

Sixty Years of Studies on Marxist Theory in China

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Abstract: The studies on Marxist theory in New China went through a period of foundation, a period of ossification and stagnation, a period of revival and development, and a period of prosperity and innovation. Great achievements were scored, but in the future development of this work, efforts must be made to continue to strengthen the work of editing, translating, publishing and studying the Marxist classics for a better scientific understanding and treatment of Marxism, constantly summarize the law of development of the studies on Marxist theory and constantly push forward the sinicization of Marxism. We must also constantly extend the fields and increase the depth of the studies on Marxist theory, strive to achieve an organic integration of academic research, policy discussion and publicity, strive to uplift the international field of vision in the studies on Marxist theory, and increase the “Chinese voice” in this field.

Key words: Marxism, future development of Marxism, and sinicization of Marxism

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The outbreak of the Opium War in 1840 saw the beginning of a process that turned China gradually into a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society. Since then, how to achieve national independence and the liberation of the people, and how to make the country powerful and prosperous and achieve the common prosperity of the people have been two great historical topics for countless people with high aspirations of the Chinese nation. From the 1840s to the founding of New China in 1949, the Chinese people stirred up a number of revolutionary waves against imperialism and feudalism, but most of them ended in failure. Western theories were introduced into China one after another, but none of them could change the destiny of the Chinese nation. At the end of the 19th century Marxism began to be introduced into China. The Communist Party of China (CPC) was founded in July 1921, and Marxism became an ideological flag for guiding the Chinese revolution. With the guidance of Marxism, the Chinese revolution took on a new look. Under the leadership of the CPC, the People’s Republic of China was founded in 1949 after 28 years of warfare.

The founding of the People’s Republic of China opened a new era in Chinese history. The CPC, armed with the theory of Marxism, began to make unremitting efforts to attain the goal of making the country powerful and prosperous, and achieve the common prosperity of the Chinese people. After painstaking exploration and successful practice, it has scored tremendous achievements that have caught the eyes of the whole world in the great cause of building socialism with Chinese characteristics. The century-old history of the Chinese nation in striving for its national independence and liberation underlay the brilliant future for Marxist theoretical

studies in China.

The century-old struggle of the Chinese people in realizing national rejuvenation and development demonstrates the tremendous power of Marxist theoretical studies in China. It will be of great importance to the promotion of the great cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics to summarize and review the progress in Marxist theoretical studies in China in the past 60 years in a scientific way and look to the future development of these studies.

I. Brief Description of the Development of Marxist Theoretical Studies over Sixty Years

After dozens of years of exploration and debate on the definition of Marxism by scholars both at home and abroad, we believe that we can give a new definition to Marxism in four aspects: Marxism is a theoretical system founded by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and constantly developed by their successors, a system of academic and scientific thought concerning the general laws of the development of Nature, society and thinking, the guiding thought and scientific system for the working class and its political party to wage socialist revolution and construction and the transition to a communist society, and the social thinking and scientific system of belief in core values.

Marxist theoretical studies in New China have experienced a tortuous process of development over the past 60 years. On the basis of the differences of the research subjects, research orientation, research methods and overall pattern, the process is roughly divided into two periods and four stages before and after the reform and opening-up policies were introduced in China in 1978.

The years from 1949 to 1965 were the initial period for laying the foundation for Marxist theoretical studies. During this period, for the purpose of meeting the needs of studying, giving publicity to and popularizing Marxism, translation and publication of the Marxist classics were promoted in an all-round way, and certain progress was made in the studies on the fundamental tenets and principal works of Marxism. At the same time, research and educational institutions for Marxist theory were set up one after another, the contingent of personnel engaged in Marxist theoretical studies grew year by year, and the establishment of a system of different branches of Marxist learning was started.

The Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPC for the Translation of the Works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin was established in January 1953, and began to translate, edit and publish the works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Volume I of the Chinese edition of the *Complete Works of Joseph Stalin* came off the press at the end of 1953, and by 1956 all 13 volumes of the series had been published. As a supplement to the *Complete Works*, the *Selected Works of Joseph Stalin* was also published in two volumes in 1962. Volume I of the *Complete Works of Vladimir Lenin* came off the press in December 1956, and all 39 volumes of the Chinese edition of Lenin's complete works had been published by 1963. Moreover, the four-volume *Selected Works of Vladimir Lenin* was published in 1960. The first volume of the Chinese edition of the *Complete Works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* was printed at the end of 1956, and 21 volumes of their works had been published by 1966. The Central Committee of the CPC set up a special committee to publish the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* in May 1950. From October 1951 to September 1960 four volumes of the *Selected Works* were published. Moreover, separate Chinese editions of *Capital*, *A Theoretical History of Surplus*

Value, Anti-Dühring, The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, and Philosophical Notebooks, and some Soviet theoretical writings and textbooks were also translated and published during this period. At the same time, Chinese Marxist theoretical workers carried out research on the classical works and fundamental tenets of Marxism in relation to the major questions of socialist transformation, socialist construction and socialist development. These works included Li Da's *Explanations of Practice*, and *Explanations of Contradictions*, Ai Siqu's *Historical Materialism* and the *History of Social Development*, and Wu Liping's *History of Socialism*.

Research and educational institutions for Marxist theory were set up one after another, and a network of different branches of Marxist learning was established. The Administrative Council (now the State Council) issued the *Decision to Reform the Curricula of Institutions of Higher Education* in August 1950, which required a political discipline of new democracy to be added. The Ministry of Education issued the *Directive on the Disciplines of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought in Institutions of Higher Education Throughout the Country* in October 1952, requiring such institutions to add the disciplines of the theory of new democracy, political economy, and dialectical materialism and historical materialism. In February 1953 the Ministry of Education defined the basics of Marxism-Leninism as a required discipline for the second-year students in all institutions of higher education and special technical schools. In 1954 institutions of higher education throughout the country all offered the four disciplines of Marxist philosophy, political economy, the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolshevik) and the history of the Chinese revolution. At the same time, institutions of higher education throughout the country almost all set up Marxism teaching and research sections in charge of teaching the basics of Marxism. In 1955 the Chinese Academy of Sciences set up its division of philosophy and social sciences and 15 research institutes of literature, history, philosophy, economics and law, with Marxist theoretical studies as an important part of their research work. In 1956 China People's University set up a basics of Marxism department, training teachers and research personnel for other institutions of higher education. After 1957 this university and some other institutions of higher education offered a special discipline on the history of the international communist movement, the course on the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolshevik) was changed to one of the history of the international communist movement, and that of the history of the Chinese revolution was changed one of the history of the CPC. With the approval of the Central Committee of the CPC, China People's University established a research institute of the history of Marxist thought.

