi.org/10.1590/0101-3173.2023.v46esp.p211>



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1 ANNOTATION OF SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY

Tracy introduced the concept of ideology in 1797, combining the Greek words “Eidos” and “Logos” to mean the empirical science of ideas. This concept is an essential development of epistemology and has a sociological and political significance because of its intellectual connection with the Enlightenment, reflecting a progressive idea of liberal revolution by historical development.

Since then, German philosophers such as Hegel, Feuerbach and Powell, have enriched and developed the theory of ideology (SONG, 1998, p. 255). In analyzing and criticizing German ideology in-depth, Marx founded and developed the theory of historical materialism and gradually formed the Marxist theory of ideology. Marx and Engels pointed out, in *The German Ideology*, that ideology refers to the ideology of the ruling class that dominates in every era. It is the conceptual reflection and expression of the existing economic relations, an essential part of the existing social system and social relations, and an integral part of the existing ruling relations (TIAN, 1991, p. 1439). In the *Communist Manifesto*, the *Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy*, and later works, Marx also proposed that ideology is the system of ideas that, systematically, consciously and directly, reflects the economic form and political system of society and is the part of the conceptual superstructure that constitutes the forms of social consciousness.

From the perspective of ideological work, ideology is mainly divided into two kinds: one is the extension of the dominant material and economic relations in the field of thought, that is, the dominant ideological system of the ruling class. The reality expressed in China, as the mainstream ideology, is the socialist ideology. The other one is the reality of the state of existence of non-dominant “concepts system,” that is, non-mainstream ideology. Mainstream ideology and non-mainstream ideology are essentially systems of ideas and concepts which belong to the superstructure. Both of which have mainstream and non-mainstream ideologies due to the subject or carrier’s different status in the social domination. History and reality have repeatedly proved that a political party, seizing power to govern, often begins with the establishment of guiding ideology and ideological discourse. The disintegration of a regime is also, oftenly, marked by the breakdown of the position of public opinion and the loss of ideological dominance (MARX, 2020, p. 56). In this sense, the front line of political security is the ideological field, and the ideological conflict is political and doctrinal. Both political issues and the underlying

principles of the economy are intimately intertwined. The conflict over ideologies frequently evolves into a political conflict and, in the end, a conflict over political power.

Engels pointed out that a “socialist society” is not static. In the great cause of promoting socialism with Chinese characteristics, the connotation of socialist ideology is constantly enriched and developed with the vivid practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics. It is highly condensed in the guiding ideology of the party, presenting a dynamic collection (WANG, 1996, p. 194). When socialism with Chinese characteristics is advancing into a new era, socialist ideology is centrally embodied in Xi Jinping’s thought of socialism with Chinese characteristics in a new era.

2 ANALYSIS OF SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY

Socialist ideology is a relatively independent system having relatively separate fundamental components that work together to form a complete system. The fundamental structure of socialist ideology is a balanced relationship. But it is a three-dimensional network of interactions in which “one element dominates numerous aspects”. It is made of a core and multiple elements, according to the definition and characterization of ideology. The contradictory movement of one core and multiple elements becomes the inner driving force for socialist ideology to stay alive. Among them, one core refers to the inner circle. Multiple elements include the middle circle and the outer circle according to the relationship with the inner circle. The rules are the whole of the central diffraction and vertical and horizontal interaction.

2.1 INNER CIRCLE

The inner circle is a central system reflecting the essential attributes, core theory, core objectives, core values, core themes and subjects. In the inner circle of socialist ideology, the core theory is the scientific theoretical system of Marxism, which provides logical arguments, doctrinal basis and cognitive foundation for the legitimacy of socialist ideology. The core goal is the pursuit of objectives in line with the theoretical basis, i.e., to realize the lofty ideal of communism, including the realization of socialist society at the primary stage and communist society at the advanced stage. The core value is the value system constructed for the realization of the goal, which mainly reflects

the core theme and the core subject. The core values are the value system constructed to achieve the goals, mainly involving ideological concepts, political views, moral norms, etc., which provide ideological guarantee and spiritual impetus for the construction of socialist ideology. The core themes are the stage tasks around the core theories, core goals and core values. They are fully integrated with the demands of the times, which are in the primary or key position in a particular historical period, and are the grasp of solving the main social contradictions and the main aspects of the contradictions in a certain period (CHEN, 1991, p. 663). The core subject is the leading force in making the above core contents come true. The proletarian party and the proletarian working people led by it are the core subject of socialist ideology. The consolidation of the status of the core subject and the cultivation of its ability directly affect the effectiveness of socialist ideology construction and development.

The proletarian political party is a strong leadership core to realize the people's dominant position. The proletariat can continuously realize the people's dominant position only by establishing the proletarian political party and adhering to its leadership.

The mastery and use of the core subject's leadership, discourse and management of ideology are related to the security of the ideological field.

