

The History and Function of Theoretical Propaganda in the Popularization of Mainstream Ideology

Yong Cao^a, Jiahui Qi

Anhui University of Finance and Economics, Bengbu, China

^a120081346@aufe.edu.cn

Abstract

Promoting the propaganda and popularization of Marxist theory is an important part of the Party's ideological and theoretical construction. As an organizational form of dissemination of Marxist theory, the theory propaganda has played an important role in the process of popularization of Marxist theory. From the historical dimension, the theoretical propaganda has existed in the long history of ideological propaganda popularization. From the functional dimension, the theoretical propaganda has the functions of political enlightenment, power discipline and legitimacy construction in ideological propaganda and popularization. The theoretical propaganda of the mainstream ideology in the new era must be upheld and perfected in practice.

Keywords

Theoretical Propaganda; Mainstream Ideology; Publicity and Popularization.

1. Introduction

The ideology produced by the dominant class in society within a certain period of time becomes the mainstream ideology, and modern states and political parties generally regard the mastery of ideological leadership, management and discourse as an important symbol and basis for maintaining state power, and any kind of doctrine and theory is not actively accepted and recognized by people, and theoretical propaganda activities are an important way to enhance the acceptance and recognition of new doctrines and theories by members of society at large. Theoretical propaganda activities are an important channel to enhance the acceptance and recognition of new doctrines and theories by members of society. In-depth study of the role of theory propaganda in ideological propaganda and popularization is of great significance for the popularization of the theoretical achievements of Marxism Chineseization.

2. The Historical Dimension of Theoretical Propaganda in the Popularization of Mainstream Ideology

To highlight its advantages, to win the dominant position and consolidate its ruling position, any political party always needs to give its ideas universality, to present its interests as the common interests of all members of society, and at the same time, to vigorously promote its political ideas with the help of different communication channels, and then win the support and backing of the public. Theoretical propaganda in ideological propaganda and popularization has a long historical tradition, and the history of theoretical propaganda in mainstream ideological propaganda and popularization is reflected in the following four stages.

2.1. The Practice of Theory Preaching in Ancient China

Confucianism was the dominant ideology in China's slave and feudal societies. Although the concept of ideology did not exist in ancient China, the practice of preaching theory with indoctrination at its core had the role of ideological propaganda and popularization. In

Confucian theory, the matter of politics and the matter of indoctrination are coterminous. Therefore, later Confucians, whenever they spoke about politics, always put edification first. The sage is in charge of edification, and the Confucian idea of a saintly ruler and a virtuous minister is in fact the same as edification of politics [1]. In ancient China, theoretical propaganda activities were more about the recitation and explanation of Confucian classics, and although they had a certain political purpose, they focused more on moral edification and persuasion of the people for good.

Throughout history, feudal dynasties have paid special attention to the selection of virtuous and talented people to preach ideology and mainstream values for the purpose of indoctrination. The Qin Dynasty, as the first unified central dynasty in feudal China, began to set up the so-called "Three Elders" as an official position to carry out political edification, whose main functions, according to the description of the "Three Elders" in the "Zi zhi Tong jian", were According to the description of "San Lao" in "Zi zhi Tong jian", its main function was "to teach and educate, to flatten the table of its people, to promote good deeds".

The "Three Elders", as the state's county and township education "public officials", were not only responsible for controlling the local ideology and educating the people, but also for preaching the state's policies and decrees to the general public. Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty selected learned and talented "doctoral officials" to tour the country to preach the policies and decrees of the court. In the Sui dynasty, the "sixteen ambassadors were sent to inspect the customs of the provinces" to preach in various places, which is somewhat similar to the present central theoretical preaching group to preach local theories.

During the Ming and Qing dynasties, the system of propagating the emperor's words on virtue to the people was called "holy preaching" and became an important form of indoctrination not only in the Ming dynasty but also had a great influence on the rulers of the Qing dynasty. In order to spread his thoughts to the local community and better maintain his rule, Zhu Yuan zhang paid special attention to the importance of preaching at the grassroots level. For this reason, he compiled the Six Sermons, which included six articles on filial piety and respect for parents and love for neighbors, as the main material for preaching at the grassroots level, and preached the Six Sermons regularly in the countryside.

