

# Research on General Secretary Xi Jinping's Important Discourse on Common Prosperity and its Practice in Zhejiang

Wei Zhang<sup>1</sup>, Junhao Hu<sup>2,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>First Clinical Medical College, Wenzhou Medical University, Wenzhou 325200, China

<sup>2</sup>Renji College, Wenzhou Medical University, Harbin 150040, China

\*Corresponding author email: hujunhao@wmu.edu.cn

## Abstract

General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourse on common prosperity inherits and develops the Marxist concept of common prosperity, summarizes the exploration and experiences of the Chinese Communist Party, and draws from the essence of China's excellent traditional culture. The concept is rich in content, emphasizing that common prosperity is a dual process of material and spiritual advancement for all people, a gradual prosperity from the local to the national level. It is an essential requirement of socialism with Chinese characteristics, an important feature of Chinese-style modernization, and a guarantee for social harmony and stability. Achieving common prosperity requires the creation of a "dual prosperity" system, optimization of the distribution structure, and promotion of regional coordination. As a demonstration zone, Zhejiang has leveraged its economic, policy, cultural, and governance advantages. Through the development of new productive forces, optimization of industrial structures, reduction of the "three major gaps," and improvement of public services, Zhejiang has enriched the theory of common prosperity and demonstrated the advantages of the system, offering valuable experiences for the whole country.

## Keywords

Common prosperity; Marxism; Chinese Communist Party; Chinese excellent traditional culture; Value implications; Zhejiang practice.

## 1. Introduction

General Secretary Xi Jinping clearly pointed out in the report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China: "Common prosperity is an essential requirement of socialism with Chinese characteristics," and elaborated on common prosperity as a key feature of Chinese-style modernization, emphasizing the need to steadily promote it. This signifies that common prosperity is the unwavering goal of the Chinese Communist Party and represents the earnest aspiration of human society for a happy and beautiful life. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi Jinping has made a series of important statements on common prosperity from various perspectives, providing a profound explanation of the strategic goals and pathways for achieving common prosperity in the new era. These discussions have addressed major theoretical and practical questions, including "What is common prosperity?", "Why must we adhere to common prosperity?", and "How can we achieve common prosperity?". This research aims to guide the development of Zhejiang's practice through the application of General Secretary Xi's important discourse on common prosperity. As the country strives toward its second centenary goal, it is crucial to explore how to construct Zhejiang as a demonstration zone for common prosperity, thereby leading the way for the entire nation. This issue holds increasingly significant contemporary value and is also a major livelihood construction task facing the Zhejiang provincial government in the new era.

## **2. The Formation and Development of General Secretary Xi Jinping's Important Discourse on Common Prosperity**

General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourse on common prosperity is both an inheritance and development of the Marxist concept of common prosperity, with profound theoretical origins and rich historical connotations. By reviewing the theoretical discussions on common prosperity by classical Marxist authors, key discourses by Chinese Communists on common prosperity, and the common prosperity ideas found in China's excellent traditional culture, the formation of Xi Jinping's important discourse on common prosperity is revealed, as well as its significant role in promoting the development of socialism with Chinese characteristics and realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation in the new era.

### **2.1. The Theoretical Exposition on Common Prosperity by Classical Marxist Authors**

#### **2.1.1. Critique of Capitalist Polarization**

Marx and Engels lived during a time of rapid capitalist development and witnessed the expanding wealth gap under the capitalist mode of production. Engels, in *Outline of a Critique of Political Economy*, pointed out that in capitalist societies, workers receive meager wages, while most of the products are owned by capital and landowners. The concentration of wealth is an inherent law of private ownership, which inevitably leads to a society divided into two polar extremes: the rich and the poor. Marx further critiqued the capitalist system in his *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, arguing that the labor of workers is alienated, and the more wealth they produce, the poorer they become. The entire society ultimately splits into the property-owning class and the proletariat. Under the capitalist mode of production, capitalists exploit workers mercilessly to extract maximum surplus value, and the private ownership of the means of production becomes the root cause of the growing wealth gap and polarization. For instance, during the Industrial Revolution, factory owners accumulated vast fortunes, while the working class faced extremely long working hours, harsh working conditions, and meager wages, resulting in a life of extreme hardship. This stark contrast between the rich and the poor deeply reflects the severity of polarization under the capitalist system.

#### **2.1.2. Envisioning a Future Society of Common Prosperity**

Marx and Engels believed that capitalist society, due to its inherent contradictions, would eventually be replaced by a more advanced society. Their vision of a future society was one of a "community of free individuals," where the free development of each person is a condition for the free development of all. In the new social system, social productivity would rapidly advance, with production aimed at achieving prosperity for all. Engels, in *Anti-Dühring*, stated that the proletariat would seize political power and transform the means of production into public property. Through socialized production, it would be possible to ensure not only that all members of society have sufficient material wealth but also that their physical and intellectual development is fully free and utilized. This suggests that the common prosperity in a future society would be based on public ownership of the means of production and would encompass both material and spiritual wealth, with the free and comprehensive development of individuals as an essential element of common prosperity. For instance, in a communist society, people would no longer be constrained by material scarcity or forced labor, allowing them to freely pursue their interests and development, thus realizing their own values.

## **2.2. Key Discourses on Common Prosperity by Chinese Communists**

### **2.2.1. Explorations during the New Democratic Revolution**

During the New Democratic Revolution, in the face of the "three mountains" of imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucratic capitalism, Chinese Communists nurtured the early germ of common-prosperity thought in their struggle for national independence and people's liberation. Early Party leader Li Dazhao maintained that socialism must be one of affluence, enabling everyone to enjoy an equitable share of provision and the greatest possible happiness. At that time, peasants constituted the vast majority of the population, so resolving their subsistence and prosperity became urgent. Throughout the Jinggangshan, Yan'an, and Xibaipo periods, the Party implemented "smash the local tyrants, divide land" and "land to the tiller" as key measures to secure peasant affluence. In 1943, Mao Zedong posited that collectivization was the only road from poverty to prosperity. Through land-revolution practices, the Party reallocated land resources, enabled peasants to become landowners, and improved rural livelihoods, thus laying the groundwork for common prosperity. For example, during the Land Revolution War, the Party confiscated landlord estates and redistributed them to peasants, granting them their most basic means of production and markedly improving their living conditions, while galvanizing their revolutionary zeal.

