

Academic history and methodology: an analysis of the research on progressive societies in abroad academic circles during the May Fourth Movement

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Abstract. During the May Fourth Movement, progressive organizations led by young intellectuals played an irreplaceable and important role in China's modern ideological enlightenment movement and social transformation exploration. Since the 1950s, foreign academic circles, especially in the United States, Japan, and the Soviet Union (Russia), have conducted research and exploration on progressive societies during the May Fourth Movement from the perspective of studying the May Fourth Movement in China. There is a phenomenon of "insufficient and unbalanced" research in the foreign academic community on the progress of progressive societies during the May Fourth Movement, whether it is the proposal of research viewpoints or the interpretation of research materials. To analyze the research results of progressive societies during the May Fourth Movement in foreign academic circles, the main dimensions of examination should focus on academic history and methodology. By reviewing the research process and main viewpoints of progressive societies during the May Fourth Movement in foreign academic circles, new academic directions can be provided for the deepening of research in this area in the domestic academic community.

Keywords: foreign academic community, the May Fourth period, progressive societies, academic history, methodology

1. Introduction

Under the influence of the Western "ism" trend in the late 19th century, modern Chinese societies became increasingly prosperous. Especially after the New Culture Movement in 1915, progressive societies with the characteristics of modern Chinese intellectuals were established one after another and gradually reached their peak stage. At that time, many progressive societies promoted and practiced various "ideologies" through different means. The activities of progressive societies, especially those with the nature of Marxism, have made important contributions to the spread and choice of Marxism and the creation of the CPC. Moreover, it provides support from an organizational perspective for a deep understanding of the founding of the CPC and the breeding and formation of the great spirit of party building. Since the 1950s, foreign academic circles, especially in the United States, Japan, and the Soviet Union (including Russia after the 1990s) have achieved some results in research on progressive societies during the May Fourth Movement. These achievements not only provide a text for the foreign academic circles to see through the creation of the CPC and the spread of Marxism in China [1], but also enlighten the domestic academic circles to study the history of the May 4th period and the problems of progressive societies. However, currently, there are relatively few review articles in the domestic academic community that systematically review and specifically sort out the research progress of progressive societies during the May Fourth Movement in foreign academic circles from a holistic perspective. From the existing review articles on the research and analysis of the May Fourth Movement in China by foreign academic circles, it can be seen that they only indirectly and briefly mention the achievements of the study of associations during the May Fourth period, and still lack in-depth research and analysis [2]. However, conducting an academic history examination and methodological analysis of the research process and achievements of foreign academic circles on the May Fourth Movement can provide a new academic orientation for deepening the research on progressive societies during the May Fourth Movement in the domestic academic community. However, due to space limitations, this article intends to use research results from the academic circles of the United States, Japan, and the Soviet Union (Russia) as the object of analysis.

2. Research in the American academic community

The research on China's modern and contemporary issues in the United States was an important component of American Sinology before World War II. After World War II, the study of China in the United States gradually shifted from the previous general Sinology research to the study of contemporary issues in China. Against this historical background, the study of China in the United States, or the discipline of American Chinese studies, emerged. Of course, since the 1950s, the scope of research on contemporary issues in China in the United States has included studies on related issues such as the history of the Chinese Revolution, modern Chinese history, and the history of the Communist Party of China. For example, American progressive journalist Snow interviewed Mao Zedong in Yan'an in 1936, and based on this, published "Red Star Over China" (also known as "Journey to the West"), which elaborated on Mao Zedong's reading of "New Youth" and participation in progressive societies (such as the Xinmin Xuehui) during the May Fourth period [3]. This can actually be regarded as the achievement of the American Chinese academic community in studying the history of the Chinese Revolution and the history of the Communist Party of China. The research on modern China issues in the American Chinese academic community often uses the academic achievements of the May Fourth period or the May Fourth Movement as the theoretical background for the study.

