

A Three-Dimensional Study on the Deep Integration of Excellent Traditional Chinese Culture with University Ideological and Political Courses— Guided by the “Two Integrations” Methodology

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Abstract: Against the backdrop of intensified global cultural collisions and ideological competition, deeply integrating excellent traditional Chinese culture (ETCC) into university ideological and political courses (IPCs) has become an imperative of our times. Guided by General Secretary Xi Jinping’s methodology of “Two Integrations,” this paper examines the pathways for this integration from three dimensions: value, theory, and practice. The value dimension emphasizes fostering moral conviction and strengthening the spiritual foundation to meet needs such as safeguarding cultural security, preserving the spiritual lineage, and constructing a spiritual framework. The theoretical dimension reveals the mutually constitutive breakthroughs between Marxism and traditional Chinese dialectical thinking, encompassing methodological complementarity, logical coherence of values, and discursive system innovation. The practical dimension involves constructing a comprehensive educational ecosystem by localizing teaching content, modernizing traditional resources, and fostering inter-platform collaborative education, thereby internalizing the value of traditional culture. These three dimensions synergize and co-constitute each other, collectively providing methodological support and practical paradigms for cultivating cultural confidence among youth and forging a new generation capable of shouldering the mission of national rejuvenation.

Keywords: Excellent traditional Chinese culture; University ideological and political courses; Two integrations; Deep integration; Three dimensions

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1. Introduction

In the sweeping waves of globalization, cultural diversity constantly clashes and blends, making competition in the ideological sphere increasingly fierce. Amid the persistent infiltration of Western values and cultural models,

upholding the Chinese cultural stance and fortifying the defenses for ideological security has become both a political task and an educational mission entrusted by our era. Excellent traditional Chinese culture embodies the most profound national genes and spiritual identity. University IPCs, serving as crucial platforms for talent cultivation, bear the significant responsibility of fostering virtue and nurturing a new era generation. Deeply integrating the essence of traditional culture into the IPC teaching system is not only a key pathway to address global cultural challenges and to achieve the Sinicization and modernization of Marxism, but also a concrete implementation within higher education of the scientific methodology of “Two Integrations” proposed by General Secretary Xi Jinping ^[1].

2. The value dimension: contemporary imperatives of clarifying principles, strengthening belief, and consolidating foundations)

Against the backdrop of global cultural collision and intensified ideological competition, ETCC serves not only as a strategic bulwark for safeguarding national cultural security but also as the spiritual lifeline for nurturing national identity among the younger generation. The core value of its integration into IPCs manifests at three strategic levels:

2.1. The demand for cultural security amid ideological contestation

Five thousand years of uninterrupted Chinese civilization have accumulated the deepest spiritual pursuits of the Chinese nation. President Xi Jinping emphasized: “Core socialist values are, in essence, virtues that the people should live by—good character at the personal level and public virtue at the level of the nation and society.” China’s excellent traditional culture encompasses rich value systems, such as the worldview of “Heaven-Human Unity”, the interaction principle of “Harmony in Diversity”, the political ideal of “All-under-Heaven Shared by All”, the spirit of innovation signified by “Casting off the Old to Establish the New”, and the people-centered philosophy of “The People as the Foundation of the State” ^[2].

These form the bedrock of its distinctive cultural character and value system. Deeply integrating these into ideological and political teaching—for instance, linking the ancient ideal of “Great Harmony” to the concept of the “Human Community with a Shared Future,” or utilizing “people-oriented” thought to deepen understanding of the “People-Centered Development” philosophy—enables students to ground themselves in profound historical roots, critically discern the core values within diverse world cultures, and thereby strengthen their identification with their own cultural heritage within an international perspective. This fosters a robust cultural confidence that constructs a barrier against cultural hegemony and safeguards ideological security. This self-conscious identification based on cultural identity provides the most solid foundation for the ideological defense line.

2.2. Safeguarding the root system of youth value identity

ETCC is not a relic confined to ancient texts but a spiritual code flowing through the veins of the nation, constituting the deep root system upon which the younger generation establishes their value coordinates and anchors their individual lives. In an era of increasingly diverse ideas and more intense value collisions, young people are at a critical stage where their worldview, outlook on life, and values take shape. ETCC crystallizes the deepest spiritual pursuits and behavioral norms of the Chinese nation, serving as the source nurturing the core values and shaping the character of young people ^[3].

During this pivotal phase of individual value formation, using IPCs as a conduit to deeply integrate the

essence of excellent traditional thought—such as “Humanity, Justice, Propriety, Wisdom, Sincerity”; “All Under Heaven Belongs to the People”; “Everyone Bears Responsibility for the Nation’s Rise and Fall”; “Ceaseless Self-improvement and Embracing Virtue with Broadness”; “Do Unto Others What You Would Have Them Do Unto You”; and “Learn from Those Better Than Oneself”—can effectively guide students to anchor themselves in the inherent moral foundations, ethical norms, and national sentiments of the Chinese nation. This helps them resist the erosion of erroneous trends such as historical nihilism, extreme individualism, and money worship, enabling them to establish their personal “roots (gen)” and “soul (hun)” for life, rooted in the continuation of cultural genes and the guardianship of their spiritual homeland.