In the Qing Dynasty, there were three main ways of preaching in the "Holy Scriptures", namely, the preaching activities of local officials, the preaching of the countryside covenant by the grassroots gentry, and the preaching of the imperial examinations by the scholars. Although, on the surface, the target audience of the "preaching of the holy scriptures" was mainly ordinary people, in fact, these holy scriptures, as official ideological discourse, also needed to be memorized by local officials. Therefore, the "bull preaching" played an important role in the propagation and popularization of official ideology.

2.2. The Practice of Theoretical Propaganda of the Communist Party of China during the New Democratic Revolution

As a typical ideological party, the CPC has always used political propaganda as an important way to improve the cohesion and combat power of the organization, mobilize the general public, and obtain legitimacy resources since its inception. Only when revolutionary theories are accepted by the masses can they become a powerful material force and be grasped by revolutionary party members and the masses. In the early period of the Party's founding, the Party's main task was to propagate Marxist ideas, mobilize the people to actively participate in the revolution, and propagate nationalism, land reform, and the united front. The theoretical propaganda of this period was mainly based on the information output network of the political parties and the army, with the Red Army as the propaganda team, which was an outward representation of the organizational characteristics of the theoretical propaganda of this period.

2.3. The Practice of Theoretical Propaganda of the Communist Party of China during the Period of Socialist Construction

At the early stage of the founding of New China, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) strengthened the propaganda of Marxist ideology in order to consolidate the construction of the nascent regime and decided to establish a propaganda network for the people, noting that the neglect of the nascent regime for the propaganda work of the people led to the frequent spread of non-Marxist ideas and reactionary thoughts among the people, which affected the stability of the socialist regime and the enthusiasm of the people to participate in socialist construction. To realize the ubiquity of mainstream ideology, it is necessary to systematically establish a propaganda network to the people. The CPC Central Committee has established a propaganda network with propagandists and rapporteurs as the main body of theory propaganda, propagandists and rapporteurs are equivalent to the current theory propagandists, and rapporteurs are higher-ranking theory propagandists, generally by the provincial, municipal, county and district party and government officials and others by the deputy of the party and government departments at the above-mentioned levels serve. The rapporteur's method of theoretical propaganda is to provide the people with timely and systematic information on the latest policies and tasks of the Party and the government.

2.4. The Practice of Theoretical Propaganda of the Communist Party of China During the Period of Reform and Opening up

Proclaiming the main resolutions of the Party congresses became the main task of theoretical propaganda groups during this period. Theoretical propaganda activities were conducive to unifying the Party's thinking and guiding social opinion, and in 2001 central propaganda groups first appeared in China's political life to undertake the important task of propagating and explaining the theoretical achievements of mainstream ideology and seeking to coalesce social consensus. Under the demonstration and influence of the theoretical preaching groups established at the central level, party and government departments around the world have set up various forms of theoretical preaching groups to actively preach the spirit of the Party's central conferences to party leaders and cadres at all levels and to the general public. Since the 21st century, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) has organized eight theoretical preaching missions for national preaching, and after the convening of the 19th Party Congress, the Central Committee established the Central Theory Preaching Mission, which immediately went to various parts of the country in early November 2017 to preach the spirit of the 19th Congress, and preached the spirit of the 19th Party Congress by holding on-site reports and various forms of interactive exchange activities.

Since theoretical propaganda has such a great role in spreading ideological views, strengthening ruling legitimacy and rallying people, it has inevitably become an effective tool for politicians to maintain their political rule [2]. During the practical process of revolution, construction, and reform, the CCP has been systematically and organizationally working to propagate the party line and policies, laying the ideological and cultural foundation for the success of revolution, construction, and reform. Although the themes, forms, processes and scales of theoretical propaganda vary, the purpose of theoretical propaganda is to gain the understanding and support of the audience of theoretical propaganda for the Party's policies and propositions in order to better advance the development and progress of society. This is the fine tradition and political advantage of our Party formed in the process of leading socialist modernization.

3. The Function of Theoretical Propaganda in the Popularization of Mainstream Ideology

Theoretical propaganda activities are different from civic education propaganda and professional knowledge propaganda, which are "purposeful communication about politics". Theoretical propaganda activities assume the functions of political edification, power discipline and legitimacy construction.

