

The Evolution of Distribution Ideology in the Centennial Party History

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Abstract

The distribution ideology plays an important guiding role in the formation of the distribution system. Throughout the centennial party history, the changes and innovations in the distribution system on the road to common prosperity stem from the continuous evolution of distribution ideology. As socialism with Chinese characteristics enters a new era, it is necessary to focus on the evolution path of the distribution system and ideology, clarify the contradiction between theory and practical development, and based on sorting out the historical process, summarize the innovative achievements of China's distribution ideology, summarize feasible experiences, and provide effective support and basis for the continuous improvement of distribution ideology.

Keywords

The Centennial Party History, Distribution Ideology, Innovative Achievements.

1. Introduction

Marx, after a long and tortuous exploration of the issue of distribution, paid attention to the relationship between distribution and key elements such as production and ownership. He believed that communist society, due to its isolation from capitalist society, inevitably had two modes of distribution. In the first stage of communist society, distribution according to work was implemented, and under the conditions of the establishment of public ownership, highly developed productive forces, and the elimination of commodity economy, the second stage implements a distribution method based on demand. On the path of holding high the great banner of Marxism and advancing courageously, based on China's basic national conditions, which have been in the primary stage of socialism for a long time, China has always adhered to the basic distribution system with distribution according to work as the main body and multiple distribution methods coexisting. Although China has always adhered to the main thread of distribution according to work, the distribution ideas and systems of different periods in practice have changed and evolved with the development of reality.

2. The Distribution System of Four Historical Periods

The Communist Party of China has always adhered to the principle of combining Marxist theory with China's reality. On the issue of distribution, our party has adopted different strategies in different historical periods and achieved rich achievements, implementing the sinicization of Marxist distribution theory into practice.

First, the new-democratic revolution period. At this time, the country was being exploited and plundered by foreign powers, and achieving national independence and liberation was the main task of the Party during this period. The primary condition for achieving this task is to concentrate national resources and achieve unified distribution by the central government, which is similar to the Soviet Union's wartime communism. The specific measures are reflected in the fair distribution of land among farmers in revolutionary base areas and the implementation of a supply system for direct distribution of labor products.

Second, the socialist revolution and construction period. After the establishment of New China, the primary task of the Party's governance was to shift from winning national sovereignty and independence to consolidating the people's democratic regime, and gradually achieve the goal of a smooth transition from a new democratic society to a socialist society. One important aspect of consolidating the people's democratic regime lies in ensuring the basic living needs of the people. Therefore, restoring economic construction has become a key focus of work at this time, and the issue of distribution has also received attention from the Party and the state. During the new democratic society, there were five economic components in China: state-owned economy, cooperative economy, individual economy, private capitalist economy, and state capitalist economy. The main methods of income distribution were supply system and wage system. After the basic recovery of the national economy, the completion of the three major reforms at the end of 1956 marked the establishment of socialist public ownership of the means of production, indicating the comprehensive formation of the economic foundation of distribution according to work. From then on, in order to improve the living standards of the entire people, Mao Zedong's distribution ideology followed the path of "seeking wealth from the average", which emphasized fairness in distribution and fairness in results while adhering to the basic principle of distribution according to work. Mao Zedong believed that achieving fair results requires achieving the balance of material wealth while eliminating the three major differences, and achieving common prosperity on this basis.