Generally speaking, the systematic research on the May Fourth Movement in the American Chinese academic community dates back to the late 1950s. As for the works on historical research during the May Fourth Movement, the representative academic achievement in this area is the doctoral thesis "History of the May Fourth Movement" by Chinese American scholar Zhou Ce. Domestic researchers believe that the important position and significance highlighted in Zhou Ce's book "The History of the May Fourth Movement" published by Harvard University Press in 1960 is reflected in the fact that "without understanding this movement (referring to the May Fourth Movement), one cannot understand the characteristics of modern China" [4]. Zhou Ce Zong pointed out that the establishment of many organizations during the May Fourth period was "on the one hand, due to the increase of new ideological publications and the popularity of new ideas; on the other hand, it was the establishment and expansion of various social groups and social services." [5] Since then, the Chinese academic community in the United States has continuously produced research results on issues related to the May Fourth period in China. Below, we can examine the basic process of American academic research on the history of the May Fourth period (including progressive societies) from three stages. Of course, this is just one of the author's methods for dividing the historical research process of the May Fourth period in the American academic community.

2.1. The 1960s and 1970s

At this stage, research achievements in the field of American Chinese studies on the founding of the CPC began to emerge. For example, in 1967, Morris Meisner, a scholar of the history of the Chinese Communist Party in the United States, mentioned the scene of Li Dazhao calling for the establishment of a civilian education lecture group and carrying out club activities when discussing his personal experience [6].

In 1972, the renowned American scholar of Chinese Communist Party history, Shi Huaci, compiled a collection of essays titled "Reflections on the May Fourth Movement", [7] which mainly included six articles: Maurice Meisner's "The Cultural Idol Breaking Movement, Nationalism, and Internationalism of the May Fourth Movement", Lin Yusheng's "The Fierce Idol Breaking Movement of the May Fourth Period and the Future of Chinese Liberalism", Chapati Si's "The May Fourth in History", Liofan's "The Romantic Temperament of May Fourth Writers", Merle Goldman's "Leftist Criticism of the Vernacular Movement", and Jerome Greider's "The Political Issues of the May Fourth Period" [8]. Although these articles do not directly address the views on the study of progressive societies during the May Fourth Movement, they focus more on "reviewing the essence and characteristics of the May Fourth Movement and exploring its transitional position in the evolution of modern Chinese history", [8] laying an important historical context and context for studying the activities of progressive societies during the May Fourth period. In addition, in the introduction to the collection of papers, Swartz also clearly pointed out that the CPC's interpretation of the "May 4th Movement" was mainly "by treating different groups and individuals among intellectuals as representatives of various social classes, they insisted that they found the basis for greater power to operate on the economic basis in the superstructure" [9].

2.2. The 1980s and 1990s

During the 1980s and 1990s, the American Chinese academic community launched new academic achievements in the study of the history of China during the May Fourth Movement, which involved the research perspectives of many organizations during the May Fourth period. For example, in 1983, Associate Professor Li Feigong of the History Department at Colby College in the United States believed that "some research groups and political societies that emerged after the May Fourth Movement later became the foundation for the establishment of communist groups across the country" [10]. Here, Li Feigong has pointed out the important role of clubs during the May Fourth Movement.

In 1986, American scholar of Chinese studies, Vera Schwartz (also known as Shu Hengzhe), introduced the situation of the New Tide Society and made contributions such as promoting the New Enlightenment viewpoint, spreading new culture, and conducting ideological mobilization [11]. American scholar of Chinese studies, Arif Derrick, believes that "1917-1919 was a few years when Chinese youth were enthusiastic about organizing groups, which were purely driven by their concern for the nation. For example, the Young China Society and the Student Salvation Association formed in 1918, as well as many student organizations established at Peking University, such as the "Civilian Education Lecture Group" [12]. In addition, Arif Derek also pointed out that the Youth China Society was probably the most important student association organization during the May Fourth Movement. Its members included some of the most important figures who founded the CPC in 1920-1921 (including Li Dazhao, Mao Zedong, Yun Daiying, Deng Zhongxia), and a group of young radicals who later established the Communist Youth League of China [13]. Ye Wenxin paid early attention to the differentiation of the May Fourth Movement and its impact in different regions of China. He believed that the development of the May Fourth New Culture Movement in Beijing, Shanghai, and other places could not reflect its characteristics in Zhejiang, while the radical performance of the May Fourth New Culture Movement in Hangzhou was due to the internal contradictions of Zhejiang itself [14]. In addition, Schwarz also mentioned the relationship between the establishment of associations by Chinese intellectuals during the May Fourth Movement to promote the New Culture Movement and the deepening of the May Fourth Movement. He pointed out that the public education lecture group at Peking University "provided the first stage for advocates of enlightenment and patriotic conservatives to mobilize their compatriots together. Through street lectures - which became the topic of rural and factory discussions in the six months after the May Fourth protests in 1919- students gained first-hand knowledge about the reality of Chinese society.

