

## The State Logic of Modernizing the Governance System\*

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### Abstract

The governance system is the institutional carrier and mechanism guaranteeing the operation of the state. The Western governance dilemma and China's governance practice show that state dominance is the intrinsic logic behind the modernization of the governance system. As a worldwide issue, the core question in the logic of state modernization of the governance system is to develop governance rules, procedures and orders that effectively respond to and resolve the problems of the state-society relationship. In other words, state logic is rooted in the historical process of the dynamic evolution of the building of the state-society relationship community, and looks toward practice in solving the issue of balanced national development. In advocating a modern governance system led by state logic, China does not simply wish to continue the master page of its history and culture, but to hold fast to being guided by the issues and focusing on the transformation of the principal contradictions of Chinese society to bring about good governance that is oriented toward the people, in order to systematically respond to the major adjustments in national governance variables brought about by IT development and globalization. In the current context in which governance solutions dominated by the logic of capital have difficulty coping with global problems of development, adhering to the logic of the state in modernizing the governance system not only helps us break away from "polycentric governance" and correctly ensures that the state plays an authoritative and leading role in the governance system while also providing an institutional framework and mechanism that achieves social justice, improves market efficiency and fosters social autonomy, thus forging a new type of civilization for national and global governance on a global scale.

**Keywords:** governance system, governance capacity, modernization, state logic

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The state has the major responsibility for the modernization of the governance system, playing an authoritative and leading role in this process. Upholding, sustaining and safeguarding state logic is a basic principle that must be adhered to in the course of modernizing the governance system, a rational requirement for deepening the relationship between the state and the social community, and the key to regulating stratified elements and overlapping functions among multiple governance actors. On the basis of a theoretical discussion of the Chinese strategy for modernizing China's governance system and capacity, this paper explores the reasons, implications and important theoretical and practical significance of upholding the role of state logic in modernizing the governance system with a view to deepening rational recognition and conscious implementation of this logic.

### **I. The Dissolution of State Logic by Western Governance Discourse**

The context of the original development of Western governance theories shows that the emphasis on the withdrawal of the state has basically been a consistent claim. Since the emergence of such theories in the 1990s, the “rolling back”<sup>1</sup> of the state has become the logical definition of the concept of governance, thereby highlighting the difference between governance and government. To summarize, the essential difference between the two is that the actors in “governance” are plural and decentralized, whereas the actor in “government” is monolithic and centralized, and can only act as a department of society's public authority. This identification and distinction between actors constitutes the discourse base of classical Western governance theory. As French scholar Jean-Pierre Godin puts it, “Governance must obviously be distinguished initially from the conventional idea of government.”<sup>2</sup> In short, as a new paradigm aimed at redeeming government and market failure, the argumentation and implementation of Western governance theory is aimed at dismantling the logic of state authority and ensuring that governance is pluralistic and decentered.

With the development of governance theory and the advance of governance practice, some researchers have discovered that governance itself is not omnipotent and its effectiveness has limits. British scholar Bob Jessop argues, “The growing fascination with governance mechanisms as a solution to market and/or state failure should not lead us to overlook the risks involved in attempts to substitute governance for markets and/or hierarchies and the resulting likelihood of governance failure.”<sup>3</sup> In order to avoid the risk of governance failure, Jessop proposes the concept of “meta-governance.” Since meta-governance itself requires the presence of the actors, the functional role of the state in the governance system is once again

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1 Andrew Heywood, *Politics*, p. 125.

2 Jean-Pierre Godin, “Modern Governance, Yesterday and Today: Some Clarifications to Be Gained from French Government Policies.”

3 Bob Jessop, “The Rise of Governance and the Risks of Failure: The Case of Economic Development.”

highlighted in the context of the governance system. In expounding the theory of “meta-governance,” Jessop distinguishes between the state as the actor in “meta-governance” and the state as the traditional public authority, and identifies the possibility of the failure of “meta-governance” itself. However, it is undeniable that the state, once disenchanting, has been re-enchanted. At present, the theory of “meta-governance” has been acknowledged by numerous scholars, which raises a series of questions: Is the state present in the governance system or not? Does the state’s assumption of a role in “meta-governance” imply the return of governance to government? Once the state becomes a “meta-governance” actor, does it no longer possess its original limitations? Will it no longer suffer failure? These questions constitute the intrinsic dilemma of Western governance theory.<sup>4</sup>