The years 1966 to 1978 (the decade of the "cultural revolution") saw the ossification and stagnation of Marxist theoretical studies, which lasted until the opening of the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CPC in late 1978. After the "cultural revolution" began, the work of translating, editing and publishing the Marxist classics was suspended, the research institutions and contingent of Marxist theoretical research workers were undermined, and normal Marxism research and teaching work almost stopped. The "theory of continued revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat" was given wide publicity as an important development of Marxist theory, and so-called Marxist studies were limited to the search in Marxist works for justification of the theory'. In November 1970 the Central Committee of the CPC issued a circular stating that all party cadres, senior cadres in

particular, must seriously study the *Communist Manifesto*, *Civil War in France*, *Critique of the Gotha Program*, *Anti-Duhring*, *State and Revolution* and *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, and five other works, including *On Practice* and *Where Does Man's Correct Thinking Come from?* Later, the work of editing and translating the Marxist classics resumed. In 1972 the four-volume Chinese edition of the *Selected Works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* and the four-volume Chinese edition of the *Selected Works of Vladimir Lenin* were re-edited and published. By 1974 all 39 volumes of the Chinese edition of the *Complete Works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* had been published. Moreover, large numbers of separate editions of classical Marxist works, and the 39 volumes of the Chinese edition of the *Complete Works of Vladimir Lenin* were reprinted. Work was started in 1975 to organize the edition of the *Manuscripts of Vladimir Lenin*. At the same time, many Marxist theoretical workers began to reflect on the "cultural revolution."

The years from 1978 to 1992 marked a period of rejuvenation and development of the Marxist theoretical studies, during which new achievements were made one after another in editing, translating and publishing the Marxist classics, a number of Marxist theoretical research and teaching institutions were restored or established, and the number of fields of Marxist learning was gradually increased. The influence of the research achievements was far-reaching, and the system of disciplines was restored and developed.

Outstanding achievements were obtained in the editing, translation and publication of the Marxist classics, especially when China began to edit, translate and publish the second Chinese edition of the *Complete Works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels*, and the second Chinese edition of the *Complete Works of Vladimir Lenin*. In May 1982 the Central Committee of the CPC decided to edit, translate and publish the second Chinese edition of the *Complete Works of Vladimir Lenin*. The first volume came out in 1984, and by December 1990 all the 60 volumes of the *Complete Works of Vladimir Lenin* were off the press. After the 11 supplementary volumes of the first edition of the *Complete Works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* were put out by 1985, the Central Committee of the CPC decided in July 1986 to edit, translate and publish the second Chinese edition of the *Complete Works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels*. At the same time, progress was made in editing and publishing the works of Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping and other revolutionaries of the older generation. The *Selected Readings from Mao Zedong* (two volumes) was published in 1986, and the second edition (revised) of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* was published in 1991. The *Selected Writings of Deng Xiaoping (1975- 1982)* came out in 1983, *Building Socialism with Chinese Characteristics* (revised and enlarged edition) was published in 1987, and the *Selected Writings of Deng Xiaoping (1938-1965)* was put out in 1989. During this period important progress was made in the study of the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, comparisons of the different editions of the Marxist classics, study of their texts and versions, and explanations of the leading works. *Capital*, *Theses On Feuerbach*, *Anti-Duhring*, *Philosophical Notebooks*, and *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* were studied widely and in great depth.

The number of Marxist theoretical research and teaching institutions grew year by year, and the system of training research personnel was gradually improved. In May 1978 China People's University reestablished its research institute for the history of the development of Marxism-Leninism. In July 1979 the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences established a research institute of Marxism, Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. In June 1980 Peking

University established a research institute of Marxism, Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. The Central Party School, the National Defense University and some local academies of social sciences also established research institutes of Marxism or Mao Zedong Thought, and sections in charge of teaching or research assignments. With the expansion of the areas of research into Marxism, and the emergence of new branches of learning, a number of new research and teaching institutions were also set up. For example, the Development and Research Center under the State Council established the World Socialism Research Institute in 1989. At the same time, the Marxist theoretical research personnel training system was improved. In April 1984 the Ministry of Education issued opinions on establishing ideological and political education specialties in 12 institutions of higher education. It decided that a regular four-year ideological and political education discipline, a second bachelor's degree discipline and a three-year ideological and political education discipline would be introduced in some institutes of higher education. On December 21, 1987 the then State Education Commission issued a catalog of regular disciplines and a three-year discipline, which included "ideological and political education" in the regular disciplines for the first time. In 1987 the Academic Degree Committee of the State Council revised the catalog of disciplines for master's and doctor's degrees, and added an ideological and political education discipline. In September of the same year the State Education Commission printed and distributed opinions for the implementation of the ideological and political education discipline for master's degree students. It decided to train postgraduates in the ideological and political education discipline starting in 1988. In that year Fudan, Wuhan and Nankai universities, and seven other institutes of higher education enrolled their first group of postgraduates in the ideological and political education discipline. In 1990 the Academic Degree Committee of the State Council adopted a catalog of disciplines for master's and doctor's degrees. Two programs were provided for master's degrees in Marxist theoretical education (including Marxist tenets, the history of the Chinese revolution, socialist construction in China, world politics and economy, and international relations) and ideological and political education in the category of law. Moreover, starting in 1981, some institutes of higher education and research also provided programs for master's and doctor's degrees in Marxist philosophy, political economy, scientific socialism and the history of the international communist movement.

