

In-depth Thoughts on the Theoretical System of “One Country, Two Systems”

RONG Kaiming*

11th January 2012 marked the 30th anniversary of Deng Xiaoping’s proposition of “One Country, Two Systems”. The best way to commemorate this occasion is to continue upholding Deng Xiaoping Theory as both theoretical and practical guide to our actions, better handle the multiple problems facing China today, and continue our vigorous advancement along the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

The idea of “One Country, Two Systems”, as an integral part of Deng Xiaoping Theory and variably described as a “scientific vision”, “basic national strategy” and “fundamental policy for national reunification”, has become the basis of a general consensus heartily embraced by the public. It has delivered tremendous results of successful practice in Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions (SARs) over the past decade and more, winning praises from people of political understanding and vision both in China and overseas, and creating profound and far-reaching impact. However, is the notion of “One Country, Two Systems” a theory? Or is it a scientific system of theories? What is its composition if it is a theoretical system? There are still people holding contrarian views regarding these questions. The author and Liu Baoshan dissented to their negative views in their joint work, *A New Insight on Deng Xiaoping’s “One Country, Two Systems” Theory*¹, offering a rather systematic discussion of its theoretical system. This paper intends to discuss further the three underlying issues in the earlier paper in the interest of academic debate.

I. Is “One Country, Two Systems” a scientific theoretical system?

To answer this question, we must first define the term “theory” and the basis and criteria for judging if it is also a scientific theoretical system.

During the 1930s and 1940s, there had been a series of heated debates within the Communist Party of China (CPC) on what constituted a theory of political truth, as the CPC had been seriously affected by dogmatic mentality. Mao Zedong who had been oppressed and persecuted by the dogmatic leaders of the CPC penned an article entitled “Oppose Bookishness” to state his arguments in the debate. He pointed out bluntly, “No investigation, no right to speak.” “We need to study Marxism by the books, but we should also combine such book-learning with Chinese realities. We need books, but should also correct bookishness that deviates from actual situation of our

* Research Fellow, Hubei Academy of Social Sciences

country.” “The correct and unwavering strategy of the Communist Party for its struggle can by no means be formed by a few people sitting inside a house. It should evolve in the actual struggle of the masses. That is to say in the process of practice.”² Mao Zedong became a leader of the CPC representing its correct political line following the Zunyi Conference. He launched a rectification campaign in Yan’an to eradicate negative legacies of subjectivism (evidenced by dogmatism and empiricism). He published several brilliant writings including “Reform our Study”, “Rectify Party’s Style of Work”, and “Oppose Stereotyped Party Writing”, advocating, “We should not regard Marxist theory as lifeless dogma. We should achieve proficiency in the theory of Marxism and be able to apply it. The purpose of achieving proficiency is for practical application of the theory. If you can use Marxist-Leninist views to analyze one or two practical problems, you should be commended for your accomplishments. If you can crack more problems and problems of more general significance, in a more profound way, the greater will be your accomplishments.”³ He also commented on the confusion caused by dogmatism on definitions of truth, theoretician and knowledge that “there is only one kind of true theory in this world, which is drawn from and then verified by objective reality.” “Marxism-Leninism is the most accurate, most scientific and most revolutionary theory of truth which has derived from and proven correct in practice. However, many people who study Marxism-Leninism treat it as lifeless dogma. This has hindered the advancement of truth and caused damage to themselves and their comrades.”⁴ These remarks by Mao Zedong pointed to the harm of subjectivism and, in particular, of dogmatism, and the essence and true meaning of Marxism, providing a set of criteria for judging what could be called truth.

Theoreticians of the CPC have proposed certain key criteria for judging if a theory is broad enough to be a scientific system, following discussions over the years. Most of them agreed that the basis and criteria for judging a new scientific system of theories “chiefly are: a) if the theory is systematic and b) if it answers a series of fundamental questions in the intended field. It will be a scientific theoretical system if the answers are positive.”⁵

In view of the foregoing, I once highlighted three aspects⁶ of the criteria for scientific system of theories:

(1) The basis of the theory, i.e. if the theory is grounded in solid theoretical basis (in particular if its world outlook and methodology are based on the science of Marxist dialectical and historical materialism), and has the foundation of practice and mass commitment;

(2) Theoretical quality, i.e. if it has a clearly articulated central argument, supported by a series of consistent basic viewpoints and internal logic and addressing fundamental problems with a systematic approach;

(3) Outcome, i.e. if it is “derived from and proven in practice”, evolving, dynamic, open and in keeping with the development of practice.

Using the above criteria to judge the “One Country, Two Systems” theory, we can say that it fully qualifies as a scientific theoretical system.

