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To cite this article: Chengbing Wang & Michael A. Peters (2021): Contemporary Chinese Marxism: disciplines, teaching platforms and status quo of basic academic research, Educational Philosophy and Theory, DOI: [10.1080/00131857.2021.1929171](https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2021.1929171)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2021.1929171>



Published online: 30 May 2021.



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Contemporary Chinese Marxism: disciplines, teaching platforms and status quo of basic academic research

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Introduction

In terms of its academic status, Marxism is the most important and unique research field in contemporary Chinese humanities and social sciences. And with respect to its role, Marxism has an incomparable influence on contemporary Chinese politics, culture, and social life that no other humanities or social science disciplines can match.

The wide range and rich contents of contemporary Chinese Marxism exceeds the basic information usually discussed by scholars both at home and abroad and it enjoys considerable influence over academic research and reality. This introduction focuses on contemporary academic research on Chinese Marxism in a broad sense, and it intends to display an overall picture of the current state of Chinese Marxism mainly from the standpoint of discipline construction and teaching platforms, the international spread and exchange of ideas in contemporary Chinese Marxism, and the primary topics normally discussed in Chinese Marxism.

Disciplines: an important platform for the teaching and research of contemporary Chinese Marxism

Professional research and teaching in contemporary Chinese Marxism are mainly the domain of two areas of inquiry, namely the first-level discipline of Marxist theory and the second-level discipline of Marxist philosophy among the disciplines of the general philosophy. In addition, the subjects, areas, and professionals engaged in research directly related to contemporary Chinese Marxism are amply present in most other academic disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. For example, researchers in ethics as a second-level discipline in philosophy work closely with the field of Marxist ethics; researchers in law studies deeply engage with the study of Marxist legal theory; researchers in the field of literature deeply engage with the research in Marxist literary theory; researchers in history deeply engage with Marxist historical theory; researchers in sociology deeply engage with Marxist sociology; and researchers in economics deeply engage with Marxist political economy, and so on.

Marxist Theory is a first-level discipline that was established in 2005. At first, it consisted of 5 second-level disciplines.¹ Soon after, some gradual planning and adjustment were made by the Office of the State Council on Academic Degrees Committee of China, and currently there are seven second-level disciplines; they are: Basic Principles of Marxism, History of Marxist Development, Studies of the Sinification of Marxism, International Studies of Marxism, Ideological and Political Education, Studies of Fundamental Issues of Modern Chinese History, and Communist Construction in China.² Marxist Theory is typically a pillar discipline in the various

schools and/or departments of Marxism in Chinese universities and in departments of Marxist education, whose administrative status in most universities is roughly equivalent to that of colleges in universities. Relatively speaking, there are many more schools of Marxism or departments of Marxist education than schools of philosophy or departments of philosophy, largely because the teaching work of the former targets all students in the colleague and universities, while the departments or the schools of philosophy are mainly geared toward the systematic teaching and study of philosophy. Additionally, in the moral education and social studies of junior and senior high schools, contents related to Marxist theory and philosophy are also an important part of teaching.

As far as the institutions of professional research and teaching in contemporary China are concerned, those specializing in Marxist research and teaching mainly include the teaching and research departments of universities, colleges, military academies, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, provincial and municipal academies of social sciences, and party schools at all levels. In addition to academic research, these teaching and research institutions also often cultivate professional talents, as for example with graduate students and post-doctoral students in Marxist research.

In the planning for the various disciplines in China, philosophy stands at the first level, and it is comprised of 8 second-level disciplines, namely: Marxist philosophy, Chinese philosophy, foreign philosophy, logic, ethics, aesthetics, religious studies, and philosophy of science and technology. Generally speaking, Marxist philosophy is one of the strongest second-level disciplines among all philosophical disciplines in Chinese colleges or universities. In accordance with the usual mainland Chinese training model, when postgraduates of philosophical disciplines are first enrolled, they choose a specific second-level discipline as their primary field of research, and their courses and dissertations usually focus on the chosen research field. In other words, many students of philosophy conduct specialized studies in Marxism from the postgraduate stage, and this has in fact guaranteed relatively sufficient talents for researching, teaching, and disseminating of contemporary Chinese Marxism.