The number of fields of Marxist theoretical research was gradually increased, and the influence of the research achievements was far-reaching. On the eve of the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party, Chinese Marxist theoretical workers took an active part in the discussion on the question of the criterion of truth, thus providing ideological guidance in promoting the emancipation of the mind, reestablishing the Marxist ideological line and starting the new era of reform and opening up. After the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party, the Marxist theoretical workers combined Marxist theoretical studies with the summing up of historical experience and lessons, with modern socialist theory and practice, and with the great practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics, constantly expanding the areas of Marxist theoretical studies and promoting the in-depth development of Marxist theoretical studies. Great progress was made in the study on the history of the thoughts of the classical Marxist writers and of Stalin, of the "Soviet and East European models," of Mao Zedong Thought, of the history of the development of Marxism, of the history of the international communist movement, of

socialist ideology, of Western Marxism and of major related questions. The greatest achievement made in the development of Marxist theory during this period was the founding of Deng Xiaoping Theory. The Marxist theoretical workers not only made contributions to the formation and development of Marxist theory with their creative achievements, they also, on the basis of learning, giving publicity to and studying the theory, made an in-depth study of major questions such as the theory of the primary stage of socialism, the nature of socialism, the strategy of socialist development, the socialist market economy and the construction of socialist spiritual civilization, around the major theme of “what is socialism and how is it to be built?” thereby deepening their knowledge of the way to build socialism in a relatively backward country.

The years from 1993 up until the present mark a period of prosperity and innovation in Marxist theoretical studies. Especially since the Sixteenth National Congress of the CPC in 2002, in the course of carrying out Marxist theory research and construction, the work of editing, translating, publishing and studying the Marxist classics has continued to advance steadily, the contingent of personnel studying and teaching Marxist theory has been growing, the research fields and topics for Marxist theoretical studies have been expanded and deepened, and the whole system of disciplines with Marxist theory as the core is becoming more complete.

A big advance has been recorded in the work of editing, translating, publishing and studying the Marxist classics. The second Chinese edition of the *Complete Works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* began to come off the press in 1955, and 20 volumes had been published by the end of 2007. It is planned to have all volumes (60-70 volumes) published in the second decade of the century. The new version of the *Selected Works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* (ten volumes) and the *Selected Works of Vladimir Lenin* (five volumes), the editing and translation of which are nearing completion, will soon be published. The new editions of the old *Selected Works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* (four volumes) and the *Selected Works of Vladimir Lenin* (four volumes) were published in 1995. The third volume of the *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* was published in 1993, and the second edition of the first two volumes of the *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* were published in 1994. At the same time, the study of the Marxist classics became more comprehensive, systematic and profound. In 2004 the Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPC for the Translation of the Works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin took the lead in undertaking research on the basic views of the Marxist classics, and joined more than 200 specialists and scholars from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the Central Party School, the Ministry of Education, the National Defense University and the Academy of Military Sciences in the study of 18 sub-topics. They devoted themselves to the scientific interpretation of the basic views of the Marxist classics, and had a collection of essays on these studies published. The famous works of the *Communist Manifesto*, *Capital*, *Germany Ideology*, and *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* have launched a new tide of study and discussion. Besides, with more and more academic exchanges with other countries, the study of the second edition of the historical text of the *Complete Works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* (MEGA2) and other foreign texts of the Marxist classics has also caught the attention of academic circles in China.

The Marxist theoretical research and educational institutions have further expanded, and the disciplines offered are more comprehensive. With the deepening of the studies on Deng Xiaoping Theory, after the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences established China’s first

Deng Xiaoping Research Center on February 13, 1993, the Central Party School, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the National Defense University and the Ministry of Education all set up Deng Xiaoping Theory research centers. In addition, many academies of social sciences, and institutions of higher education, including Beijing University and Fudan University, have also set up Deng Xiaoping Theory research institutions. Since the beginning of the new century, the Central Committee of the CPC has started a grand-scale Marxist theoretical research and construction project, which has greatly united the Marxist theoretical research personnel. With the approval of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, a Marxism research institute was set up by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences on December 26, 2005. Dozens of institutions of higher education in China established their own Marxist research institutes or research centers. At the same time, the offering of Marxist theoretical disciplines also became more complete. In 1995 the Academic Degree Committee of the State Council and the State Education Commission consolidated the two disciplines of Marxist theoretical education and ideological and political education into Marxist theoretical education and ideological and political education under the category of the science of law, as a second-level discipline in the category of political science for second-year students. In 1996 Wuhan University, China People's University and Tsinghua University became the first group of schools to offer doctorate degree programs in this discipline. On December 23, 2005 the Academic Degree Committee of the State Council and the Ministry of Education issued a circular on the adjustment and addition of the first-level discipline of Marxist theory and second-level disciplines under it. The Circular said that the first-level discipline of Marxist theory and second-level disciplines would be added, and the first-level discipline of Marxist theory would be placed temporarily in the category of jurisprudence, under which there would be five second-level disciplines - the fundamental tenets of Marxism, the history of the development of Marxism, the sinicization of Marxism, the study of Marxism in foreign countries, and ideological and political education. In April 2008 another second-level discipline—the basic questions of the contemporary and modern history of China—was added. At present, there are 21 Ph.D programs and 73 master's degree programs of the first level, and 213 Ph.D programs and 842 master's degree programs of the second level.