### **2.2.2. Explorations during the Socialist Revolution and Construction Period**

After the founding of New China, the Party united and led the people through the socialist revolution, established the basic socialist system, and advanced socialist construction, thus paving the way for common prosperity. In December 1953, the Central Committee's "Resolution on Developing Agricultural Producers' Cooperatives" explicitly affirmed the goal of gradually lifting peasants out of poverty to achieve common affluence and universal prosperity. In 1955, Mao Zedong emphasized that realizing common prosperity required walking the socialist path, eradicating the rich-peasant and individual-economy systems in the countryside, and bringing all rural people into shared affluence. During this period, the Party not only articulated the concept of "common prosperity" but also recognized that building the socialist system was fundamental to its realization. Measures such as the socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts, and capitalist industry and commerce established the socialist public-ownership economy, creating the institutional conditions necessary for large-scale national economic mobilization and the attainment of common prosperity.

### **2.2.3. Explorations during the Reform-and-Opening-Up and New Phase of Socialist Modernization**

Following Reform and Opening Up, Chinese Communists, led by Deng Xiaoping, undertook fresh explorations of "what socialism is and how to build it," with common prosperity as their core concern. Deng stressed that socialism's aim is the common affluence of the entire people, not polarization; that public ownership must remain predominant; and that common prosperity is socialism's fundamental principle. He asserted that "the essence of socialism is to liberate and develop productivity, end exploitation, eliminate polarization, and ultimately achieve common prosperity," and that allowing some regions and people to become prosperous first would help bring others along. Jiang Zemin later underscored that attaining common prosperity is socialism's fundamental principle and essential characteristic, calling to expand the middle-income group and raise incomes of the low-income population. Hu Jintao, adhering to the people-centered, comprehensive, coordinated, and sustainable scientific outlook on development, focused on securing and improving people's livelihood and promoting social equity so that all could share in the fruits of reform and development. Through economic liberalization—establishing special economic zones, opening to foreign investment and technology—the Party secured rapid growth and the material basis for common prosperity,

while simultaneously building social-security systems and improving public services in education and health, thereby narrowing urban-rural, regional, and group disparities.

#### **2.2.4. Explorations in the New Era of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics**

Since the 18th National Congress, the Party Central Committee, with Xi Jinping at its core, has upheld a people-centered development philosophy and, in pursuit of the strategic goal of comprehensively building a modern socialist country, put forth a series of major strategic ideas for realizing common prosperity in the new era. In the report to the 19th National Congress, Xi explicitly set the goal that by 2035 all people should have taken solid steps toward common prosperity, and by the middle of this century common prosperity should be basically realized. The Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee provided more concrete target requirements. In August 2021, at the 10th Meeting of the Central Financial and Economic Affairs Commission, Xi stressed that common prosperity is an essential requirement of socialism and an important feature of Chinese-style modernization, and that it must be advanced through high-quality development. In the new era, the Party has placed promoting the common prosperity of all at an even higher priority, steadily advancing toward this goal through winning the battle against poverty, pushing forward rural revitalization, and strengthening the social-security system. For example, after years of concerted effort, China timely achieved its poverty-alleviation targets, historically solving absolute poverty and taking a critical step toward common prosperity; it has also pressed on with the rural revitalization strategy—upgrading infrastructure, developing rural industries, and increasing farmers' incomes—further narrowing the urban-rural gap and ensuring that all share in the fruits of development.

### **2.3. Common-Prosperity Thought in China's Excellent Traditional Culture**

#### **2.3.1. The Ideal Pursuit of a "Great Unity" Society**

The ideal of a "Great Unity" society has been the cherished aspiration of the Chinese people for millennia. As described in the Book of Rites (Lǐ Yùn chapter):

"When the Great Way prevails, the world is a commonwealth; worthy and capable persons are chosen; trustworthiness is promoted, and harmony cultivated. Thus, no one considers only one's own parents alone, nor one's own children alone; the aged receive proper care, the able-bodied find meaningful work, the young are nurtured to maturity; widows, orphans, the childless, and the infirm are all provided for."

This ideal society embodies the yearning for fairness, justice, harmonious coexistence, and shared prosperity. It emphasizes mutual aid and mutual affection among social members, ensuring that each finds their rightful place. In such a society, no exploitation or oppression exists; people labor together and share the fruits of their work, realizing both material and spiritual abundance. For instance, elders enjoy a secure old age; adults fully exercise their talents for societal benefit; children receive quality education; and vulnerable groups enjoy social care, resulting in a harmonious and flourishing community.

#### **2.3.2. Confucian "Benevolent Love" and Common Prosperity**

Confucianism's concept of "benevolent love" underscores care and empathy between individuals, advocating principles such as "Do not impose on others what you yourself do not desire" and "Extend care for one's own elders to the elders of others; extend care for one's own young to the young of others." When applied at the societal level, this ethos mandates concern for the welfare of all, the pursuit of collective benefit, and aligns closely with the notion of shared development inherent in common prosperity. Confucians held that rulers should practice benevolent governance, safeguarding the people's welfare so they may live and work in peace and prosperity. For example, Confucius taught "Economize expenditure yet cherish the people; regulate their labor to proper seasons", emphasizing that rulers ought to live frugally, care for their subjects, and organize labor rationally to foster economic growth and improve

livelihoods. Mencius further asserted that "the people are paramount, the state comes second, and the ruler is least," insisting that leaders prioritize the people's needs to achieve social stability and prosperity—core aspirations shared by the vision of common prosperity.

### **2.3.3. Daoist "Non-Interventionist Governance" and Social Harmony**

Daoism's principle of "governing by non-interference" does not imply total inaction; rather, it stresses alignment with natural laws and avoidance of excessive intervention in social and individual life, allowing society to evolve organically. This concept embodies the pursuit of social harmony and a stable environment in which people can live and work peacefully—conditions conducive to common prosperity. Daoists maintained that rulers should refrain from overburdening the populace and instead permit people to develop production freely, thereby fostering social flourishing and wealth. For instance, Laozi advised that "Governing a great state is like cooking a small fish: too much handling spoils it", implying that governance, like cooking delicate fish, requires restraint to maintain stability and natural order. Under such guidance, social order sustains itself, and citizens can engage in production and life within a relatively relaxed environment, facilitating the achievement of shared prosperity.