2.2 MIDDLE CIRCLE

The middle circle is the conceptual and practical movement surrounding the core circle, which is an entire field to stimulate the recognition of the core elements in a wider context and so increase the capacity of the core circle capacity for absorption. In contrast to ideologies that exist in a vacuum, socialist ideologies evolve with people's living conditions, their social interactions, and their social existence. The essential impetus behind the evolution of socialist ideology is this conflicting movement. In the middle circle of socialist ideology, three key elements are discourse, media, and public opinion. First, as the carrier of ideology, discourse has the most direct function of expression and explanation. Discourse expression and interpretation explains the "what" and "why" so that the core elements can be accepted, transformed into identity and turned into practice. Second, the media here refers to information dissemination tools in a narrow sense, including communication, broadcasting and network, which play a role in

disseminating and accepting socialist ideology. Especially in the cyber, the relationship among the core elements of ideology is changing, and how the core subject can keep the core theory, core goal, core value, and core theme alive in cyberspace is an ongoing ideological issue. Focusing on the Internet as the “largest increment,” the CPC proposes to pay attention to the Internet as the central front, the main battlefield and the forefront of ideological struggle to strengthen the leadership and management of the Internet. Thirdly, public opinion, as the sum of social psychology, social attitudes and social opinions, plays a role in reflecting and judging the status of ideology and its influence. It may become a “booster” to consolidate its status or a “separator” to dissipate its influence (YURDAKUL, 2018, p. 1). The power of public opinion must not be underestimated. The discourse, media and public opinion elements of the middle circle of socialist ideology gradually evolve into the mastery of socialist ideological discourse, dominance and management in the mutual integration with the elements of the inner hoard.

2.3 EXTENSIVE CIRCLE

The epiphenomenal circle is a mechanical system to ensure that the intermediate circle effectively serves the delicate operation of the kernel circle and provides a mechanism guarantee for the self-improvement, continuous consolidation and sustainable development of socialist ideology. The extended sphere of socialist ideology mainly includes various aspects such as education mechanism, work mechanism, security mechanism, responsibility mechanism and normalization and long-term mechanism. It carries out multiple activities of serving socialist practice such as education practice, work practice, security maintenance practice and responsibility implementation practice of ideology according to the law of evolution and development of ideology (MARX, 2020, p.59). The function of the internal components of socialist ideology is determined by these interconnected systems, which also impact and interact with one another. Among these, the national education system, which views ideology education as a crucial component of national education and creates a more organized ideology education chain, is where the ideology education mechanism is most clearly shown. In general, socialist ideology education aims to “identify with, love, and serve socialism” through educational and instructive activities. The mechanism of ideological work is mainly reflected in the connection and integration with national economic and social undertakings, i.e., how to deal with the relationship between “ideological

work” and “central work” and ensure that they promote each other in organic integration. The ideological security mechanism is mainly designed to address the national security issues arising from the ideological struggle. The socialist ideological security is directly related to the realization of a socialist regime, socialist state interests and socialist people’s rights and interests. The ideological responsibility mechanism mainly emphasizes the implementation of responsibilities for ideological education, work and security maintenance (LI, 1999, p. 109). In the process of building the responsibility mechanism of socialist ideology in China, it is emphasized that leading cadres at all levels should effectively assume political responsibility and leadership, improve the responsibility system of ideological work and form a pattern of the whole party to take action and grasp propaganda and ideological work. It shall promote the formation of socialist ideology normalization and long-term mechanism, aimed at promoting the above mechanism to play a continuous role, not only in the mirror image of the air to form a “constant” state, but also in the longitudinal axis of time to form a “long-term success” of the situation, and resolutely guard the ideological position and defense line (CHEN, 1991, p. 855).

2.4 THE INTERACTION BETWEEN SOCIALIST IDEOLOGICAL STRUCTURES AND ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

As an active reflection of the economic base at the conceptual level, the inner structure of ideology must be closely related to the economic structure. On the one hand, the economic structure determines the ideological structure. The internal elements of the economic structure and its sequence of elements directly determine the interrelationship of the internal elements of the ideological structure and the form of the relationship. When the structure of the socialist public economy is adjusted, socialist ideology can only make adaptive adjustments in order to promote the synergistic development of both. On the other hand, the ideological structure reacts to the economic structure (THOMPSON, 2019, p. 102). When elements of the internal structure of ideology change in sequence or evolve in a relationship, it often metaphorically indicates that is necessary to pay attention to specific social needs and certain social problems need to be solved. Thus pointing to certain interest relations that need to be adjusted, forcing the innovation of unreasonable components in the economic structure, or even breaking down the barriers of old interest relations.