In order to understand the intrinsic dilemma of Western governance theory, as reflected in “the presence or absence of the state,” it is necessary to go deeper into history and reality and clear away the complicated fog of theory in order to gain an essential grasp and scientific answer to this question. Marx pointed out that, “The mode of production in material life determines the general character of social, political, and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness.”<sup>5</sup> In the context of Marx’s historical materialist critique of capital, the prominence of the problem of the “presence or absence of the state” in Western governance theory and the emergence and development of the inherent dilemmas of a governance theory that is closely related to the development of and changes in the capitalist mode of production and the mode of capital valorization essentially faces the inherent dilemma of the capitalist mode of production and capital valorization. This is because the development of capital inevitably leads to “anarchy in the social division of labor.” The failure of governance practices in some developing countries in the world today is also caused by the dismantling of state logic in their governance practices. As Francis Fukuyama says, “Weak or failed states are at the root of many of the world’s most serious problems, from poverty and AIDS to drug trafficking and terrorism.”<sup>6</sup>

Looking back at the emergence and development of the capitalist mode of production, we can see that the “presence or absence of the state” has always been a central but constantly changing issue in relation to capital. This change can be divided into four stages. The first stage was the germination and beginning of the capitalist mode of production. In the face of the enfeoffed feudal nobility and the weakness of the state (kingship) in the Middle Ages, capital needed the emergence of a state (monarchy) with absolute authority in order to achieve higher capital valorization. For this reason, the civil hierarchy and the royal power, then based on a common goal, joined hands to defeat the feudal nobility’s enfeoffed power and

4 See Wang Shizong, “The Inherent Contradictions of Governance Theory and the Way Out.”

5 Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works of Marx and Engels*, vol. 2, p. 2.

6 See Francis Fukuyama, “Preface to *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century*,” p. 1.

establish the royal power of the monarchy as the dominant force, i.e., the absolutist state as identified by Giddens. This necessarily presented itself at the theoretical and ideological level as support for the absolute authority of state logic. The second stage was the stage of capitalist free competition. With the emergence and development of the capitalist mode of production, the contradiction between the civil hierarchy and the absolutist state intensified. As we know, “One of the prerequisites of wage labor, and one of the historical conditions for capital, is free labor and the exchange of free labor for money,” and “Another prerequisite is the separation of free labor from the objective conditions of its realization.”<sup>7</sup> But in the absolutist state, where “everything is owned by the king,” these two historical conditions are totally lacking, and still less is there a free and open environment for barter. Therefore, the dismantling of state authority necessarily became a theoretical and ideological demand of the capitalist mode of production at this stage. The third stage was the stage of monopoly capitalism. In this stage, capital completely controls the state. Internally, it monopolizes the market and externally, it uses its political power to carve up the world, with the aim of maximizing capital valorization. The result, as Jürgen Habermas pointed out, is “the nationalization of society and the simultaneous socialization of the state.”<sup>8</sup> Needless to say, this stage of capital development promotes a state logic possessed of absolute authority at the theoretical and ideological level. The fourth stage is that of late capitalism. The development of capital is not always smooth sailing; it will always run up against one crisis after another. To overcome such crises, capital needed to make a shift from industrialization to post-industrialization through its valorization mode, accompanied by unceasing innovation. The adoption of a diversified, differentiated and virtualized mode of valorization is the main feature of the late capitalist mode of production; the demands of this mode of production at the theoretical and ideological level are necessarily diversified and decentered and call for the retreat of state logic. From the point of view of timing, Western governance theory was proposed at the stage of late capitalism; as a systemic theory, it conforms to and upholds late capitalism’s post-industrial mode of production. Some scholars have therefore examined Western governance theory using a postmodern approach: “In essence, the governance theory attempts to comprehensively dissolve the modern absolute notion of sovereignty, thus exhibiting a pronounced tendency toward postmodernity.”<sup>9</sup>

It can be seen that whether Western discussion on the issue of “the presence or absence of the state” in the last few centuries has propounded the absolute authority of the state or the dissolution of state power and the return of power to society, all of it essentially reflects the current situation of the capitalist mode of production and the capital valorization mode and meets their needs at a certain historical stage. The emergence of Western governance

7 Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works of Marx and Engels*, vol. 30, p. 465.