### **2.3.4. Mohist "Universal Love" and "Non-Aggression" in Pursuit of Fairness**

Mohism advocated "universal love"—the equal care for all—and opposed war and violence through its principle of "non-aggression". These tenets reflect a commitment to fairness, justice, and social harmony, resonating with the ideal that all people should equally share the benefits of development. Mohists argued that only by eliminating distinctions and conflicts among individuals and realizing social equity can common prosperity be attained. For example, Mohist teachings called for mutual care and assistance in collective endeavors for societal advancement, and rejected social inequality and conflict arising from excessive wealth disparity, thereby fostering a favorable social climate for common prosperity.

General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourse on common prosperity was formed on the foundation of inheriting and developing the theoretical contributions of classical Marxist authors, summarizing the century-long explorations of the Chinese Communists in pursuit of shared affluence, and drawing on the essence of common-prosperity thought within China's excellent traditional culture. This discourse, grounded in deep theoretical roots and closely attuned to China's realities, provides a scientific guide for steadfastly advancing common prosperity in the new era. On the new journey of comprehensively building a modern socialist country, thoroughly studying and implementing Xi Jinping's important discourse on common prosperity is of profound and far-reaching significance for realizing the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation and ensuring all people share in the fruits of development. We must unswervingly follow the direction set by General Secretary Xi, promote common prosperity through high-quality development, continuously open new chapters in the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and courageously advance toward the goal of common prosperity for all.

## **3. Interpretation and Elucidation of General Secretary Xi Jinping's Important Discourse on Common Prosperity**

General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourse on common prosperity profoundly addresses why we must promote common prosperity in the new era, what form of common prosperity we seek to achieve, and how to realize it, showcasing the political wisdom and mission commitment of contemporary Chinese Communists. This discourse is rich in connotation and profound in thought, representing the latest theoretical achievement in the sinicization and modernization of Marxism. To solidly advance common prosperity on the new

journey, one must deeply understand its philosophical essence, accurately grasp its value implications, and scientifically plan its practical pathways.

### **3.1. The Philosophical Essence of Xi Jinping's Important Discourse on Common Prosperity**

#### **3.1.1. Common Prosperity as the Prosperity of All People**

Common prosperity does not mean the affluence of a minority but the shared affluence of all people. This reflects the Marxist materialist conception of history's principle that the masses are the creators of history. The people are the producers of both material and spiritual wealth and the decisive force driving social development. In pursuing common prosperity, we must adhere to the people-centered development philosophy, taking the people's aspiration for a better life as our goal, and ensure that the fruits of development benefit all people more equitably.

Under the socialist system, all people enjoy equality in the ownership of the means of production, providing a solid institutional basis for realizing common prosperity. However, differences in individual ability and labor contribution naturally give rise to some income disparities. Achieving common prosperity for all does not require eliminating such reasonable gaps, but rather controlling them within a proper range through sound institutional arrangements and policy adjustments, so that everyone can share in the gains of economic and social development. As General Secretary Xi Jinping has emphasized, "Common prosperity is common prosperity for all people, and must be viewed from an overall perspective."

#### **3.1.2. Common Prosperity as Both Material and Spiritual Affluence**

Common prosperity encompasses not only material affluence but also spiritual enrichment. Material wealth constitutes the foundation of common prosperity: only with continually increasing material wealth can we provide people with better living conditions. Yet spiritual affluence is equally vital—an important marker of common prosperity and a reflection of the requirement for people's all-round development.

Marxism holds that human beings are a unity of material and spirit, with diverse needs spanning both dimensions. As economic and social development advances, the people's demand for spiritual and cultural fulfillment grows. To achieve common prosperity, we must, alongside promoting economic growth and augmenting material wealth, strengthen the construction of socialist spiritual civilization, enrich the people's cultural and spiritual lives, and elevate the nation's moral and scientific-cultural quality. As Xi Jinping has stated, "Only by excelling in both material-civilization construction and spiritual-civilization construction—enhancing the nation's material and spiritual strength and improving the material and spiritual lives of all ethnic groups—can the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics move forward smoothly."

#### **3.1.3. Common Prosperity as Gradual Affluence from Local to Whole**

Common prosperity is a long-term historical process that cannot be achieved overnight; it must be advanced in phases and steps, progressing from local areas to the nation as a whole. This reflects the laws of gradualness and stage-wise development inherent in all things. China's vast territory and unbalanced regional development, as well as income differences among social groups, necessitate respecting objective laws and allowing some people and regions to become prosperous first, so that they may lead and assist others to become prosperous gradually, thereby realizing common prosperity for all.

At different stages of development, the goals and tasks of common prosperity differ. In the primary stage of socialism, our main task is to liberate and develop productive forces, eradicate poverty, and achieve a moderately prosperous society in all respects. As economic and social development proceeds, we will advance step by step toward the goals of comprehensively

building a moderately prosperous society and realizing common prosperity. Throughout this process, we must formulate practical policies and measures that correspond to each stage's level and circumstances, and steadily push forward. As Xi Jinping has pointed out, "Achieving common prosperity is a long-term, arduous process that cannot be accomplished in a single stroke; its longevity, difficulty, and complexity must be fully estimated."

### **3.2. Profound Elucidation of the Importance of Achieving Common Prosperity**

#### **3.2.1. Common Prosperity as the Essential Requirement of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics**

The essence of socialism is to emancipate and develop productive forces, to abolish exploitation, to eliminate polarization, and ultimately to achieve common prosperity. Common prosperity embodies the superiority of the socialist system and constitutes a fundamental principle of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Only by realizing common prosperity can the essential features of the socialist system be fully manifested and win the sustained support of the people. Since its founding, the Chinese Communist Party has upheld as its original aspiration and mission the pursuit of happiness for the Chinese people and the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Throughout the revolutionary, construction, and reform eras, the Party has been unwaveringly committed to securing a happy life for the people and striving for common prosperity. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, we established the socialist system, thereby creating the fundamental political and institutional prerequisites for common prosperity. Since Reform and Opening Up, by centering our work on economic development and vigorously advancing productive forces, we have achieved rapid economic growth and significantly improved living standards, laying a solid material foundation for common prosperity. Entering the new era, the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core has placed the gradual realization of common prosperity for all people in a more prominent position and has taken a series of effective measures to drive substantive progress toward that goal.