2.3. Spiritual coordinates cultivating historical consciousness

Contemporary youth, living in an environment saturated with information and diverse values, are prone to having blurred historical perspectives and a sense of alienation from mission. Integrating traditional culture into IPCs is far from a mere supplement of knowledge or superficial symbolic addition; its core objective lies in awakening an inner consciousness of historical understanding and cultural responsibility. The historical narrative within traditional culture shares a logical isomorphism with the “Four Histories Education” in IPCs. For instance, using the personal development trajectory of “Cultivating Oneself, Managing the Family Well, Governing the State Effectively, and Bringing Peace to All Under the World”, instructors can guide students to contemplate the inherent connection between their own growth plans as members of the new era and national development, thereby effectively enhancing the affinity and appeal of IPCs ^[4].

By employing teaching methods like “historical situational drama [lishi qingjing ju]”, where students reenact the decision-making processes of historical figures like Wen Tianxiang or Lin Zexu, they can personally experience the “tightly interwoven connection between individual fate and the nation’s rise and fall.” This immersive education breaks the mould of one-way knowledge transmission, elevating cultural confidence from the cognitive level to that of emotional identification. Through dialogues between history and reality, youth establish their identity as historical actors consciously undertaking the mission of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

3. The theoretical dimension: mutually constitutive breakthroughs between Marxism and traditional dialectical thinking

The deep theoretical rationale for integrating ETCC into university IPCs lies in how the fundamental tenets of Marxism and traditional Chinese dialectical wisdom achieve mutual enrichment and profound interaction under the guidance of the “Two Integrations” methodology, thereby generating an innovative intellectual synergy. This interplay manifests prominently across three closely interconnected levels: methodological complementarity, logical coherence of values, and discursive innovation ^[5].

3.1. Complementarity at the methodological level

Marxist materialist dialectics constitutes a powerful tool for understanding the world through its scientific insights into universal connections, the laws of contradiction and development. The laws of social development it reveals provide macro-level guidance. The dialectical wisdom cultivated by the Chinese nation through millennia of practical experience profoundly elucidates the dynamic relationships and transformation mechanisms of contradictions, expressed through concepts such as “yin-yang complementarity”, “reversal upon reaching an extreme”, and “the doctrine of the mean seeking balanced harmony”. These two traditions of

thought are not substitutive but exhibit significant complementary characteristics at the methodological level. Marxism offers rigorous systemic analysis and an orientation towards transformation, while the traditional Chinese dialectical approach, rooted in experiential wisdom and cultural psychology, demonstrates greater contextual fitness and heuristic power within the local milieu. For example, when explaining the characteristics of contradictions during periods of social transformation in IPC teaching, educators can simultaneously employ Marxist methods of contradiction analysis and incorporate cases illustrating traditional historical wisdom emphasizing “adaptation to circumstances” and “appropriate balance of dynamism and stillness”. This approach imbues theoretical analysis with greater historical depth and practical persuasiveness, helping students understand the complexity of real-world issues.

3.2. Logical coherence in values

In terms of ultimate concerns and pragmatic orientation, Marxism and Chinese ETCC reveal a profound structural similarity in values. The Communist pursuit of liberation and free, all-around development for humankind resonates deeply with the shared well-being and ethical realm envisioned in the traditional Chinese concept of a “Great Unity”, where “All Under Heaven Belongs to the People” and universal love and social beneficence prevail. Both traditions attach paramount importance to practical action to change the world, embodying the essence of “Unity of Knowledge and Action”. Marxism’s emphasis on the people’s role as the creators of history aligns consistently with the core tenet of Chinese culture’s enduring “People as Foundation” thought. Furthermore, the shared pursuit of justice and fairness, adherence to moral values like integrity, and a joint commitment to maintaining a harmonious relationship between humanity and nature all constitute deep points of convergence in their foundational values. This high degree of consonance in value core not only makes ETCC abundant spiritual nourishment for the Sinicization of Marxism but also provides profound logical support and a basis for emotional identification for explaining the practical necessity of Socialist Core Values and the path of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics using Chinese discourse today.

3.3. Transformative innovation in the discursive system

The effective combination of Marxism and traditional Chinese dialectical wisdom must ultimately manifest in the creative transformation of the IPC narrative system and its localization into a Chinese discursive expression. This is not a simple grafting of allusions or classical terms but a reinterpretation and localized expression of shared intellectual kernels within contemporary contexts. The key lies in promoting the temporal elevation of traditional concepts as they integrate with the essence of Marxist thought. For instance:

- (1) Elevating the ancient admonition of “Seeking Truth from Facts” into the core epistemological and practical principle of the ideological line;
- (2) Infusing “Great Unity” with contemporary scientific content, directing it towards the practical goals of common prosperity and building a Community of Shared Future for Mankind;
- (3) Transforming “Harmony in Diversity” into a cornerstone for China’s approaches to building a harmonious society and a new international order based on respect for diversity. In teaching practice, it is crucial to ground theoretical logic within the context of Chinese historical evolution and present-day practical situations;
- (4) Utilizing vivid language rich in national characteristics, combined with cases and modern communication methods readily accessible to students, allows for the dynamic articulation of profound theoretical insights. The emergent IPC discourse with Chinese characteristics can effectively enhance

the affinity, penetrating power, and cultural confidence intrinsic to ideological and political education.