Unprecedented active exchanges with foreign Marxist scholars

Public research into and evaluations of foreign Marxism by Chinese Marxist researchers was a project mainly developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s. At that time, György Lukács, together with other proponents of French and Italian structuralist Marxism³ as well as members of the Yugoslav Praxis School⁴ (among others) attracted a lot of attention from Chinese Marxist researchers. That was partly because these philosophers had relatively close relations either with political parties identified with communism that were active at that time (such as the Italian Communist Party and the French Communist Party) or with Western socialist states, for instance Yugoslavia and Hungary. China researchers had a compelling need to learn and study their guiding philosophical thoughts and their valued theoretical propositions.

Since the end of the 20th century, the exchanges and dialogues between Chinese Marxist researchers and foreign Marxism have been very active, and these are the three foremost signs of this:

First, contemporary Chinese Marxism is highly sensitive to but also highly supportive of foreign Marxism. It is able to reflect in a timely way the new research contributions of foreign Marxism with a high degree of comprehension and accuracy, and to conduct direct exchanges with foreign Marxists especially with respect to the dynamics of research in time. More specifically, work in this area can be understood from the following aspects:

1. The research contributions of foreign Marxism have been positively introduced and studied in China. The works of Jürgen Habermas, Axel Honneth, Theodor W. Adorno, Walter

Benjamin, Nancy Fraser and others who have been identified with Western Marxism or people with obvious Marxist inclinations, have been adequately translated and introduced. Many contemporary foreign philosophers considered to have or approximate Marxist inclinations, such as Giorgio Agamben, Slavoj Žižek, and Alain Badiou, also have had their works introduced into Chinese academic circles.

2. Almost all renowned contemporary Western Marxists have been carefully researched in China, and the works of many of their outstanding representatives have been selected by graduate students as research topics for their dissertations, with relevant research topics at various levels having received funding support from related authorities.
3. Contemporary Chinese Marxist researchers have formulated and published serial reports on the development of their field, among which the most influential include the *Yearly Report of Marxism Abroad* and the *Report on Development of China's Overseas Marxism Research*, edited and published by the Center for Contemporary Marxism in Foreign Countries of Fudan University. Of these two reports, the former mainly collects, sorts out and analyzes information on the study of Marxism and related special topics in all major countries and regions in the world, and the latter focuses on the achievements of contemporary Chinese Marxism researchers in their investigation into foreign Marxism. These reports have become an important source of literature and information for research on contemporary Chinese Marxism.

Second, many well-known contemporary Western Marxist scholars have already visited China for academic exchanges. During his visit to China from April 15 to 29, 2001, Jürgen Habermas, a distinguished Western Marxist philosopher and leading spokesperson of the Frankfurt School, provided several academic presentations in Beijing and Shanghai (see Chen, 2001, p. 99). From March 17 to 29, 2009, Nancy Fraser, a third-generation representative of the Frankfurt School visited China and provided academic presentations in several of universities and research institutions in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou.⁵ For some time now, some Western scholars of Marxism have even hold or continue to hold formal teaching positions in Chinese universities. For example, Tom Rockmore, a well-known scholar of American Marxism, has been serving as the Distinguished Humanities Chair Professor of Marxist Philosophy in the Department of Philosophy at Peking University, one of the birthplaces of Chinese Marxism, since 2014.⁶

Third, in the 21st century, Chinese Marxist researchers have been committed to establishing academic platforms for dialogue, debates, and exchanges with global Marxist researchers, among which the most typical is the World Congress on Marxism, co-sponsored by the School of Marxism Peking University and the Collaborative Innovation Center of Chinese Path and Sinicized Marxism of Peking University. The first World Congress on Marxism was held in Beijing from October 10th to 11th, 2015, with the theme of "Marxism and the Development of the Human Race." More than 400 Marxist researchers and experts on Chinese issues from nearly 20 countries attended the conference, entering into discussions about the world-wide exchange, dissemination and development of Marxism, and the important value of Marxism in promoting social progress and civilizational development. The conference participants produced the "Scholars' Consensus of World Congress on Marxism," which claims that Marxism is one of the most influential thought systems affecting the world today and represents the "quintessence of the spirit of the times." According to the Consensus, Marxist philosophy is both a world view and a kind of social science, an open creative system. Marxists need to envisage thorny problems and embrace the critical spirit and revolutionary consciousness inherent in Marxism, combine it with the particular realities of different countries and the spirit of the times, and thereby make great breakthrough while creatively responding to realistic problems. The duty of Marxist researchers in twenty-first century is to promote theoretical innovations based on practice and push Marxism to new heights (Tan & Jia, 2016, pp. 153-154).