8 Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society (Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit. Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft)*.

9 Yu Jianxing and Liu Dazhi, “Modernity and Postmodernity in Governance Theory.”

theory and its dissolution of the logic of the state are simply the theoretical and ideological manifestations of the post-industrial turn of the late capitalist mode of production. Only a deep understanding of this point can enable China's governance theory and governance practice to escape the pull of Western governance theory and thus avoid falling into the theoretical and ideological pit of late capitalism.

## II. The Basic Implications of the State Logic of Modernizing the Governance System

The modernization of the governance system is a systemic activity involving structure, process, relationships, procedures and rules in which multiple actors including the government, the market and the public reach consensus on action-based consultation, dialogue and interaction in the management of daily affairs, regulation of resources and exercise of rights in order to alleviate conflicts or integrate interests, achieve public goals and meet people's daily requirements. As an abstract proposition of the characteristics and ideal goals of governance system activities, the modernization of governance refers to the modern system of the operational framework of public authority that includes diversified governance actors, complex objects (targets) of governance, diverse governance methods and multifaceted governance processes. In short, the modernization of the governance system refers to a modernization process of balancing individual interests and promoting the public interest by using a certain authority to guide, control and regulate the public and its activities within the public sphere.

In the broad sense, modernization of the governance system is a mode of practice of the human race and an object-based activity. Specifically, many links and elements—the actors, the objects of the action and the modes, mechanisms, direction, scope and process of governance—create the following characteristics. First, the actors of governance are diversified, including not only the government, but also social and business organizations and residents' self-governance organizations. This is the key to distinguishing governance from government. Second, the governance objects are complex; they are not simple and unchanging entities, but “the structure of society, in which all relations coexist simultaneously and support one another”<sup>10</sup> and “an organism capable of change, and...constantly changing.”<sup>11</sup> Dynamism, complexity and diversity already present as the main characteristics of the modern objects of governance. Third, governance is diverse. There are various types of governance: the coercive, the consultative and the directive, as well as political, economic, and cultural approaches. Finally, the governance process is multifaceted. It does not consist of a single top-down direction, but is rather a horizontally linked and vertically interactive process, with clear dynamics and frequent changes. In real life, the governance system presents as a series of specific systems, rules and procedures regulating government behavior, social initiatives,

10 Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works of Marx and Engels*, vol. 1, p. 223.

11 Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. I, pp. 12-13.

market actions and individual performance; as a holistic operational system, it involves many areas, including the economy, politics, culture, society and the environment.

From the perspective of theoretical logic, the state logic of a modernizing governance system perceives the state as an ontological and methodological existence. In the ontological sense, the state itself is considered as an entity with maintaining social solidarity as its characteristic and keeping order as its primacy; in the methodological sense, it is viewed as a special social field in which multiple actors engage in interactive gaming and which acts as a “lens” for understanding other issues. From the perspective of practical logic, the logic of state in governance modernization “is the cooperative management of social public affairs by multiple actors such as owners, managers and stakeholders of state power within the scope of the state, with the aim of advancing the public interest and maintaining public order.”<sup>12</sup> That is, it is an activity that uses a certain degree of state authority to deal with public affairs. Specifically, the modernization of the structure and functions of the state progresses on the basis of drawing on and fully exploiting the existing resources of the state system, thus enhancing the effectiveness of the normative level and governance capacity of state governance. Put simply, the state logic in governance modernization rests on looking toward practice in solving the problem of balanced state construction and establishing an inclusive political and economic system, as in, “Our country’s governance system is an institutional system that governs the country under the leadership of the Party. It is comprised of institutions, mechanisms, laws and regulations regarding economics, politics, culture, society, environmental progress, and Party building, and is a complete set of closely connected and coordinated institutions.”<sup>13</sup> Its basic direction is oriented to the state governance of complex modernity, forming a state with “people-oriented” good governance, and it provides a systemic response to the profound transmutation of the governance environment in terms of power operation, issue selection, mechanism creation, resource integration and even performance evaluation arising from the major adjustment of state governance variables brought about by IT development and globalization.

