

Preface

Paying Attention to Chinese Interpretations

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The name of this series, “A Developing China”, is plain and simple, but giving some thought to its implications yields three levels of meaning. The first is that China is a developing country. Over the course of the modern period, because of the constrictions imposed from the outside by imperialism and the internal corruptions of feudalism, China’s economy, politics, culture and social development all lagged behind, with the result that the country remained underdeveloped for a substantial period of time, becoming, in fact, the world’s largest developing nation. Second, China is still at its primary stage of socialism. Owing to the combination of a number of internal and external factors, China did not evolve along the traditional path of capitalism, choosing instead a non-capitalist form of development, a determination made both by its people and by history. The socialist path, however, can only be experimental in nature, and is marked by considerable uncertainty in the setting of its goals, the design of its institutions, its growth approaches and its operational mechanisms. In all of these things we can see the symptoms of a country still in the process of development. Third is the character of a still developing social science. As far as the understanding and grasp of the rules of China’s development toward modernization is concerned, Chinese social science can only deepen its awareness through a process of constant exploration and trial and error, and can only mature via repeated reflection upon and synthesis of new research. Regarding a move toward a spirit of autonomy, Chinese social science is in pursuit of a comprehensive method arising out of a gradual amalgamation of Western academic learning, Chinese cultural heritage and theoretical innovation of

Marxism. Based upon the three considerations outlined above, using the idea of “a developing China” to describe and define contemporary China is clearly an apt and precise reading.

The gathering speed of China’s development, the growing intensity of its transformation, and the ever more evident achievements of its modernization over the past 30 years have attracted a good deal of interest. Like a huge laboratory, China and its development represent a comprehensive process of transformation combining economic growth, political stability, social growth, cultural maturation, and a high level of diplomatic activity. In terms of economics, China has sustained an annual rate of GDP growth of over nine percent, with GDP having jumped to the third largest in the world, and it has grown into an important contributor of industrial products to the world’s trading system. Politically, this country with a huge population and a vast area has been able to maintain a commendable stability; there has been a firm drive toward putting democracy into action; the rule of law has been implemented with great perseverance and leadership by the Communist Party has been very effectively improved. Socially, the issue of the livelihood of the people has always been at the head of the agenda; the pursuit of social justice and equality has never been set aside and there has been great effort to confine the social costs of development to as small an area as possible; the social welfare system as they have accumulated has been continually improved, and non-governmental organizations for public welfare have flourished. Culturally, the creation and innovation of a mainstream ideology has continued apace and in an environment that is profoundly changing, people’s intellectual and spiritual worlds increasingly show an essential soundness; the provision of the products of public culture grows richer by the day, and the spread of education, literature and the arts, and science has greatly increased. In diplomacy our essential premise has been to maintain an open stance and to pursue an independent, autonomous and peaceful foreign policy; we pay careful attention to relations among the major powers, as well as to links with our neighbors, and we participate actively in all matters global; we strive to contribute as we should to making adjustments to the international political situation and toward economic globalization. All of these factors indicate that China provides a model case in development that is rare in the contemporary world, regardless of whether one considers development in its totality, its

sustainability, or its depth. As a result, it is only natural that a developing China has attracted increasing curiosity and more favorable opinion.

One consequence of China's rapid development is that people inevitably wish to take their thoughts about this issue one step further, which brings in its wake a whole series of perplexities. Has China's development been merely the result of a series of fortuitous circumstances, or is it comprised of historical rationality and a certain objective necessity? Has China's development been an isolated case that cannot be emulated, or can it function as a universal reference for other developing countries? Is China's development merely an uncomplicated duplication of the developed nations of the West, or is it a unique creation that has at once assimilated such achievements of human civilization as market economics and combined them with indigenous conditions? Has China's development been nothing more than a series of hasty and muddled practical efforts that have nonetheless brought about significant results, or will it gradually take shape as an exemplary developmental model? Is China's development only a single charge forward, or will it be able to build on its current momentum to achieve sustained progress over a longer duration? Is China's development only a matter of material wealth, the pursuit of profit and economic growth, or does it embody unique Chinese views on development, social order, human well-being and the world as a whole? All such questions represent unavoidable and serious challenges to those people objectively observing Chinese development. Any accurate response to these questions cannot be based only on simple common sense, but requires the assistance and support of the humanities and the social sciences. Scholars active in such fields as economics, political science, sociology and law need to take their responsibilities seriously.

