

# The Basic Course and Valuable Experience of Rural Social Governance Led by the CPC

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## Abstract

Rural social governance is an important part of national governance. Since its founding, the CPC has attached great importance to rural social governance. In different historical periods, in order to cope with different tasks of The Times, the CPC has adopted different governance modes and governance means to carry out rural social governance. In the course of leading rural social governance, the CPC has accumulated many valuable successful experiences: first, upholding the leadership of the CPC is the fundamental political premise; Second, we have always adhered to the concept of people-centered development; Third, we should respect the principal position of the people and their initiative; Fourth, we develop new models of social governance promptly; Fifth, material conditions and spiritual civilization are developed at the same time.

## Keywords

CPC; Rural Social Governance; Social Governance Model.

## 1. Introduction

According to the report of the 19th NATIONAL Congress of the CPC, "Strengthen basic work in rural areas and improve the rural governance system combining autonomy, rule of law and rule of virtue" [1]. Rural governance is an important part of national governance the quality of rural governance is directly related to whether the modernization of national governance system and governance capacity can be successfully promoted. The modernization of rural governance is not only an important part of the modernization of national governance, but also an inherent requirement of rural revitalization. Retrospecting the century-old course of the party's leadership in rural governance, we can sum up the valuable experience of the party's leadership in rural governance, which helps us to solve new problems and contradictions from a new historical starting point.

## 2. The Basic Course of Rural Social Governance Led by the CPC

The Communist Party of China has attached great importance to rural social governance since its founding. In different historical periods, in order to cope with different tasks of The Times, the Party has adopted different governance modes and means to lead the rural social governance.

### 2.1. The Period of the New Democratic Revolution(1921-1949)

The party's emphasis on rural work is not from the beginning of its establishment, but in the process of the revolution, summing up experience and lessons, the final valuable experience. Under the command of the Comintern and the influence of the experience of the October Revolution in Russia, the Party put the focus of its work in the cities rather than the countryside before the failure of the Revolution. MAO Zedong made a serious study of the peasant

movement, pointing out in his 1927 Investigation Report on the Peasant Movement in Hunan that "the national revolution needs a big change in the countryside. The Revolution of 1911 failed because there was no such change. This change is an important factor in the completion of the revolution." [2] It was from the agrarian Revolution that the CPC really shifted its focus of work from cities to rural areas. The Communist Party of China in practice to explore the real effective governance of rural areas, take some correct practices, and accumulated valuable experience.

First, we will improve the political status of farmers. For a long time, the majority of farmers in the position of oppression, farmers own rights are difficult to secure. After the Communist Party of China entered the rural society, it stimulated the enthusiasm of peasants to participate in political life through elections, such as the Soviet election activities from 1931 to 1934 and the Election Law of Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region in 1937. The Communist Party of China has improved the political status of peasants and enhanced the political identity between peasants and the Communist Party by absorbing them into the organization and construction of grassroots political power. The peasants who hold the political rights also provide the legitimacy resources for the party's ruling in the future.

Second, we will ensure the material conditions of farmers. In the course of the revolution, the Party realized that the peasants were reliable Allies. It was not enough to unite the peasants and guarantee their political rights, but also to improve material conditions and solve the problem of material interests. The key to solving farmers' problems lies in land. Therefore, the Party adopted different land policies in different periods, such as the Land Law of Rejuvenating the Country during the agrarian Revolution and the policy of reducing rent and interest during the Anti-Japanese War. According to different situations and needs, the Party has formulated different land policies to fully protect the vital interests of farmers and effectively unite them.

Third, change the farmers' ideas. In the traditional society of China, the peasants have always kept the traditional backward ideas of feudalism, and the establishment of the Republic of China has not changed the backward ideas of the peasants. The various political forces of the Republic of China always focused on the urban work and ignored the rural work for a long time. It was not until the Party shifted the focus of its work from the cities to the countryside that the peasants' mindset changed. The Party propagandizes its own line and principles in the countryside, actively carries out rural education, absorbs the peasants to join the Party, carries out ideological and political education to the peasants, greatly arouses the peasants' revolutionary enthusiasm. In traditional Chinese society, the state power system has the convention that "the imperial power does not belong to the county", and the rural governance depends on autonomy and squire. From the revolutionary period, the Party began to attach importance to rural work and widely united the people, which laid the foundation for promoting the political power to the countryside after the founding of new China. .

## **2.2. The Period of Socialist Revolution and Construction(1949-1978)**

With the founding of new China and the liberation of all regions of the country, the working scope of the Party's rural governance expanded to the whole country from the liberated areas. Under the new situation, the COMMUNIST Party of China has promoted the rural governance ability by centralizing political power and economic power.