During the 1990s, Chinese scholars in the United States gradually shifted their academic focus to the study of community organizations during the May Fourth Movement, and examined the construction, dissemination, and characteristics of new ideas and concepts in the intellectual community during that period. In 1993, Marilyn A. Levine believed that "Chinese people born in 1895-1905 have a strong sense of national responsibility. After the First World War, about 6000 young Chinese intellectuals, men and women, went to Europe, especially France, to carry out the work study movement. Some of them accepted advanced ideas such as Marxism there, established the European branch of the Communist Party of China, and conducted research on the specific members of the European branch of the Communist Party of China." [15] In addition, Vera Schwarz (i.e. Shu Hengzhe) interviewed Zhang Shenfu, an early communist intellectual in China, in 1979, and later published the interview record of Zhang Shenfu, a research achievement of Shu Hengzhe's oral history. One book. In the book, Shu Hengzhe provides a detailed account of the social tendencies of the Chinese Communist intellectual community during the May Fourth Movement, as well as the activities of Chen Duxiu, Li Dazhao, and the Communist group in Europe during the process of the founding of the Communist Party of China [16].

Anna Gustafsson. Chen's doctoral thesis "Dreaming of the Future: Public Experiments during the May Fourth Movement" mainly focuses on exploring the background, development, and failures of Hubei Liqun Book Society and Beijing Labor Study Group before and after the May Fourth Movement. It discusses the experiences of the participants in the main progressive societies during the May Fourth Movement and their enthusiasm for embracing the identity of "new youth", and demonstrates how patriotism and anti imperialism as core vocabulary and ideas affect the lives of members of these two progressive societies [17]. Therefore, this graduation thesis helps the domestic academic community to deeply understand how the ideological concepts of the May Fourth period were generated and widely disseminated.

2.3. Stages since the 21st century

With the advancement of research on Western new cultural history since the 1980s, there have been some new trends in the study of the history of the May Fourth period or the May Fourth Movement in the Chinese academic community in the United States. Among them, the most obvious academic trend is the historical research on the May Fourth period in the American Chinese academic community, which gradually combines with the research results of researchers in the fields of politics, culture, society, etc., and gradually shifts from the original preference for ideological history issues in the study of the May Fourth period to the academic perspective of cultural history and global history research. That is to say, such results profoundly demonstrate that in the study of history, "the history of thought is not an established field, its boundaries, or more accurately, its life is destined to unfold with the diverse relationships between concepts and historical issues over time [18].

Under such a development trend, the research on the history of China's May Fourth period or the May Fourth Movement in the American academic community since the 21st century has achieved some new results by expanding the research scope and themes. For example, Shakhrah Rahav's doctoral thesis "Yun Daiying and the Emergence of Political Intellectuals in Modern China: Radical Societies in Wuhan during the May Fourth Movement" examines how smaller societies operated, attempted to spread and implement ideas, and explains how a radical political culture was formed among educated young people in Wuhan, a central Chinese metropolis, when the May Fourth Movement entered a critical moment (1915-1923), by focusing on the progressive societies created by Yun Daiying, such as the Mutual Aid Society and the Liqun Book Society, as well as their relationships with other societies in distant regions [19]. This doctoral thesis mainly adopts the social history perspective of

community organizations, focusing on the ideological development of Yun Daiying, an outstanding young intellectual during the May Fourth Movement, and clarifying the important role of communities during the May Fourth Movement.

Overall, in the 30 years since the late 1950s, most of the research results of American scholars on the May Fourth Movement in China have mentioned the content of social organizations during the May Fourth period. Since the 1990s, research on the May Fourth Movement has focused on drawing on methods from other disciplines such as sociology and anthropology. However, there are relatively few achievements in systematically examining the research overview of social organizations during the May Fourth period. The vast majority of academic achievements are based on the historical research perspective of the May Fourth period. Moreover, we can roughly summarize the research on Chinese social organizations during the May Fourth Movement in the American academic community into two aspects: on the one hand, studying the contributions of progressive social organizations during the May Fourth Movement to the development of modern Chinese thought and culture; On the other hand, studying the early organization and ideological formation of the Communist Party of China by social organizations during the May Fourth period plays an important role. This actually means a shift in academic research methodology.