First, in view of its theoretical basis, we can see that it came from the lineage of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought and the theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics, adopting their world outlook and methodology of dialectical materialism and historical materialism, common ideals, beliefs, outlook on life and values. It was also derived from a practical understanding of contemporary international politics, economy, culture and science and technology, from the practice of China’s reform, opening up and developing socialist market economy, and from the experience and lessons of national reunification processes around the world. It is based on

broad popular support and commitment of the vast majority of compatriots on the Chinese mainland, in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, as well as overseas Chinese around the world.

Second, from its theoretical rationalization, we can see that it provides systematic answers in a scientific manner to questions concerning definition, rationale, plausibility and methodology of national reunification, and approach to maintaining stability and prosperity in Hong Kong and Macao which are reunited with the motherland, with the “One Country, Two Systems” policy as an overriding goal. It also provides a range of innovative theories and ideas on national reunification. It is complete with clarification of the subjective and objective basis for, and evolution, basic contents, practical model, distinct features, significance, and future prospects of, the theory itself. It is obvious that this theoretical system is a major innovative contribution to Marxism and an epitome of great wisdom and strategic, decisive and innovative thinking, with strong internal and systematic logic. It is in keeping with contemporary reality, highly practical, scientific and innovative. Its conclusions are forward-looking, reflecting collective wisdom and openness of its system. Overall, the “One Country, Two Systems” theory addresses a whole range of issues related to national reunification and demonstrates the systematic quality of a scientific theory.

Third, in view of its outcome, we can see that the theory, which is derived from the practice of China’s socialist modernization and national reunification, has been proven true in practice. The prosperity and stability maintained in Hong Kong and Macao for more than a decade after their return to the motherland fully demonstrate that the theory and its system are completely correct. In his “Speech at the Ceremony Celebrating 10th Anniversary of Macao’s Return to the Motherland and the Inauguration of the Third-term Government the Macao SAR”, Hu Jintao said, “Over the past decade after Macao’s return to the motherland, the Macao SAR Chief Executive Edmund Ho Hau Wah and the Macao SAR administration with the full support of the Central Government and the mainland, led the people from all walks of life in Macao in meeting such grave challenges as the Asian financial crisis, SARS and world financial crisis, and overcoming various difficulties encountered in Macao development process through joint struggle and pragmatism. They have maintained overall prosperity and stability of Macao and made great progress in all fields of endeavours. Macao, this historical town renowned for commerce, is thriving as never before. The successful practice of ‘One Country, Two Systems’ created a glorious chapter in Macao’s development and added glory to the nation’s development as a whole.” “The past decade after Macao’s return to the motherland witnessed the successful practice of ‘One country, Two Systems’ in Macao, the smooth implementation of the Macao Basic Law and the constant progress made by Macao people in all circles in pursuing a development path that conforms to Macao’s realities.”⁷ The same can be said for the practice over the past decade and more in Hong Kong after its return to the motherland. Taiwan, under the influence of Hong Kong and Macao and other domestic and international factors, is also making great head way in developing trade, communication, mutual consultation and assistance with the mainland.

For these reasons, it is apparently improper to regard the idea of “One Country, Two Systems”, three decades after its first proposition, merely as a “scientific vision”, “national strategy,” and “a principle and policy in dealing with issues of national reunification,” not recognizing its evolution through practice from vision, principle and policy to a complete scientific system of theories, which has made the original vision more concrete, systematic and institutionalized in law. Further, in all the main reports by the CPC at its national congresses since the 13th, the notion of “adopting ‘One Country, Two Systems’ in realizing reunification of the motherland” has been a fundamental

component and essential element of the theoretical outline and system of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

It should also be noted that the proper formation of "scientific vision", "national strategy," principle and policy should always be grounded in scientific theories, without which they would be mere whimsical thinking without positive effect. At the same time, the correct understanding and implementation of such vision, strategy, principle and policy would also require theoretical elaboration and guidance, validation, evaluation and revision in practice. Therefore, vision, strategy, principle and policy on the one hand, and theory and system of theories on the other, mutually permeating and reinforcing, form a virtuous cycle of interdependence. It is therefore a fallacy to define the "One Country, Two Systems" idea merely as a vision, strategy, principle and policy, but not a theory or system of theories at the same time, mistaking their relations of interdependence as those of conflict and negation.

II. Classification of "One Country, Two Systems" as a scientific theoretical system

Different perspectives can be adopted in determining the type of scientific system of theories to which "One Country, Two Systems" should belong.