First, the concentration of political power. The work of land reform was also extended from the liberated areas to the whole country. Since 1950, the Central Government passed the Land Reform Law of the People's Republic of China, and the land reform movement has been carried out in full swing throughout the country. Feudal land ownership has been completely abolished nationwide, and state ownership of urban land and collective ownership of rural land have been established. By getting the land, the farmers truly felt that they were part of the country, which enhanced their sense of identity with the country. The land reform movement not only allowed

the vast number of farmers to own land, but also effectively attacked local forces, so that the political power in rural areas was transferred from individual forces to the hands of the state, so that the national political power was centralized from bottom to top, and effectively guaranteed the stability of the new regime. In the period of traditional rural society, peasant society and state power are separate. The task of the modern state is to break this pattern, to link up the state and society and form an organic whole. The construction of modern state is a two-way process of political power centralization from bottom to top and infiltration from top to bottom. [3] Only when the organizational system of political power covering all the territory penetrates power from top to bottom, and the rural resources are effectively integrated, can the effective governance of rural areas become possible. The establishment of the people's commune system made the country complete the task of transforming the rural society from "scattered sand" to an organic whole, and the rural governance under the leadership of the Party was promoted smoothly.

Second, the concentration of economic power. From the beginning of the land reform movement, during the construction period of new China, rural governance under the leadership of the Party was characterized by movement governance. At the same time of the land reform, small mutual-aid groups were set up in rural areas throughout the country and later expanded into a cooperative movement. With the deepening of the cooperative movement, advanced agricultural production cooperatives appeared. The Constitution of the People's Republic of China adopted in 1954 stipulated that the rural grass-roots political power was townships and abolished the administrative village structure. During the cooperative movement, the cooperative gradually integrated with the village and formed the situation of the unity of the village community. In 1958, with the gradual opening of the people's commune movement, people's communes were established throughout the country to replace the county and township governments. People's communes are both grassroots political power and cooperative economic organizations. The party has its own strong organizational power embedded in the countryside, so that the economic power in the countryside has been centralized. The people's commune system played a huge role in the later rural governance, and it made important contributions to the construction of medical care, culture and education in rural China.

### **2.3. The Period of Reform, Opening up, and Socialist Modernization(1978-2012)**

The people's commune system plays an active role in the early stage of its operation, but its disadvantages will be exposed as time goes on. The collective labor of the people's commune reduced the enthusiasm of farmers in production and brought about the decline of total agricultural production. This means that the working people, as masters of the country, lack enthusiasm in social production and their living conditions have not been improved. After the third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee in 1978, China ushered in the reform and opening up. The failure of democracy and people's livelihood was the origin of the reform and opening up, and the purpose of the reform and opening up was to liberate and develop productive forces. As an advanced superstructure, the socialist system did not match the productivity level of China at that time. Without sufficient level of productive forces, people's livelihood cannot be directly improved, and the democratic system as the superstructure cannot be fully developed. Only when the level of productivity is raised can people's livelihood be improved and democracy be fully realized. In this sense, rural governance after the reform and opening up is carried out around the two dimensions of "democracy" and "people's livelihood".

First, the reorganization of power structure at grass-roots level and the establishment and development of villagers' autonomy. The people's commune system has the dual attributes of

politics and economy and is the special product of the planned economy period. Its withdrawal from the historical stage, the biggest impact from the household contract responsibility system. In order to improve the total amount of agricultural production, the farmers in Xiaogang Village, Fengyang, Anhui, got rid of the people's commune system and made bold exploration, creating the first household contract responsibility system. When the people's commune is disintegrating, the public goods cannot be provided effectively and the rural order is in disorder. A new village governance organization, the Villagers' committee, came into being. From the preliminary exploration in 1980 to 1982 when it was written into the Constitution, the villagers' committee has officially become a grass-roots self-governing organization of the masses in China. After that, the township level government began to restore the institutional system, and the pattern of the integration of government and society was completely changed to the villagers' autonomy. In 1987, the Organic Law of the Villagers' Committee of the People's Republic of China (For Trial implementation) was adopted, which means that there is a legal basis for grassroots governance and that the party's leadership, the people's position as masters of the country and the rule of law can be organically combined at the grassroots level. Second, gradual improvement of people's livelihood. The implementation of the household contract responsibility system has aroused the enthusiasm of farmers in production, overcome the disadvantages of "having food from a large pot", and gradually increased grain output and improved the living standards of farmers. Surplus labor and capital were used to develop production and operation, and a large number of township enterprises and production and operation households mushroomed. With the diversification of the household registration system, individuals are liberated from the original unit system and can develop freely. The abolishing of the Regulations on agricultural Tax of the People's Republic of China in 2006 has lightened the burden on farmers. In 2003, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Agriculture and other departments jointly formulated the Opinions on the Establishment of a new Rural cooperative medical system. In 2006, the Central Committee for Comprehensive Governance of Social Security issued several Opinions on Deepening the Construction of Rural Safety. In 2009, The State Council issued the Guiding Opinions on developing the New Rural Social Old-age Insurance Pilot Program. The Party and the state have issued a series of opinions or policies to solve problems in rural areas such as medical care, old-age care and public security, all of which demonstrate the fundamental purpose of serving the people wholeheartedly.