The fields of Marxist theoretical studies and the number of research subjects have been increased and deepened. In order to solve the major questions emerging in the practice of the reform and opening up, and the construction of the socialist market economy, Chinese Marxist theoretical workers have constantly deepened their studies in the fields of the fundamental tenets of Marxism, the history of the development of Marxism, the sinicization of Marxism and Marxism in foreign countries, and constantly strengthened comprehensive studies on the theoretical system of Marxism, and on the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, actively promoted the popularization of Marxism in modern China, and worked hard to publicize and explain the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics in popular forms and language. Centering on the important question of “What style of Party is to be built and how can such a party be built?” they have deeply studied the important thought of the “Three Represents,” conscientiously discussed the building of the governance ability of the ruling party and the law of ruling, and summed up the lessons of the radical changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Centering on the important question of “what kind of development is to be aimed at, and how can it be achieved?”

they deeply studied and explained the important strategic ideas advanced by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of persevering in putting people first, achieving scientific development, building a harmonious socialist society, perfecting the socialist market economy, building a new socialist countryside, building an innovative country, developing socialist political democracy and building a system of socialist core values.

II. The Main Achievements in the Sixty Years of Marxist Theoretical Studies

In the past sixty years, Marxist theoretical studies in New China have traversed an extraordinary path, but also made unusual achievements, giving full play to the role of knowing the world, passing on and inheriting civilization, innovating theories, providing advice to the government and training personnel. Thereby they have made important contributions to the great cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Following is a brief description of the major academic achievements in the major fields of Marxist theory - the Marxist classics and their fundamental tenets, the history of the development of Marxism, the sinicization of Marxism and Marxist studies in other countries.

1. The study of the Marxist classics

After the founding of New China important progress was made in editing, translating and publishing the Marxist classics, giving publicity to them, doing textual research and version comparison, and giving explanations and interpretations of famous works. From 1953, when the Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPC for the Translation of the Works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin was formed, to 2005, when the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences established its Marxism Research Institute, the research force engaged in the studies of the Marxist classics kept growing, and the methods of studying the Marxist classics became more scientific in the process from learning and introducing the explanations on the Marxist classics in the Soviet Union to editing, translating and explaining the versions and originals of the Marxist classics by Chinese scholars themselves. The field of vision in the studies of the Marxist classics became more international and open as more Chinese scholars were sent abroad and foreign scholars were invited to visit China.

From 1979 to 2008 alone, the numbers of research papers on the Marxist classics written in China were as follows: 2,376 papers on *Capital*; 877 papers on the *Communist Manifesto*; 396 papers on *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* ; 311 papers on *The German Ideology* ; 157 papers on *Anti-Duhring* ; 148 papers on *Theses on Feuerbach*; and 145 papers on *Philosophical Notebooks*. There were also many publications on special topics, such as *Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels and Vladimir Lenin on Ideology*. The research papers on the Marxist classics, centering on “What is Marxism and how is Marxism to be approached” dealt with almost all aspects of the theories and ideas of the writers of the Marxist classics. In recent years, particular stress has been placed on the studies of the basic views of those writers, such as the idea of socialism, the idea of the road of social development in the underdeveloped Eastern countries, the idea of economic globalization and economic crises, the idea of man’s all-round development and his coordinated development with society and nature, and the idea of political civilization and the building of ruling parties.

2. The study of the fundamental tenets of Marxism

The combination of the fundamental tenets of Marxism with the concrete practice in China

is the fundamental guiding principle for the Chinese revolution, construction and reform. The study of the fundamental tenets of Marxism has always been an important part of the theoretical studies of Marxism in China. After the founding of New China, influenced by the Soviet model, the study of the fundamental tenets of Marxism was conducted separately in the three parts of Marxism: philosophy, political economy and scientific socialism. Chinese scholars made extensive and intensive studies on the respective basic theoretical questions of the three component parts, and made many theoretical achievements with important influence, in works such as *Dialectical Materialism and Historical Materialism*, the *Tenets of Dialectical Materialism*, the *Tenets of Historical Materialism*, *Textbook of Political Economy*, *Political Economy (capitalism)*, *Introduction to Scientific Socialism*, *Tenets of Scientific Socialism*, and *Scientific Socialism*.

Since the beginning of the reform and opening up, and especially after the State Education Commission required the institutions of higher education to add the “tenets of Marxism,” the study of the tenets of Marxism as a whole became very lively. After the beginning of the 21st century, with progress in Marxist theoretical research and the adding to university curricula of the “fundamental tenets of Marxism,” the systematic study of the fundamental tenets of Marxism became more and more extensive.

Centering on the major question of “what are the fundamental tenets of Marxism and how to handle the fundamental tenets of Marxism,” Chinese scholars had intensive discussions on the theoretical questions of the characteristics, content and hierarchy of the fundamental tenets of Marxism and the ideological principle of treating the fundamental tenets of Marxism, made a systematic study of the tenet of material determining consciousness and man’s social being determining his consciousness, the tenet of the eternal development of the interrelations of the objective worlds, the tenet of the law of the evolution and development of social formation from the primary stage to the higher stages, the tenets of the theory of surplus value and the fundamental and principal contradictions of capitalism, the fundamental tenets and theoretical hypothesis of modern Marxist political economy, the tenet of the historical inevitability of socialism and the historical mission of the working class, the tenet of class struggle and the revolution of the proletariat, the tenet of the theory of the state and the dictatorship of the proletariat, the tenet of the masses being the creators of history, the tenet of the strategy and tactics of the proletariat, the tenet of the political party of the proletariat and its building, the tenet of the nature and characteristics of scientific socialism, the tenet of man’s all-round development and communism, as well as the overall Marxist theoretical system consisting of these tenets, and obtained a number of theoretical achievements of influence in works such as the *General Description of the Fundamental Tenets of Marxism*.

3. The study of the history of the development of Marxism

After the founding of New China the study of the history of the development of Marxism emphasized the three component parts of Marxism – philosophy, political economy and scientific socialism. In order to study the whole history of the gestation, emergence and development of Marxism, in the early 1980s a national planning conference of philosophy and the social sciences included the writing of the history of the development of Marxism as a major national research project.³ The fruits of this endeavor included the *History of the Thought of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels*, *History of the Thought of Vladimir Lenin* and *History of the*

Development of Marxism (4 volumes) written by the Institute of the History of the Development of Marxism of China People's University. Apart from writings on general history, research achievements were encapsulated in *History of the Birth of Marxism*, *History of the Formation of Marxism*, *History of Marxist Philosophy* (eight volumes), *History and Present Situation of Marxist Philosophy*, *History of Marxist Economic Thought* (five volumes), and *Thirty Years of Theoretical Innovations in the Sinicization of Marxism*. Besides, the research achievements of some foreign scholars in this field were translated into Chinese and published, including *History of Marxism* by the Yugoslav scholar Franitsky, and British scholar David McLellan's *Marx before Marxism* and *Marxism after Marx*.