#### **3.2.2. Common Prosperity as the Nature and Direction of the New Path of Chinese-Style Modernization**

Chinese-style modernization is characterized by large population scale, common prosperity for all people, the coordinated advancement of material and spiritual civilization, harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature, and the path of peaceful development. Common prosperity for all is a key feature and essential requirement of Chinese-style modernization, determining its nature and direction.

Unlike Western paths to modernization, Chinese-style modernization emphasizes development for the people, development by the people, and development outcomes shared by the people, striving for the prosperity of all rather than that of a privileged few. Achieving common prosperity can fully mobilize the enthusiasm, initiative, and creativity of the masses, uniting a powerful force to propel modernization forward and ensuring that Chinese-style modernization progresses along the correct trajectory. Moreover, common prosperity helps advance social fairness and justice, narrow urban-rural, regional, and group disparities, and realize social harmony and stability—thereby providing an enabling environment for Chinese-style modernization.

#### **3.2.3. Common Prosperity as a Vital Guarantee of Social Harmony and Stability**

Common prosperity is closely linked to social harmony and stability. In a society marked by excessive wealth disparity and unfair distribution, conflicts will inevitably abound, undermining harmony and stability. Achieving common prosperity aligns the economic interests of all people more closely, reduces social contradictions and conflicts, and promotes a harmonious and stable society.

When the material and spiritual needs of the people are met and living standards continually rise, they will have greater confidence in society and hope for the future, thereby becoming more willing to uphold social order and actively participate in social development. Moreover, common prosperity strengthens social cohesion and centripetal force, uniting the populace under a shared goal and fostering a model of joint construction and mutual sharing. As General Secretary Xi Jinping has noted, "Common prosperity is a fundamental principle of socialism with Chinese characteristics; its realization is not only an economic issue but also a major political issue related to the Party's ruling foundation."

### **3.3. Constructing Pathways for Implementing General Secretary Xi Jinping's Important Discourse on Common Prosperity**

#### **3.3.1. Fostering Coordinated Development of Material and Spiritual Well-being**

To achieve common prosperity encompassing both material and spiritual well-being, we must first promote high-quality economic development and continuously elevate the people's material living standards. Guided by the new development philosophy, we should accelerate the formation of a new development paradigm, driving qualitative improvement and reasonable quantitative growth in the economy. By increasing investment in scientific and technological innovation and enhancing independent innovation capacity, we can advance industrial transformation and upgrading, cultivate new economic growth drivers, and provide a solid material foundation for common prosperity.

Concurrently, we must strengthen the construction of socialist spiritual civilization and enrich the people's cultural and spiritual life. This calls for a deep implementation of the Civic Moral Construction Project, intensified ideological and moral education, and the promotion of the Socialist Core Values to raise the overall level of social civility. We should improve the public cultural service system, expand the supply of cultural products and services, and satisfy the people's diverse, multi-level spiritual and cultural needs. By advancing the cultural industry, fostering new cultural business formats, and enhancing the competitiveness and influence of cultural enterprises, we enable the populace not only to enjoy abundant material life but also to partake in high-quality spiritual and cultural experiences.

#### **3.3.2. Optimizing and Perfecting the Income Distribution Structure to Promote Common Prosperity**

Income distribution is a critical link in realizing common prosperity. We must optimize and perfect the distribution structure by raising incomes of low-earning groups, expanding the middle-income bracket, appropriately regulating high incomes, and eliminating illicit earnings—thereby creating an "olive-shaped" distribution with a large middle and small ends.

In primary distribution, we should uphold distribution according to work as the mainstay alongside multiple distribution methods, increase the share of labor remuneration in primary distribution, establish mechanisms for reasonable wage growth, and refine policies for factor-based distribution so that labor, capital, land, knowledge, technology, management, and data participate in distribution in proportion to their contributions, fully mobilizing all productive forces. In redistribution, we must enhance the precision and intensity of tax, social-security, and transfer-payment adjustments; strengthen fiscal redistribution; perfect the social-security system and raise its level; and promote equalization of basic public services to narrow income gaps across urban-rural, regional, and demographic lines. We should also leverage tertiary distribution by guiding and encouraging high-income groups and enterprises to give back to society through charitable and public-welfare initiatives, and promote the

"first-to-get-rich helps-the-later-to-get-rich" ethos.

### **3.3.3. Promoting Coordinated Regional Economic Development to Safeguard Common Prosperity**

China's uneven regional development presents a significant challenge to common prosperity. Advancing coordinated regional economic development is thus an essential guarantee. We must implement major regional strategies and the regional coordinated-development strategy, strengthen inter-regional cooperation, facilitate free flow of factors and optimal allocation of resources, and narrow regional development disparities.

Deeply advance the coordinated development of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, the Yangtze River Economic Belt, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the integrated development of the Yangtze River Delta, and the Chengdu-Chongqing Economic Circle. Promote connectivity of infrastructure, coordinated industrial development, joint ecological preservation and governance, and shared public-service provision within and among these regions. Under the regional coordinated-development strategy, increase support for revolutionary-base areas, ethnic minority regions, border areas, and underdeveloped regions to accelerate their development and enhance self-development capacity. Improve mechanisms for regional mutual aid and benefit compensation, encourage developed regions to provide counterpart assistance and industrial cooperation with less developed areas, achieve complementary advantages, and foster shared growth.