In view of the relationship between the theoretical system of "One Country, Two Systems" and that of socialism with Chinese characteristics, the former is a subsystem subordinate to and in support of the latter. "Theories of socialism with Chinese characteristics constitute a system of scientific theories including Deng Xiaoping Theory, the important thought of Three Represents, and the Scientific Outlook on Development and other major strategic thoughts. This system represents the Party's adherence to and development of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought and embodies the wisdom and hard work of several generations of Chinese Communists leading the people in carrying out tireless explorations and practices. It is the latest achievement in adapting Marxism to Chinese conditions, the CPC's invaluable political and intellectual asset, and the common ideological foundation for the concerted endeavor of the people of all ethnic groups."⁸ The system of theories of socialism with Chinese characteristics provides answers in a relatively systematic way for the first time ever to a whole range of fundamental questions concerning the path, phases, fundamental tasks, driving force, external conditions, political assurance, strategic steps, leading force and support base for the advancement of Chinese socialism and national reunification, which are all basic components of the theoretical system.

Under guidance of such theoretical system and based on lessons from the past, the fundamental political approach and agenda of the CPC for the primary stage of socialism was developed. It is a theoretical system of potent political meaning, philosophical insight, rigorous logic, extraordinary profoundness and breadth spanning academic disciplines of philosophy, political economics and scientific socialism, and applicable to all areas of economy, political affairs, science and technology, education, culture, civil/ethnic/religious affairs, military, diplomacy, the united front, national unification, and CPC building. It is a scientific system of closely linked and interrelated theories embodying new thinking, new ideas and new conclusions. These and the resulting basic theories, political line, agenda and experience concern China's reform, development and stability, home and foreign affairs, national defense, and governance of the CPC, state and the

armed forces. It reflects underlying laws of governance of the CPC, laws of socialist development and the development of human society. It is thoroughly consistent with Marxist attitude, outlook and methodology. Its essence is emancipating the mind, seeking truth from facts and keeping up with the times, along a central axis of reform and opening up, with a central theme of development, a core value of putting people first, and with a cornerstone of the CPC leadership and party building.

This theoretical system will be continuously enriched and developed while adapting to Chinese conditions, advancing in step with the times and being tied to the destiny of the people. In the context of China as a whole, the system of theories of socialism with Chinese characteristics is a holistic macro-theoretical system with its whole range of subsystems, dealing with economy, political affairs, science and technology, education, culture, civil/ethnic/religious affairs, military, diplomacy, the united front, national unification, and party building, being subordinate and in support of the main system. Therefore, the theoretical system of “One Country, Two Systems” has to be a subsystem under the system of theories for socialism with Chinese characteristics, the former being subordinate to, in support of, and evolving in sync with the latter. The subsystem is equally important and indispensable, and shares a relationship of dialectical unity with the main system, with the former being an integral part of the latter and both being mutually dependent.

In view of its theoretical form, the theoretical system of “One Country, Two Systems” is conducive to practice and application. Of the diverse theoretical forms that exist in the world, two are the most important. The first is a purely academic kind with systematic knowledge based on strictly woven logic and structure of basic concepts, reasoning and judgment. It is well referenced, rational, complete and convincing in its argument. Typically, it focuses on fundamental concepts, definitions and principles, and can be highly abstract and speculative. The second is practice and application oriented. It focuses on application and practical relevance of its fundamental concepts, definitions and principles which are to be applied to relevant disciplines or practical work, addressing practical problems of universal significance and deriving knowledge and theory from real experience for future applications. It underscores the process of deriving theory from practice, with the theory being validated, enriched and developed in practice. It emphasizes adherence to basic theories and principles and related positions, viewpoints and methodology, while not being constrained by understanding, thinking and behavior patterns dictated by the theory. It advocates actions and thinking always proceeding from reality and being responsive to change, to create innovative breakthroughs. The theoretical system of “One Country, Two Systems” belongs to the second type. To recognize only the first and reject the second type as a proper theory is one-sided and inappropriate.