3. Research in the Japanese academic community

After the Second World War, the study of Chinese studies in Japan has developed rapidly. Research achievements on modern Chinese history and the history of the CPC have been emerging. Some of these achievements mentioned the logical relationship between the development of progressive societies and the May 4th Movement, as well as the establishment of the CPC. The research on the history of the May Fourth Movement or the May Fourth Movement in Japanese academia roughly began in the late 1950s. For example, during this period, the renowned Japanese scholar of the history of the Communist Party of China, Tadao Ishikawa, believed that in the spring of 1918, the "Marxist Research Association" organized by Li Dazhao at Peking University became a pioneer in spreading Marxism in China. This research association developed smoothly with the support of Chen Duxiu and became a leading force during the May Fourth Movement in 1919.

After entering the 1960s, the representative achievement of the Chinese academic community in Japan on the study of China's May Fourth Movement was mainly the work of Shiro Nohara, "Anarchists and the May Fourth Movement" (1960). Subsequently, research on the May Fourth Movement or the history of the May Fourth period continued to emerge in the Japanese academic community. Overall, Japan's research on the history of China during the May Fourth Movement has roughly gone through three major stages: the 1960s and 1970s, the 1980s and 1990s, and the new century.

3.1. The 1960s and 1970s

At this stage, the achievements of Japanese academic research on the May Fourth Movement or the history of the May Fourth period mainly include: Matsuyuki Maruyama's "The May Fourth Movement - A History of Thought" (1969), Noboru Ono's "Idealism in the May Fourth Period - Yun Daiying's Thought" (1970), Nobuko Shimamoto's "The May Fourth Movement in Shanghai" (1970), Yoshida Hatano's "Cooperation between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party" (1973), and "Lectures on Modern and Contemporary Chinese History" (1978) compiled by Shigeru Nozawa and others. In his book "The Cooperation between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party," Bodano Shanda explicitly stated: "Members of the 'Young China Society' living in Beijing gather together every week for discussions. At a rally in November 1919, Li Jin said: Li Dazhao praised Russia's' October Revolution 'in his speech, believing that the October Revolution was superior to the French Revolution because it considered the liberation movement of weak nations, while Wang Guangqi refuted that the national conditions of different countries are different, so China's revolution does not need to imitate the French Revolution or learn from Russia [20].

In addition, research on the work study movement during the May Fourth Movement in the Japanese academic community is also worth paying attention to. Terahiro Hideo pointed out that the Work Study Movement, which originated in 1919, only lasted for three years. However, this movement was initiated by progressive young intellectuals to seek new knowledge and ideas in an extremely difficult environment and was of great significance in the history of the Communist Party of China. However, Yuzuru Uno believed that during the May Fourth Movement, the movements of Chinese student groups overseas could not be ignored. They were the latest intellectual groups at that time and had many opportunities to come into contact with communism. Especially Paris, France, was a destination for Chinese students to work and study.

3.2. The 1980s and 1990s

In 1980, scholar Lingxiong Nakajima believed that before the May Fourth Movement, the Marxist Research Association was organized at Peking University; Mao Zedong, on the other hand, organized the ideological group "Xinmin Society" centered around Hunan students, and Mao Zedong's organizational talent was revealed at this time [21]. In 1982, Japanese scholar of Chinese studies Kida Guangyi and others believed that China's advanced intellectuals developed the Marxist Research Association into a communist group, and carried out Marxist propaganda among the working class, which constituted an

important background for the establishment of the CPC. In addition, Mori Shiyan made an in-depth study of the Paris organization that provided theorists and activists for the CPC, rejected the statement that the "general branch" in Europe with branches in France and Germany was established in 1922, and demonstrated that the actual establishment time was around February and March 1925, and the organization size was limited to the level of "branch" [22]. In addition, one can also refer to the book "Research on the National Salvation Ten Person Movement" by Japanese scholar of modern Chinese history, Shinji Ono. In this work, after studying Mao Zedong's relevant discourse and a large amount of historical materials, the author points out that during the May Fourth period, Chinese intellectuals with preliminary communist ideas were the main body preparing for the June Third Movement by advocating and promoting the National Salvation Ten People's League Movement [23].