Because of this, we should not only do a good job on the central work and give ideological work a strong material foundation, but also do a good job on ideological work and give the central work a strong guarantee; we should neither neglect ideological work because of the central work nor cause ideological work to diverge from the central work. Political and ideological structures are intrinsically intertwined, and there is a tight natural relationship between them. Marx and Engels pointed out that a class is the dominant material force in society and at the same time the dominant spiritual force in society. It can be said that ideology provides a systematic system of conceptual values for political subjects. Their political practices achieve certain political purposes with the help of the state apparatus by playing the functions of ideology, such as defense, integration, support and guidance. The role of the elements of the internal structure of ideology will directly affect the elements of the political structure and their role. If the ideological structure is stable, that is, if the internal elements form a benign interaction and normal operation, the political structure will be relatively stable. If there is a disorder within the ideological structure, the political structure is bound to make adjustments. The adjustment of the political structure may be both the result of the adjustment of the ideological structure and the cause of the adjustment of the ideological result. Both ones are causally related to each other to promote and consolidate the development of the state power (WU, 2016, p. 37). Therefore, ideological issues should be treated from the height of political security to prevent changing course. The banners, especially the ones of the socialist countries, should avoid falling victim to “color revolution” and “peaceful evolution” due to the loss of ideological defense.

3 THE PROCESS OF BUILDING SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY IN CHINA

For ease of reading, the references of the citations must be in the body of the text, not in the footnotes. Furthermore, they must be described in the descriptive style, not in the IDEM or IBIDEM style. Through continuous exploration, we have deepened the understanding and application of Marxist ideological theory, strengthened the combination of Marxist ideology with specific national conditions of China, and continuously promoted the multidimensional development of Chinese socialist ideology. According to the chronological order, the incredible process of ideological construction in the past 70 years can be divided into six stages.

3.1 1949-1956 WAS THE INITIAL STAGE OF SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY CONSTRUCTION

The “anti-imperialist and anti-revisionist” movement was carried out during the socialist revolution to critique bourgeois idealism and develop a national ideology dominated by Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong’s Thought. Leading or promoting the propagation of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong’s Thought (including the propagation of patriotism) and leading or promoting the criticism of anti-Marxist ideas were categorically stated as being an important task of ideological construction by the Communist Party of China. To this end, a great deal of targeted work was carried out to enable the people to truly understand and master the Marxist position, methods, views and to establish a correct worldview, outlook on life and values. Through a series of ideological transformations, propaganda and education activities, socialist ideology was recognized in the whole society (KULL, 2019, p. 21). At this stage, the establishment of the socialist system was accompanied by the realization of the initial construction of socialist ideology. Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong’s Thought were elevated to the ideology of the socialist state and became the common values and the code of conduct of the party and the people’s.

3.2 1956-1976 WAS THE TORTUOUS INTEGRATION STAGE OF SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY CONSTRUCTION

After the completion of the socialist transformation in 1956, the CPC calmly considered the problem of ideological construction, closely integrated Marxism with the national and party conditions, and put forward a series of creative ideological construction ideas. For example, in response to the change of the main social contradiction, it emphasized that ideological construction should serve the central work of economic construction. The “Double Hundred Policy” became the guideline for socialist ideological construction. It attached great importance to ideological and political work, maintained and consolidated the dominant position of Marxism in the field of ideology. The “Six Political Standards” were used to judge whether people’s words and deeds were in line with Marxism and to help the people arm their minds. At this stage, ideological construction was a tortuous development of intertwining wrong and right. However, the socialist nature of ideological construction of China remained unchanged, and the fundamental guiding position of Marxism remained unchanged too (XI, 2020, p. 341). The ideological

construction of the Party during this period rapidly achieved the remarkable efficacy of integrating society and fully established and consolidated the monolithic guiding position of Marxism in the ideological life of the country.

3.3 1976-1981 WAS THE STAGE OF SETTING THINGS RIGHT IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY

At the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Party, “economic construction as the center” replaced “class struggle as the program,” and ideological construction began to focus closely on economic construction. The important task of ideological construction in the new period of reform and opening up is to “combine the general principles of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought with the concrete practice of socialist modernization and develop them under new historical conditions.” (XI, 2020, p. 341). After that, “adhering to the four basic principles” became the bottom line of ideological construction of China and forcefully countered various attempts to vilify and blacken socialism and Marxism. At the same time, a series of ideological struggles against the “left” and the “right” was carried out in response to a number of historical legacy issues. At this stage, the erroneous ideas of the Cultural Revolution were criticized and cleaned up. A “return to the true Marxism” was achieved, which became a historic turning point in ideological construction. This became a historic turning point in ideological construction.