4. The practical dimension: constructing a multi-dimensional educational ecosystem guided by “two integrations”

Practical exploration unfolds along three pathways—teaching transformation, resource revitalization, and platform collaboration—aiming to forge an integrated channel that traverses classroom walls, connects past and present, and synthesizes intellect and sensibility. This facilitates ETCC’s essence truly coming alive, being transmitted, and being utilized within IPC teaching and pedagogical practice, substantially enriching IPC’s cultural depth and educational efficacy, thereby aiding students in developing firm cultural confidence and a spirit of historical initiative.

4.1. Promoting localized Transformation and In-depth Interpretation of Teaching Content

Precisely excavate elements within ETCC highly congruent with IPC teaching goals—such as governance wisdom, ethical norms, and philosophical dialectics—for creative transformation and innovative development. In practical teaching, straightforward copying or superficial quoting is insufficient. Instead, interpretations must be grounded in contemporary Chinese issues and practical cases, closely intertwining historical logic with present-day concerns. For example: When explaining the “People-Centered” development philosophy, explore its intrinsic connection with and developmental transcendence over traditional people-oriented (minben) ideas like “The People Are the Basis of the State, Solidifying the Basis Brings Stability, and illustrate its contemporary vitality through vivid cases on poverty alleviation and common prosperity. On the other hand, while analyzing the laws of contradiction utilizing Marxist dialectics, incorporate traditional philosophical wisdom on contradictions like “Harmony in Diversity”, “Reversal Upon Reaching Extremes”, “Set rules for foreseeable scenarios, devise defenses for unexpected bends”, thereby deepening students’ comprehension of the complexity of contradictory movements and their resolution.

This deep-level intellectual integration helps students elevate their understanding from emotional identification to rational conviction.

4.2. Revitalizing rich traditional resources and innovating presentation modes

China’s cultural treasure trove contains vast quantities of intellectual essence and narrative resources. The key to making them effective nourishment for IPC education lies in “revitalization” not mere “application”. Specific methods include systematically collating classical propositions from ancient texts, exemplary cases from historical transitions, moral paragons among outstanding historical figures and ideational values embodied by material and intangible cultural heritage.

The challenge is to select high-relevance materials offering ample interpretive scope and to employ modern pedagogical techniques to present them in innovative and engaging forms. For instance:

- (1) Use sophisticated multimedia courseware or virtual simulation to recreate historical scenes;
- (2) Organize immersive field experiences where students engage deeply in communities, museums, or cultural heritage sites, translating textual knowledge into direct perception;
- (3) Design carefully crafted classroom discussion questions and situational analyses based on historical materials or classical texts, encouraging students to apply dialectical thinking to understand the causes, effects, and values underlying historical events and figures’ choices;

- (4) Infuse the spirit of traditional academy scholarship (shuyuan lectures) into modern seminar-style teaching, guiding students to deepen cognition through dialogue and debate, thereby transforming learning process from passive reception into active construction and cultural experience.

4.3. Establishing collaborative educational platforms and resource networks

Deepening and expanding the effectiveness of traditional culture integration relies on dismantling the boundaries of the traditional classroom and effectively integrating multi-dimensional educational resources both within and outside campus, online and offline. The primary task is to consolidate internal university resources:

- (1) Strengthen collaboration between IPC faculty and experts in history, literature, art, philosophy, and other humanities and social sciences disciplines;
- (2) Form interdisciplinary teaching research teams to jointly develop systematic, graded IPC curriculum modules or thematic units incorporating traditional culture. Concurrently, proactively expand access to external high-quality resources by establishing deep cooperative relationships with museums, historical sites, local cultural research institutes, and units safeguarding intangible cultural heritage;
- (3) Co-develop practical teaching bases or customized research-learning itineraries. This synergistic framework aims to empower students to progressively evolve from knowledge recipients and cultural experiencers into practitioners and inheritors possessing cultural consciousness and a sense of contemporary mission.

5. Conclusion

The deep integration of ETCC into university IPCs is, in essence, the concrete unfolding of the “Two Integrations” methodology within the educational field. In this enduring endeavor of upholding orthodoxy and driving innovation, the three dimensions of value (fortifying ideological defenses), theory (achieving discursive innovation), and practice (reshaping pedagogical norms) mutually support, fuse, and propel each other. They jointly converge on the cultivation project for a new generation shaped by the distinctive features of Chinese modernization. Only under the illumination of Marxist truth, by enabling youth to truly grasp the logical core sustaining Chinese civilization over five millennia, can we fulfill the lofty educational goal of reinforcing roots, forging souls (peigen zhuxin), enlightening wisdom, and nurturing hearts (qizhi runxin). This will provide an indelible pedagogical force for the great undertaking of national rejuvenation—forging a vibrant new force imbued with historical depth yet brimming with contemporary creativity and agency.

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