Third, the New Era of Reform and Opening up and Socialist Modernization Construction. At the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in 1978, Comrade Deng Xiaoping set things right based on the national conditions and gradually opened up the path of building socialism with Chinese characteristics. In 1986, Deng Xiaoping once pointed out that "engaging in egalitarianism and eating a 'big pot rice' will never improve people's lives, and their enthusiasm will never be mobilized." This is a clear statement about "what socialism is". In fact, socialism is not equivalent to egalitarianism, blindly pursuing equality will only cause the people to lose their enthusiasm. During the Southern Talk period, faced with the huge impact of the disintegration of the Soviet Union on the socialist camp, Deng Xiaoping emphasized: "Let some people and some regions become prosperous first, and the general principle is common prosperity. Some regions develop faster, driving most regions, which is a shortcut to accelerate development and achieve common prosperity." In addition, Deng Xiaoping further improved the distribution policy and adhered to a distribution system that was based on distribution according to work and supplemented by other distribution methods. On the basis of adhering to Deng Xiaoping's distribution ideology, the Party further explored and improved the distribution system in the primary stage of socialism. The report of the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China clearly stated that "we should adhere to and improve the distribution system with distribution according to work as the main body and multiple distribution methods coexisting, and improve the system of labor, capital, technology, management and other production factors participating in distribution according to their contributions". The report of the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China further pointed out that "efforts should be made to synchronize the growth of residents' income with economic development, the growth of labor remuneration with the increase of labor productivity, and to increase the proportion of residents' income in the distribution of national income, as well as the proportion of labor remuneration in the initial distribution" "improve the initial distribution mechanism for factors such as labor, capital, technology, and management to participate in distribution based on their contributions, and accelerate the improvement of the redistribution adjustment mechanism with taxation, social security, and transfer payments as the main means".

Fourth, the new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The basis for judging the entry into a new era is firstly that China's development has reached a new historical starting point, and

socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new stage of development; Secondly, the main contradictions in our society have undergone changes. The distribution system at this stage is more specific and systematic, facing new problems, trends, and challenges in the new era. At present, the speed of China's economic development is shifting from high-speed growth to medium to high-speed growth, and the mode of economic development is shifting from extensive growth to intensive growth. At the same time, the significant income distribution gap and unreasonable income distribution structure are important manifestations of imbalanced and insufficient development. Therefore, in the face of new challenges such as structural unemployment that may arise from new issues in the new situation, it is necessary to ensure the subjectivity of the people in terms of value adherence, adhere to the principle of people's joint construction and sharing of development achievements, and adhere to the implementation of the new development concept to make the distribution results more inclusive and equitable.

3. The Evolution of Distribution Ideology

From the new democratic revolution to the new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics, with the continuous change of the background of the times and major contradictions, innovative theoretical achievements such as Mao Zedong's Distributive Ideology, Socialism with Chinese Characteristics Distribution Theory and Xi Jinping's Distribution Ideology have been formed.

The emergence and improvement of Mao Zedong's Distributive Ideology occurred from the period of the new democratic revolution to the period of socialist revolution and construction. At this stage, the concept of distribution has shifted from the original supply system to distribution according to work, and fair distribution and fair results are guaranteed. While emphasizing the principle of distribution according to work, Mao Zedong firmly opposed absolute egalitarianism: "In the socialist period, material distribution should also be in accordance with the principle of 'paying their best according to work' and the needs of work, and there is no absolute average." The completion of the three major transformations at the end of 1956 means that China has officially entered the socialist society and realized the transformation from private ownership of the means of production to public ownership. In Marx's discussion of distribution theory, the public ownership of the means of production is the basic economic condition for distribution according to work or even distribution on demand. At the same time, he also pointed out: "In a collective society based on the public ownership of the means of production, producers do not exchange their own products; labor used on products is not express the value of products here... Individual labor no longer goes through tortuous roads, but directly exists as an integral part of the total labor of society." In Marx's description, the realization of on-demand distribution requires the great development of the productive forces until the elimination of the commodity economy. At that time, the development of China's productive forces was not highly developed, so the idea of distribution at this time was the result of adapting to the public ownership of the means of production and the low productivity. Mao Zedong also clearly put forward the idea of common prosperity of the people: "This wealth is common wealth... This kind of common prosperity is certain..."

The idea of socialism distribution with Chinese characteristics, represented by Deng Xiaoping's central leaders, took place in a new era of socialist modernization. At this stage, Deng Xiaoping put forward the assertion of the "primary stage theory of socialism" and made a clear judgment on China's backward productivity and underdeveloped commodity economy. In response to the current situation of low productivity, he pointed out: "If economic development is always low, it will be difficult to improve living standards." At first, Mao Zedong's distribution thought was very accurate in grasp of Marxist distribution theory and China's actual national conditions, and