3.4 1981-1992 WAS THE STAGE OF TRANSFORMATION AND RESHAPING OF SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY

The Twelfth Party Congress in 1982 clearly pointed out that “combining the universal truths of Marxism with the specific reality of China, taking our own path and building socialism with Chinese characteristics.” Since then, “socialism with Chinese characteristics” has become the theme of ideological construction in the new era. By deepening the understanding of the market economy, the ideological construction in China ensures the correct direction of a socialist market economy, maintains the stability of the political environment and plays a political function. At the same time, it advocates economic values with fairness and efficiency as the core and organically unifies the consciousness of socialism and the spontaneity of the market economy to

promote the liberation and development of productive forces and the orderly development of the socialist market economy.

3.5 1992-2012 WAS THE INNOVATIVE STAGE OF SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY CONSTRUCTION

The new development stage emphasized the strengthening of ideological construction, especially the construction of spiritual civilization. We will carry out extensive and long-lasting mass spiritual civilization creation activities, actively advance socialist culture, strengthen the ideological and political work of the entire society, and raise the ideological and moral standards of the entire country by effectively increasing our investment in the development of spiritual civilization. We will always adhere to the monolithic guiding position of Marxism in the field of ideology and will not engage in the pluralism of guiding ideologies. In the 21st century, the Party Central Committee has put forward the scientific development concept. Hold on to the human orientation of ideological construction, fully highlighting the fundamental interests and subjectivity of the people. Respecting the value pursuit of the diversity of social subjects, it pursues economic development and comprehensive, coordinated and sustainable development in all aspects of politics, culture, society and ecology. At this stage, the CPC has constantly summarized practical experience and promoted theoretical innovation, forming a series of important theoretical achievements. For example, it enriches the connotation and extension of the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics and makes the construction of Chinese socialist ideology more systematic and perfect. On the basis of inheriting the Marxist ideology construction theory, the CPC has carried out a bold exploration of the socialist ideology construction of China: it has promoted the strategic position of ideological work.

3.6 2012 SOCIALIST IDEOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTION ENTERED A NEW STAGE OF COMPREHENSIVE DEEPENING

Since the 18th Party Congress, socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era of development. In the context of the new era, socialist ideological construction has also emerged a series of “new” to meet the needs of the times, including new positioning, new tasks, new systems, new means, and so on.

At this stage, the focus on ideological construction includes the construction of the main body, theoretical construction, practical strategies and institutional construction. For example, in response to the “four risks” and “four challenges,” the ideological team should be strengthened to enhance the sense of responsibility and mission. According to the social reality of informatization and networking, we should strengthen the construction of network ideology, especially the content construction of network ideology. In response to the rapid development of the “all-media,” the variety and complexity of the propaganda platform focus on mutual assistance and cooperation of all sectors of society, the formation of a social propaganda system, mastering the main ideological positions and the main battlefield. A new era of socialist ideology with Chinese characteristics, that is harmonious with China and abroad and rich in authority should be built. A new era of socialist ideology with Chinese characteristics that is harmonious with China, besides being abroad and rich in authority, should be built. At the moment, the direction of the ideological construction of China is determined by the conditions of the world, the nation and the party. We should understand the new situation and new challenges and work to find new breakthroughs and new methods that are multidimensional and enterprising.

4 MAO'S NEW UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY

The first is intra-people, i.e., the recognition of the fundamental change in the nature of socialist social contradictions and the consequent change in the usual usage of the ruling class to deal with social contradictions under private ownership. In view of the problems exposed by the Soviet Union in the construction of socialist ideology and its impact on the “Polish-Hungarian affair,” Mao pointed out that after the establishment of the socialist system, the “internal contradictions of the people” that used to be concealed by the acute enemy struggle among us, became increasingly “be noticed”. people’s ideology should therefore change accordingly and not “shrink from social contradictions and be in a passive position,” i.e., not be surprised or dwell on whether there are contradictions and mistakes in socialist construction, but face up to these contradictions and avoid, as far as possible, making the same mistakes again. To this end, on the one hand, we must admit that there are still contradictions in socialist society. To deny the existence of contradictions is to deny materialistic dialectics. Stalin’s mistake was his long-standing failure to admit that contradictions still exist under the socialist system. On the

other hand, we recognize that mistakes are inevitable in socialist construction because “the realization of communism is an unprecedentedly great and unprecedentedly difficult undertaking”. And to engage in socialism in a backward capitalist country or a country that has just emerged from a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society, the Communists can be said to be walking on a path that no one has ever walked before. It is inevitable to run into walls and make mistakes in the process of exploring the way. The key lies in not repeating the mistakes of their predecessors as far as possible.

Mao Zedong thought that in order to address this issue, the CPC, the central organization guiding the socialist revolution and construction of China, needed to change the way it operated and its approach to solve problems. Mao Zedong thought that these changes should primarily be made by correcting erroneous ideologies. Mao Zedong emphasized that, during the socialist construction period, the primary conflict in society had shifted from the prior one, which was based on the people’s internal contradiction, to one, which was based on the contradiction between the enemy and us. Therefore, the mass class struggles of the past, which were of the rapid and stormy type, were basically over, and the majority of the party and government cadres should not only not confuse the contradictions between the enemy and us with the people’s internal contradictions, but should also learn to handle the people’s internal contradictions correctly. To understand the nature of the ideological problems, the people’s internal arguments can only be solved by democratic methods, only by the methods of discussion, criticism, persuasion, and education, but not by coercive, subdued methods to solve.

