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## THE CHINESE CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE SOVIET INFLUENCE ON ITS DEVELOPMENT IN THE 19TH–20TH CENTURIES

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## КИТАЙСКАЯ КОНЦЕПТУАЛЬНАЯ МОДЕЛЬ ВЫСШЕГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ И СОВЕТСКОЕ ВЛИЯНИЕ НА ЕЁ РАЗВИТИЕ В XIX–XX ВЕКАХ

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**Abstract.** From the late 19th century through the 20th century, China's higher education underwent significant transformations shaped largely by Western educational thought and the Soviet educational model. At the close of the 19th century, the introduction of Western educational practices began shifting China's educational system away from the traditional imperial examination system. In the early to mid-20th century, particularly during the 1950s following the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the Soviet educational model exerted profound influence on the structure and direction of Chinese higher education. This study investigates the Soviet Union's impact on the Chinese higher education system by analyzing the historical evolution of educational concepts in China. It specifically addresses the methods by which the Soviet model was introduced, adapted, and integrated into China's unique socio-cultural environment. Findings suggest that the Soviet educational framework significantly accelerated the modernization of Chinese higher education and facilitated the development of substantial technical, engineering, and scientific expertise. However, the implementation of this model also encountered practical challenges, necessitating adjustments tailored to China's specific circumstances. The paper further explores aspects of the educational system, curriculum design, and pedagogical methods introduced from the Soviet Union. It critically evaluates the model's effectiveness, adaptability, and limitations, ultimately proposing recommendations for the continued evolution and improvement of China's higher education.

**Аннотация.** С конца XIX до XX века высшее образование в Китае претерпело значительные изменения под влиянием западной образовательной мысли и советской образовательной модели. В конце XIX века введение западной системы образования способствовало отказу Китая от традиционной императорской экзаменационной системы. В первой половине XX века, особенно в 1950-е годы после основания Китайской Народной Республики, советская образовательная модель оказала ключевое влияние на развитие высшего образования в стране. В исследовании рассматривается влияние Советского Союза на высшее образование Китая через анализ эволюции китайских представлений о высшем образовании, способов внедрения советской образовательной модели и её интеграции в особый социально-культурный контекст Китая. Результаты показывают, что советская

модель не только способствовала модернизации системы высшего образования в Китае, но и обеспечила подготовку значительного количества специалистов в технической, инженерной и научной областях. Однако при её внедрении возник ряд трудностей, что потребовало адаптации модели к конкретным условиям Китая. Анализируются структура, учебные планы и методы преподавания, заимствованные из советской образовательной системы, обсуждаются возможности и ограничения данной модели, а также предлагаются рекомендации по дальнейшему развитию высшего образования в Китае.

*Keywords:* higher education, China, educational reform, educational system, 20th century.

*Ключевые слова:* высшее образование, Китай, реформа образования, система образования, XX век.

From the end of the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century, Chinese society experienced a critical period of transformation from traditional feudal society to modern state. Education is the foundation of national development and social change, and its reform process is closely related to social political and economic changes. Since the late Qing Dynasty, China's higher education began to contact with western educational concepts, especially the transition from the imperial examination system to the modern education system, which marked the first major transformation of China's higher education concepts. In the early 20th century, especially in the 1950s after the founding of New China, the Soviet education model had a great impact on the reform of China's higher education. At that time, China was in urgent need of training various professional talents for the country's socialist construction through education, and the Soviet education system was highly compatible with China's needs. In this context, China has borrowed from the Soviet educational system on a large scale, especially in the organizational structure, subject setting and personnel training model of higher education. The Soviet experience not only influenced the structure and curriculum of China's higher education, but also strengthened Sino-Soviet educational exchanges and cooperation by sending experts and students to study abroad. However, with the changes in Sino-Soviet relations, especially the political turmoil after the Cultural Revolution, China's education system has been constantly adjusted and rethought. This paper will deeply discuss the process of the reform of the concept and model of Chinese higher education in the 19th and 20th centuries, and analyze the long-term impact of the Soviet education model on the development of Chinese higher education [1].