General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourse on common prosperity, grounded in the great practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, profoundly reveals the scientific connotation, vital significance, and implementation pathways of common prosperity. It carries immense theoretical and practical value. By deeply understanding its philosophical essence, accurately grasping the importance of achieving common prosperity, and actively implementing its prescribed pathways, we will significantly advance the comprehensive construction of a modern socialist country and the realization of the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation. On the new journey ahead, guided by Xi Jinping's important discourse on common prosperity, we must maintain confidence, work diligently, and strive to achieve more substantive and visible progress in common prosperity—so that all people may share equitably in the fruits of reform and development and lead happier, more fulfilling lives.

## **4. The Path of Zhejiang's Practice under General Secretary Xi Jinping's Important Discourse on Common Prosperity**

General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourse on common prosperity provides the theoretical foundation and implementation guide for China's pursuit of shared affluence. As a pilot zone for common prosperity, Zhejiang has demonstrated unique advantages and undertaken a series of innovative explorations. This section examines Zhejiang's experience in three dimensions—its demonstrated advantages, practical pathways, and theoretical reflections—by analyzing its strengths in economic fundamentals, policy support, cultural heritage, and governance, exploring its practical approaches in industrial innovation, gap reduction, and public-service optimization, and considering how these efforts enrich and develop common-prosperity theory, with a view to offering instructive experiences for the whole nation.

### **4.1. Zhejiang's Demonstrated Advantages as a Pilot Zone for Common Prosperity**

#### **4.1.1. A Solid Economic Foundation**

Zhejiang has long been a leading province in China's economic development. In 2020, Zhejiang's per-capita GDP exceeded RMB 100,000, and for twenty consecutive years and thirty-six consecutive years respectively, its urban and rural per-capita incomes have ranked first among

all provinces and regions. The province boasts a developed private-sector economy, with numerous private enterprises competing strongly in national and global markets. For example, in Hangzhou, the internet economy has flourished: Alibaba and other companies spearhead digital-economy development, driving related industries, generating substantial employment, and creating wealth. In manufacturing, Zhejiang's traditional sectors—textiles, apparel, machinery—have continuously upgraded, while emerging industries—high-end equipment manufacturing, new energy, advanced materials—are booming. In Ningbo, the automotive-manufacturing cluster has increased industrial value-added and market share through technological innovation and agglomeration, injecting vigorous momentum into economic growth.

#### **4.1.2. Robust Policy Support**

The Party Central Committee and the State Council have endowed Zhejiang with strong policy backing to build a pilot zone for common prosperity. The "Opinions of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on Supporting Zhejiang's High-Quality Development and Building a Pilot Zone for Common Prosperity" set out four strategic positioning goals and six major support measures. Under this policy framework, Zhejiang enjoys enhanced reform autonomy in areas such as income-distribution reform, urban-rural and regional coordination, and high-quality, shared public services. For instance, as a pilot for income-distribution system reform, Zhejiang can take the lead in refining policies for factor-based distribution to unleash vitality across all factors of production and boost residents' incomes. Local governments have also introduced complementary measures—Hangzhou's talent policies attract high-end professionals to support economic growth and common prosperity; Jiaxing has issued a series of measures to promote rural-urban integration, foster rural industries, and increase farmers' incomes.

#### **4.1.3. Deep Cultural Heritage**

Zhejiang's rich historical and cultural endowments—including the Liangzhu civilization, Grand Canal heritage, and Yue opera—enrich the people's spiritual life and confer unique advantages for economic development. In the cultural-tourism sector, Shaoxing leverages cultural resources such as Lu Xun's former residence to create distinctive cultural tourism routes, attracting large visitor numbers and stimulating local economies and employment. Zhejiang's cultural values—hard work, mutual aid—also underpin its entrepreneurial spirit. The Wenzhou merchants, for example, are renowned for their pioneering entrepreneurship and innovation; while accumulating wealth, they have driven development in their hometowns. This cultural atmosphere provides powerful spiritual motivation and cultural support for common prosperity.

#### **4.1.4. A Strong Foundation in Social Governance**

Zhejiang has been at the forefront of social governance, upholding and advancing the New Era "Fengqiao Experience" to build a comfortable, secure, and reassuring social environment. In grassroots governance, Zhejiang uses digital tools to enhance efficiency—its "One-Visit Maximum" reform streamlines public services, making them more convenient and effective, thereby boosting public satisfaction. In public-security construction, the province has established a comprehensive crime-prevention and control system; its low crime rate and stable social order create a favorable environment for economic development and common prosperity. For example, Ningbo's "smart security" community projects have strengthened neighborhood safety and management, enhancing residents' sense of security and well-being.

## **4.2. Practical Pathways for Building Zhejiang's Common Prosperity Demonstration Zone**

### **4.2.1. Developing New-Quality Productive Forces and Promoting Industrial Innovation and Upgrading**

Zhejiang regards the development of new-quality productive forces as key to high-quality growth. In the realm of scientific and technological innovation, the province has increased R&D investment and established a number of research platforms—such as the Zhijiang Laboratory and the Liangzhu Laboratory—drawing top-tier scientific talent. These institutions have delivered breakthroughs in fields including artificial intelligence, biopharmaceuticals, and advanced materials, thereby driving industrial innovation. For example, Hangzhou has become a hub for AI enterprises—among them, ByteDance's AI R&D center—and fosters industry-university-research collaboration to raise technological capabilities and extend application scenarios, catalyzing growth in related sectors. Meanwhile, Zhejiang actively cultivates emerging industries and accelerates the digital transformation of traditional sectors: Tiantai County, for instance, has converted its established auto-parts firms into smart factories and digital workshops, markedly improving production efficiency and product quality.

### **4.2.2. Optimizing the Industrial Structure to Build a Modern Industry System**

Zhejiang places great emphasis on optimizing its industrial structure and promoting the integration of primary, secondary, and tertiary industries. In agriculture, it fosters specialty and smart agriculture to raise value-added levels; Quzhou's citrus industry has extended its value chain through e-commerce and deep processing, thereby increasing farmers' incomes. In manufacturing, Zhejiang nurtures strategic emerging industries—such as new energy vehicles and integrated circuits—while enhancing the competitiveness of traditional manufacturing. Ningbo's petrochemical sector, for instance, has adopted technological upgrades and green practices to bolster its sustainability. In services, the province vigorously develops modern service industries—including fintech, cultural and creative services, and advanced logistics. Hangzhou's rapid growth in internet finance, led by firms like Ant Group, exemplifies this trend, providing robust financial support to the real economy.