In his report delivered at the 16th National Congress of the CPC in 2002, Comrade Jiang Zemin said that it would be necessary to "conduct education in the history of the development of Marxism throughout the party." With the carrying out of the project of Marxist theoretical research and construction, the work of writing and compiling textbooks related to the history of the development of Marxism has been started, and Marxist theoreticians in China have made in-depth studies on several important questions, in an effort to explain and interpret the periods, trends and basic laws of the development of Marxism.

4. The study of the sinicization of Marxism

Starting on the very day it was founded, the CPC decided to establish Marxism as its guiding thought, persisted in combining the fundamental tenets of Marxism with the concrete practice in China, and founded the two great theoretical achievements of Mao Zedong Thought and the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, including Deng Xiaoping Theory, the important thought of the "Three Represents" and the important strategic ideas of the Scientific Outlook on Development. At the same time, after Mao Zedong put forward for the first time the task of sinicizing Marxism in his work *On the New Stage*, this question immediately aroused attention among Chinese Marxist scholars. Since the beginning of the reform and opening up, and especially after the beginning of the 21st century, Chinese Marxist scholars have made intensive studies on the basic questions of the historical inevitability of the sinicization of Marxism, the conditions for the sinicization of Marxism, the principles and requirements that must be upheld in this course, the historical process and basic laws, the basic historical experience and the two great theoretical achievements in the sinicization of Marxism. They have not only made contributions to the formation and development of the two great theoretical achievements, but also pushed forward the process of making the Chinese social sciences Marxist.

The study of Mao Zedong Thought is an important field of research into the sinicization of Marxism. In the past 60 years the study of Mao Zedong Thought has gone through the stages of giving publicity to it, making easily understandable explanations, using quotes out of context, allowing dogmatism to take over, and making fair evaluations and scientific explanations. The fields and subjects of research have been constantly expanded, the field of vision and research methods constantly renewed, and a number of important and influential research achievements obtained. From 1949 to 1978 more than 10,000 research papers on Mao Zedong Thought, and more than 1,300 kinds of related works were published in China. Both the quantity and quality of the research achievements obtained after 1978 have far exceeded those in the previous 30 years⁴. Among the influential and important works and treatises are *Talk on the Tenets of Mao*

Zedong Thought, Manuscripts of the History of Mao Zedong Thought, Studies of Mao Zedong Thought, History of Mao Zedong Thought (four volumes), *Outline of Mao Zedong Thought, Studies of Mao Zedong, The Scientific System of Mao Zedong Thought, and Mao Zedong Thought and Practice*. Many research documents of this period contain intensive studies on the scientific system and living essence of Mao Zedong Thought, the enrichment and development of Marxism-Leninism by Mao Zedong Thought, the contributions made by Zhou Enlai, Liu Shaoqi and Chen Yun, and other Chinese thinkers and statesmen of the party to Mao Zedong Thought, Mao Zedong's early and late thoughts, Mao Zedong's philosophical, economic, military and educational thought, and on Mao Zedong Thought and the practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics. They thereby made a systematic summary of the first historic leap in the sinicization of Marxism.

Deng Xiaoping Theory is the foundation of the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Since the 1970s, with the gradual formation and development of Deng Xiaoping Theory, China's studies on Deng Xiaoping Theory have undergone three periods: Before the 13th National Congress of the Communist Party in 1987 more intensive studies were made on the question of the criterion of truth, the question of the shift of the strategic focus, the question of the necessity of the reform and opening up, and the scientific topic of "taking our own road and building socialism with Chinese characteristics." From the 13th National Congress in 1987 to the 14th National Congress in 1992, the scholars made systematic studies on the important questions of the theories concerning the primary stage of socialism and the party's basic line for the primary stage of socialism. Since the 14th National Congress studies on Deng Xiaoping Theory were unfolded in all fields in a multi-dimensional, multi-level and systematic way. In the course of more than 30 years a large number of high-quality and influential general and special research writings, works and papers were published as a result of intensive studies of the formation and development of Deng Xiaoping Theory, its scientific system, logical structure, basic features and essence, its relationship and comparison with Mao Zedong Thought, and its contribution to the history of Marxism. They include: *Socialism with Chinese characteristics-Economy, Politics and Culture*, the *Outline of Deng Xiaoping's New Ideas on Building Socialism with Chinese Characteristics*, *Studies of Deng Xiaoping's Thought*, *Outline of Deng Xiaoping's Thought*, *Studies on the Theoretical System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics*, *Series of Studies on Deng Xiaoping's Thought* and *Series of the Studies on Deng Xiaoping Theory and Its Practice*.

The Important Idea of the "Three Represents" is an enrichment and development of the advanced theory of the Marxist party and the theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new historical conditions. Since Comrade Jiang Zemin advanced his important idea of the "Three Represents" in February 2000 the theoreticians have made a profound exposition of its scientific response to the stern tests confronted by the Party in its construction in the conditions of the major changes in the international situation, and clearly defined the relationship of the source and flow between the important idea of the "Three Represents" and Marxism, and Mao Zedong Thought and Deng Xiaoping Theory, centering on the inevitability of its birth, its theory and practice, scientific connotation, spirit and essence, and place in history. They held profound discussions on the law of the building of the ruling party, and had a number of influential and important theoretical achievements published, such as *The Party's Nature and the Scientific Connotation of the "Three Represents," An Outline for Studying the "Three*

Represents,” New Theory that Keeps Up with the Times - Interpretation of the Important Idea of the “Three Represents,” Innovation and Transcendence: Studies on the Important Idea of the “Three Represents” and the CPC’s Advanced Character, and The “Three Represents” and the Law of the Rule of the CPC.