Specifically, the state logic of governance modernization presents four major levels, the first of which is the state logic of the governance actors. The diversified governance actors in governance modernization are the political parties, the government, commerce, society, the people and the media, all of which have to participate in state governance, though different actors play different roles in the governance system. In China’s governance system, the socialist state led by the Communist Party of China, due to its “advanced, pure and representative” nature, takes the leadership role in the practice of state governance, a leadership role that comes from the public and is always under public oversight. The second level is that of state logic as an object of governance. The coverage of the governance system

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12 He Zengke, “Understanding State Governance and Its Modernization.”

13 Xi Jinping, “Aligning Our Thinking with the Guiding Principles of the Third Plenary Session of the 18th Communist Party of China Central Committee.”

is not one-sided or isolated; politics, the economy, culture, society, the environment and party building are all to be included and indeed must be included; that is, the public sphere, public activities and public affairs of the state are all objects of state governance. In this sense, one could say that “state governance” is “governance of the state.” The third level is state logic as an operational governance mechanism. Rational systems and mechanisms and perfected laws and regulations form the basis of the governance system. “To modernize our country’s governance system and governance capacity, we need to adapt to changing times by reforming institutions, mechanisms, laws and regulations that fail to keep pace with the development of praxis, while at the same time constantly establishing new ones, so that all of our institutions are more scientific and robust, and the governance of Party, state, and social affairs is more institutionalized, standardized and procedure-based.”<sup>14</sup> The fourth is state logic as a governance structure. Governance actors and the objects of governance action together with the institutional basis on which they depend are not separated but closely linked, mutually coordinated and organically unified. We cannot grasp the governance system only individually or partially; rather, we should view it as a systemic whole, i.e., “the national governance system includes not only the various constituent elements of national governance, but also the internal logical relationship between them.”<sup>15</sup>

It can be seen that state domination is the internal logic of governance modernization. All governance is the form of a system, or, one could say, governance equates to system, but this does not mean that there is a completely “egalitarian” or “equal” value ranking among the various segments and elements of the governance system, and still less can one use this reason to do away with the dominant position and leadership function of the state and the government in the governance system. In terms of the functions of governance, all governance entails the use of authority; without authority, there is no governance. Engels categorically stated that, “it is absurd to speak of the principle of authority as being absolutely evil, and of the principle of autonomy as being absolutely good.”<sup>16</sup> Which, then, of the governance actors—the political state, the market, social organizations and individuals—is best able to assume the role of authority? Clearly, this authority can only be assumed by the political state.

The state logic of governance system modernization not only shows that the state has to play the leading role in this process, but also logically identifies an important value structure issue, that is, the institutions and systems of state governance and their value orientation. Discussion of this issue is a problem that Western governance theory cannot avoid. On the one hand, with the deepening of globalization, there is no doubt that states remain the basic actors across the world; on the other, as the modernization process in each country advances, the paradigm of government has gradually been replaced by the paradigm of governance, a

14 Xi Jinping, “Aligning Our Thinking with the Guiding Principles of the Third Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee.”

15 Ding Zhigang, “How to Understand National Governance and National Governance System.”

16 Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works of Marx and Engels*, vol. 3, p. 276.

change that has become a basic trend. In the present era, the fact that the role of the state and the role of governance share the same latitude indicates that the issue of state governance is not only real, but also growing in importance.

State logic studies the way the modern state actor, using the resources of power and coordinating a variety of techniques and methods, assumes the mission of progressing governance system modernization with the core values of defending national sovereignty, safeguarding the people's rights and interests, and protecting the public interest, through the state's capacity for action. It endows state logic with authority, mission and responsibility; and it fosters people's sense of identification with, trust in and belonging to the state. In the process of governance system modernization, state logic is always inherent in the process and relationship of mutual support, dependence and remolding between state and society. The kind of state logic a governance system chooses and adheres to is also determined by the movement of the basic contradictions of the society that has generated the governance system, i.e., the contradictions between state and society. The core problem facing state logic in the course of modernization of the governance system is the building of governance rules, procedures and orders that effectively respond to and resolve the problems existing between the state and social relations. In other words, state logic is not the subjective determination of state power, but a historical and dynamic phenomenon rooted in the building of the community of state-society relations.