#### **2.4. A New Era of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics(2012-)**

Since the 18th CPC National Congress, socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era. Based on the new historical starting point, the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping as the core put forward some new measures and methods in the face of new problems in rural governance. The 18th CPC National Congress put forward the goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, and the 19th CPC National Congress put forward the rural revitalization strategy. The CPC Central Committee attaches great importance to rural development and governance, and sets out the general requirements for rural revitalization: "Prosperous industries, livable ecology, civilized local customs, effective governance, and prosperous life." The promotion of the modernization of rural governance in the new era starts from three aspects.

First, highlighting the guiding role of Party building. The decision of the CPC Central Committee on Deepening the Reform of Party and State Institutions, adopted at the Third Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Decision), calls for strengthening the leadership of Party organizations at the same level. In the new era, the main body of rural governance from single to multiple, but we still need to adhere to the leadership role of grassroots party organizations in rural governance. The strength of grassroots party

organization itself is related to the effectiveness of rural governance, only to build grassroots Party organization well, can provide effective guarantee for rural governance, organizational revitalization is also the due meaning of rural revitalization.

Second, adhere to the "three governance in one" governance system of autonomy, rule of law and rule of virtue. The report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China emphasized that "we should move the focus of social governance down to the grassroots level, give play to the role of social organizations, and realize the positive interaction between government governance, social regulation and residents' autonomy" [1]. The "three governance in one" in Tongxiang of Zhejiang province and the "three downshifting" in Qingyuan of Guangdong province have their own characteristics and are models of downshifting of the center of gravity. The downward shift of governance center can effectively mobilize the enthusiasm of public participation and villagers' autonomy. In the context of comprehensively governing the country by law, various subjects of rural governance should take the lead in abiding by the law, adhere to the law throughout the whole process of rural governance, and ensure that the red line of law is strictly observed. If the rule of law relies more on external coercive forces to maintain order - heteronomy, then the rule of virtue is more self-discipline. The foundation of moral governance is the basic quality of governing subject. "Party committees at all levels should give full play to the strengths and strengths of mass organizations such as trade unions, Communist Youth League, women's federations, science and technology associations, disabled persons' federations, and family planning associations, and give full play to the positive role of democratic parties, federations of industry and commerce, and personages without party affiliations," the CPC Rural Work Regulation states. In addition to mass organizations playing a role in the governance of virtue, some "councils" and other non-governmental organizations established in rural areas have played a correct role in guiding the governance of rural areas when the main body quality is not high.

Third, diversified governance methods. In addition to relying on moral law and other means, rural governance in the new era gradually relies on the Internet and other new media means. With the popularization of the Internet, China has entered the Internet era. In the stage of poverty alleviation, many poor villages just use the online e-commerce platform to open the market of agricultural products. In addition, many regions have opened network service systems for the convenience of the people, and the emergence of a series of APP small programs such as "Zheli Office" and "Code on the office" has effectively improved the efficiency of grassroots governance.

### **3. The Valuable Experience of Rural Social Governance Led by the CPC**

In the century-long process of leading rural social governance, the CPC has faced different historical tasks and problems in different periods, carried out a series of struggles, resolved many problems and accumulated a lot of valuable experience. Looking back on the course of rural social governance for a hundred years and summing up the basic experience will help us stand at a new historical starting point and better carry out rural social governance work.

