

# Reform of the rural land system and the exploration of the road of socialism with Chinese characteristics

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**Abstract:** looking back at the history of the founding of new China, new China's rural land system is not fixed, but with the continuous development of history, the party and the government in practice, for different periods of marxist basic principle, seeking truth from facts, have the courage to face mistakes, adhere to the road exploration spirit constantly improve China's rural land system. The process of China's rural land system reform is a from certain to negative, from negative to certain the dialectical evolution process, from farmers' land ownership, to collective ownership, to the household contract responsibility system, to today's "separation division", China's rural land policy is in the process of the movement of the contradiction constantly developing, constantly perfecting the land system in our country.

**Keywords:** Land reform; Dialectics; Historical materialism; Road exploration

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With the continuous development of history, different land policies were made according to the social conditions at that time. The Party and the government have been constantly exploring in practice, applying the basic principles of Marxism in different periods, seeking truth from facts, daring to face mistakes, always adhering to the continuous improvement of China's rural land system through evolution, exploration, improvement and promotion, and adhering to the spirit of road exploration.

## 1. The evolution process of the rural land system after the founding of new China

### 1.1 The rural land system before the reform and opening up

In the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the innovation of various systems was followed successively, including the reform of the rural land system. In the early days of the founding of new China, the rural land system experienced historic changes in a relatively short period of time.

#### 1.1.1 *Farmers-owned, individual management*

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, China is in the transition stage from new democracy to socialism. Land reform has not yet been implemented in the vast liberated areas, and most of the rural land is still owned by the feudal landlords<sup>[3]</sup>. In order to further consolidate the achievements of the new democratic revolution, maintain the stability of the new people's political power, and meet the needs of economic recovery and development after the founding of the People's Republic of China, China promulgated the Land Reform Law in 1950, abolished the past feudal ownership of land, and decided to carry out land reform in the liberated areas and distribute land to farmers. The promotion of this system marks the completion of the first land reform system in new China and the development of the individual ownership of farmers.

#### 1.1.2 *Farmer ownership, collective management*

The aforementioned land reform gave farmers only the ownership of the old landlords, and did not change the private ownership of the land. The land could still be bought and sold freely<sup>[3]</sup>. In view of this problem, the Party began to explore agricultural cooperation in rural areas in 1953, mainly to encourage the development of mutual assistance groups in agricultural production. At this stage, land ownership is still farmers' private ownership, only helping each other in some production stages. Primary agricultural cooperatives are a collective economic organization, in which members' land, livestock, farm tools and other means of production are shared, which gradually become common property, and cooperative members work together to share the fruits of their labor. Although the private nature of the farmers' land has not changed, the ownership and right to use of the land have been separated, and the ownership still belongs to the farmers, but it is managed collectively.

### *1.1.3 Collective ownership, collective management*

In 1956, the Party proposed to further develop primary cooperatives, transfer all land assets related to production to the collective, and then the collective distribution, and the members of the production cooperatives received corresponding remuneration according to their own labor. But at this stage, there are still a small number of members who can disperse the land, but farmers can only manage the land. It was not until the end of 1956 that the collective ownership of rural land was basically formed. In 1958, Comrade MAO Zedong believed that small cooperatives were not conducive to the development of production, so he decided to cancel the cooperatives and transform and upgrade them into people's communes. And the people's communes should be continuously expanded. Although most of the land at this time was still collective, the members' private land could be used for free. In the later period, the members' private lands were all recovered and returned to the state. At this time, the farmers' private ownership of the land really ended.

## **1.2 The rural land system after the reform and opening up**

In 1978, the reform and opening up entered thousands of households, and at the same time, the land policy of new China has undergone earth-shaking changes. According to the power of land, the reform process of the land system after the reform and opening up is divided into two parts: the land system of "separation of two rights" and the land system of "separation of three rights".