The state logic of the modernization of the governance system is a worldwide issue, so its nature, functions and values are heterogeneous and diverse according to the different patterns and stages of the movement of the contradictions between the state and society. The Western governance system of the "rolling back of the state," which emerged in the 1990s, is a state logic that aims to dissolve, reject and abolish the state's domination and controlling power in the process of modernizing the governance system. By contrast, China's state logic, which aims to strengthen, cultivate and regulate the state's principal position, responsibility and governance capacity in the process of modernizing the governance system, "has been developed and gradually improved over a long period of time on the basis of our historical heritage, cultural traditions, and social and economic development."<sup>17</sup> In terms of theory, the profound change in the contradictions in the relationship between the state and society is the fundamental motive for tracking the causes of state logic in the course of modernizing the governance system.

### **III. The Practice Path of State Logic in Governance System Modernization**

The Third Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China put forward the general goal of the comprehensive deepening reform to "modernize the

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17 Xi Jinping, "Improve Governance Capacity through the Socialist System with Chinese Characteristics," p. 105.



national governance system and capacity,” marking the transformation of China’s governance from political governance and management to state governance. This undoubtedly strengthens the logical function of state capacity in the course of modernizing the governance system in terms of governance concepts, mechanisms and goals, i.e., the change from the coercive one-way exercise of power to a governance logic in which the state interacts with the community of social relations. Making the state the supreme leader in “modernizing the governance system and capacity” is the important mission enjoined on the CPC by the times, a mission of upholding its fundamental purpose of “serving the people wholeheartedly” and improving the state’s governance capacity. This political commitment and responsibility toward the people reflects the state logic of unified “legitimacy,” “purposefulness” and “compliance” in modernizing the governance system. Raising the “state” to a new historical height in modernizing the governance system and capacity will strengthen and improve the logical role of state capacity in the course of the omni-directional and full-process modernization of the governance system in terms of governance actors, governance responsibility and governance capacity. Adhering to state logic in the course of modernizing the governance system in China not only accurately upholds the Marxist view of the state and of governance and the core positions and principles of the governance theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics, but also scientifically grasps the essential features and trends of contemporary Chinese and global governance practice, thus highlight the importance of “rationality” and “legitimacy.”

First of all, the state is the strongest defender of sovereignty. As a national force and national will that is supreme internally and independent externally, sovereignty is the state’s highest power in the handling of domestic and foreign affairs without interference or restrictions from other countries. Even in the globalized governance system, the sovereign state remains the global governance actor; it serves as the basis of international law and is protected by it. The solution to environmental pollution, population expansion, disparities of wealth, trade protectionism and other problems of a global public nature must ultimately be governed globally by strengthening mutually beneficial win-win cooperation among states and between states and the international community in terms of mutual respect, mutual concern and mutual action under the logic and framework of the sovereign state.

Second, the state is the supreme defender of people’s rights and interests. It is the mission, responsibility and supreme authority of the state in the course of governance system modernization to constitutionally and legally safeguard and guarantee sovereign resources including territory, politics, culture and the economy on which people depend for their survival and full and free development. In today’s world of globalized governance, China is opposed to both the narrow nationalism and the unilateralism that run counter to globalization. In the course of the modernization of the governance system, state logic helps the populace to gain a sense of belonging to the value conversion of the “family-state” community. Adhering to this logic means always taking the people’s position as the fundamental political position, putting the people’s interests to the first priority, and reflecting the state’s love of the people in

the great cause of protecting their rights and interests and solving their problems.

Third, state logic is fundamentally a patriotic spirit and political stance that upholds and respects national interests. Embedded as it is in the core socialist values which represent mankind's most "basic, pure and universal" "family-state" sentiments and are their heart and soul, this state logic is a profound revelation of the dependence on the state of the mass of the people; it expresses their sense of belonging to the state, their identification with it, and their sense of dignity, as well as their attachment to the homeland on which they depend for survival. The essence of this logic is embodied in the value consensus and code of conduct under which the masses regard themselves as members of the nation, actively defend the national interests, identify with state institutions, blazon the national culture, and respect the national development goals. These rightful, basic and common aspirations construct a strong motivation for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Finally, state logic of China represents the strong cultural tradition accumulated over the 5,000 years of Chinese civilization. Although the Chinese nation has undergone trials and tribulations and suffered vicissitudes, its splendid civilization, passing the torch down in good times and bad and lasting 5,000 years, stems from the national spirit of safeguarding national unity, serving the country faithfully, resisting invasion, identifying with the Chinese people and pursuing harmony and peace with other nations. The national spirit accumulated by the Chinese nation for 5,000 years has become the cultural root and civilizational source of state logic in the process of modernizing the governance system.