paid attention to the dialectical unity of the relationship between productivity and production, but in the process of practice, it unilaterally emphasized the change of production relations itself and ignored the reaction of production relations on productivity. In this way, the fairness felt by the people was fairness in a relatively poor and backward state, with many defects. Deng Xiaoping realized that the development and transformation of production relations without the basic limitations of the real productive forces cannot promote socialist progress. Without the actual foundation of productive forces as the support, relying solely on the reform of production relations cannot reach communism, and it will only make the Chinese people farther and farther away from the road to common prosperity. Deng Xiaoping also opposes egalitarianism, believing that "average development is impossible", so that "it is actually common backwardness and common poverty". Therefore, for the goal of common prosperity, while pointing out that "the purpose of socialism is to achieve common prosperity for the people of the whole country" and raising it to a strategic height, the realization path has also changed from "even wealth" to a more flexible "rich first and then rich". In a word, the distribution ideology of this period is more systematic and comprehensive, more in line with China's reality and realistic development.

Xi Jinping's Distribution Ideology was formed in the new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Since the reform and opening up, China's economic construction has continuously made great achievements, and the speed of development has been greatly improved. However, problems such as the uneven development pattern, the large gap in income distribution, and the people's sense of happiness and participation have also followed. For example, the relative difference in the per capita disposable income of urban and rural residents in China has narrowed from 3.10 times in 2012 to 2.56 times in 2020, but there is still a big gap compared with Western developed countries, reflecting that the urban-rural dual structure is still a major problem restricting development. Therefore, how to achieve high-quality development and how to ensure the common construction and sharing of development achievements by the broad masses of the people has become a new problem that needs to be solved urgently in the new era. In other words, the new era is to solve the problem of common prosperity more effectively. How to divide the "cake" while making a big "cake" requires a new exploration of the distribution idea. Therefore, at this stage, we should adhere to the principle of highlighting the subjectivity of the people, so that the fruits of development can be popularized to the broad masses of the people. General Secretary Xi Jinping specifically pointed out at the 10th meeting of the Central Financial and Economic Commission: "We should adhere to the idea of people-centered development, promote common prosperity in high-quality development, correctly handle the relationship between efficiency and fairness, build a basic institutional arrangement for the coordination of primary distribution, redistribution and third distribution, and increase taxation, social security, transfer payments and other adjustment efforts and improve accuracy, expand the proportion of middle-income groups, increase the income of low-income groups, reasonably regulate high income, ban illegal income, form an olive-type distribution structure with large and small in the middle, promote social fairness and justice, promote the all-round development of people, and make all the people move towards the common Solid progress with the goal of wealth." General Secretary Xi Jinping's judgment reflects the continuous improvement of distribution ideas in distribution methods, the continuous construction of distribution systems and the continuous enrichment of distribution links. The prominent point is to combine Marxist distribution theory more closely with China's reality and walk out of the distribution path with more Chinese characteristics.

It is worth noting the proposal of the "third allocation". In the 1990s, economist Li Yining pointed out that the third distribution was "income distribution based on moral beliefs." In recent years, the third distribution has been increasingly valued by the Party. It was mentioned in the Fourth and Fifth Plenary Sessions of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party

of China, and was promoted to a more important position in the 10th meeting of the Central Financial and Economic Commission. Regarding the meaning and status of the third allocation, Liu He, former Vice Premier of the State Council, pointed out: "The third allocation is under the influence of morality, culture, customs, etc. The behavior of social forces voluntarily helping the poor and the weak through non-governmental donations, charity, voluntary action, etc., which is a useful supplement to redistribution. With the improvement of China's economic development and social civilization, the awareness of public welfare charity in the whole society is increasing day by day. We should pay attention to giving full play to the third distribution role and developing social public welfare undertakings such as charity." Individuals, enterprises, groups, etc. donate wealth in the form of charity, promote the reflow of social wealth, benefit low-income groups, and help narrow the gap between the rich and the poor. The main body of the third distribution is the social force, which effectively makes up for the shortcomings of the distribution relying solely on the market and the government, mobilizes the enthusiasm of the whole society, and promotes the improvement of the distribution pattern. Of course, the third distribution cannot replace the initial distribution and redistribution, and the realization of common prosperity cannot be limited to the adjustment of the distribution mode, which should be correctly grasped.