Compared to the research on Yun Daiying in the American Chinese academic community, the research on Yun Daiying in the Japanese Chinese academic community also has its own characteristics. Japanese scholar Akiyoshi Kujifu believes that "Yun Daiying was an enlightener of the New Culture Movement before the May Fourth Movement, a member of the early Chinese intellectuals who accepted communist ideas, and a figure who played a core guiding role in social practice, especially in the field of education and cultural work after the May Fourth Movement." [24] In the late 20th century, Yanzi Goto was the most important representative of the systematic study of Yun Daiying in the Japanese and Chinese academic circles. Through a profound analysis of Yun Daiying's thoughts and actions during the May Fourth Movement, Yoko Goto examined the tendency of Yun Daiying's idealism towards civil society, which gave birth to new ideas in the process [25]. Shiner Ono believes that Yun Daiying, under the influence of Marxism and the principle of mutual aid between work and study, chose the Russian road and consciously chose the line of class struggle [26].

3.3. Stages since the new century

At this stage, new achievements in the study of modern Chinese societies emerged in Japan. In 2003, Masako Kohama published the book *Publicity and State of Modern Shanghai* on the mainland of Chinese Mainland on the basis of his 1998 doctoral dissertation, *Societies, Urban Societies and the State of Modern Shanghai*. Masako Kobayashi clearly defined the definition of modern Chinese societies as "social groups formed by members gathering spontaneously according to their will in modern Chinese society since the late period of imperial rule"; Secondly, the theme of 'closely following Chinese regional society is formed through the activities of clubs and their mutual networks' [27]. The May Fourth period was the peak period of the development of modern Chinese associations, so the study of associations during this period is of great significance for understanding the history of the May Fourth period and the May Fourth Movement.

In addition, the achievements of the Japanese academic circles in systematically studying the establishment or founding of the CPC are the *History of the Establishment of the CPC* written by the famous scholar of the history of the Communist Party of China, Masahiro Ishikawa [28]. The book was first published by Iwanami Bookstore in Japan in 2001. From the perspective of academic history, this work is the product of Ishikawa Sadahiro's long-term tracking and research on the history of early communist movements in China. In fact, during the 1990s, Masahiro Ishikawa published a series of research results on the founding history of the CPC. In 2006, the first Chinese translation of the *History of the Establishment of the CPC* was published in Chinese Mainland. In the third chapter of the book, Masahiro Ishikawa expounds the logical relationship between the communist group (that is, the early organization of the CPC) gradually transformed and formed by the progressive mass organization during the May 4th period and the establishment of the CPC [28]. On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the CPC, Masahiro Ishikawa revised the *History of the Founding of the CPC* and published the latest updated version of the book in the Chinese University of Hong Kong Press.

4. Research in the Soviet academic community

Because of the inherent relationship between the Soviet Communist Party and the CPC, the establishment of the CPC or the May 4th Movement is an important academic field in the country. From the late 1920s of the 20th century, the research achievements of the Soviet academic circles on the CPC and modern Chinese history continued to emerge. In 1927, the "Brief History of the Communist Party of China" written by Soviet military advisor Karachev was published. In July 1936, Miff, who was then the main person in charge of the eastern part of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, published the *Fifteen Years of Heroic Struggle - the Fifteenth Anniversary of the Founding of the CPC*. Miff pointed out that "among the progressive intellectuals in China, various groups and organizations with different names have emerged everywhere, such as 'New Tide', 'New Youth', 'New China', etc.' Marxist research associations, discussions on Soviet issues, workers' night schools, clubs, political training classes, etc. have been organized everywhere." [29]

From a long-term perspective, the research process of the May Fourth period history of China (including the content of progressive societies) in the Soviet academic community and the Russian academic community since the 1990s can be roughly divided into two major stages, from the establishment of New China to the present.

4.1. The 1950s to 1980s

The study of the May Fourth Movement by Soviet scholars began in the 1950s, and the first article dedicated to the movement was Vinogradov's "The May Fourth Movement in China in 1919". In addition, the "Introduction to Modern Chinese History" collectively compiled by the Soviet Institute of Chinese Studies, published in 1959, systematically described the development process of the revolutionary movement in China from 1918 to 1949, especially providing more detailed explanations of the major revolutionary events in China from 1919 to 1927. During this period, Soviet scholars generally believed that the May Fourth Movement stimulated the enthusiasm of advanced Chinese intellectuals to actively participate in political movements through organizing associations in order to find a way out of the national crisis, prompting the Chinese proletariat to step onto the political stage and accelerating the spread of Marxism in China. Especially Jeliusin's 1970 book "The Debate on Socialism: A Brief History of Chinese Social and Political Thought in the Early 1920s" mainly discusses the basic situation of the establishment of the Chinese Marxist Group in 1920. "The debate on socialism held at the end of 1920 mainly involved whether Marxism was applicable to China, whether it contradicted the national characteristics of this country, whether the socialist system could make China enter the ranks of advanced countries in the world, etc." "The debate gave general, but positive answers to these three questions, thus preparing the conditions for the establishment of the Communist Party of China (referring to the CPC)" [30].