The state logic of modernizing the governance system is rooted in the basic movement of the contradictions between society and the state; it is not a single path, but a synergistic system of stratified elements and overlapping functions among multiple actors of governance. State logic cannot rest on social governance alone; it can also achieve modernization through the self-revolution of the state, i.e., the state can take the initiative in the multifaceted path of actively cultivating and developing governance actors. Upholding the leadership of the Communist Party of China, putting the people at the center, pursuing governance according to law, and establishing a sound "synergistic" modern governance system featuring high quality legitimacy and competence is not only the strategic goal of the harmonization of the relationship between the state and society in China, but also the way to achieve high quality modernization of the governance system and capacity.

The aim of holding fast to state logic in the course of modernizing the governance system is to effectively solve two major problems: the problem of the legitimacy of the state logic of modernizing the governance system, and the problem of the competence of the state logic of modernizing the governance system. Legitimacy and competence are often intertwined in functional logic. Generally speaking, legitimacy manifests normative power and competence guarantees power in practice. The legitimacy and competence of China's strategy to promote modern state construction through a sound governance system can be broken down in China into the theoretical and practical exploration of two questions: "How is it possible to build a

governance system and a modern state?” and “What makes it possible to build a governance system and a modern state?”

In essence, state capacity, with its core orientation toward rationality and competence, is the functional practice of state power, good order, dynamics and operational logic in the modernization of the governance system. The governance system and state capacity set each other off. The governance system is the basic premise of state capacity, and a high quality governance system is indispensable for the modernization of the governance system and governance capacity. By the same token, the full realization of modernization of the governance system very much needs the support of a high quality governance system and governance capacity. The modernization of the governance system always needs to be matched by a strong state capacity. China’s glorious history of reform and opening up over the past forty years has fully demonstrated that “governance without the state” and “the state without governance” are contrary to the modernization of the governance system and governance capacity. The modernization of the governance system and governance capacity is a powerful engine for the building of a modern state, and the building of a modern state must be incorporated into the modernized governance system.

#### **IV. Methodological Principles for Upholding the State Logic of Governance Modernization**

According to the basic theory of historical materialism, upholding state logic in the course of modernizing the governance system should not only follow the universal laws of modern national governance systems while remaining rooted in China’s national conditions and current issues, but should at the same time draw on the rational components of Western governance theory to form an effective response to real national governance problems. This is a methodological principle that must be followed to achieve the high quality development of the state logic of governance system modernization that features “legitimacy” and “competence.”

First, it is necessary to uphold the leadership and authority of the Communist Party of China, which is guided by Marxism. Xi Jinping pointed out that, “Marxism has always been the guiding thought of our Party and state, and it has been a powerful intellectual instrument for us to understand the world, grasp the laws, pursue the truth and transform the world.”<sup>18</sup> Grasping the functional role of state logic in the practice of the governance of socialism with Chinese characteristics requires forever upholding the leadership and authority of the CPC’s strategic thinking on sizing up the overall situation, its dialectical thinking on promoting reform and development, and its innovative thinking that derives from and guides practice, all of which are under the leadership of sinicized Marxism. Marxist ideas on the laws governing the development of human society, on upholding the people’s position, on

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18 Xi Jinping, “Speech at a Ceremony Marking the Bicentenary of Karl Marx,” p. 2.