In view of rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, “One Country, Two Systems” is a very important theoretical system for achieving national reunification and rejuvenation. China is one of the most ancient countries in the world, with an uninterrupted history of civilization spanning nearly five thousand years and outstanding and brilliant contribution to world civilization. However, in the age of industrialization, it became closed up, self-conceited, and lagged behind, which resulted in defeat and humiliation. The defeat in the Opium War of 1840 became a major turning point in modern Chinese history, which was followed a succession of Western invasions and wars against China, forcing the Qing government into submission and pushing the country into the abyss of semi-colonial and semi-feudal rule. In pursuit of national independence, liberation, common prosperity and national power, Chinese leaders with vision embarked on the road of seeking truth

and struggle for national rejuvenation. The 20th century witnessed historic transformations of the Chinese nation. "Over the past century, the Chinese people witnessed three historic transformations, which created three great leaders at the leading edge in their respective times. They are Sun Yat-sen, Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping"⁹ who led three great revolutions, creating three theories.¹⁰

Sun Yat-sen stepped into the limelight of Chinese revolution on the eve of the 20th century. The entire country was in crisis and faced with the prospect of being carved up by foreign powers. He founded a revolutionary group called Hsing Chung Hui (also known as Revive China Society). Reviving China hence became a rallying call throughout the 20th century that inspired and united the Chinese nation. He also advocated a theory of Three People's Principles, which he described as a theory of national salvation. He commented, "What is 'ism'? It is an idea, a belief and a force." He wanted to apply the idea, belief and force of Three People's Principles to save China from demise and enable her to stand among nations of the world. Under the guidance of his Three People's Principles, China embarked on the road of nationalist and democratic revolution, in the full sense of a modern revolution, culminating in the 1911 Revolution that toppled monarchic dynastic rule that had lasted for millennia in China. "The 1911 Revolution failed to change the nature of old Chinese society and harsh conditions of people's life. It did however open the floodgate of China's progress, making it impossible for the stability of reactionary rule and order."¹¹ In his late years, Sun advocated a New Three Principles of the People which consisted of "working with the soviets, working with the communists and helping the farmers and workers." The Chinese communists have always regarded Sun Yat-sen as the "Forerunner of the Revolution" and described themselves as heirs to his revolutionary cause. Mao Zedong in his lecture in Yan'an on *How to Study the History of Chinese Communist Party* commented "to study the history of the Communist Party of China, we should also study the 1911 Revolution and the May Fourth Movement prior to the founding of the Party, so as to understand its historical evolution." "Speaking of preparation for revolution, we should regard the first phase that started in 1921 as a result of preparation by the 1911 Revolution and the May Fourth Movement."¹² In his political report delivered at the 7th National Congress of the CPC, Mao made special remarks about how the communists should treat Sun Yat-sen. He said, "Sun Yat-sen had indeed done a few good things and spoken some good words, which I have tried to capture as much as possible in my report. We should always uphold this and even after we die, our children and grand children should continue to do so." "We should always be clear-headed in upholding the banner of Sun Yat-sen."¹³

The second great personality was Mao Zedong who became a central figure of Chinese politics as one of the founders of the CPC a decade after the 1911 Revolution. His greatest contributions were the creation of Mao Zedong Thought, adapting general tenets of Marxism-Leninism to actual conditions of Chinese revolution, the first historic leap in the development of Marxism in China, and his role in the success of the great revolution overthrowing a semi-colonial and semi-feudal system and establishing a socialist new China. This great revolution "overthrew the three big mountains of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism. The Chinese people have since stood up, moved from the phase of new-democratic revolution to the phase of socialism, and achieved tremendous accomplishments in socialist construction. This is a great victory of people's revolution that has never happened in China before and also a great victory of socialism and national liberation with world significance."¹⁴

The third great man is Deng Xiaoping who was at center stage of Chinese politics at a critical and historic juncture when the future direction of Chinese revolution was to be determined. Deng

was a key member of the first generation of central collective leadership with Mao Zedong at its core and was persecuted for the second time in the early stages of the “Cultural Revolution”. In 1975, Mao Zedong supported rehabilitation of Deng Xiaoping, placing him in a position to preside over daily affairs of the Party. He launched a comprehensive and highly effective rectification, which “in effect negated effects of the ‘Cultural Revolution’ and incurred the wrath of the ‘Gang of Four’”.¹⁵ He was then persecuted for the third time. He came back again after the death of Mao Zedong, the smashing of the “Gang of Four” and the end of the “Cultural Revolution”. After he was reinstated, Deng Xiaoping strongly supported discussions on the criteria for truth to counter conservative constraints of the “Two Whatevers” mindset. At the closing session of the Work Conference of the Central Committee of Chinese Communist Party in 1978, he delivered a speech entitled “Emancipate the Mind, Seek Truth from Facts and Unite as One in Looking to the Future”. This set scene for the historic Third Plenary Session of the 11th National Congress of CPC and became its official report. “The speech was a manifesto for breaking down constraints of ‘Two Whatevers’, blazing new trails for the new era and launching a new theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics, delivered at the major historic juncture when China’s fate is being decided.”¹⁶ This showed that Deng Xiaoping, at the core of the CPC’s second generation of central collective leadership, was the chief architect of China’s reform and opening up. The precarious domestic situation in China following the “Cultural Revolution”, the disintegration of the former USSR and drastic changes in former socialist countries in Eastern Europe compelled Deng Xiaoping and the CPC to rethink China’s socialist path of development, develop a new approach of building socialism with Chinese characteristics, and create a system of theories for such a new approach, namely the Deng Xiaoping Theory. This new system, including the theory of “One Country, Two Systems”, was developed also by drawing upon China’s own experience since 1949 and lessons of rise and fall of other socialist countries. Under the guidance of Deng Xiaoping Theory and its subsystem - the theory of “One Country, Two Systems”, the CPC and the people of all ethnic groups have achieved remarkable success over the last three decades of reform, opening up and socialist modernization. They also accomplished the return of Hong Kong and Macao to the motherland, maintained their prosperity and stability over the past decade and more, and made tremendous progress in areas concerning Taiwan with cross-strait economic and cultural cooperation and exchanges gaining positive momentum and moving in a new direction.