### **4.2.3. Narrowing the Urban-Rural Gap and Advancing Integrated Urban-Rural Development**

Using the county as the basic unit, Zhejiang has strengthened the "county-town-village" development axis to construct a "Poetic Zhejiang" and "Beautiful Countryside." Jiaying, by deepening integrated rural reform and promoting the "Ten Measures for Farmers' Shared Prosperity," has achieved that virtually all villages with collective operating income above RMB 1 million annually are fully covered, enabling its farmers to top provincial income rankings for 21 consecutive years. In infrastructure, the province integrates urban and rural planning, infrastructure, and industrial layouts to facilitate two-way flow of factors. Hangzhou, for example, has significantly invested in rural roads, power, and communications—achieving "village-to-village" road connectivity—and enhanced rural logistics and e-commerce. In public services, Zhejiang is piloting a province-wide "New Era Urban-Rural Education Community" across primary and secondary schools and deepening county-level and urban-rural medical consortia to raise the standard of rural education and healthcare.

### **4.2.4. Reducing Regional Disparities by Advancing Mountain-Sea Cooperation**

Zhejiang has vigorously implemented its Mountain-Sea Cooperation initiative, coordinating funding, talent, and other development factors to foster balanced growth between affluent coastal areas and less-developed mountainous and island regions. In 2023, 26 mountain counties in Zhejiang secured a total of RMB 170 million through paired assistance and other channels, initiated 315 industrial cooperation projects under Mountain-Sea Cooperation, and

attracted investments totaling RMB 46.1 billion. For example, Shangyu District has forged industrial and consumer chains with Wencheng County and Jingning She Autonomous County in southern Zhejiang's mountainous area, opening new markets for mountain agricultural products and generating fresh Mountain–Sea Cooperation products. In talent development, the province has created "talent enclaves" to attract skilled professionals to mountain counties; Quzhou's HaiChuang Park in Yuhang District of Hangzhou, for instance, provides space for Quzhou enterprises to recruit high-end innovation talent.

#### **4.2.5. Narrowing Income Gaps by Deepening Income-Distribution Reform**

Zhejiang is accelerating the establishment of a coordinated system encompassing primary distribution, redistribution, and tertiary distribution, with an emphasis on raising the share of labor compensation in primary distribution. The province has refined the linkage mechanism of minimum-wage standards with economic growth and average wage increases to safeguard workers' fundamental rights. It broadens residents' property-income channels—exploring, for instance, how land-use rights and capital income can supplement factor income for low- and middle-income populations. Hangzhou encourages rural land transfers so that farmers can boost their incomes through land lease fees and equity dividends. Zhejiang also strengthens the institutional framework for healthy, sustainable development of charitable organizations, guiding social forces to participate in philanthropy and advance social fairness.

#### **4.2.6. Enhancing Education Quality and Promoting Educational Equity**

Zhejiang has increased education investment and optimized the allocation of educational resources. In early childhood education, the province has expanded the number of public kindergartens and raised the gross enrollment rate for children aged three to six. In compulsory education, Zhejiang promotes integrated urban–rural development, upgrades underperforming schools, and implements teacher-exchange programs to balance quality. In higher education, it supports "Double First-Class" initiatives at institutions such as Zhejiang University to bolster research and talent cultivation. Simultaneously, Zhejiang expands vocational education—Ningbo Polytechnic, through industry partnerships and "order-based" training, enhances students' employability and technical skills.

#### **4.2.7. Improving the Medical-Insurance System and Raising Healthcare Service Standards**

Zhejiang is deepening reforms in its healthcare system and refining medical-insurance coverage. The province advances county medical consortia and urban–rural medical alliances, optimizing resource distribution and strengthening primary-level healthcare capacity. In Shangyu District of Shaoxing, for instance, the medical consortium has successfully expanded access to high-quality medical services at the grassroots, significantly raising local clinic utilization rates. Zhejiang also enhances insurance benefits, broadens the scope of covered critical and emergency medicines, and reinforces public-health systems to respond to emergencies. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Zhejiang's robust public-health infrastructure and efficient containment measures effectively protected public health.

#### **4.2.8. Strengthening Elderly Care Services to Address Population Aging**

Zhejiang is rapidly building an elderly-care system that coordinates home, community, and institutional services while integrating medical care and wellness. For home-based care, the province procures services to deliver in-home nursing, meal assistance, and bathing aid. Community eldercare centers offer day care and cultural activities. In institutional care, Zhejiang encourages social investment to expand and improve eldercare facilities—Hangzhou's Suiyuan Jiashu Elderly Community, for example, provides diversified services to meet various elder needs. The province is also piloting a long-term care insurance scheme to protect seniors with disabilities and dementia.

### **4.3. Theoretical Reflections on Zhejiang's Practice of General Secretary Xi Jinping's Important Discourse on Common Prosperity**

#### **4.3.1. Enrichment and Development of the Theoretical Connotation of Common Prosperity**

Zhejiang's practice has enriched the theoretical framework for achieving common prosperity. In the realm of developing new quality productive forces to promote common prosperity, Zhejiang has leveraged technological and industrial innovation to drive high-quality economic growth and enlarge the "economic pie," thereby laying a material foundation for shared wealth. This confirms the intrinsic link between the development of new quality productive forces and common prosperity, and advances theoretical research on the relationship between productivity development and shared affluence. In terms of income-distribution reform, Zhejiang has piloted a coordinated system of primary distribution, redistribution, and tertiary distribution, thereby enriching the theory of socialist distribution systems and offering empirical insights into how equitable allocation can be realized under market-economy conditions. Regarding theories of coordinated urban-rural and regional development, Zhejiang's "mountain-sea cooperation" and integrated urban-rural development practices provide novel approaches and methods for narrowing regional and urban-rural disparities, further refining the theory of regional coordination and urban-rural integration.