the productive forces and the relations of production, on the people's democracy, on cultural and social development, on the relationship between man and nature, on world history and on the construction of political parties are the theoretical basis and methodological principles on which contemporary China can establish a sound governance system and promote the development of a modern state. At present, the rapid rise of Western governance theory—increasingly the dominant discourse in global governance—has also had a great influence on contemporary China's theory and practice. It is of particular note that the position and viewpoint advocating the dissolution of state logic has been affirmed and supported by some Chinese scholars. Strictly speaking, this tendency is dangerous.<sup>19</sup> Marx and Engels' critique of Hegel's "omnipotent state," Lassalle's "modern state," Weitling's "provisional government," Blanqui's "Paris dictatorship," and Bakunin's anarchism, as well as their arguments for and praise of the Paris Commune model, provide us with rich intellectual resources for identifying, refuting, and clarifying the theoretical essence and implications of Western governance theory's attempt to dismantle state logic. Contemporary China's Marxist ideas on modernizing the governance system and governance capacity, establishing a social governance model based on collaboration, participation, and common interests, building a community with a shared future for mankind and forging a new pattern of global governance constitute the current real-world strategy for shaping the state logic of the governance system and promoting the sustainable development of governance theory and practice.

Second, it is imperative to critically draw on the rational components of Western governance theory. As Xi Jinping has said, "The Chinese nation is open-minded. Over centuries, we have been continuously drawing on others' strengths and shaping the character of our own nation."<sup>20</sup> "We should draw from the good theories, ideas and intellectual achievements of all humanity,"<sup>21</sup> and we should not become stuck in a rut or close ourselves off. Although Western governance theory is essentially a liberal trend, many of its ideas have important reference value for the development of the governance theory and practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics. For example, in past studies of governance theories, people would "directly oppose the political state to the economy or the market, as if the political state and the market were direct existential entities and constituted the whole of

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19 As Yu Keping pointed out, "Governance theories, especially global governance theories, are based on the premise that the government role and national sovereignty are insignificant and nation-state boundaries are blurred, emphasizing the transnational and global nature of governance. The danger lies in the fact that weakening the important role of national sovereignty and sovereign governments in domestic and international governance may objectively provide theoretical support for powerful countries and multinational corporations to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries and pursue hegemonic international policies. Therefore, we must be highly alert to this dangerous tendency of governance theories, especially global governance theories." (Yu Keping, "Introduction to Governance and Good Governance").

20 Xi Jinping, "Improve Governance Capacity through the System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics," pp. 105-106.

21 Xi Jinping, "Speech at a Forum on Philosophy and Social Sciences," p. 2.

the human world, without looking further at the more fundamental life-world realm lying beneath these special fields of human practice.”<sup>22</sup> Western governance theory, on the other hand, attaches great importance to “a sphere which mediates between society and state,”<sup>23</sup> that is, the so-called public sphere. It always focuses on highlighting a “logic of life” or “logic of survival” that sits between state logic and market logic. This undoubtedly provides us with expansion and edification as we break away from the long-established dichotomy of the state/civil society and the confrontation of the state/market logic. In addition, Western governance theory’s critique of state logic’s transgression of boundaries in the governance system, its examination of the causes of this failure, and its exploration of functional models can provide us with both positive and negative inspiration.

Third, it is vitally important to base ourselves on the developmental reality of contemporary China. To construct the state logic of modernizing the governance system of socialism with Chinese characteristics and to effectively promote the development of such a system, in addition to theoretically adhering to CPC leadership under the guidance of Marxism and actively drawing on the rational aspects of Western governance theory, an extremely important point is proceeding from the circumstances of the state, the Party and the people in contemporary China. In other words, we must take a stand on Chinese soil in seeking methods, tools and approaches to solve the unique contradictions and real-life problems occurring in Chinese society in the course of reform and opening up by constructing indigenous academic concepts, discourse systems and theoretical analysis frameworks to forge a governance system and modern state based on China’s local context. Unlike modern Western societies, Chinese society in transition is complex and differentiated, where pre-modern, modern, and postmodern factors are intertwined, posing a great test for China’s governance practice. Therefore, to construct the state logic of the contemporary Chinese governance system, China should: 1) Continuously eliminate pre-modern, backward and corrupting factors and keep them from eroding and influencing state logic. In the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Marx and Engels identified “feudal socialism” as the first “reactionary socialism” to be criticized, and profoundly demonstrated its backwardness, hypocrisy and danger. In a sense, governance practice is currently at a critical stage, facing the uncharted waters of rent-seeking by power, nepotism and other difficulties. This is not unrelated to the constraints of pre-modern factors, which therefore need to be boldly and resolutely eradicated, just as heavy doses of medicine are needed to treat serious disease. 2) Control, utilize and guide the logic of capital. At the same time as it makes full use of “all the positive acquisitions devised by the capitalist system”<sup>24</sup> to promote the development of its modernity, China should prevent the tendency of capital logic to convert capital into power and power into capital to discredit state logic through enchantment under cover of developing the market economy. Strong state power