Since the 16th National Congress of the CPC, the Central Committee, with Hu Jintao as its general secretary, advanced the important strategic ideas of the Scientific Outlook on Development and building a socialist and harmonious society, greatly pushing forward the process of the sinicization of Marxism. The theoreticians made comprehensive studies on the establishment of the Scientific Outlook on Development and its connotations, the theoretical origin and characteristics of a socialist and harmonious society, and the choice of paths for how to implement the Scientific Outlook on Development and build a socialist and harmonious society, made a systematic exploration of the innovations in the integrity of the theory of the development of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and made a number of important and influential theoretical achievements, such as the *Reader in the Concept of Scientific Development, China’s Peaceful Development and National Strategy, Analysis of Certain Important Questions Concerning the Building of a Socialist Harmonious Society, and Reader in the Latest Achievements in the Sinicization of Marxism.*

5. Marxist studies in other countries

Marxist studies in other countries started in the 1960s for “opposing and preventing revisionism,” in the works of Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Ernst Bloch, and became a field of theoretical study on Marxism in China in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In this period Marxist studies in the West mainly centered on the general description of the origin of “Western Marxism,” the Frankfurt school’s “negative dialectics,” the social critical theory and the ideas of their representatives. In the mid-1980s foreign Marxist studies centered on the conceptions, origin, targets, characteristics, methods of research and realistic significance of “Western Marxism” and its place in the history of Marxist philosophy. In the 1990s foreign Marxist studies centered on comments on the ideas of Gyorgy Lukacs and Antonio Gramsci and other founders of “Western Marxism,” the Frankfurt school and the ideas of its representatives Jurgen Habermas and Herbert Marcuse, the ideas of existentialism and its representative Jean-Paul Sartre, and the ideas of structural Marxism and its representative Louis Althusser. With the beginning of the 21st century, the trends of thought of Analytical Marxism represented by Gerald Allan Cohen, John Roemer and Jon Elster, postmodernism philosophy represented by Fredric Jameson, David Harvie and Jacques Derrida, and Ecological Marxism represented by David Pepper, James O’Conner and John Bellamy Foster have become the focus of Marxist studies in other countries. The year 2005 saw the advent of the discipline of “foreign Marxist studies.” The theoretical propositions of the communist parties in other countries and left and center-left ideas in other countries have also become objects of Marxist studies in China.

In the past 30 years Marxist studies in other countries have moved from focus on “Western Marxism” and “Neo-Marxism” to the research paradigm of the self-innovative discipline of “foreign Marxist studies,” the extension of the fields of learning from scattered studies and concentration mainly on philosophy to comprehensive studies and multi-disciplinary studies, and from focus on discussions on the theories of the scholar-students of Marxism in foreign countries to simultaneous attention to the extension of the categories of the studies of the

Marxist theories of the communist parties in other countries. During this period, a large number of representative foreign Marxist works were translated into Chinese and published in China, including Gyorgy Lukacs' works *History & Class Consciousness* and *The Destruction of Reason*, Karl Korsch's *Marxism and Philosophy and Karl Marx*, Antonio Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* and Gerald Allan Cohen's *Karl Marx's Theory of History*. At the same time, a large number of important academic works written by Chinese scholars were put on the market, such as *Western Marxism*, *Studies on Western Marxist Theories*, *Freud's Marxism*, *Contemporary Capitalist Theory of Western Marxism*, *Studies of the Frankfurt School*, *Analytical Marxism*, *The Philosophical Schools of Foreign Marxism*, *Analysis of "New Marxism,"* *The Broken Wing of Reason*, *The Changes in the Communist Parties in the Developed European Countries* and *The Communist Parties in the Present Capitalist Countries*.

6. Studies in other theoretical fields

After the founding of New China, importance was attached to studies of the historical experience of the international communist movement. After *The History of the International Communist Movement* written by Chinese scholars was published in 1958, more and more books on the international communist movement appeared on the market, and research institutions related to it were also set up one after another. The main questions under study included studies of the Communist International, historical figures like Eduard Bernstein and Karl Kautsky, and the international communist movement after World War II, including the conflict between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, the Hungarian incident and the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Studies were also published concerning the theories and practices of the reforms in the socialist countries of Yugoslavia and Hungary, the international communist movement after the radical changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, international financial crises, and the communist parties and workers' movements in other countries⁵.

In the early years after the founding of New China, one of the important tasks of the theoretical research and construction of Marxist historiography was to introduce and learn the historiographic theories of the Soviet Union, adhere to the guiding role of historical materialism, and criticize and eradicate the influence of the bourgeois historiographic theories and the feudalistic traditional historiography. Large numbers of famous works by Soviet historians were translated into Chinese and published, and became textbooks or reference books in the history departments of Chinese institutions of higher education. The questions of Marxist historiographic theories in the 1950s and early 1960s included the division of the periods of ancient Chinese history, China's feudal land system, peasant wars in ancient China, the formation of the Han nationality, and the rudiments of capitalism in China. The *Concise Edition of the General History of China* (four volumes in three editions) and the multivolume *General History of Chinese Thought* were also published during this period. Since the beginning of the reform and opening up, studies of Marxist historiographic theories have entered a new period of development, and the main questions under study include the laws of historical development and the five modes of production, the Asiatic mode of production, the categories of "regional history" and "world history," the origin of civilization and the Emergence of the state, the unity and diversity of historical development, and the necessity and contingency of historical development and choice⁶.