We can take comfort, however, from the fact that Chinese humanists and social scientists have neither absented themselves from this great and profound transformation nor lost their way during the course of this intensely dramatic restructuring — they have kept apace with the times and of events. The work of Chinese scholars of the humanities and the social sciences over the past decades can be encapsulated within the several categories listed below. First, they have engaged in meaningful analysis of both the real world and the national situation. Whether in the face of the difficult beginning days of China's reform and opening-up or in regard to the

specific developmental steps or changes that followed, in order to sort out the principal contradictions of each stage or field, Chinese scholars have all paid close attention to analyzing both the contemporary international environment and the practicalities of the domestic situation. With an issue-oriented approach, they illuminated the full dimensions of the bottlenecks during the course of reform such that they gained a full range of information and source materials for policy makers. Second, they have developed specialized planning of the programs and the ways and means of reform. Although the pace of intensity of the Chinese reform and opening-up proceeded according to both its own rhythm and its own program, no one can deny its wide range and comprehensiveness. From economics to politics, from culture to society, hundreds and thousands of important changes took place in succession, and the survival and success rate of all of these reforms was exceptionally high. One of the main reasons for this was the development of carefully thought out as well as highly detailed contingency plans, on which Chinese scholars expended a good deal of painful intellectual labor. Almost every anticipated program required detailed thinking and preparations because of the necessity and urgency of each item on the agenda, tasks implicit in the general goal, key specific points to work on, safeguards, and due attention to each item. It was such pre-planning that differentiated China's reform from that which took place in the ex-USSR bloc — it was less hasty, random and careless, and more objective, precise, and generally undertaken with more equanimity.

Third, they have drawn upon and introduced the experiences of the developed world. Against the background of globalization, the interaction, accommodation, and contesting of an opened China with the rest of the world have become increasingly commonplace, and Chinese scholars are the interactive link between the two. They have been the group most sensitive to global trends, to the propensities of the times, and to the most beneficial elements of these tendencies. In recent years, Chinese scholars have assiduously introduced and promoted the latest news, advanced understandings and freshest concepts from abroad, with the result that Chinese from all walks of life have benefitted greatly from the extension of their perspectives and the updating of their knowledge.

Fourth, they have initiated a methodical discourse. The existence of a variety of interests in the current Chinese social structure is a demonstrable

fact; equally clear is the decisive role of the underlying socialist system in rendering a fundamental consistency of interests, such that there are not any fundamental antagonisms. The smooth implementation of the reform and opening-up of Chinese society, as well as future results, has depended upon the full expression of a variety of views and the effective coordination of a variety of interests. An ever richer public discussion, therefore, has by degrees become a vital factor in determining whether the reform and opening-up will succeed or not. Chinese scholars have played a key role in this and in the face of a wide variety of different problems associated with the developmental process, they have provided the impetus for and participated in discussions large and small. Most of these discussions took place on the scholarly level, but they were often characterized by a strong social or public quality. More often than not this discourse reflects divergent perspectives, or requests from different groups, and eventuates in a more complete conceptualization of specific aspects of the reform. The discussions have also provided numerous ideas about how to solve practical problems, opened up space for practical action and increased people's ability to make comparisons and choices. Even more importantly, the lively atmosphere created by these discussions has enabled society as a whole to gradually achieve consensus, to gather together the public will, and to unify action.