22 Wang Nanshi, “The Game between the Logic of Survival and the Logic of Capital in the Era of Globalization.”

23 Jürgen Habermas, “The Public Sphere” (Öffentlichkeit).

24 Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works of Marx and Engels*, vol. 3, p. 825.

should always control the allocation of capital to avoid the crisis of modernity caused by the logic of capital. 3) Effectively deal with the dissolution of state logic by post-modern factors. In the era of the shift from industrial civilization to environmental civilization, China should, while developing a green mode of production and living, also be alert to the possible risks in the critique and rejection of power by postmodern factors. Resisting the dissolution of state logic by such factors must always be an important task for the practice of the state logic of modernizing the governance system in contemporary China.

Last, it is essential to use composite thinking to promote the state logic of modernizing the governance system. Upholding state logic in modernizing the governance system does not mean completely ignoring the role of other logics. On the one hand, it is clearly not enough to rely on a single logic to accomplish the major tasks of ensuring coordinated implementation of the “five-sphere” integrated plan<sup>25</sup> and the “four-pronged” comprehensive strategy<sup>26</sup> and the modernization of China’s governance system and capacity in the New Era. The state, society, the market and individuals need to work together to accomplish these tasks. On the other, governance is different from management in that it is not entirely top-down or one-way, but rather has a systemic existence. As Xi Jinping emphasized, “Different from management, governance is systemic governance, law-based governance, governance at source, and comprehensive policy.”<sup>27</sup> Therefore, multiple intellectual logics must exist in the governance system. And thirdly, state logic can only be enhanced and developed when it interacts with multiple other logics, or rather, state logic can only play its leading role if it is integrated with the advantages and resources of other logics. In the long run, in the governance system of socialism with Chinese characteristics for the New Era, factors such as state logic, market logic and social logic need to be closely interwoven. State logic guarantees order, market logic provides dynamism and social logic creates meaning. China should promote state logic with composite thinking, open up the modernization of China’s governance system and capacity under socialism with Chinese characteristics for the New Era, and strive to contribute Chinese wisdom to global governance and human development.

Adhering to the values and functions of state logic in modernizing the governance system not only helps us escape from the myth of “polycentric governance” and ensure that the state plays the authoritative and leading role in the governance system, but also provides the institutional framework and mechanism for achieving social justice, improving market efficiency and fostering social autonomy. Upholding state logic in the course of modernizing the governance system is necessary not only for creatively preserving China’s fine history

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25 The five-sphere integrated plan promotes coordinated economic, political, cultural, social and environmental advancement.

26 The four-pronged comprehensive strategy undertakes comprehensive steps to finish building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, deepen reform, advance law-based governance, and strengthen Party self-governance.

27 Xi Jinping, “Developing the China (Shanghai) Pilot Free Trade Zone to Strengthen and Innovate Social Governance in Megacities,” p. 1.

and culture, but also for critically absorbing the positive achievements of Western theories of governance modernization. More importantly, it is essential to focus on problem-solving, on the transformation of the principal contradictions in Chinese society, and encapsulate the innovation of a governance theory that originates in and guides practice. Contemporary Chinese society is a differentiated society in transition, with pre-modern, modern and postmodern factors being present at the same time, creating complex and rigorous challenges for China's governance practice. Only by unfailingly upholding state logic in the course of modernizing the governance system can China's governance practice throw off the hindrance of multiple factors and always take the correct road.

Adhering to state logic in the process of modernizing the governance system not only has practical significance for China, but also has extensive global significance. In an era when governance solutions based on the principles of capital logic have trouble coping with global development problems, China advocates a modern governance system led by state logic which will open up a new civilization for national and global governance on a global scale. Only by adhering to state logic in the course of modernizing the governance system can the developed world escape the crisis of modernity that has always constrained its development; only thus can developing countries avoid the failed paths of capital modernity or classical Western modernity and throw off their law of the jungle, or "war of all against all." Only then can a community with a shared future for mankind be truly built in the world under the principle of achieving shared growth through discussion and collaboration.

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