#### **4.3.2. Demonstration of the Institutional Advantages of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics**

The construction of Zhejiang's common-prosperity pilot zone exemplifies the advantage of the socialist system's capacity to concentrate resources on major undertakings. In policy support, the top-level design of the Party Central Committee and the State Council, together with proactive local implementation, can mobilize resources and advance significant projects and reform measures. For example, in advancing the "mountain-sea cooperation" initiative, the government has effectively coordinated resources between affluent coastal areas and underdeveloped mountainous counties to achieve complementary advantages. The people-centered development philosophy of the socialist system is fully realized in Zhejiang: in the realm of high-quality, shared public services, the government has increased investment to safeguard citizens' rights in education, healthcare, and eldercare—an essential feature of socialism. Simultaneously, the socialist market-economy system, which melds the decisive role of the market in resource allocation with an active government role, is illustrated by the synergy between Zhejiang's vibrant private sector and government policy guidance, fostering both economic development and common prosperity.

#### **4.3.3. Offering Chinese Wisdom for Global Poverty-and-Wealth Disparity Solutions**

Zhejiang's practices in narrowing income gaps and promoting coordinated urban-rural and regional development furnish valuable lessons for the world in addressing wealth disparities. In distribution reform, Zhejiang's measures—increasing the proportion of labor remuneration in primary distribution and refining the linkage mechanism between minimum-wage standards, economic growth, and average wages—provide other nations with approaches to boost workers' incomes and reduce wealth gaps. In integrated urban-rural development, Zhejiang's strengthening of rural infrastructure and enhancement of rural public-service capacity to narrow the urban-rural divide offer reference points for developing countries seeking balanced rural and urban progress. Throughout its pursuit of common prosperity, Zhejiang has struck a balance between economic growth and social equity, presenting a "Chinese solution" for coordinated socio-economic development globally.

In the course of building a high-quality common-prosperity pilot zone, Zhejiang has fully capitalized on its advantages and actively explored practical pathways, vividly interpreting and implementing Xi Jinping's important discourse on common prosperity. Through economic

development, gap reduction, and public-service optimization, Zhejiang has achieved significant outcomes, while also enriching and advancing the theory of common prosperity and showcasing the institutional strengths of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Zhejiang's experience offers invaluable lessons for the nation's realization of common prosperity. As these practices deepen, Zhejiang will continue to lead by example on the path to shared affluence, making ever-greater contributions to the goal of common prosperity for all. Going forward, it will be essential to further distill Zhejiang's experience, promote replicable models and mechanisms nationwide, and continually innovate to address emerging challenges in practice, thereby propelling the cause of common prosperity onward.

## **5. Reflections on the Practice in Zhejiang of General Secretary Xi Jinping's Important Discourse on Common Prosperity**

General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourse on common prosperity represents the latest achievement in the sinicization and modernization of Marxism, carrying profound contemporary significance. At the theoretical level, it opens a new horizon for Marxist theory of common prosperity, enriches the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and responds to—and transcends—Western theories on governing wealth disparities. At the practical level, it provides pathways for resolving the principal social contradictions of the new era, offers direction for constructing a path of Chinese-style modernization, and forges consensus toward realizing common prosperity in the new epoch. A thorough study of this discourse holds vital theoretical and practical significance for the comprehensive construction of a modern socialist country and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

### **5.1. Theoretical Value of General Secretary Xi Jinping's Important Discourse on Common Prosperity**

#### **5.1.1. Opening a New Frontier in Marxist Theory of Common Prosperity**

Marx and Engels critiqued the capitalist system's polarization of wealth, identifying private ownership as the root cause of inequality and advocating proletarian revolution to establish a communist society based on public ownership of the means of production, thereby realizing prosperity for all. This forms the bedrock of Marxist theory on common prosperity.

Building on the great practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, General Secretary Xi Jinping has inherited and advanced this Marxist framework. He emphasizes that common prosperity is the very essence of socialism and a defining characteristic of Chinese-style modernization, clarifying that "common prosperity means shared affluence for all people—both materially and spiritually—not the enrichment of a few, nor a uniform egalitarianism." By delineating common prosperity across material and spiritual dimensions, he deepens our understanding of socialism's inherent nature and elevates Marxist theory on common prosperity to a new level.

Regarding implementation, Xi Jinping advocates promoting common prosperity through high-quality development, establishing foundational institutional arrangements that harmonize primary distribution, redistribution, and tertiary distribution, and correctly balancing efficiency with equity. This approach—increasing the size of the "economic pie" via productivity growth while fairly allocating that "pie"—constitutes a creative application of Marxist dialectics concerning the relations between productive forces and relations of production, and between the economic base and the superstructure. It thus inaugurates a new frontier in Marxist theory on common prosperity.

#### **5.1.2. Enriching the Theoretical System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics**

The theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics guides practice nationwide. Deng Xiaoping first posited that socialism's purpose includes achieving common prosperity,

inaugurating exploration of a distinctly Chinese theory of shared affluence; Jiang Zemin emphasized balanced regional development and launched the Western Development Strategy to advance common prosperity through regional coordination; Hu Jintao's "Scientific Outlook on Development" prioritized people-centered, coordinated growth—addressing urban-rural integration and social equity in ways that concretized common-prosperity practice.

Xi Jinping's discourse on common prosperity, attuned to the evolving principal contradiction of Chinese society, further deepens our grasp of socialist developmental laws. He set the goal of building a moderately prosperous society, historically eradicating absolute poverty and thus laying a firm foundation for shared affluence; he has advanced the people-centered development philosophy by making the people's aspiration for a better life the ultimate objective and by investing heavily in education, health care, employment, and social security—pushing for equalization of basic public services and enriching the theory of socialist livelihood provision. Through the rural revitalization strategy, Xi has championed urban-rural integration and the narrowing of the "three rural issues," thereby refining theories on agriculture, rural areas, and farmers (the "Three Rural" theory) and on urban-rural relations. His promotion of major regional strategies has fostered complementary, high-quality development across eastern, central, western, and northeastern regions—further embellishing the theory of Chinese socialist regional development. Collectively, these contributions have made the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics more complete and mature.

### **5.1.3. Responding to and Surpassing Western Theories of Wealth Disparity Governance**

Western capitalist countries have grappled with severe wealth gaps, giving rise to various governance theories: welfare economics advocates extensive government intervention to maximize social welfare; neoliberalism champions market freedom and minimal state intervention, trusting market mechanisms to self-correct disparities.