4. Enlightenment on the field of distribution

The construction of the distribution ideology system is inseparable from the influence of Marx's distribution theory, which is the cornerstone of the formation of the distribution ideology system. The second is the framework that constitutes the distribution ideology system: the first is the transformation of the ownership structure and the economic system; the second is the contradictory movement of the relationship between productivity and production. Finally, fairness and efficiency are two specific principles to measure the distribution ideological system. In other words, Marx's distribution theory is the soul of the distribution ideology system; the contradictory movement to adapt to the transformation of ownership structure and the economic system and the relationship between productivity and production is the meridians of distribution ideas; while fairness and efficiency play the role of warp and latitude, filling the flesh and blood of the distribution ideology system.

On the road to common prosperity, efficiency and fairness are two unavoidable principles. Wealth requires attention to efficiency in the process of development, while common requires attention to fairness in the process of development.

First of all, efficiency should be considered for distribution. The premise of allocation is that there are some substances or resources that need to be allocated. Marx believes that production determines distribution: "Distribution itself is a product of production, not only in the object, but also in form." Therefore, the distribution idea must adapt to the current economic foundation, and at the same time, it should be linked to the basic content of vigorously developing productive forces. This is why Marx combines distribution theory with factors such as ownership and production. Therefore, when it comes to the principle of efficiency, the distribution idea must match the ownership of the means of production. Neither the reform of production relations nor the vigorous development of productive forces can surpass the actual situation, that is, the relationship between production and the productive forces are interdependent and interacting with each other. It is necessary to avoid both the theory of productivity only, but also prevent the theory of production relations alone. Only by adapting the two can we promote economic and social development along the right track.

Secondly, distribution should pay attention to fairness. China's development depends on the people, and for the sake of the people, the people should naturally share the fruits of development. The results of distribution are ultimately measured and judged by the people.

Marx pointed out: "Production will be aimed at the prosperity of all people."Therefore, what cannot be avoided in distribution is the need to pay attention to the fairness of distribution. Equity mainly depends on whether the distribution is justice or not, and the distribution justice comes from the unity of the distribution process and the distribution results. Therefore, when referring to the principle of fairness, we should adhere to the subjective status of people's evaluation and ensure the fairness of the distribution process and results with the standard of the system.At the same time, we should insist on overcoming the tendency of egalitarianism. Distributive fairness is not undifferentiated egalitarianism, but differentiated and non-equalized fairness. Common prosperity is not synchronous prosperity, but universal prosperity with gaps, which eliminates the drawbacks of egalitarianism to a certain extent and contributes to better economic and social development.

Finally, only by taking into account the dialectical unity of efficiency and fairness can the distribution be done well. In fact, distribution is not only about whether the masses can effectively enjoy well-being, but also counterproductive to the country's economy, productivity development and the transformation of production relations.Capitalist society pays attention to efficiency but lacks fairness with authenticity, and the unity of efficiency and fairness is the essential attribute of socialism. In the century-long struggle of the Party, the idea of distribution has continuously evolved and innovated, and the relationship between efficiency and fairness has not been fixed.Distributive thinking attaches too much importance to the relationship between productivity and production, and the distributive idea pays too much attention to efficiency, which leads to the problem of a large gap between the rich and the poor. Therefore, in the new era, the issue of distribution should pay more attention to the two key issues of who is allocated for and how to distribute efficiently. Only by achieving the dialectical unity of fairness and efficiency can we better achieve the goal of common prosperity.

The construction of a well-off society in an all-round way does not mean that the road of "common prosperity" has come to an end, but also a new starting point for continued struggle.When it is about distribution, we cannot ignore the two pairs behind it: the relationship between the government and the market, and the relationship between co-construction and sharing. The contradictory movement between the transformation of ownership structure and economic system and the relationship between productivity and production deeply affects the relationship between the government and the market. Although the functions of market regulation and government participation have been specifically practiced, whether there are other issues in this pair of relationships still need to be paid attention to.Over the past century, there has been a situation of co-construction and non-sharing in the development process, which is not only an inherent requirement in the distribution field, but also an inherent requirement for achieving common prosperity. Therefore, the great emphasis on fairness and efficiency in the new era lies in thinking about co-construction and sharing. There is still a lot of room for exploration in the future on how to ensure co-construction and sharing with more specific measures.

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