This study adopts the analysis method of historical documents, mainly from the following aspects: literature collection and collation: Through the review of higher education policy documents, educational laws, academic papers and other historical documents of the late Qing Dynasty, the Republic of China and the founding of New China, the reform process of China's higher education is sorted out in detail. Transnational comparative analysis: Through the comparison of the similarities and differences between the Soviet Union and China's higher education system, the adaptability and limitations of the Soviet model in China are analyzed, especially in the subject setting, curriculum content, teacher training and other aspects. Quantitative and qualitative combination: Combined with the statistical data and qualitative analysis of the development history of China's higher education, the concrete effect of the Soviet education model on the construction of China's higher education system is investigated [2].

The introduction and transformation of Western education model: At the end of the 19th century, China was faced with the impact of Western education concepts. Western education focuses on the cultivation of science, technology and practical skills, especially the university

system and curriculum of European and American countries have a direct impact on China. In the late Qing Dynasty, the establishment of the Peking University marked the beginning of the modernization of Chinese higher education. Although China's higher education reform in this period was limited by the political environment and social conditions, the influence of western education model had begun to sprout. Introduction and practice of the Soviet Education system: After the founding of New China, especially in the 1950s, the Soviet Union became the main reference model for higher education reform in China. The Chinese government borrowed heavily from the Soviet educational system in its education policy, especially in fields such as engineering, agriculture, and medicine. On the one hand, China imitates the educational structure of the Soviet Union, on the other hand, it pays attention to the combination of talent training with national economic construction and social needs. For example, the establishment of a large number of industrial, agricultural and soldier universities is a direct product of the Soviet model. These schools focus on training technical and practical talents to support the country's industrialization and agricultural modernization process. Subject setting and curriculum reform: Under the influence of the Soviet model, China's higher education institutions generally set up a large number of engineering and technical majors to meet the country's demand for technical personnel [3].

Through this specialized subject setting, China's higher education has provided a large number of talents for the country's construction and industrialization. However, the Soviet model also brought about a single disciplinary setting, and certain fields such as humanities and social sciences were not sufficiently valued. Strengthening of political and ideological education: The education of Marxism-Leninism and socialist ideology emphasized in the Soviet educational system has been fully implemented in China's higher education. Political and ideological education is integrated into the curriculum of all institutions of higher learning, especially the emphasis on the indoctrination of students in political theory and socialist ideology. On the one hand, this promotes the ideological unity of students, on the other hand, it also limits the cultivation of innovative thinking [4].

Advantages of the Soviet model: The application of the Soviet education system in China has significant advantages, especially in the training of technical and engineering talents, which has greatly promoted the process of industrialization and modernization of China. Through the establishment of colleges such as Industrial, agricultural and soldier universities, China has trained a group of engineering talents to provide technical support for national construction in a short period of time. In addition, the systematization and standardization of the Soviet education system also provided valuable experience for the establishment of China's higher education system. Limitations of the Soviet model: The practical application of the Soviet model in China has also exposed some problems. First of all, due to the excessive emphasis on the training of technical and practical skills, ignoring the training of innovation and critical thinking, the quality of education in some institutions of higher learning lags behind international standards. Secondly, the Soviet education system was highly centralized and lacked flexibility and innovation, which was not fully adapted to the actual situation in China. Political interference and educational independence: The Soviet education model pays too much attention to the cultivation of political ideology, which on the one hand ensures ideological unity, but on the other hand may inhibit students' personality development and innovation ability [5].

From the 19th century to the 20th century, China's higher education experienced a transformation from traditional to modern, from single to multiple. In this process, the Soviet education model has played an important role in the development of China's higher education. Although this model has played a positive role in promoting the training of technical talents and the construction of modern education system, its limitations are gradually exposed, especially in the

single ideological education and the rigidity of educational content. With the changes of The Times, China's higher education is gradually moving towards reform and opening up, especially after the reform and opening up, the education system pays more attention to the diversification, innovation and globalization of talents. In the future, the development of China's higher education should learn from the experience of other countries, and strengthen educational cooperation and exchanges with the international community while deepening internal reform.

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