Fifth, they have assessed and taken stock of the achievements of the reform and opening-up, another key link that has been taken very seriously in the developmental process. Implementing reform in China has been, of course, particularly formidable, because modernizing this most populous nation in the world presents far more difficulties than would be the case anywhere else. Reform in China, however, also has had an exploratory quality to it, as there is absolutely no precedent that can be consulted for a country with an essentially socialist system and guiding ideology in connecting with the world economy and achieving a market economy. The Chinese experience is also characterized by its long duration, for to realize the goals of true industrialization, urbanization, commercialization, digitalization, and internationalization from a relatively low production base has to be a long and gradual process. China has had, therefore, to become proficient at taking stock and self-evaluation, diligent at repeated assessment, and bold in continuously correcting error. Chinese scholars have again and again been highly effective in this, enthusiastically encompassing a wide

terrain, engaging in both theoretical argument and powerful social assessment. These debates have included purely academic retrospective analysis as well as retrospective summing up of experiences carried out in cooperation with the ruling party and the government. These activities have contributed powerfully to the ripening and maturation of the policy makers and implementers of China's reform and opening-up even as they have ensured the orderliness and accuracy of the actions that have followed on its heels.

Sixth, they have enhanced and spread public rationality. China's reform and opening-up has been of great benefit to the populace as well as being an immense series of activities in which hundreds of millions of people have participated — its characteristics include self-education and self-management. Through the experience of the reform and opening-up, people have not only attained material benefits, but have also attained rich and satisfying lives, gained spiritual and political growth, as well as achieved a more civil mentality. As a consequence, Chinese intellectuals have a responsibility to disseminate knowledge of the humanities and the social sciences, enhance public rationality, create a common spiritual home, and satisfy the ever-increasing needs of the popular consciousness. At the same time, the spread of public rationality has also contributed to the ability to handle inter-personal relations, provided a basic code for interaction between individuals and society, and been of great help in the mediation of these relations as well as in resolving social antagonisms. Via the many ways through which they have paved the way for the spread and enhancement of public rationality, Chinese scholars have thus provided valuable lubrication to ease the process of a tense and pressing reform and opening-up; they have constantly raised the level of harmony in a society in the process of restructuring.

Seventh, they have improved the humanities and the social sciences in China. The Chinese humanities and social sciences in the modern sense got a tortuous start in the 20th century. They did not really flourish until they received a boost during the period of reform and opening-up, which provided an exceptional opportunity for their development. Mainstream Marxist ideology called forth a vitality that kept pace with the times, the resources of Chinese traditional culture were taken up and sorted through from a new perspective, and the high achievements of world civilization received

unprecedented attention and were introduced to China. All these intellectual resources were gathered together to provide a generous foundation for the development of the humanities and the social sciences. Even more important, the rich variety of achievements of the reform and opening-up provided a plentiful assortment of source materials for the Chinese humanities and social sciences, and the advancing and ever deepening project of socialist modernization allowed them ample space for development. This enabled Chinese scholars to take the initiative to contribute to the establishment of the humanities and the social sciences even as they were taking part in practical affairs. As a result, we have been delighted to observe the ever more profound and healthy interaction between academia and society, theory and practice, with the result that Chinese-style humanities and social sciences composed of the various academic disciplines have gradually come into being.

It must be stressed that the prospering of the Chinese humanities and social sciences cannot be separated from the support, understanding and importance attached to them by the Party and the government. The Party and the government earnestly hope that the Chinese humanities and social sciences will be able to play a key role in undertaking the vital tasks of bringing its people to understand the world, transmitting the ideas of civilization, creating theory, counselling the government, educating the people, and being of service to society. It must be said that at the initiation point of the reform and opening-up, based on the urgent needs of the forces of production and the building of modernization, the Chinese Party and government favored the development of modern scientific technique. Following upon the intensification of the process of modernization and after due attention to the organization of the economy, however, political, cultural, social, and environmental construction were all put on the agenda, and the Party and the government's focus on the humanities and the social sciences became ever more profound. Because of this the important concept of "four things of equal importance", i.e. philosophy, the social sciences and the natural sciences had the same priority, was clearly set forth. This meant that training of high-caliber philosophers and social scientists received the same weight as the training of natural scientists, that raising the national quality of philosophy and social sciences was as vital as raising the national quality of the natural sciences, and that there was to be no distinction between