#### **3.1. Upholding the Leadership of the CPC is the Fundamental Political Premise**

"The most essential feature of socialism with Chinese characteristics is the leadership of the CPC, and the greatest strength of the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics is the leadership of the CPC," Xi said. [4] Although the main body of rural social governance is gradually diversified, the Leadership of the Party should not be lost. Party organizations at all levels should take a leading position and play a leading role among organizations at the same level. The party is the leading core of rural social governance. In each period of revolution, construction and reform, rural social governance can achieve great achievements, in the final analysis, all adhere to the leadership of the Party. Primary-level Party organizations need not

only to maintain close ties with the people and implement the Party's mass line, but also to convey the spirit and instructions of higher party organizations. In this sense, the composition of grassroots party organizations determines the strength of grassroots party organizations. Therefore, we should further improve the mechanism of selection and appointment, optimize the structure of party members, give full play to the vanguard role of grassroots party members, and lead rural social governance into modernization with party building.

### **3.2. Adhere to the Concept of People-centered Development**

Xi Jinping pointed out that "the people are the country, and the country is the people" [5]. The nature and purpose of the Party determine that the starting point and foothold of the party's leadership in rural social governance must be the people. Communists seek the happiness of the majority of the people, and the support and support of the broad masses of the people are the greatest confidence for the Party to govern. The party not only seeks the source of legitimacy for itself from theory, but also accumulates the ruling legitimacy for itself in practical work. During the revolutionary period, under the leadership of the Party, the peasants mastered their basic political rights, improved their material living conditions and changed their ideology. During the construction period, peasants took control of the land and actively participated in the modern state construction. During the reform period, people's living standards not only improved greatly, but they were able to participate in political life in an orderly way. Since the 18th CPC National Congress, the CPC Central Committee has attached great importance to rural work and paid close attention to the living standards of people in rural areas. At different times, the Party has been able to formulate policies that meet the needs of the people in accordance with the tasks of The Times, and constantly enhance the people's sense of gain and happiness.

### **3.3. Respect the Principal Position of the People and Their Initiative**

The people are the makers of history. The masses are the decisive force in the course of historical development. In the century-long process of leading rural social governance, the Party is constantly activating the creativity of the people and giving play to the principal role of the people. During the reform period, 18 farmers in Xiaogang Village, Anhui province took great risks and signed the "life and death" contract, which brought the local grain harvest. Later, the party central Committee affirmed the practice in its first "No. 1 Document" in 1982, and began to promote it nationwide. The villagers' committee was first explored in Hezhai Village, Guangxi. As a form of autonomy, the villagers' committee meets the needs of the development of The Times and rural social governance. The form of villagers' self-governance has been officially confirmed from its inception in 1980 to its expression in the Constitution in 1982 and the law of villagers' Self-Governance of the People's Republic of China (For Trial Implementation) in 1987. These systems were first explored locally, tested in practice, and then promoted to the whole country. These successful explorations fully reflect the great creative spirit of the people in the process of rural social governance. In the new era, it is all the more important for us to carry forward the people's creative spirit, mobilize their enthusiasm and wisdom, and make greater contributions to the new journey of building a modern China.

### **3.4. Develop New Models of Social Governance Promptly**

The governance pattern of the Party in different periods has different characteristics. During the revolutionary period, MAO Zedong proposed "letting go and mobilizing the masses" at the seventh National Congress of the Communist Party of China. The rural social governance mode in this period belongs to mobilization governance. During the construction period, numerous political movements were launched from top to bottom across the country, replacing governance with movement, and problems in rural governance were solved by new movements, thus falling into a vicious circle of political movements. After the reform and opening up, the

people's communes with concentrated power withdrew from the historical stage, the villagers' self-governing organizations came into being, the main body of governance began to diversify, and the governance mode and means have changed. Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, the three-in-one rural governance system has been proposed. Rural social governance pays more attention to the leading role of Party construction, and the governance model is constantly innovating.

### **3.5. Material Conditions and Spiritual Civilization are Developed at the Same Time**

Looking back on the history of the Party, the Party in different periods of rural social governance, attention to farmers in the material standard of living and spiritual civilization in two aspects of simultaneous improvement. During the revolutionary period, in the process of rural governance, the Party not only improved the basic material living conditions of the peasants, but also increased the education and training of the peasants, actively reformed their ideas and made them accept modern ideas. In the early years of the People's Republic of China, in order to improve the literacy rate of the people, the country launched a large-scale campaign to eradicate illiteracy. Since reform and opening up, the people have not only improved their material living standards, but also actively promoted the construction of socialist cultural and ethical progress. In order to effectively carry out poverty alleviation work, the General Secretary put forward the idea of "supporting people's aspirations first". Party members and cadres in the material and spirit of the two levels at the same time to help work, finally to ensure the overall well-off as scheduled. In the course of social governance in rural areas, we should always adhere to the simultaneous development of material level and spiritual civilization.

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