The Second World Congress on Marxism was held in Beijing on May 5, 2018. More than 1,100 renowned experts, including more than 120 foreign scholars from 30 plus countries, attended the conference. This conference was on the theme of “Marxism and a Human Community with Shared Destiny,” which covered the following topics: (1) The limits of financial capital leading globalization; the real answer to the crisis of capitalism itself is how to gradually get out of the systematic crisis of capitalism and how humans leap over capitalism. (2) The crisis of neoliberal ideology and policy system. (3) Marxism provides theoretical tools for understanding capitalism, basic logic for analyzing the operating mechanism of capitalism, and a methodology for analyzing capitalist crisis. (4) The world significance of the exploration of China’s socialist road is worthy of full research. (5) The systemic crisis of the globalization of financial capital and the setbacks of neoliberal policy systems mean a new turn of globalization, and the new era calls for further revival of Marxism (Song, 2018, pp. 195-196).

The Third World Congress on Marxism was first scheduled to be held in Beijing from May 5 to 6, 2020, but has been postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The conference has been intended on the theme of “Marxism and the Cause of Anti-poverty of Mankind,” with topics for branch sessions including “Anti-poverty and the Progress of civilization,” “Marxism and All-round Development of Human Beings,” “The Anti-poverty Value of Chinese Traditional Institutional Civilization,” “Anti-poverty in the Modernization of Western Countries,” “Research on Anti-poverty Problem of Underdeveloped Countries,” “Chinese Road and the Practice of Global Poverty Eradication,” “United Nations (UN)’s Millennium Development Goals and China’s Well-off Society Research,” “Anti-poverty Research in Multi-disciplinary Perspective,” and “The Compilation and Research of *Ma Zang* (Collections of Literature on Studies of Marxism and MEGA),” etc., as well as special sessions.⁷

Discussing in reference to reality the problems and challenges faced by the Chinese road during China’s modernization

Over the past 40 years of reform and opening up, China has greatly enhanced its comprehensive national strength, and scientific research management institutions have thus increased their investments in humanities and social science research. Because Marxism holds a special position and makes strong contributions to scientific research, research projects directly pertaining to the disciplines of Marxism account for a considerable proportion in terms of the establishment of national research projects and financial support every year. For example, in 2019 and 2020, as the highest-level research project in the field of humanities and social sciences in China, Marxism or projects directly related to Marxism account for a large proportion of the “Major Bidding Projects of National Social Science Fund.”⁸ Thanks to various favorable conditions, including satisfactory platforms for teaching and research, fairly large teaching and research teams, and adequate research funding, reliable, sufficient and long-term research has been able to be conducted with respect to many theoretical and practical issues concerning contemporary Chinese Marxism.

On the one hand, contemporary Chinese Marxism attaches great importance to theoretical research; on the other hand, it does not divorce itself from reality and indulge in narcissism or castle in the sky; instead, it focuses on practical problems to carry out academic exploration. Contemporary Chinese Marxism has not only taken part, but indeed has bravely undertaken academic responsibilities to explore forbidden areas of theory and to pursue academic innovation in theoretical discussions, from debates about the “criterion of truth” at the beginning of the reform and opening up, to arguments about the major social changes and transitions in China in recent decades and the severe theoretical challenges stemming from them. Briefly, over the past few decades, especially since the end of the 20th century, contemporary Chinese Marxism has actively contributed theoretical explanations for and responses to almost all important practical

issues that the world is facing today, including the community with shared future for mankind, the Chinese dream, global governance, national governance, modernity and identify, ecological crises and challenges, globalization, theoretical issues raised by the new development of science and technology, the issue of equality and global justice, etc.

According to the judgment made by Contemporary Chinese Marxism, China is in the best period of development since the beginning of modern times, and the world too is undergoing major changes unseen in a century. These two are intertwined, creating a volatile situation. The distinctive feature of socialism with Chinese characteristics in a new era is constituted by the paralleling of the period of important strategic opportunities and the period of major risks with the co-existence of promising prospects and severe challenges. This situation is in fact not only a rare opportunity for contemporary Chinese Marxism, but also an important research topic for it. So, it can be concluded that contemporary Chinese Marxism in the future will showcase a unique theoretical landscape deserving the attention of all Marxist researchers throughout the world.