The Communist Party of China has led the people in different historical periods to struggle to achieve the goals and tasks of national independence and national prosperity, and the realization of the goals and tasks requires the will of the people to become a city, to advance, to be down-to-earth, to struggle hard, and to firmly establish the belief that the whole party and the people are of one mind and one step forward. The Party's theoretical propaganda work should consciously assume the historical responsibility of building a socialist ideology with strong cohesion and leadership, and better unify the minds and hearts of people.

3.1. The Function of Political Indoctrination

As a highly ideological Marxist party, the Communist Party of China has always taken political propaganda as an important means to gain its strong vitality and organizational capacity. It is a kind of "spiritual midwifery" based on psychological cognition, emotional integration, persuasion and enlightenment, and the main goal of self-construction of the rational and virtuous nature of truth, goodness and beauty. The purpose of theoretical propaganda activities is to internalize ideology in the hearts of the audiences of theoretical propaganda and influence their thoughts and behaviors.

In a certain sense, modern democratic politics can be understood as "consent-based rule"? The political indoctrination function of theoretical propaganda activities is realized in two main ways.

One is the edification of information output. As a special activity with distinctive ideology to win public support, political propaganda is inseparable from various concrete means of operation in the practice of specific issue setting, and political discourse, political symbols and political symbols are typical ways of this practice. Ideological discourse promotes the awareness of the members of society of their social role, social status and due social action, as well as of their future development through the mechanism of inquiry and evocation [3]. The information output of language in theoretical propaganda activities shapes the development of the ideology of the theoretical propaganda audience, coordinates the behavior of social members within the limits guided by state policies, and enables them to form habits of positive behavior under the guidance of discourse. At the same time, theoretical propaganda activities contribute to the subjectivation of the propaganda audience and stimulate the motivation and initiative of the members of society to give full play to it. The ruling party has to indoctrinate members of society with ideology and provide a set of value systems as norms to shape their thoughts and behaviors. By proactively promoting mainstream ideological ideas through theoretical propaganda groups, the public will be nurtured to abide by the norms of public life in society and form commonly accepted values based on the public interest, so that Marxist ideology will become the value standard and code of conduct in people's daily lives, enhance the degree of fit and conformity between the ideology of the social public and Marxist ideology, and form a strong cohesive and inspirational power[4].

Public space is an important place in people's daily life and a material medium for social interaction. The formation of people's ideas is inseparably related to material space, and public space as a special form of education has a certain degree of edification effect on the formation of people's ideas. The meeting room, as an important public space, has the function of

transmitting ideas, is a stimulus for the formation of values, and can become an important tool for transforming people's ideas [5].

Unlike modern political communication, which focuses on indirectly conveying political information through mass media, theoretical propaganda activities are generally conducted in public spaces with conference rooms as the venue. Theoretical propaganda activities are face-to-face information exchanges between theoretical propaganda experts and theoretical propaganda audiences, who can be directly influenced by the personality and words of the theoretical propagandists in a closed space, and the effect of such ideological indoctrination cannot be achieved by other forms of propaganda [6]. The meeting room is the natural existence of people's daily life, with more stable visibility, which can increase the hidden nature of indoctrination, and then form a lasting indoctrination of the audience in a short period of time, so that the indoctrination power can be generated and accumulated continuously.

Each field has its own unique logic and rules of operation, and the actors in each field are constructing their own rules of power. The managers of theoretical propaganda organizations often require the audience to arrive early at the theoretical propaganda venue and sign in, turn off their mobile phones or turn them into silent mode. In the name of quietness and order, the theoretical lecture organization managers turn the theoretical lecture space into a contractual space with edifying nature.

When an individual enters the field of theoretical propaganda, he or she is subject to the discipline of the field, because the individual cannot be separated from the field of theoretical information dissemination, as long as the individual accepts the information output of theoretical propaganda, he or she is bound to be subject to the discipline of the whole field, and information is everywhere, whether it is sound or language, all belong to the textual category of information.

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3.2. The Function of Power Regulation

Theoretical propaganda activities help the mainstream ideology to generate great political action and social influence in the whole society, and it can make social thinking, social behavior and social life tend to the direction it leads and play a continuous influence and control role in the social and spiritual level [8]. The power-regulating function of theoretical propaganda activities in ideological propaganda and popularization is mainly reflected in two aspects.