III. The structure of the theoretical system of “One Country, Two Systems”

Any system of theories has its core and central theme, supported by a logical and layered structure. What then is the structure of the theoretical system of “One Country, Two Systems”? There has been a certain lack of academic discussions on this topic in China. In our view, its structure contains the following multiple levels:

3.1 The core and theme of the theory

The core of the “One Country, Two Systems” theory is national unity. Deng Xiaoping pointed out when commenting on the Taiwan issue that “the core of the issue is reunification of the motherland.”¹⁷ Hu Jintao also noted, “The key to resolve the Taiwan question is achieving national reunification. The goal is to uphold and safeguard China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and

pursue happiness of all sons and daughters of the Chinese nation, including Taiwan compatriots, and achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.”¹⁸ Although these remarks by Deng Xiaoping and Hu Jintao referred to the Taiwan issue, they should apply in spirit to Hong Kong and Macao as well. This constitutes the core of the theoretical system of “One Country, Two Systems.” National reunification referred here means the following:

(a) Territorial integrity of the nation, i.e. the integrity of all its territorial land, waters and airspace.

(b) Unified sovereignty. Sovereignty is defined by the supremacy of authority in dealing with all domestic and international matters without interference by other countries. It cannot be divided and existence of more than one such supreme authority within one country is not permissible. Within China, national sovereignty encompasses the mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao.

(c) The singularity of the central government. In a unified China, there can only be one Central Government, or a democratic coalition government including all political parties, factions and representatives of people with no party or faction affiliations, such as Mao Zedong proposed in his writing “On Coalition Government”. No matter whether it is the Central Government or a coalition central government, it will be the sole national government with its scope of governance covering the whole country.

(d) Singularity in the context of international law. In consideration of national unification, there is only one national entity of China in international affairs, with Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao all being integral parts of China. They can each participate in certain international activities using the names of “Taiwan, China”, “Hong Kong, China”, and “Macao, China”, but they cannot represent China. This has become an internationally recognized fact that no one can deny or alter.

Parallel to the core principles of the “One Country, Two Systems” theory is the theme of peace and development. At his meeting with Lien Chan, Honorary Chairman of Kuomintang Party in April 2006, Hu Jintao proposed, “peace and development should be a central theme in the development of cross-strait relations.” On the issue of cross-strait relations, the report of the 17th National Congress of the CPC called for “a firm grasp of the theme of peaceful development of cross-strait relations.”¹⁹ In his “Speech at the Forum Marking the 30th Anniversary of the Issuance of the Message to Compatriots in Taiwan,” Hu Jintao affirmed that “we must strive for the peaceful reunification of the motherland with the greatest sincerity and utmost effort. First of all, it is imperative to ensure the peaceful development of cross-strait relations.” “We must firmly hold on to the theme of peaceful development of cross-strait relations and actively promote, so as to achieve solidarity, harmony and prosperity of the entire nation.”²⁰ All this tells us that peaceful development should be the central theme of not only cross-strait relations, but also relations between the mainland and Hong Kong, and between mainland and Macao. It is the central theme of the theoretical system of “One Country, Two Systems”.