Reflecting on the centurial history of the sinicization of Marxism to show the process of the growth and maturity of contemporary marxism

Marxism originated in the West and has a history only over one hundred years in China. The first record is from the British missionary Timothy Richard, who mentioned Marx's name in the 121st issue of the *Global Magazine (Wanguo Gongbao)* in 1899. The first Chinese scholar to recommend Marx was Liang Qichao, who introduced the life of Marx in the 8th issue of the *New Citizen Journal (Xinmin Congbao)* on October 16, 1902. And Zhu Zhixin was the first Chinese scholar to mention *The Communist Manifesto* (Wang, 2017).

In recent years, contemporary Chinese Marxism has devoted itself to the summary and analysis of the sinicization of Marxism in the past century, and it has clearly documented the historical process of Chinese Marxism from its first introduction into China to the present. It has basically formed a preliminary consensus about significant junctures in the spread and sinicization of Marxism.

Juncture 1: The early leaders of the Communist Party of China Chen Duxiu, Li Dazhao and others started the spread of Marxism around the "May Fourth Movement" in 1919.

Juncture 2: Qu Qiubai disseminated Marxist dialectical materialism and historical materialism in a relatively comprehensive way.

Juncture 3: Ai Siqi and Li Da made efforts to popularize and systematize Marxism in the 1930s so that it could be easily accepted by the masses.

Juncture 4: Mao Zedong Thought, which began to take shape in the 1930s, was a great leap in the sinicization of Marxism.

Juncture 5: The sinicization of contemporary Marxism is produced and improved by the new stage of reform and opening up in 1978, when it became a theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics that was grounded in Deng Xiaoping Theory, the important thought of Three Represents, the scientific outlook on development, as well as, more recently, Xi Jinping's thought on socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era. Xi Jinping has clearly put forward the major concepts of contemporary Chinese Marxism and 21st century Marxism. This stands as the latest theoretical summary of the sinicization of Marxism (see Guo, 2020, pp. 2-10).

Paying attention to the relationship between Marxism and outstanding traditional Chinese culture

The combination of Marxism with China's specific reality naturally implies the consideration of traditional Chinese culture to a certain extent. Outstanding traditional Chinese culture is an important thought resource of contemporary Chinese Marxism. Chinese Marxism has clearly

recognized the necessity of combining the basic principles of Marxism with the excellent culture of China over the past 5,000 years. "The extensive, profound and outstanding traditional Chinese culture is the foundation for us to stand firm in the global mingling and clashing of cultures. The long-developed Chinese culture embraces our deepest intellectual pursuits. It is an icon of the unique Chinese nation, and has ensured the lineage, development and growth of the Chinese nation" (Xi, 2014, p. 164).

Contemporary Chinese Marxism encourages the grasping of the internal connection, developmental logic, and future trend of Marxism and outstanding traditional Chinese culture. It seeks to enhance their deep integration under the new historical conditions, and this involves the following two important aspects: the first is to boost the innovation of Marxist theory, and the second is to encourage the exchange and dialogue between Marxism and outstanding traditional Chinese culture and their comprehensive innovation. More specifically, we must realize that the combination of Marxism and outstanding traditional Chinese culture is crucial, because only when Marxism and Chinese culture have been combined and integrated can the sinicization of Marxism become a true reality. As well, we must realize that the combination of Marxism and outstanding traditional Chinese culture is urgent. Finally, we must realize that the combination of Marxism and outstanding traditional Chinese culture is difficult. Since Marxism and Chinese culture have their own respective logical systems and research paradigms, the project of integrating them still has a long way to go and requires continuous and unremitting efforts. In this sense, the combination of Marxism and outstanding traditional Chinese culture is a "centennial project" of the 21st century (Guo, 2014).

Returning to the Marxist classics

Regarding the return to the Marxist classic, contemporary Chinese Marxism advocates theoretical propositions such as "return to Marx" and "reread Marx," and it encourages reinterpreting many important texts of the classic Marxist writers in order to re-examine the textual basis of Marxism. In this respect, most noteworthy is the strong academic interest in and in-depth research on the historical-critical edition of *The Complete Works of Marx and Engels* (*Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe*, MEGA, 2nd edition). It is indispensable literature for us to enrich and update the objective, complete and in-depth understanding of Marx's thoughts (see Zhang, 2018, pp. 1-4; Nie, 2018, pp. 5-7).