The first 30 years after the founding of New China marked a period in which the studies on the Marxist outlook on religion were formally started, initially developed, and then interrupted. In the subsequent 30 years after the beginning of the reform and opening up, studies on the Marxist religious outlook have become more scientific and mature, after bringing order out of the chaos caused by the “cultural revolution,” emancipating the minds of the people, restoring and deepening the studies, and making innovations and pursuing development. Since the beginning of the 21st century, the field of vision has become even broader in the studies on the Marxist religious outlook in China, and the views are more innovative. A number of works devoted to studies on the religious ideas of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels have been published, including studies on the sinicization of the Marxist religious outlook, and a large number of treatises and works concentrated their discussions on the theoretical structure of the sinicized Marxist religious outlook, such as *On Socialist Religion*, *On the Socialist Religious Outlook with Chinese Characteristics*, *On the Basic Experience in the Sinicization of the Marxist Religious Outlook* and *On the Socialist Religious Theoretical System with Chinese Characteristics*.

In addition, abundant research achievements have also been obtained in the fields of Marxist political science, logic, sociology, art and literature, and aesthetics.

III. The Future Development of Marxist Theoretical Studies

Summing up history is done for the purpose of opening up the future. “The success of the past is our wealth, and the mistakes of the past are also our wealth.”²⁸ To look into the future, with the changes of the times and the advance of the great cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics, Marxist theoretical studies will surely create a new situation and obtain still greater achievements.

1. Continuing to strengthen the work of editing, translating, publishing and studying the Marxist classics, so as to understand and treat Marxism in a scientific way

To strengthen the work of editing, translating, publishing and studying the Marxist classics is the inevitable requirement for adhering to and developing Marxism. It can be predicted that with all the volumes of the second Chinese edition of the *Complete Works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* put on the market, the ten volumes of the *Selected Works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* and the five volumes of the *Selected Works of Vladimir Lenin* published, the continuous introduction of the new documents of MEGA2 and translations of the newly discovered classics, still greater progress will be made in the studies on the classics and basic views of Marxism. Textual research, text comparisons and the comparative studies of the authors of the Marxist classics will continue to be deepened, and a science of Marxism with Chinese characteristics is expected to be born as a new sort of Marxist theory.

The studies on the classic works and basic views of Marxism are the basis for the scientific understanding and treatment of Marxism. Revolving around the important question of “what is Marxism and how is it to be treated,” Chinese Marxist theoretical workers have held lengthy and heated discussions, and made important progress. However, it should be seen that how to know Marxism from the viewpoint of development, how to comprehend Marxism from the field of vision as a whole, how to treat Marxism with a scientific attitude, to explain and interpret the nature and attributes of Marxism, its history of development and innovation mechanism, and to make efforts to make clear which are the fundamental tenets of Marxism

that must be adhered to for a long time, which are the theoretical judgments that have to be enriched and developed in the light of the new reality, which are the dogmatic comprehensions of Marxism that have to be eradicated, and which are the erroneous viewpoints that have emerged in the name of Marxism and that have to be clarified will remain fields of learning that require more hard work in the studies on the Marxist classical works.

2. Summing up the law of development in the studies on the Marxist theories and constantly pushing forward the process of the sinicization of Marxism

To persist in the combination of the fundamental tenets of Marxism with the concrete reality in China and the actual conditions in the world as a whole is the crucial secret of success of the Chinese revolution and construction, and the valuable experience of China's 60 years of studies on the Marxist theories. To make the studies on the Marxist theories prosperous and to constantly push forward the sinicization of Marxism, it is necessary to continue to adhere to the principle of combining the fundamental tenets of Marxism with the actual conditions in China and the world as a whole, correctly handle the relationships among "Marxist learning," "Western learning" and "Chinese learning," uphold the guiding position of Marxism, actively assimilate and draw on the beneficial achievements of Western philosophy and social sciences and the quintessence of Chinese traditional culture, strengthen studies on the changes and problems in different countries, and especially of present-day capitalism, sum up the historical experience of the past 60 years and especially the 30 years of reform and opening up, accurately grasp the various issues of the great practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics and achieve comprehensive innovations in the studies on the Marxist theories to push forward the studies on the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics. It is necessary to establish the academic principle of "Marxist learning as the base, Western learning for application, Chinese learning as the root, world conditions as a mirror, national conditions as the basis, and comprehensive innovations."

At the same time, by summing up the history of the development of Marxism over the past 160 years in a scientific way, it is necessary to find out the law of evolution of the research methods of Marxist theories and consciously renew the way of thinking and research paradigm for studies on Marxist theories, find the law of establishment of disciplines for Marxist theories and establish the catalogue of disciplines, discipline boundaries, discipline structures, discipline functions and discipline systems, find out the law of the training and growth of research personnel and make efforts to train a number of great Marxist theoreticians, leading figures of disciplines and high-quality backbone personnel. At the same time it is necessary to find out the law and mechanism for the production of top-notch academic products of Marxism, and constantly raise the academic and ideological levels of the studies on the Marxist theories to provide powerful theoretical support for the process of the sinicization of Marxism.

3. Constantly extending the fields and depth of the studies on the Marxist theories to achieve the organic integration of academic studies, theoretical publicity and policy discussion

Marxism is an academic system of constant development, not ossified learning. As an open scientific system, Marxism can display its vigorous academic vitality only in the course of development and innovation. The Chinese Marxist scholars of the present time must constantly make innovations in academic studies on Marxism in the light of the latest changes in capitalism

and socialism worldwide. Radical changes are taking place in the present-day world, and Marxist academic studies are confronting many new topics and challenges. For example, how to treat the different changes and trends of development of present-day world capitalism and explain its potential for development and life cycle in a scientific way, how to treat the frustrations and low tide of the present world socialist movement and explain the future destiny and road of development of scientific socialism in a scientific way, and how to treat the profound changes in all fields of the social life of mankind caused by the world scientific and technological developments of the present time and clarify the present values of the Marxist theoretical system in a scientific way, how to treat the experience of success and actual problems in the practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and explain the law of socialist construction, the law of the Communist Party's rule, and the law of development of human society. It is the academic mission of the Chinese Marxist scholars of the present time to apply the Marxist stand, viewpoint and methods to study the new situation, solve new problems and come to new conclusions. The Chinese social sciences must use Marxism as their guide.