### *1.2.1 Land system of "separation of two rights": 1978-2012*

In 1978 is a historical turning point, is also a new journey, this year of reform and opening up, while the land policy in the second major reform, Anhui fengyang xiaogang village of household contract responsibility system is actually farmers in the name of the contract operating the land, but the ownership of the land still belongs to the state, strictly control land circulation<sup>[4]</sup>. In order to promote this excellent production cooperation mode to the whole country, the country has issued relevant documents to vigorously support this cooperation mode every year for the next five years of 1982. The land reform system for the first time to distinguish the land ownership and use right in China, in order to improve the farmers land use right, countries issued in 1984 the notice about 1984 rural work to increase its right to 15 years, in 1993,15 years land contract period, the central documents and instructions land contract period to 30 years, the household contract responsibility system to continue. Land contract management realizes the separation of "two rights" of agricultural land. The collective ownership of land and farmers 'contracted farming rights have changed from the single ownership of all land rights to the dual ownership<sup>[3]</sup> of collective land and farmers' contracted farming rights.

### *1.2.2 Land system of "separation of three rights": from 2012 to now*

After the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era of development. General Secretary Xi Jinping stressed that China's rural reform should stay true to its original aspiration. In the trend of the new era, the leading direction of rural reform is still to give priority to the relationship between farmers and land. In 2014, on the basis of the land ownership belongs to the collective, "realize the separation of ownership, contracting rights and management rights, and guide the orderly transfer of land management rights". In 2016, the policy of "separation of the three rights" was clarified, and the "separation of the three rights" mode of land ownership under collective ownership, farmers enjoying the right to contract, and the marketization of management rights was realized. Thus, a new round of rural land system reform in China has officially begun.

## **2. Theoretical basis of China's rural land reform**

In the 70 years of land reform since the founding of the People's Republic of China, Chinese Communists have always developed the rural land system with Chinese characteristics in accordance with Marxist historical materialism and the basic laws of social development. The following paper analyzes the theoretical basis for the development of China's rural land system since the founding of the People's Republic of China from the perspectives of Marxist dialectics and Marxist historical materialism.

### **2.1 The perspective of Marxist dialectics**

From the beginning of the founding of new China to the present, the process of China's rural land system reform is a dialectical evolution process from affirmation to negation, from negation to affirmation. First, abolish the private ownership of the feudal landlords and return

the ownership of the land to the peasants; In the three reconstruction periods, the land ownership was transferred to the collective, which was a positive stage. However, in order to expand the scale of production, to establish the people's commune system and then improve the productive forces, at this time, the relations of production will no longer adapt to the productive forces and violate the law, leading to the farmers generally in poverty, which is a negative stage of the land ownership of farmers. The emergence of the household contract responsibility system in 1978, arouse the enthusiasm of most farmers, agricultural productivity, this is the negation of the people's commune system, including late land property rights experienced "two rights separation" to "separation division", land property right is seemingly to restore the farmers land ownership at the founding of new China, is not restored farmers land ownership, but on the basis of the land collective ownership of expanding the management rights. China's agricultural land system has gone through two "dialectical negation", to some extent, denied the first two stages of the land system, so that the development of China's land system is more perfect.

## **2.2 The perspective of Marxist historical materialism**

Marx's historical materialism was acquired on the basis of the study of the general process of human historical and realistic movement. The process of human history is no longer interpreted as the development process of ideas, but completely based on the objective process of real social history.

### *2.2.1 The basic social contradiction is the fundamental motivation of the land system reform*

Marx and Engels pointed out that when the productive forces and the relations of production conflict, the society needs to undergo a revolution. As an objective factor of the historical process, all the changes of the land possession system express the movement law of the basic social contradictions. The change of the land use right system is not determined by people, but by objective laws and specific social and historical conditions. Under the guidance of the basic social contradictions, the different stages of the evolution of the land system are related to the general change process of the land system, which is the internal law of the land system.