Contemporary Chinese Marxism has reinterpreted the *Capital*, which is the core text of Marxist philosophy, political economy and socialist thought. According to contemporary Chinese Marxism, Chinese people largely hesitated to read *Capital* before the reform and opening up in 1978, and they therefore had a poor understanding of it. Over the latest 40 years of reform and opening up, *Capital* has been a major participant in the reshaping of Chinese society, and Chinese people have come to fully understand Marx's attitude towards capital and overall Marxist theory in this respect (see Nie, 2018, p. 7). Contemporary Chinese Marxism holds that although a series of important changes have taken place in the world in the 150 years since the publication of the *Capital*, we still should follow the basic principles and theoretical laws that is sets forth in understanding capitalism and its contemporary development. The development of contemporary capitalism in the 21st century has many new characteristics; it has fallen into a new predicament, and it has led to many global problems. The dialectics employed in the *Capital* in its analysis of the relation of capitalist production is also applicable in promoting the socialist economic construction with Chinese characteristics and the construction of the theoretical system of socialist political economics with Chinese characteristics in the new era (see Zhang, 2017, p.46).

On the basis of reinterpreting Marxist classics, contemporary Chinese Marxism has carried out a comprehensive study of the basic theories of Marxism. According to contemporary Chinese

Marxism, Marxism is a scientific, popular, practical, and open theory that is constantly developing. With both immense historical value and irreplaceable contemporary value, it has not only answered the historical question concerning where capitalism is headed which no socialist theory except Marxism can reply to, but it is also a theoretical guidance for people to solve the contemporary problems of China and observe the trend of today's world (Chen, 2020, pp. 61-68). Marxism is concentrated on the theoretical themes of the proletariat and human liberation, and it is theoretically based on practical, dialectical, and historical materialism. Marxism, different from books of revelation, works from a scientific method to investigate contemporary problems rather than to provide ready-made answers. Philosophy, political economy, and scientific socialism constitute the internal structure of the complete Marxist theoretical system, where each of the three parts is relatively independent but also depends upon and infiltrate each other. The separation of any of these components from the whole will deprive it of its proper nature and lead to the misunderstanding or even distortion of Marxism as a whole (Yang, 2020, pp. 1-16).

Paying close attention to contemporary western Marxism

Contemporary Chinese Marxism has an open attitude towards current work in foreign Marxism: "We must pay close attention to and research the new achievements of foreign Marxism, treating them discriminately, rather than rejecting all or accepting all" (Xi, 2017). Contemporary Chinese Marxism maintains its academic sensitivity to Marxism worldwide, with its vision covering almost all the styles of Marxism in the world, including Western Marxism, and Marxism in Vietnam, Laos, and other Asian countries or regions, Marxism in Latin American countries, Marxism in former Eastern Europe, etc. Of course, there is no need to deny that Western Marxism in developed countries has top priority among the research subjects of contemporary Chinese Marxism. This introduction mainly makes out an outline of the research that contemporary Chinese Marxism has carried out on present Western Marxism:

1. Chinese academic circles regard some radical postmodern philosophers with Marxist standpoints as post-Marxists.

Firstly, structural Marxism represented by Louis Althusser entered the arena of Chinese Marxism at the end of the 1970s (Xu, 1982, pp. 540-598). Now, when contemporary Chinese Marxism investigates structural Marxism from the works of Althusser, it mainly focuses on his notions of anti-humanism, historical form and science, symptomatic reading, and overdetermination (see Zhang, 2019, pp. 31-38). But at the same time, it has also begun to introduce some of his other ideas, including those concerning legal thought (see Xu, 2019, pp. 43-52, 128). Besides all of this, contemporary Chinese Marxism has worked hard to study Althusser's overall influence on radical Marxism (see Lu, 2021, pp. 24-35).

Secondly, Chinese scholars has been about the study of Michel Foucault for decades. Contemporary Chinese Marxism recognized that Foucault maintains a very delicate relation to Marxism, one which is based on both discontinuity and continuity. This is so much the case that he has been characterized as "Marx without quotation-marks."