One is the regulation of cultural hegemony. Cultural hegemony is a non-coercive form of class domination, the ability of the ruling class to use the power of socialization to impose its values and beliefs on the non-ruling class.

The communication of any ideology cannot be separated from a specific network of relations and influenced by the power structure of society. In a monolithic political communication network, the Party Central Committee is the core of the public power structure. In the top-down organizational hierarchy established by the CPC and the resulting organizational communication channels, the attitude and voice of the Party Central Committee is the common attitude of the whole Party. The central theoretical propaganda group, which is personally directed and formed by the central government, assumes an important role in political communication. The central theoretical propaganda group not only "speaks out" on behalf of the central government, but also transmits the correct voice of the mainstream ideology with

its special status, so as to avoid criticism and different interpretations of the central government's policies by local governments.

Theoretical propaganda group is a kind of institutionalized relationship network, which originates from "relationship" but is different from "relationship". As far as the Party's propaganda organization system is concerned, there are the central theory propaganda group, the provincial party school lecturer groups and the municipal lecturer groups, which are the core body of the Communist Party of China's theory propaganda work, forming the Party's theory propaganda work system supported by the lecturer groups of the Party committees at all levels, with the Party's propaganda organizations in various departments and units as the network, and the propagandists of various grassroots organizations as the backbone. In general, in the Chinese theoretical propaganda system, the more important the policy to be propagated, the larger the scale of the mobilization meeting of the theoretical propaganda group and the higher the specifications of the leaders attending and presiding over the meeting [9].

The second is the regulation of authoritative discourse. Ideas are subject to the entanglement of language from the very beginning, and even great ideas must be paired with appropriate language, otherwise it will be difficult to spread effectively. Knowledge elites play a very important role in the production and dissemination of ideology, they occupy a wealth of knowledge, and thus have a certain authoritative discourse advantage. In Foucault's theory, intellectual elites are the soldiers in the surveillance tower at the center of the panoramic circular prison, and they achieve public opinion guidance and issue inquiry through monitoring the communication field, expressing opinions and views, and thus achieving the regulation of others.

In theory propaganda, theory propagators and theory propaganda audiences form a direct communication relationship. Although this relationship is not compulsory, it tends to have a strong appeal to the theoretical audience due to the status of the theoretical preaching group in the theoretical supply, its specialized operational concept and practice, and its long-established professional reputation, combined with the theoretical audience's own needs [10].

The focus of theoretical preaching in the new era should be the road and direction of socialism with Chinese characteristics, preaching the inevitability of the road of socialism with Chinese characteristics, focusing on clear direction, taking the right path, not the evil path. To preach Xi Jinping thought of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, the emphasis is on "casting the soul", always Xi Jinping thought of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era as the backbone, maintain and spread well.

3.3. The Function of Building Legitimacy

As a whole, ideology provides the ideological and spiritual support for the "political legitimacy" of society, and establishes a symbolic strategy to achieve the function of ideological manipulation of society. The significance of ideology for legitimacy is that it provides a value-based explanation and defense of the legitimacy of the modern state and its rulers. The process of ideological theoretical propaganda is in essence a process of value reshaping for members of society. Through ideological theoretical propaganda, the CCP satisfies the needs of members of organized society for value identity by way of value reshaping. Historically, regardless of the means by which they gained power, political rulers have always used various ways to win and gain popular support and voluntary obedience to them. The legitimacy-building function of theoretical propaganda activities is realized in the following three ways.

First, the method of "eating through the top" builds legitimacy. The political propaganda group of the Communist Party of China (CPC) is essentially conveying an ideology when it propagates the spirit of the central government's meetings to the party leaders and the public. When the theoretical propaganda group conducts propaganda activities in front of the general public in different places, the members of the theoretical propaganda group always try to interpret the

central policies through popularized language, and the propaganda activities for the public are conducive to gaining the understanding and support of the members of society for the policies of the Party and the government. For example, the 19th Party Congress introduced new terms such as the major social contradictions in the new era and the new journey of a modern and powerful socialist state with Chinese characteristics in the new era, which indicates a change in the decision-making orientation and governance strategy of the top echelon of the CPC. The 19th National Congress report is a manifesto and action guide for the CPC to expand more new resources of legitimacy beyond performance legitimacy. Socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era gradually forms a legitimacy reshaping path with an all-round and global Chinese discourse system led by procedural legitimacy and the overall development of ideological legitimacy, performance legitimacy, moral legitimacy, and ecological legitimacy [11].