3.2 Theoretical and philosophical foundation

The theoretical foundation of the “One Country, Two Systems” theory is Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought and the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Its philosophical basis is Marxist dialectical and historical materialism. Its philosophical essence is emancipating the mind, seeking truth from facts, keeping up with times and pragmatism. These philosophical elements provide support to the theory and have higher meanings in themselves, helping people to gain penetrating insight when observing real problems. There has been no

ambiguity about the theoretical and philosophical foundation of “One Country, Two Systems”. Deng Xiaoping himself stated repeatedly that “if ‘One Country, Two Systems’ is deemed as an idea of significance to the world, we should attribute such to Marxist dialectical materialism and historical materialism which in essence is what Chairman Mao Zedong described as seeking truth from facts.”²¹ “Seeking truth from facts is the basis of a proletarian world outlook and the ideological basis of Marxism. The success of our revolution in the past was entirely dependent on the approach of seeking truth from facts. Our drive to achieve the Four Modernizations still needs to be based on this approach.”²² “Seeking truth from facts reflects the essence of Marxism. We should promote this approach rather than a bookish one. The success of our reform and opening up has not been based on bookish theories, but rather on our practical approach and on seeking truth from facts.”²³

3.3 Core content and basic viewpoints

The core content of the theoretical system of “One Country, Two Systems” is “the existence of two systems within one China.” A series of basic viewpoints were proposed in support of this core.

“One China” in this context means there is only China in the world. Hong Kong once under British occupation and Macao once under Portuguese occupation have always been part of Chinese territories and must be returned to China. The province of Taiwan under administration of Taiwanese authorities also has always been China’s sacred territories and must be unified with China. In this regard, “One China” refers to the whole of China including Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao and Chinese mainland, within the scope of Chinese sovereign state. “One China” is the premise and prerequisite for achieving reunification of motherland. Absent of this premise, there will be no basis for consultation. All our contentious discussions with British, Portuguese and Taiwanese authorities have focused on the issue of “one China” and the recognition of Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan having always been part of China’s sacred territories. The temporary status of their separation from the motherland was historical legacy. Their return to China is a matter of inevitability and cannot be blocked by any force. Adherence to “one China” principle entails opposition to “two-Chinas”, “one China, one Taiwan”, “Taiwan independence”, “Hong Kong under U.N. trusteeship,” “Hong Kong Adopting Singaporean model of independence,” or “Sino-British joint administration.” All these propositions, in varying terms, are in essence attempts to oppose the return of Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao to China and the great reunification of China. They run counter to the common aspirations of the Chinese nation for national unification and their opposition to separation. They are also detrimental to the interests of Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao. At present, on the issue of “one China”, both Taiwan and mainland authorities acknowledge that “both sides of the Taiwan strait belong to one China”, but have major disagreements on the representation of “One China”. Taiwan authorities hold the position that “Republic of China” on Taiwan represents China, is, and has always been the representative of China (including the Chinese mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao). The mainland authorities hold the position that the People’s Republic of China (PRC) is the sole legitimate representative of “one China”. The Chinese mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao are all integral parts of China’s sacred territories, which has been an unquestionable and internationally recognized fact. Therefore, on the representation of “one China”, it remains to be a strenuous process to try to build consensus between both sides of the strait. Both sides need to adopt the principle of respecting

reality and evolutionary progress in efforts for theoretical and conceptual breakthrough and develop necessary steps and measures acceptable to both sides.

Deng Xiaoping described "two systems" as such: "With 'One Country, Two Systems', there will be socialism in addition to capitalism. This means that within the PRC, the mainland with its one billion people will unswervingly maintain the socialist system... Upon this premise, a capitalist system will be allowed to exist in certain areas and on a small scale."²⁴ In other words, on the basis "One China", the mainland will maintain the socialist system, while Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao continue under the capitalist system. All will coexist in joint development over the long term. None will swallow up or infringe upon the interests of the others. Such coexistence of two systems is unique in:

(a) Accommodating two systems of heterogeneous nature. The mainland practices socialism while Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao remain under capitalism, the two socio-political systems being of different and opposing nature. The coexistence of such conflicting systems within a unified country is possible because they also share certain commonalities. These include the mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao all concur on reunification and the notion of "one China". They all identify with traditional Chinese culture with Confucianism at its core. They are economically interrelated: while Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao need mainland market and resources, the mainland needs the capital, technology and extensive international networks of Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao.

(b) Uniting the primary and secondary. Within one country, socialism on the mainland will be the primary socio-political system of a dominant nature. Relative to the mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao are in auxiliary positions, which exert significant influences on the mainland while also being guided by the mainland. Such a relationship determines the direction and prospects of the development of "One Country, Two Systems". The relationship is not one in which one side swallowing up or weighing down on the other, but rather one of mutual learning and support. Within such a relationship of coexistence, integration and positive interaction, each side will remain relatively independent and all will be mutually complementary, so as to achieve mutual benefits and win-win.