Thirdly, Foucault has been influenced by various Marxist concepts, which reveal a hidden view into Marx's own theoretical edifice. His unique notions of discourse practice and power-knowledge criticizes the social system, supplements and augments Marxism (see He, 2016, pp. 1-7). In these ways, we can see a deep connection between Foucault's theory of power and Marx's historical materialism, which is confirmed by the mutual penetration and confirmation of the issues of Marx's critique of political economy with the various themes in Foucault's theory of power. Foucault's concept of "biopower" retains in a deeper sense the mark of its own awareness of historical materialism, showing that his theory of power rests on a materialist foundation

by re-declaring the naturalness of power, and reinterpreting it in contextual relationships to Marx's concept of the relations of production. Precisely through perspective of historical materialism, Foucault has not only identified the repressive nature of power, but he also discovered its positive and productive effects. This allows, from the perspective of the productiveness of power, a new standpoint from which to rereinterpret Marx's surplus-value theory of production (Zhang & Wang, 2019, pp. 20-27).

Fourthly, contemporary Chinese Marxism continues to interpret and deeply consider the writings of Jean Baudrillard, studying in particular the contents of and internal logical relationships between his four major academic publications, namely *The System of Objects*, *The Consumer Society*, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, and *The Mirror of Production*, which were composed in his early years under the influence of Western Marxism (see Yang, 2018). In addition, contemporary Chinese Marxism in recent years has also undertaken in-depth and detailed investigations into Baudrillard's thinking about consumerism, his critique of political economy, and simulation (Zhang & Li, 2020, pp. 15-24; Zhou & Tang, 2021, pp. 47-53).

Fifthly, Gilles Deleuze enjoys a fairly high reputation in the Chinese academy and has become a subject of interest in contemporary Chinese Marxism. Assessing the relationship between Deleuze and Marxism, contemporary Chinese Marxism holds that both of them employ similar expressions for the logic of production in different historical and theoretical contexts. Deleuze's conception of "desiring-production" is an effective response to Baudrillard's critique of the logic of production, and it has deeply enriched the connotations of Marx's concept of production (see Xia, 2016, pp.28-34).

Sixthly, many disciplines in the Chinese academy have shown a strong academic interest in Jacques Derrida. In recent years, contemporary Chinese Marxism has paid special attention to the study of Derrida's deconstructive Marxism. It claims that maintaining the timeliness of Marxism has become an urgent theoretical and practical problem, and Derrida's deconstruction has already given a clear solution for it. Derrida examines the crisis of contemporary capitalism from his perspective of deconstructive thinking, and thus shows that there is an ironic expression at the heart of Marx's spirit of social criticism. Derrida also interprets Marx's theory of human liberation from the angle of the *à venir* (to come) of democracy, thus revealing an intrinsic connection between his deconstruction theory and Marx's intellectual legacy (see Lu, 2016, pp. 37-40).

Seventhly, contemporary Chinese Marxism also continues to interpret and deeply consider Slavoj Žižek's "post-Marxism," which is mainly concentrated on his ideological theory, dialectical thought, and political criticism (Chen & Zhang, 2017, pp. 216-217; 2018, pp. 64-91).

Eighthly, it also interprets and deeply considers the work of Alain Badiou, which focuses on the relationship between his thought and Mao Zedong's thought, as well as Badiou's notions of truth, the subject, and literature. Contemporary Chinese Marxism holds that the study of Badiou's work as a Western thinker cannot be limited to simple introductory research, but also needs to rethink its meanings in the context of China (Lan, 2018, pp. 179-185).

Ninthly, contemporary Chinese Marxism interprets and deeply considers the work of Giorgio Agamben because it holds that Agamben's thought primarily concerns biopolitics, linguistics, poetics, state of exception, and political philosophy (Chen & Zhang, 2017, pp. 218-219; 2018, pp. 118-140; 2019, pp. 128-130).

Tenthly, contemporary Chinese Marxism also interprets and deeply considers the work of Jacques Rancière, particularly his thinking about the politics of aesthetics, the politics of literature, and the logic of equality (Chen & Zhang, 2019, pp. 128-130).

Eleventh, contemporary Chinese Marxism also interprets and deeply considers the work of David Harvey because it holds that his thought primarily concerns the production of space, urban space, the crisis of capital accumulation, and spatial justice, as well as his criticism against new imperialism and neoliberalism, his utopian thought and politics of liberation, and his spatialized explanation of postmodernism (Chen & Zhang, 2018, pp. 141-166).