giving free rein to and fully utilizing the talents of philosophers and social scientists and the treatment accorded to natural scientists. In accord with this principle, the Party and government adopted a series of important measures to forward the development of the humanities and the social sciences, making them a crucial constitutive part of overall national strength, with the earnest desire that the humanities and the social sciences will begin to thrive sooner rather than later.

Because of the common effort of the Party, the government and the academy, over the course of 30 years following the reform and opening-up, theoretical research has had an important influence on policy formulation and implementation. The launching of the reform program, which began with a highly significant discussion of the idea that “practice is the only criterion for testing the truth”, opened up the movement for the liberation of thought that cast off the fetters of dogmatism. On the occasion of drawing conclusions from 30 years of development, the theoretical structure of the idea of socialism with Chinese characteristics has taken shape. It is possible to say without any exaggeration that no other historical transformation that has lasted as long as 30 years has been able to preserve such a level of enthusiastic anticipation of theoretical guidance, that no other political party has been able to effectively combine organically a steadfast loyalty to its principal ideology and capacity for the innovation of mainstream theory, and that no other country has been able to remain so favorably and enthusiastically disposed to the theoretical enterprise for so long. Theory has played a vital and unmistakable role in the research into and scrutiny of the development of China’s reforms. From this perspective it is thus possible to draw the following inferences: theory has guided practical concerns, practical concerns have changed China, and China has influenced the world.

The implementation of this earth-shaking reform and opening-up has, of course, fed back into influencing and changing the development of theory itself. Over the past 30 years, the development of the Chinese humanities and social sciences has followed a path not entirely like that pursued in the West. Careful scrutiny reveals three specific features of how this process has unfolded in China. First, from the developmental perspective there have been efforts of and some preliminary implementation of combining the trinity of basic Marxist principles, the general achievements of human civilization, and Chinese realities. Second, from the perspective

of basic content, there have been efforts of and some preliminary implementation of pushing forward a combination of the trinity of theoretical exploration, broadening the base of popular knowledge, and policy transformation. Third, from the perspective of those who participate, there has been effective advocacy of and some preliminary implementation of combining scholarly experts, leading cadres, and the general populace. Of course, during the process of merging the three entities listed above, people experienced the adjustments of moving from the unsystematic to the systematic, from lack of proficiency to proficiency, and from lacking initiative to possessing it. The upshot of these efforts has been to edge the contemporary Chinese humanities and social sciences toward a brand new point of departure. The goal of our current series is to introduce the achievements of the last 30 years of the Chinese humanities and social sciences, and their close relationship to China's reform and opening-up, to the foreign academic and general audience.

Any dispassionate review will, of course, reveal that, no matter how fast the Chinese humanities and social sciences have progressed, there are still numerous inadequacies. For example, there has yet to be adequate study of the Chinese model, more attention need to be paid to the development of academic standards, the development of the various disciplines has been uneven, there has not been enough done in regard to rendering research and analytical methods sufficiently diverse and scientific, and much more need to be done with respect to training academic talent. Among the problems, the low degree of internationalization is an especially weak link. A statistical count reveals that in the decade between 1991 and 2001, Chinese scholars of the humanities and the social sciences received 9,000 invitations to lecture abroad, with 19,000 scholars going abroad to study, and 23,000 foreign scholars invited to lecture in China. There was great progress made between 2001 and 2005, with 100,000 Chinese scholars participating in international conferences, 13,000 articles by Chinese scholars being published in foreign journals, and 2,600 cooperative ventures with foreign universities and research organizations. Clearly, then, there has been a demonstrable and stable increase in the rate of interaction between Chinese academia and the rest of the world.