The second is criticality, i.e., being conscious of and paying sufficient attention to the socialist ideology as a weapon of criticism. While the Stalin’s era objectively worsened the reputation of ideological construction in some respects, the Khrushchev’s era subjectively diluted the ideology.

For a long time, in order to suppress this and promote the other, people have referred to the wholesale rejection of socialist ideology in the Stalinist era by Khrushchev and some scholars as critical, while the criticism of various schools of thought in the Stalinist era and the breaking up of ideology in the Maoist era are summarized as “struggling.” This distinction, in fact, presupposes the positive image of “criticality” and the label of “struggle” as cruel and backward. The question is not whether it is “critical” and constructive, but rather what to criticize and what to construct, and whether this criticism and construction are consistent with the direction of historical

trends (FRANCIS; DAVID, 2019, p. 43). For this reason, Mao talked about his reasons for critiquing or defending the construction of ideology.

It is defensive, i.e., openly asserting the rationality of socialist ideology to reflect and serve objective reality. For one thing, out of the theoretical self-consciousness of historical materialism and the historical self-consciousness of social development, Mao recognized that socialist ideology, as a conceptual superstructure, should and must serve the socialist economic construction, saying that “ideology is a reflection of objective reality and serves the economic base.” In modern Chinese history, the democratic revolution was successful after a long period of defense and spiritual preparation in the field of ideology. Therefore, it is also proper that socialist ideology is defensive and that it plays its defensive role. Secondly, ideology has a great role in promoting social production. For example, after the Rectification Movement in the mid-late 1950s, the problem of the “three doctrines” (bureaucracy, sectarianism, and subjectivism) and the divergence of perceptions on the political and ideological fronts within the CCP were solved, and the enthusiasm of the masses for construction was thus heightened. The people’s enthusiasm for construction was thus heightened. Mao thus concluded, “If the superstructure (which includes ideas and public opinion) protects the kind of relations of production that the people do not like, the people will have to reform it.” (ZHANG, 2020, p. 26).

Mao Zedong explicitly demanded that socialist ideology defend and explain the necessity of socialist revolution and construction in order to better reflect and serve the objective reality of socialism. First, to explain what the achievements of socialist revolution and construction are; second, to determine why the socialist road should be taken; and third, to explain why socialist revolution and construction need the proletariat and the Communist Party. Last but not least, logic should be in order, both to critique incorrect and outdated notions and not to anticipate.

5 CONTRIBUTION OF MAO ZEDONG’S THOUGHT TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY IN CHINA

(1) Mao Zedong was the founder of New China and the founder of the ideology of the new Chinese socialist state. As the pioneer and applicator of the Chineseization of Marxist ideology, Mao Zedong creatively put forward the basic principles and fundamental directions of combining the

basic principles of Marxism with the concrete reality of China, laying a solid foundation for the development of modern Chinese society in shaping a scientific mainstream ideology. At the same time, he systematically proposed the essential connotation, guiding ideology, fundamental purpose, basic content and realization path of socialist ideology, forming a relatively complete set of scientific and effective political discourse systems based on the specific conditions of contemporary China and the characteristics of the times. And, finally, promoting the first theoretical leap of the Chineseization of Marxist ideology. Mao's thoughts and views on the construction of socialist ideology are still of great inspiration and guidance for the construction of socialist ideology with Chinese characteristics in the new era.

First, the essential connotation of ideological construction is clear: "Social ideology is theoretically recreating the real society." What position and role ideology should play in the whole process of social operation and development is an important question for any political strategist to think about. Mao Zedong developed and innovated Marxist ideological theory, especially the role of ideology in the structure of society, and gave a profound theoretical explanation.

On the one hand, he believed that ideology, as the expression of particular class interests, had a pivotal role in leading and guiding social change and revolutionary action. In order for modern China to emerge from its confusion, it must be guided by scientific truth. At this time, Marxism was introduced to China. Since then, "the Chinese have found Marxism-Leninism, a universal truth that is universally applicable, and the face of China has changed." Mao embraced Marxism, preached it, and intentionally used it to arm the Chinese people and lead the Chinese revolution with sober theoretical and political knowledge. He believed that the political leadership of ideas was unquestionably crucial to the success of the revolution. Mao made clear the political interpretation and defense function of ideology. Moreover, Mao believed that a certain ideology must always express the interests of a certain class and must provide rational explanations and arguments for the "why" and "wherefore" of this class.