The second is the "grasp the next situation" method to build legitimacy. "Grasp the next situation", is to understand and grasp the actual situation and real ideas of the preaching object, clear preaching object on the demand for preaching in which areas or which issues. The current content of China's theoretical preaching to the theory of rules and regulations, not from the actual work life of the cadres and masses, and even people's concerns about the hot spots, difficult and focal points to avoid the important issues. The consequence is that the cadres and masses do not understand, do not learn, do not understand, and some people even reject the mainstream ideology, which is very difficult for the Party's theory in the masses into the brain into the heart. In modern society, people's identification with a priority "absolute meaning" has weakened, and they no longer advocate a homogeneous and monolithic way of life, with differences and diversity replacing sameness becoming the norm. This means that theoretical propaganda activities must take into account the real needs of the audience and give people the legitimacy to pursue good happiness, so that theoretical propaganda can enhance the legitimacy of ideology.

Third, the method of media coverage builds legitimacy. Central and local media coverage of the activities of the mission in various forms constitutes one of the most important links in the entire political communication system of preaching. This is not only reflected in the reporting time, that is, from before the establishment of the central preaching group to the end of the tour around the preaching, but also in the number of reports, that is, the central and local levels and various types of media, and also in the content and specifications of the reports. Since there is a strict limit on the number of people that can be covered by the reports and seminars of the theoretical propaganda group, these "content-oriented" reports create an atmosphere of public opinion, showing the ruling party's willingness to actively communicate with cadres and the public and to guarantee their right to know, which can make the spirit and policies of the conference penetrate into people's hearts in a relatively short period of time. It can make the spirit and policies of the conference reach people's hearts and minds in a relatively short time, which undoubtedly enhances the function of theoretical propaganda activities.

The amplification of theoretical propaganda activities through the communication media is conducive to the strengthening of mainstream ideology in the cognition of the audience, creating an "environment of consensus", such an environment in which most audiences are more receptive to the content of theoretical propaganda, when the ideology has the basis for further proliferation and dissemination.

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4. Conclusion: Adhere to and Improve Theoretical Propaganda Activities

In the face of the independence, selectivity, variability and diversity of people's thought activities, and the trend of increasingly diverse and changing social trends, theoretical propaganda activities are in urgent need of innovation, in order to further play its role in promoting the popularization of theory. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out at the national propaganda and ideological work conference that propaganda and ideological work can only be strengthened, not weakened, and that theoretical propaganda work, as an important way of the Party's propaganda and ideological work, must be adhered to and improved in the new era in the spirit of reform and innovation.

First, adhere to and consolidate theoretical propaganda positions. To continue to consolidate the role of theoretical propaganda positions, for example: play the role of state agencies, higher education institutions and the military and other theoretical propaganda positions, adhere to the authority of theoretical propaganda, unified theory propaganda caliber, firmly grasp the correct orientation of public opinion, sing the main theme, grow positive energy. In the face of the new situation of "non-unit organization" employment, the formation of theoretical propaganda group "send theory door-to-door" and other ways to occupy the ideological position. At the same time, to adapt to the development requirements of the network era, actively develop network positions, such as play the role of learning strong cell phone APP, and actively spread the mainstream ideology.

Second, optimize the theoretical propaganda team. Organizational propaganda mechanism is to transmit information through the organizational network, the power within the organizational network provides a channel for the flow of information in the organization, leaving the organizational power, the effectiveness of information transmission will be weakened. Leading cadres are the personalized representatives of the power of the party organization, leading cadres for theoretical propaganda is conducive to the identity of the content of theoretical propaganda, the members of the theoretical propaganda team should be selected from the main responsible persons of the party and government departments, they not only have a certain degree of theoretical policy capabilities, but also more familiar with the actual work, which helps in the process of theoretical propaganda to the central spirit of a more comprehensive and accurate grasp and interpretation.

Acknowledgments

This study is partially supported by funding from the Anhui Social Science Planning Project under grant AHSKY2019D047.

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