4.2. Since the 1990s

At this stage, with the occurrence of the Eastern European upheaval, Russian scholars have gradually shifted their research focus to the study of the history of the Communist Party of China and the People's Republic of China during the socialist period. Therefore, the overall trend of Russian scholars' research on the history of the May Fourth period is to focus on the overall analysis of the history of the May Fourth period, but to pay little attention to micro level research. Micro level research mainly revolves around the May Fourth Movement, with a greater emphasis on the analysis of the ideological history of Li Dazhao and Chen Duxiu. In a word, after the founding of New China, Soviet scholars and later Russian scholars after the 1990s mainly focused on the status and significance of the May Fourth Movement, the impact of the October Revolution on the Chinese revolution, the early communist intellectuals in China and the labor movement during the May Fourth Movement, the struggle in the field of social ideology in China in the early 1920s, the spread of Marxism in China, the establishment of the CPC and other related contents. However, there were few achievements in the systematic study of progressive associations during the May Fourth Movement. Some research achievements on associations during the May Fourth Period were also linked to the historical research of the entire May Fourth Period.

Overall, there are relatively few research achievements in the foreign academic community on progressive societies (referring to intellectual societies) during the May Fourth period, which may have some Western ideological "filters" to some extent. Many academic viewpoints are inevitably biased. In addition, when studying a certain organization during the May Fourth Movement, American scholars mostly focus on the organization of the organization and integrate interdisciplinary research theories and methods; However, Japanese scholars' research tends to focus on the characteristics of intellectual history, examining the intellectual history of typical figures during the May Fourth period, paying attention to meticulous historical analysis and rigorous academic reasoning. The research results of foreign researchers on the organizations during the May Fourth Movement are of reference value, but further in-depth and sublimation are needed for a more microscopic examination of the organizations during the May Fourth Movement. It can be said that there is a phenomenon of "insufficient and unbalanced" in the research on social organizations during the May Fourth Movement in foreign academic circles. The so-called 'insufficiency' generally refers to the fact that the research results of foreign academic circles on the social organizations during the May Fourth Movement are mostly focused on case studies, especially the research results on the social organization thoughts of Li Dazhao, Mao Zedong, and Yun Daiying; The so-called 'imbalance', compared to other contents of historical research during the May Fourth period, there are still relatively few achievements in foreign academic circles on the study of social organizations during the May Fourth period.

Although this article only involves the investigation and analysis of the history of the May Fourth Movement and the research achievements of the May Fourth Movement in the academic circles of the United States, Japan, and the Soviet Union (as well as Russia after the 1990s), in reality, the research on China issues in the United States has always been in a key position, influencing the research on China issues in other countries (such as Japan). For example, when referring to the establishment of the CPC, Schwartz's doctoral thesis "Communism in China and the Rise of Mao Zedong" published in the 1950s pointed out that "Dai Jitao may participate in the activities of the Socialist Youth League, and even cooperate with Chen Duxiu to establish a 'Marxist Research Group' in the Youth League" [31]. Shi Huaci's work had a profound impact on the study of the history of the Chinese Communist Party in Japan, as can be seen from the evaluation of one of the translators, Tadao Ishikawa: "As is widely recognized, this book (referring to 'Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao Zedong', cited in the footnote) opened a new era in

the study of Chinese communism in the United States." "Although there are various comments, it is not an exaggeration to say that it is an unprecedentedly high-level research work [32].

Of course, in addition to the United States, Japan, and the Soviet Union (Russia) as the main representative countries, countries such as the United Kingdom also have some research results related to the May Fourth Movement associations, but overall their achievements are very few. Therefore, domestic researchers need to constantly adjust their academic perspectives and integrate their academic thinking to deepen their exploration of the May Fourth Movement organizations. This can to some extent reflect the concepts and methods of academic history research [33]. Therefore, the importance and necessity of valuing the research achievements and academic contributions of predecessors and conducting a thorough review and analysis of academic history are self-evident, but there are still some perspectives that can be supplemented and discussed.