On the other hand, Mao believed that ideology was not passively determined by the economic base. Under certain conditions, ideology could play a leading or even decisive role in social development. In other words, in a certain society, productivity is undoubtedly the decisive and most active factor, which manifests itself as a material force for changing reality. However,

as the main body of productivity, people are adhering to certain conceptual guidelines and policies to determine their actions. At this time, ideology as a conceptual superstructure, i.e., certain conceptual guidelines and policies, in turn, becomes the main factor in determining human actions, which is the relative independence of ideology.

(2) The guiding ideology of ideological construction is explained: “The ideological and theoretical foundation that guides us is Marxism-Leninism.” Under the guidance of Marxism, the Chinese people found a revolutionary path with Chinese characteristics, and the Chinese Revolution was ultimately victorious. It can be said that since its establishment, the CPC has clearly taken Marxism as a directional guide, used Marxism as a theoretical weapon to solve the real problems of China at that time, and applied Marxism to analyze the nature and future of the Chinese revolution, thus opening up a revolutionary path with Chinese characteristics. “The core force leading our cause is the Communist Party of China, and the ideological and theoretical basis guiding us is Marxism-Leninism,” which was confirmed at the First National People’s Congress held in September 1954, after the founding of New China, and was established in the form of the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China, the fundamental law of the country. The guiding ideology of ideology, which provides a solid institutional guarantee for the adherence and the development of the Chinese nation of Marxist ideology.

In Mao’s view, Marxism-Leninism as an ideology was not only a direction for revolution and construction but also a spiritual food and ideological tool to guide the Chinese to transform the old China and build a new China actively. This spiritual food and ideological tool are based on the socialist system and are compatible with the socialist public economy. Just as bourgeois ideology serves capitalist society, any political power, political action and task require a certain ideology as an ideological tool. Marx created many doctrines, such as the doctrine of class struggle, the theory of party construction, the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the theory of literature and art, etc. These are all ideological tools that are used to “arm the masses” and guide revolutionary practice. These views emphasize the guiding and leading function of ideology and further clarify the practical nature of ideology.

(3) The fundamental purpose of ideological construction is established: “to serve the people and the socialist cause.” A certain ideology reflects the interests and will of a certain class, and a particular ideology is always the expression of the interests and will of a certain class. A certain class or political

group always establishes the legitimacy of its regime and explains the rationality of its behavior through ideology. Philosophy, as the essence of the spirit of the times, represents the dominant ideology of the times and serves the interests and will of a certain class. In this regard, Mao Zedong has pointed out that “[...] bourgeois philosophers are at the service of their current politics, and in every country, in every period, there are new theorists who put forward new theories.” (MARX, 2020, p. 61). No matter how different the positions and views they hold or how similar the goals of the social construction they design are, the many theoretical systems and designs for social construction, that human society has seen so far, are all ideological arguments and defences based on the class interests they represent and the themes of the times they reflect. Both socialist and capitalist countries have this characteristic. Given that ideology has definite class characteristics, it is crucial to place a high value on ideological creation and make it clear who ideology is for and who it depends on.

According to Mao, any cultural or artistic work is embedded with a certain political stance and political line. The so-called super-class culture or art, or pure politics and pure art, do not exist in real life. “The place of the Party’s literary work, in the Party’s revolutionary work as a whole, is determined and arranged; it is subordinated to the revolutionary tasks set by the Party within a certain revolutionary period.” (LI, 1999, p. 109). For this reason, Mao Zedong put forward the “two-for” idea of “literature and art serving politics” and “literature and art serving the workers, peasants and soldiers.” This is because “[...] the new culture of China at this stage is the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal culture of the people under the leadership of the proletariat. What is truly the people’s culture must be led by the proletariat. What is led by the bourgeoisie cannot belong to the people’s masses. This is the case with the new literature and art in the new culture.”

It should be said that Mao Zedong’s guiding ideology of “two for” in literary and artistic creation was an ideological construction goal in response to the political needs of the revolutionary war period, which was in line with the reality of the time. The 1982 Constitution clearly states that the fundamental purpose of socialist ideological construction is “[...] to serve the people and the socialist cause.” The new formulation follows and inherits Mao Zedong’s basic ideas on ideological construction and can be regarded as an innovation and development of the theory of socialist ideological construction.