The imbalance in the level of "exports" and "imports" in this academic exchange is, however, still a serious problem. Taking scholarly translation

as an example, between 2000 and 2005 there were approximately 7,000 foreign academic works translated into Chinese, but in the same period of time there were only 800 works whose primary author was a Chinese scholar translated into foreign languages. Taking the internationally influential Social Science Citation Index (SCCI) as another example, in 2007 there were 1,962 journals listed in the SCCI published in over 40 countries, with the United States accounting for almost 60% of them and the top ten countries on the list accounting for more than 90%; there were only about ten journals concerned with Chinese social sciences. Only one of these, however, actually comes from China, *China and World Economy*, published by Basil Blackwell in the UK on behalf of the China Society of World Economics and the World Economy and Politics Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. The inability of Chinese academic research to go far from home stands in sharp contrast to China's ever-increasing economic and political influence and represents a serious weakness in the development of the Chinese humanities and social sciences.

It is in this context that, in order to carry through the strategy of having the Chinese humanities and social sciences “walk out”, the Publicity Department of the Shanghai Municipal Committee of the Chinese Communist Party decided to initiate this important “Series on Developing China”. It organized an editorial committee and appointed Fudan University Distinguished Professor Deng Zhenglai, Dean of the Fudan Institute for Advanced Studies in Social Sciences to head the program. By translating outstanding academic articles on the subject of the experience of Chinese development published over the last 30 years, this program aims to introduce a comprehensive set of outstanding world-level scholarly works by Chinese scholars and thereby take steps to move the Chinese humanities and social sciences “toward the world”.

The series will be marked by the following characteristics: one, it will hold firm to the principle of “standing firmly in China and moving toward the world”, but also make sure to choose themes that will be influential in the international academic sphere and conform to its demands. We believe that only works in the humanities and the social sciences with true Chinese character, style and manner will be able to really make its way into the world, and that only works with the distinct imprint of the national culture will be truly vital. With this in mind, we have chosen a number of academic

fields that will perhaps be influential internationally as our point of entry and developed themes like “China’s Economy: Rural Reform and Agricultural Development”, “State and Civil Society: the Chinese Perspective”, “Sino-American Relations: the Chinese Perspective”, and “Globalization and Localization: the Chinese Perspective”. Second, we have organized an authoritative editorial committee, which will uphold strict academic standards and select only the most outstanding papers on relevant topics. The committee is made up of premier Chinese scholars such as Zhang Wenxian, Yu Keping, Zhang Weiyong, Wang Hui, Chen Jiaying, Zhou Guoping, Xu Xianming, Ma Min, Lin Shangli, He Qinhua and Sun Liping; it thus embodies a high level of academic expertise that will ensure meticulously fair and objective choice in the works to be published. Third, we have organized a group of high quality translators and will be on guard to guarantee a high level of translation. In addition to this team of translators, we have set up a process that will have experts from each field do a preliminary translation, which will then be checked by the original author, passed on to the English editor and finally to the editor-in-chief for review.

The internationalization of Chinese scholarship is a lofty goal; it is also a difficult task, but even more than that, something that will take time. What continues to encourage us to devote ourselves to the task is this firm conviction: the economic and social development — and the related academic progress — that has already taken place in China, is taking place now, and will take place in the future is essentially aligned with trends in the advance of human civilization. We have every reason to believe that by way of our careful, even and painstaking efforts we can make some small contribution toward an understanding of China’s transformation, taking stock of the Chinese experience, researching the Chinese model, spreading Chinese values, and raising the international standing of the Chinese humanities and social sciences. Of course, owing to our lack of experience, such a large-scale undertaking as this translation project will be subject to numerous oversights, even outright errors. As far as that is concerned, we can only hope that our readers all over the world will provide us with critical feedback.

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