In summary, when analyzing the research results of foreign academic circles on the May Fourth Movement, domestic researchers should pay attention to the perspective of combining history and theory, entering the research context and cultural context of foreign academic circles, and providing a comprehensive examination of the research results of progressive societies during the May Fourth Movement through various means such as academic history, academic criticism, and case analysis. That is to say, domestic researchers need to use cross-cultural and interdisciplinary perspectives to analyze the research results of foreign academic circles on progressive societies during the May Fourth period, enter the ideological world of foreign researchers, explore the academic history trajectory of foreign academic circles' research on societies during the May Fourth period, and examine the problem consciousness and research methods presented in it. Researchers collect, organize, verify, and utilize historical materials such as works, literature, memoirs, and personal diaries related to the May Fourth Movement, starting from the historical context of the May Fourth period, to examine the trajectory and influence of progressive societies and their activities. Therefore, comparative research methods and case study methods can be used. Among them, the comparative research method is to examine two or more things with similar attributes based on standards, find their similarities and differences, and highlight the rich connotation and precise significance of the research process. Researchers can use comparative research methods to examine the common and individual characteristics of progressive societies during the May Fourth Movement. The case study method is also a common approach. This is to select typical cases, identify the inherent laws of things, and promote theoretical innovation and paradigm shift in the research of a certain field or discipline. Foreign scholars generally prefer to use case study methods. However, when analyzing the research results of foreign academic circles on the May Fourth Movement, the domestic academic circles should pay attention to the perspective of combining history and theory, entering the research context and cultural context of foreign academic circles, and providing a comprehensive examination of the research results of progressive societies through various means such as academic history, academic criticism, and case analysis. Research materials and research topics are always in an interactive relationship, and the formation of research topics comes from the interpretation and reflection of the meaning behind the research materials. It is necessary to handle the value of the research materials themselves, the degree of relevance between the research materials and the research topics, and the relationship between the research materials. That is to say, domestic researchers need to use cross-cultural and interdisciplinary perspectives to analyze the research results of foreign academic circles on progressive societies during the May Fourth period, enter the ideological world of foreign scholars, explore the academic history trajectory of foreign academic circles' research on societies during the May Fourth period, and examine the problem awareness and research methods presented therein.

5. Conclusion

The investigation and analysis of the research progress of progressive societies during the May Fourth Movement in the domestic academic community should mainly focus on the academic history and methodological exploration. No matter what problem researchers choose to study, they must rely on reasoning and evaluation of existing knowledge. If researchers cannot make appropriate evaluations of existing literature and research results, they cannot determine the appropriate topic direction and select necessary literature. To do these tasks well, we cannot do without the methods of academic history. In the previous text, American scholar Shakhrah Rahav's doctoral thesis "Yun Daiying and the Emergence of Modern Chinese Political Intellectuals: Radical Societies in Wuhan during the May Fourth Movement" selected Yun Daiying and the societies she founded as research cases, and further explored Yun Daiying's choice from "ideal moralism" to "political realism" as the initiator of progressive societies during the May Fourth Movement. Shakhrah Rahav believes that "Yun Daiying used a Confucian model of moral society as a social blueprint, and Yun Daiying and those around him planned a radical moral elevation activity: from individuals, society (groups) to the state" [34]. Based on the grand historical background of the transformation of modern Chinese thought, Xu Xiaxiang explores the dilemma and political 'fate' faced by moral idealism as a social value and belief under the comprehensive crisis of the country, demonstrates the modernity choices of some intellectuals during the May Fourth period and the rise of communism in China, and attempts to reveal one aspect of the origin of Chinese communist revolutionary culture. He explores how Yun Daiying's political ideological transformation from moral idealism to revolutionary idealism [35]. In short, based on the analysis of the research achievements of the overseas academic community on the progressive societies during the May Fourth Movement, the domestic academic community should use interdisciplinary theories and methods, especially to deeply explore

the changes in academic paradigms and academic paths in the study of May Fourth history, and take the issue of seeking modern China's salvation and strength as the logical basis for research. Based on the political transformation, ideological consensus, belief establishment, and identity transformation of progressive societies, this study aims to reveal the important position and contemporary significance of progressive societies during the May Fourth Movement.

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