(c) Uniting entities large and small. The mainland has a large geographical area and population with abundant natural resources, massive total economic output, powerful military forces and strong international reputation. Its every move may have impact on not only Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao but also internationally. Relative to the mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao are small in size though they each have their own strengths and advantages. The human history is littered with examples of the large, powerful and majority bullying the small, weak and minority. However, the relationship between the mainland and Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao is one of the large helping and defending the small, and vice versa. It is a relationship of solidarity, goodwill and cooperation, and of joint efforts, mutual benefits and win-win.

(d) Integrating the unitary and plural. The PRC is a unitary state but its unitary structure also allows certain federal features. With full implementation of "One Country, Two Systems", the PRC Government will represent the entire sovereign state. Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao will enjoy a high degree of autonomy mandated by the Central Government in accordance with the *Constitution of the People's Republic of China* and relevant laws, and will form special administrative region governments to exercise rights of autonomy mandated by laws. This is the predominant feature of the unitary state structure. At the same time, the coexistence of two systems within one country also

allowed a major breakthrough to the scope of local government power under unitary system. Compared with autonomous regions of minority nationalities, special administrative regions have broader and more extensive autonomous rights. They include:

(1) Certain rights in external affairs that are not enjoyed by autonomous regions. For example, economic, cultural and science and technology agreements with foreign states can be concluded, and membership in international organizations not limited to states can be gained, in the name of “Taiwan, China”, “Hong Kong, China” and “Macao, China”. Such powers do not equal to diplomatic rights that belong to the Central People’s Government.

(2) Having Independent finances and maintain independence in their respective financial and monetary systems.

(3) Independent legislative power and power of final adjudication. The special administrative region governments can enact laws in accordance with local realities which can differ from laws of the mainland. The courts shall exercise judicial power independently and no cases for final adjudication need be referred to Beijing.

(4) Independent law enforcement power to maintain law and order locally.

(5) Taiwan shall even maintain its own armed forces and directly purchase arms from foreign states under the condition that such arms acquisitions do not pose a threat to the mainland.

These aforementioned powers are not enjoyed by autonomous regions of minority nationalities under a unitary system, which reflects certain characteristics of a federal structure. Thus, “One Country, Two Systems” provides a state structure integrating unitary and federal features. The coexistence of two systems shall not be a coerced arrangement but rather a proactive, voluntary and scientific combination based on correct understanding of realities. Historically, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao have since ancient times been inalienable parts of Chinese territories. Presently, the four geographical regions are closely linked in the flow of human resources, goods, capital and information. Their proximity is also enhanced by easy overland infrastructure and maritime transportation. In view of social connection, there has been deep-seated mutual understanding and spirit of goodwill that may have been hampered by historical grievances but is now enhanced by practical necessity. Therefore, the coexistence of two systems is not only necessary but also plausible.

The theoretical system of “One Country, Two Systems” also contains a series of basic viewpoints in support of its core contents. They include:

(1) “One China” is the basis and prerequisite for reunification of the motherland.

(2) The roles and statures of “Two Systems” within “One Country” are not equal and balanced. The main part of the country remains under socialism while allowing capitalism in certain regions for as long as several decades or even a hundred years and maintaining such coexistence for the long run.

(3) Peaceful reunification but with no commitment to not using military force.

(4) Following peaceful reunification of the motherland, there will be SARs of Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan established in accordance with relevant laws. They will enjoy a high degree of autonomy with appending powers and obligations, practicing “Hong Kong People Ruling Hong Kong”, “Macao People Ruling Macao” and “Taiwan People Ruling Taiwan.” Taiwan will be somewhat different from Hong Kong and Macao in that its scope of autonomy will be even broader.

(5) "One Country, Two Systems" is a fundamental policy of the CPC and government that will remain unchanged for a long time to come.

(6) "One Country, Two Systems" shall be fully embodied in basic laws.

(7) Stability should be secured without turmoil during transition leading up to the return of Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan to the motherland.

(8) Following their reunification with the motherland, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan shall endeavor to maintain the long-term prosperity and stability of the mainland and their respective regions for mutual benefit and win-win, through joint commitment and dedication, consultation and cooperation, leveraging strengths and minimizing weaknesses.

There can be further examples of such supporting viewpoints. With continued practice of "One Country, Two Systems" in wider context and increasing depth, there will be new conclusions, propositions and insights based on improved understanding and innovative thinking.