Marxism is a vivid theory, not an “abstruse”¹⁰ field of learning. As a theory and ideology of the fundamental interests of the working class, Marxism can become a powerful force to transform the world only when it is really mastered by the broad masses of the people. The Chinese Marxist scholars of the present time must give active publicity to the Marxist theories, and especially the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and constantly push forward the popularization of Marxism. They should explain the historical position and guiding significance of the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics by focusing on the important theoretical and practical questions of what is Marxism, how to treat Marxism, what is socialism, how to build socialism, what kind of a party to build, how to build the party, what kind of development to achieve and how to achieve it. They should explain how the history and the people have chosen Marxism, have chosen the CPC and have chosen the socialist road in the light of the history of the Chinese nation in striving for national independence and achieving national rejuvenation for over a century, in order to lead the people to realize that only socialism can save China and that only socialism with Chinese characteristics can enable China to develop. They should explain how the reform and opening up policies have enabled China to progress, and developed socialism and Marxism in the light of the course of hardships suffered by the CPC in opening the road of reform and opening up, and the tremendous achievements that have been made, to lead the people to know that the reform and opening up policies decide the destiny of China in the present time. They should learn and explain the experience and lessons gained in the popularization of Marxism in line with the path and method by which the masses of the people have learned and grasped Marxism and have transformed it into the force for action, and constantly promote the popularization of the innovative achievements of the Marxist theories of the present time at the grassroots level. It is necessary to establish a Marxist mass communication system to study how to effectively disseminate Marxism. The masses of the people want to grasp Marxism and Marxism needs more publicity.

Marxism is a constantly applied train of thought for making policy decisions, not a mere academic study. As a theoretical tool for transforming the world, Marxism can embody its scientific value of application only in concrete practice. Marxist scholars must meet the

requirements of the developments of the domestic and international situations and practices, and make intensive studies on the major questions raised in the practice of the reform and opening up and modernization, and constantly produce applicable and policy achievements in conformity with the inherent requirements and values of Marxism and socialism with Chinese characteristics, so as to promote the historic task of building a well-off society in an all-round way and accelerating socialist modernization. They must make intensive studies on how to implement the concept of scientific development and adhere to China's basic economic system in the primary stage of socialism, and further improve the socialist market economic system and policies; make intensive studies on how to integrate the adherence to the party's leadership, making the people the masters of the country and governing the country according to law, and further deepen the reform of the political system, broaden and develop the system and policies of political democracy of socialism with Chinese characteristics. They must make intensive studies on how to adhere to and consolidate the guiding position of Marxism in the field of ideology, make efforts to construct the socialist core value system, consolidate and strengthen the mainstream ideology and public opinion, promote cultural innovations, and improve the system and policies of the soft power of the culture of the country. They must make intensive studies on the changes in international political, economic and cultural development, and especially the international financial and economic crises of the present time to improve the system and policies to cope with the changes in the international situation. In addition, they must study how to promote the system and policies concerning party building with the building of the party's ruling ability and advanced nature as the main thread. Chinese think tanks should learn to apply Marxism, and China needs more think tanks of a Marxist nature.

4. Striving to broaden the international field of vision in the studies on Marxist theories and making great efforts to form a "Chinese voice" in global studies on Marxist theories

With the tremendous successes achieved in the Chinese revolution, construction and reform, the international influence of Chinese studies on Marxist theories is growing day by day. In the past 60 years China has translated and published English, French, Spanish and Japanese editions of the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, *Selected Readers of Mao Zedong's Works*, *Selected Military Works of Mao Zedong*, *Selected Works of Zhou Enlai*, *Selected Works of Liu Shaoqi*, *Selected Works of Zhu De*, *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* and *Selected Writings of Chen Yun*, and the Russian edition of *The Selected Works of Jiang Zemin*, and a large number of Marxist scholars' works, showing the theoretical achievements of the sinicization of Marxism to the world. At the same time, a large number of foreign scholars, such as Stuart R. Schram, Frederic Wakeman, Brantly Womack, Nat, Ito Makoto and David Cotes, with the combination of the fundamental tenets of Marxism with the actual conditions in China as topics, have made studies on the sinicization of Marxism and the theories and realities in the economic, political, cultural and social fields of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the two principal forms of text interpretation and theoretical perspective.

For a long period of time, however, the "sinicization of Marxism" and "internationalization of Chinese Marxism" were divorced from each other in the field of theoretical studies of Marxism in China¹¹. The future development of the studies on Marxist theory in China must increase the two-way exchanges by sending scholars abroad and inviting foreign scholars to visit China to extend the international field of vision in the studies on

Marxist theory, and make great efforts to increase the “Chinese voice” in the global studies on Marxist theory. The Chinese Marxist scholars of the present time must have a thorough and comprehensive knowledge of the history and present situation of Marxism in other countries and hold all-dimensional and substantial academic dialogues with foreign Marxist scholars, at the same time introducing the Chinese Marxist social sciences and the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics correctly to other countries so as to make them become one of the most influential theoretical trend of thought and academic frontiers with the greatest vitality in the world, to constantly increase the international voice and international influence of the Chinese studies on Marxist theory.

While reviewing the studies on Marxist theory in China, we deeply realize that the degree of realization of theory in a country is always determined by how much theory meets the needs of that country. History has proved and will continue to prove that China needs Marxism, and the great cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics needs sinicized Marxism. With Marxism and its sinicized theories as the guide, by implementing the scientific outlook on development, seeking truth from facts, emancipating our minds, keeping up with the times, keeping close to reality, life and the masses, we will surely open a new situation in the studies on Marxism. We will make important progress in the studies on the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, in giving publicity and popularizing the latest achievements in the sinicization of Marxism, in editing, translating and publishing the Marxist classics and in the studies on the basic views of Marxism, in constructing the discipline and teaching material systems that fully reflect the latest achievements in the sinicization of Marxism, in the training of Marxist theoretical research personnel, and in exchanging the research achievements of the Marxist theories with other countries, so as to provide academic support, publicity guarantee and innovation motive force for the development of socialism with Chinese characteristics and the rejuvenation of world socialism.

Notes

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