2. In its study of the Frankfurt School's critical theory of society, contemporary Chinese Marxism has strengthened its research on the second-generation representative Jürgen Habermas and third-generation representative Axel Honneth, all while continuing research on the first-generation representatives Max Horkheimer, Theodor W. Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, Walter Benjamin, Erich Fromm, and so forth (Chen & Zhang, 2017, pp. 306-345; 2019, pp. 105-110).
3. Contemporary Chinese Marxism holds that British neo-Marxism, which involves many academic fields, has accumulated a wealth of academic thought. It has also exhibited some distinctive features, including the ways that the pursuit of changes in the way of thinking, the strengthening of social criticism against capitalism and modernism, the advocating of new cultural ways of survival, and the enriching of the connotation of the ideal world. These views have exerted a wide range of influences, and they have a reference value for the development of Marxism, the construction of contemporary Chinese Marxism, and the modern practice of reform and opening up (Qiao, 2011, pp. 101-115).
4. Chinese academic circles believe that analytical Marxism is a relatively influential school of Western Marxism, and that one of its major representatives is John Roemer, whose main project is to "reconstruct" Marxism with the method of analytical philosophy. According to the research, the main theoretical contribution of John Roemer and his fellows is their criticism of the liberalism of John Rawls, Robert Nozick, and Ronald Dworkin, because they demonstrate the limitations of contemporary liberalism to a certain extent and thus they highlight the differences between Marxism and liberalism (see Yao, 2018, pp. 79-85).
5. For feminist Marxism, contemporary Chinese Marxism mainly focuses on the feminist thoughts of Nancy Fraser and Judith Butler (Chen & Zhang, 2019, pp. 198-202).

In addition, contemporary Chinese Marxism also researches ecological Marxism as represented by John Bellamy Foster (Wang, 2020, pp. 26-35). Related to this, contemporary Chinese Marxism has conducted academic research and debate on the connotation of organic Marxism and the positioning and evaluation of it (Yang, 2016, pp. 65-70; Shen, 2017, pp. 49-55).

The construction and continuous improvement of Marxist textbooks system

As mentioned earlier, contemporary Chinese Marxism bears important functions for teaching and talent training that inevitably involve compiling excellent Marxist textbooks. Since the turn of the 21st century, related institutions have initiated Marxist theoretical research and construction projects and organized top experts all over China. By doing so, they have compiled a solid amount of teaching materials. Some of them are textbooks directly pertaining to Marxism, for example, *Marxist Philosophy* and *Introduction to Marxist Political Economy*, while others focus on the guiding principles of contemporary Marxism. These teaching materials have played a very good role in regulating Marxist teaching and promoting Marxist research. It can be expected that professionals in contemporary Chinese Marxism will continue to improve the quality of Marxist textbooks and Marxist courses in the future (Jiang, 2018, pp. 4-9).⁹ Here, it is also necessary to point out that the project of integrating teaching materials for moral education in universities, middle schools, and primary schools has entered not only a very positive academic stage in contemporary Chinese Marxism, but also the stage of practical operation (see Han, 2020, pp. 14-18).

Notes

1. http://www.moe.gov.cn/srcsite/A22/moe_833/200512/t20051223_82753.html
2. <https://marxism.pku.edu.cn/tzgg/1298771.htm>
3. The works on the studies of Western Marxism at that stage include Xu Chongwen's *Defense of Material Dialectics* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1986), *Western Marxism* (Tianjin: Tianjin People's Publishing

- House, 1982), *Structuralism and Post-structuralism* (Shenyang: Liaoning People's Publishing House, 1986). In the *Western Marxism*, the author introduced György Lukács, Karl Korsch, Antonio Gramsci, Wilhelm Reich, Ernst Bloch, the Frankfurt School, Henri Lefebvre, Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Louis Althusser et al.
4. For an authoritative introduction to Yugoslav Marxism at that stage, see Jia Zelin, *Contemporary Yugoslav Philosophy*. Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 1982.
 5. <http://www.aisixiang.com/data/25835.html>; <https://www.douban.com/group/topic/5656349/?author=1>; regarding the introduction of Nancy Fraser's thoughts by Chinese academic circles, see Wei Xiaoping "On Marx and Habermas—Wei Xiaoping's Interview with Nancy Fraser," *World Philosophy*, no. 1, 2014, pp. 140–147.
 6. <http://news.pku.edu.cn/xwzh/b471c4f97d094721ba3d084855959d65.htm>
 7. <http://news.pku.edu.cn/xwzh/b471c4f97d094721ba3d084855959d65.htm>
 8. <http://www.nopss.gov.cn/n1/2020/1203/c219469-31954423.html>; <http://www.nopss.gov.cn/n1/2019/1204/c219469-31490279.html>
 9. https://www.sohu.com/a/243973380_479698.

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