(4) The basic nature of ideological construction is proposed: “[...] to build a new national, scientific and popular culture of our own.” Marxist ideology answers the questions of “for whom,” “on whom,” and “reflecting whom.” Marxist ideology has no ambiguity in answering the questions of “for whom,” “on whom,” and “reflecting whom.” Mao Zedong clearly realized that “[...] a certain culture (culture as a conceptual form) is a reflection of the politics and economy of a certain society, and gives great influence to and acts on the politics and economy of a certain society.” Mao profoundly recognized that ideology is a reflection of political and economic society, and at the same time, ideology can provide ideological leadership and cultural leadership for economic development and political action, and thus shape the development form and development path of society. As early as the Chinese revolutionary war years, Mao Zedong proposed the concept and task of building a new democratic culture and socialist culture (ideology), which is another theoretical contribution to the Chineseization of Marxist ideology. In its essence, the so-called culture of new democracy is the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal culture of the masses of the people led by the proletariat.” (KULL, 2019, p. 34). Mao Zedong divided modern Chinese culture into “new” and “old,” in fact, “old and new” itself was the dominant ideological discourse in that era. He took the May Fourth Movement as the dividing line between old and new Chinese culture. Before the May Fourth Movement, China was still in the period of the old democratic revolution and was part of the capitalist cultural revolution of the world bourgeoisie, so the culture at that time was of an old cultural nature. “After May Fourth, the Chinese revolution has undergone significant changes in the dynamics, main body, leading force and direction of the revolution. Its cultural nature belongs to the new culture. The “new” nature of the new culture is that it reflects the new democratic revolution and is a part of the cultural revolution of the world proletariat and socialism.

The essential nature of the new culture is “national, scientific, and popular culture.” The so-called “national” culture means that the new culture we build should be guided by Marxism, genuinely inherit the excellent traditional Chinese culture, and combine it with the problems of the times faced by the Chinese nation to truly respond to the needs of national development (PENG, 1991, p. 64). Our nation has developed a new form of culture that comprehends and applies Marxism to the unique practises of contemporary China. As a result, it bears a distinct national identity and national stamp. The mission of this culture is to critique imperialism and colonial oppression. It is also a cultural ideology that asserts and affirms the

dignity and independence of the Chinese nation. The so-called “scientific” culture means that the new culture must be guided by a scientific worldview and methodology, with scientific and advanced regular understanding as the main content, and with a scientific and rational spirit and attitude towards all things. China is influenced by the long feudal society and culture, and there are still many backward cultures with superstition, ignorance, decadence and vulgarity in the society, and even some corrupt cultures that corrupt people’s spiritual world and endanger the cause of socialist revolution. Mao Zedong proposed that the construction of a new culture must be closely combined with the people’s Enlightenment and the development of their wisdom (MARX, 2020, p. 79). The first is to insist on seeking truth from facts and objective truth and oppose all feudal superstition; the second is to serve the people and guide their practice; the third is a culture that unites the people’s wisdom and can be tested by social practice. The new culture must originate from the people’s social practice, and the people’s social practice will, in turn, confirm the truthfulness of the culture. This process will become a common social ideal to inspire people of all nationalities. The so-called “popular” culture, that is, the new culture, is a culture that faces the people, relies on the people and serves the people.

Mao Zedong’s idea of building a “national, scientific and popular culture” can be said to be another contribution to the development of the theory of socialist ideology construction. He still has real guiding significance in building a new socialist culture and promoting the great development and prosperity of our socialist culture.

(5) Mao Zedong also made fruitful explorations on how to carry out effectively the ideological construction work: “reforming our learning” and “carrying out a whole-party rectification campaign.”

First of all, “transform our learning.” The first thing to solve in the construction of Marxist ideology is the problem of theoretical armament, and the degree and effect of theoretical armament are directly related to the content, attitude and way of learning (XU, 1991, p. 756). In the early years of our party, we had little experience and understanding of ideological work and lacked ideological preparation and theoretical training. Coupled with the complex and changing revolutionary situation, our understanding of Marxism had great limitations. Before the Zunyi Conference, the Chinese Revolution had experienced two major setbacks and failures, both of which were related to insufficient theoretical preparation and the proliferation of

non-proletarian ideas in the party. One was the failure of the revolution in 1927. Due to Chen Duxiu's right-leaning opportunist error, he put forward the "Second Revolution Theory," which led to the failure of the Communist Party. The setback and defeat made the CPC realize that it must strengthen its theoretical study and ideological struggle, truly and thoroughly master the theory and methods of Marxism-Leninism, and build the party into a fighting party, which required a Party-wide study campaign to arm Party members and cadres with the basic theory of Marxism.

In addition, Mao Zedong thought that learning, that was solely theoretical and did not concentrate on examining the current state of practise, investigation and application of Marxism-Leninism, was "pseudo" scientific and did not constitute a legitimate study and application of Marxism. He suggested that in order to improve our education, we must reject subjectivism, fight bookishness and do genuine research and investigation in order to understand the fundamental ideas of Marxism and the actual tangible reality of China. It should be said that Mao Zedong's approach to the study campaign within the party was an important practice and exploration in advancing the Chineseization of Marxist ideology. Through the study campaign, Marxist ideology was shaped into the belief system and ideal mission of the CPC, which in turn led to the historical orientation and value structure of the country (SHEN, 2016, p. 6). This was a great success in the construction of socialist ideology and established a shining example of ideological construction.