IV. Conclusion

In conclusion, we believe that the "One Country, Two Systems" theory through its evolution thus far has become an independent and complete subsystem of the main system of theories of "socialism with Chinese characteristics". This theoretical system was constructed upon answers to a series of fundamental questions concerning definition, rationale and plausibility of, and approaches to, national reunification. The structure of this scientific theoretical system of new thinking, ideas and conclusions can be highlighted as containing the following:

(1) National reunification at its core;

(2) Peaceful development as central theme;

(3) One china, coexistence of two systems, peaceful negotiation and a high degree of autonomy as focal points;

(4) Supremacy of national sovereignty, keeping people first, executive-led government, administration according to law, prosperity and stability, and gradual democratic evolution as principles;

(5) The Hong Kong SAR and the Macao SAR as best practice cases;

(6) Subjective and objective conditions and historical evolution as background;

(7) Unique characteristics, historic significance and future prospect as basis of its value system.

The different levels of this theoretical system are each distinct and all closely linked, forming a holistic, integrated and open structure.

Notes:

¹ Rong Kaiming and Liu Baoshan (2011). *A New Insight on Deng Xiaoping's "One Country, Two Systems" Theory*. Macao: One Country Two Systems Research Center of Macao Polytechnic Institute.

² Mao Zedong (1991). *Selected Works of Mao Zedong (Volume 1)*. Beijing: People's Publishing House. 109, 111, 112, 115.

- ³ Mao Zedong (1991). *Selected Works of Mao Zedong (Volume 1)*. Beijing: People's Publishing House. 815.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, 817.
- ⁵ Zhao Yao (2005). A Comprehensive and Systematic Understanding of the Scientific System of Deng Xiaoping Theory. In *A Collection of Papers Presented at the Commemorative Forum on Deng Xiaoping's Life and Thought (I)*. Beijing: Central Party Literature Press. 218.
- ⁶ Rong Kaiming (2004). Understanding the Relationship between the Important Thought of "Three Represents" and Deng Xiaoping Theory. *Journal of Ezhou University*.
- ⁷ Hu Jintao (2009). Speech at the Ceremony Celebrating 10th Anniversary of Macao's Return to the Motherland and the Inauguration of the Third-term Government the Macao SAR. *People's Daily (Overseas Edition)*. 21st December 2009.
- ⁸ Hu Jintao (2007). Report at the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. In *A Collection of Documents of the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China*. Beijing: People's Publishing House. 11.
- ⁹ Jiang Zemin (1997). Speech at the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. In *A Collection of Documents of the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China*. Beijing: People's Publishing House.
- ¹⁰ Gong Yuzhi (2004). *From Mao Zedong to Deng Xiaoping*. Beijing: Chinese Communist Party History Publishing House. 24-29.
- ¹¹ Jiang Zemin (1997). Speech at the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. In *A Collection of Documents of the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China*. Beijing: People's Publishing House.
- ¹² Mao Zedong (1993). *A Collection of Mao Zedong's Writings (Volume 2)*. Beijing: People's Publishing House. 402, 404.
- ¹³ Mao Zedong (1996). *A Collection of Mao Zedong's Writings (Volume 3)*. Beijing: People's Publishing House. 321-322.
- ¹⁴ Jiang Zemin (1997). Speech at the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. In *A Collection of Documents of the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China*. Beijing: People's Publishing House.
- ¹⁵ Deng Xiaoping (1993). *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping (Volume 3)*. Beijing: People's Publishing House. 81.
- ¹⁶ Jiang Zemin (1997). Speech at the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. In *A Collection of Documents of the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China*. Beijing: People's Publishing House.
- ¹⁷ Deng Xiaoping (1993). *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping (Volume 3)*. Beijing: People's Publishing House. 30.
- ¹⁸ Hu Jintao (2009). Jointly Promote the Peace and Development of the Relationship across the Taiwan Strait and Realize Great Revitalization of Chinese Nation: Speech at the Forum of the 30th Anniversary of the Message to Taiwan Compatriots. In *A Selection of Important Documents since the 17th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (I)*. Beijing: Central Party Literature Press. 843.
- ¹⁹ Hu Jintao (2007). Report at the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. In *A Collection of Documents of the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China*. Beijing: People's Publishing House. 11.
- ²⁰ Hu Jintao (2009). Jointly Promote the Peace and Development of the Relationship across the Taiwan Strait and Realize Great Revitalization of Chinese Nation: Speech at the Forum of the 30th Anniversary of the Message to Taiwan Compatriots. In *A Selection of Important Documents since the 17th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (I)*. Beijing: Central Party Literature Press. 843-844.
- ²¹ Deng Xiaoping (1993). *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping (Volume 3)*. Beijing: People's Publishing House. 101.
- ²² Deng Xiaoping (1994). *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping (Volume 2)*. Beijing: People's Publishing House. 143.
- ²³ Deng Xiaoping (1993). *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping (Volume 3)*. Beijing: People's Publishing House. 382.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.* 103.