In practice, these Western models reveal limitations: welfare states have strained public finances and spurred social dependency, while neoliberal regimes have often exacerbated inequality—evident in movements such as "Occupy Wall Street," which highlighted governance failures.

Xi Jinping's discourse fundamentally addresses these shortcomings. Conceptually, it centers on the people's fundamental interests—contrasting sharply with Western capital-centered paradigms. Practically, it emphasizes solving problems through development and collective effort, while ensuring equitable distribution via a coordinated three-tier distribution system to build a shared-construction, shared-benefits model. This comprehensive design—from institutional architecture to development strategy and distribution mechanism—transcends Western reliance on either market forces or state intervention alone, offering a Chinese blueprint and demonstrating socialism's advantage in promoting social justice and achieving common prosperity.

## **5.2. Practical Value of General Secretary Xi Jinping's Important Discourse on Common Prosperity**

### **5.2.1. Offering Pathways to Resolve the Principal Social Contradiction of the New Era**

In the new era, China's principal social contradiction has evolved into the gap between the people's growing needs for a better life and unbalanced, inadequate development. Such imbalance manifests acutely in disparities between urban and rural areas, significant income-distribution gaps, and uneven provision of basic public services, all of which severely constrain the fulfillment of the people's aspirations.

General Secretary Xi Jinping's discourse on common prosperity provides clear guidelines for addressing this contradiction. To foster coordinated regional development, he advocates implementing major strategies—such as the coordinated development of Beijing–Tianjin–

Hebei, the Yangtze River Economic Belt, and the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area—to promote the rational flow of factors and the optimal allocation of resources, thereby narrowing regional disparities. For urban–rural integration, he urges vigorous promotion of the rural revitalization strategy, with increased support for rural infrastructure, agricultural industry development, and public-service enhancement, to improve living and production conditions for rural residents and incrementally close the urban–rural income gap. In the realm of income distribution, he emphasizes raising the share of labor remuneration in primary distribution, strengthening the social-security system, and leveraging tax, social-security, and transfer-payment mechanisms in redistribution, alongside encouraging charitable giving in tertiary distribution. These measures aim to expand the middle-income group, boost incomes of low-earning households, curb excessive incomes, and eliminate illicit gains—optimizing the distribution structure and promoting social equity. Through such comprehensive actions, the people's material, spiritual, ecological, and social needs are progressively met, effectively alleviating the principal contradiction of the new era.

### **5.2.2. Guiding the Construction of a Path of Chinese-Style Modernization**

Chinese-style modernization is characterized by large-scale population, common prosperity for all, coordination between material and spiritual civilization, harmony between humanity and nature, and a commitment to peaceful development. Common prosperity for all is both a defining feature and an essential requirement of this model.

Xi Jinping's discourse on common prosperity permeates every aspect of Chinese-style modernization. Economically, it stresses high-quality development, structural upgrading, and cultivation of new drivers to ensure both the quality and efficiency of growth—thereby laying a solid material foundation for shared prosperity. For instance, accelerating the development of new productive forces, integrating technological and industrial innovation, and nurturing emerging industries create high-quality jobs and raise household incomes. Socially, it prioritizes people's livelihoods and social justice by promoting equal access to basic public services—ensuring that all citizens benefit from modernization in education, healthcare, and social security. Culturally, it strengthens socialist spiritual civilization, preserves and promotes China's fine traditional culture, and advances an inclusive, advanced socialist culture to enrich people's spiritual lives and enhance moral, scientific, and cultural literacy—thus unifying material well-being with spiritual fulfillment. Ecologically, it upholds the principle that "lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets," drives green development, and builds a beautiful China in which humans and nature coexist harmoniously—making a healthy environment a source of well-being and providing sustainable ecological support for common prosperity. In these ways, Xi Jinping's discourse delivers value orientations and practical guidance across all domains of Chinese-style modernization, ensuring that the endeavor remains on the correct path.

### **5.2.3. Forging Consensus for Achieving Common Prosperity in the New Era**

The realization of common prosperity is a long-term, arduous undertaking requiring the joint efforts of the entire populace and active participation from all sectors of society. Xi Jinping's discourse has forged a powerful consensus both ideationally and operationally.

Ideationally, by deeply elaborating the significance, objectives, and pathways of common prosperity, it has made clear that this goal is not merely a national development target but also pertains directly to individual well-being—thereby inspiring people's intrinsic motivation, bolstering their confidence and resolve, and creating a societal ethos in which all aspire to and pursue shared affluence.

Operationally, the discourse delineates the responsibilities and missions of all stakeholders. Governments at every level are called upon to prioritize common prosperity by formulating sound policies, increasing investment in people's livelihoods, enhancing public-service delivery,

and driving regional coordination, urban–rural integration, and income-distribution reform. Enterprises are encouraged to shoulder social responsibility, pursuing social benefits alongside economic gains through innovation, job creation, and public-welfare initiatives. Social organizations and individuals are urged to engage in philanthropy and voluntary service, leveraging tertiary distribution to promote social fairness and harmony. By mobilizing these diverse forces, Xi Jinping's discourse has catalyzed a vibrant, collaborative movement in which government bodies, businesses, social institutions, and citizens work in concert to advance common prosperity.

## 6. Conclusion

General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourse on common prosperity, grounded in China's development realities in the new era, represents an innovative advancement of Marxist theory on shared affluence and carries immeasurable contemporary significance at both theoretical and practical levels. Theoretically, it opens new horizons for Marxist common-prosperity theory, enriches the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and responds to—while transcending—Western approaches to wealth-gap governance. Practically, it offers effective pathways for resolving the principal social contradiction of our era, provides correct guidance for constructing a Chinese-style modernization, and forges a broad consensus toward achieving common prosperity. On the new journey of comprehensively building a modern socialist country, thoroughly studying and implementing Xi Jinping's discourse on common prosperity is of vital guiding significance for promoting high-quality economic and social development, realizing shared prosperity for all people, and fulfilling the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation. We must unswervingly let this discourse guide us as we continuously explore and advance the monumental undertaking of common prosperity in practice.

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