Secondly, the "Campaign for the Rectification of the Party and the Rectification of the Wind" was launched. The "Whole Party Rectification Movement" is another result of Mao Zedong's practical exploration of Marxist ideology construction (XI, 2020, p. 342). The "Party Rectification Campaign" of the CPC refers to the top-down Marxist theoretical study and education activities carried out throughout the party in response to the ideological, organizational and style problems that emerged in the party during a specific period through studying the classics, reflecting on ideas, summing up experience and learning lessons. In accordance with the principle of "punishing the former to prevent the latter and curing the sick to save the others," criticism and self-criticism are carried out to correct the Party members' shortcomings and deficiencies and to purify the thinking, style of work and organization of the party. The Party Rectification Movement initiated and led by Mao Zedong was an important way to build the party ideologically and to maintain the advancement and combativeness of the party. At the same time, it was also an

important initiative to shape the ideology of the party, transform the spiritual world of the Chinese Communists, promote the Chineseization of Marxist ideology and build a socialist ideology (XI, 2021).

Finally, Mao's constant emphasis and advancement of intellectual and political education are also reflective of his research of the evolution of socialist ideology. Ideological and political education was highly valued by Mao Zedong, who saw it as a crucial tool for mass political mobilisation, force unification and theoretical arming. The challenge at hand was to create a fighting Marxist party while eradicating the influence of the urban petty bourgeoisie, peasantry and other non-proletarian beliefs. Mao Zedong made a point. "The question of the ideological leadership of the proletariat is a very important one. The party in the border counties is almost entirely of peasant composition, and if it is not given the ideological leadership of the proletariat, its tendency is going to be wrong."

After the establishment of New China, Mao Zedong raised the ideology of ideological and political work to the height of ideological and political education to promote the smooth development of other work. Ideology and politics is the commander-in-chief, is the soul. As long as our ideological and political work is a little relaxed, economical and technical work will definitely go to the evil way.

CONCLUSION

Xi Jinping (2020) said that building socialism under the historical conditions of China at that time was like climbing an untouched mountain, and the climber needed to "cut through the thorns and open up the path." In the construction of socialist ideology, Mao Zedong started from the desire to avoid the serious problems that had been exposed in the Soviet Union, and took into account the actual situation in China. Of course, the exploration in Mao's era had its detours, and just as the Chinese Communists gained a correct understanding of the New Democratic Revolution only after many setbacks, the initial construction of socialist ideology in Mao's era also had limitations and shortcomings. After all, the cause of the socialist building of China had only recently begun. The experience in the development of Chinese socialist ideology was still accruing, and the laws that govern its development had not yet fully manifested themselves. The process from conception to implementation is complicated, and the degree of policy, execution and public

awareness at all stages of implementation directly affect its standardisation and actual impacts. If later researchers can make efforts to return to the historical truth and put themselves in the people's shoes, perhaps the complexity and enormity of the exploration of socialist ideology construction in Mao's era and its foundational contribution can be revealed more, and the regularity and lessons of ideology construction can be better understood.

ZHANG, M.; ZONG, H.; ZEEN, D. O Pensamento de Mao Tsé-Tung e a Construção Ideológica Socialista. **Trans/Form/Ação**, Marília, v. 46, p. 211-232, 2023. Edição Especial.

Resumo: A prática de 70 anos da Nova China mostra que nosso Partido tem, de forma permanente, valorizado e fortalecido a liderança do trabalho ideológico, fator essencial para que a nação chinesa consiga o salto de rica e poderosa, e consolide continuamente a posição dominante do partido. As sucessivas lideranças coletivas do partido exploraram e inovaram a teoria da ideologia socialista em diferentes períodos da história da China, em vista da situação internacional e doméstica, fornecendo ao PCCh uma base teórica científica e diretrizes de ação para romper as barreiras ideológicas em sua regra de longo prazo. Mao Tsé-Tung fez contribuições históricas significativas para explorar o caminho para o novo socialismo chinês, projeto institucional, inovação teórica e construção ideológica. O objetivo deste estudo é combinar os princípios **básicos** marxismo com a realidade específica da China, apresentar de forma criativa os princípios **básicos** e as direções básicas da construção da ideologia nacional e elaborar sistematicamente a conotação essencial, a ideologia orientadora, os objetivos primários, a natureza fundamental e o caminho de realização da construção da ideologia socialista. Este estudo mostra que o primeiro salto teórico da localização da ideologia marxista na China lançou uma base sólida para construir um país científico e completo e um sistema ideológico nacional científico e completo.

Palavras-chave: Mao Tsé-Tung. Instituições Políticas. Ideologia Socialista. Marxismo-Leninismo.

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Received: 27/07/2022

Approved: 15/10/2022