### *2.2.2 Productivity and production relations interact*

According to the Marxist historical materialism, the productive forces are the material force that determines the development of social conditions, and are "the basis of human social life and all history". The relationship of production is the economic relationship formed in the process of material production that is not transferred by the will of people. It reflects the relationship between people. In addition, the ownership of the means of production also determines the social nature<sup>[4]</sup>. The people here are not isolated, atomic people, but people in society. The old system will not perish as long as it can promote the development of the social productive forces; the new system will not be particularly mature until it develops the productive forces vigorously. Land is the most basic material production in the process of rural historical development, the development of rural productivity determines its ownership relations, on the one hand, the agricultural productivity level determines the allocation of rural social resources, on the other hand, this decision reflected in the special material production of workers and the progress and development of agricultural production tools. With the continuous development of productive forces, the corresponding rural production relations also need to be adjusted accordingly, otherwise it will hinder or even restrict the development of productive forces. In the early days of the founding of New China, the level of industrialization of China was low and the productivity severely restricted the development of productivity, and the ownership of land returned the land to the farmers, stimulating the enthusiasm of farmers. Under the premise that the production relations of China were the socialist interest, after the completion of the three reforms, in this problem, China adopted the form of the people's commune of land, without the enthusiasm of farmers in production, the production development entered the bottleneck period. It is because of the one-sided emphasis on collective ownership, the relations of production greatly advanced the level of productive forces at that time, divorced from reality and violated the basic principle that the relations of production must adapt to the development of productive forces.

## **3. Explore the road spirit of the Communist Party of China from the land reform**

Hegel believes that anything is in the dialectical development of "positive", in the process of Marx's words, "is to set yourself, since the opposite, self phase synthesis, is the point, thesis, topic, or its self affirmation, self-denial negative self denial" such a negative movement process. The reform process of China's agrarian revolution presents the spirit of such a "positive and negative integration" road exploration.

### 3.1 The “main topic” in the land reform

The so-called “main topic” is the law of the new China since the founding of the law, a stage of self. In the early days of the founding of new China to the completion of the three major reforms, the rural land system in our country changed from the private ownership of the feudal landlord class to the peasant land ownership and then to the collective ownership of peasant land, but there are still some farmers who can have private land. Compared with the early days of the founding of new China, our farmers realized the land as the masters, willing to production, so the agricultural productivity is improved, this is the affirmation of land policy reform in our country, observe the fundamental rules of social development, namely match production relations and productivity, superstructure must change according to the economic base change. In addition, the people have always been the most powerful weapon of our Party. The promotion of China’s rural land system is all for the well-being of the people, so that the broad masses of the people will so support and support China’s rural land policy, and China’s rural land system will be constantly improved. Therefore, following the basic laws of social development and adhering to the people-centered are the “business points” in the process of China’s land reform.

### 3.2 The “counterquestion” in land reform

Three completed after the people’s commune system is not like marxist theory of public land, the enthusiasm of the people, agricultural productivity has not improved, this is not a marxist theory of land public wrong, but because the production relations greatly ahead of the productivity of the conditions, influenced by “left”, the national must establish people’s commune system, the farmers land ownership completely killed, farmers make the material means of production owned by the collective, one-sided emphasis on the development of collective ownership economy, cancel the individual ownership economy. This not only divorced from the actual situation of the productive forces at that time, but also went against the will of farmers, causing the strong dissatisfaction of the majority of farmers, reducing the enthusiasm of farmers for production, and making agriculture and rural economy in a state of slow development or even stagnation for a long time. For these “countertopic” we should resolutely abandon, with “the blade inward, scraping the fearless spirit of the poison”.

### 3.3 “Cooperation topic” in land reform

In 1978, the communist party of China in following the basic law of social development and the people as the center, on the basis of to admit mistakes, correct mistakes, promote household contract responsibility system, completely separate the land ownership and the contracted management, makes the original land property rights owned by the collective single property rights system, into the ownership and the contracted management of land respectively belongs to the collective and farmers two subjects of the dual property rights system. This greatly aroused the enthusiasm of farmers, made farmers become independent business units, obtained the support of their own labor, promoted the development of rural economy, and solved the problems brought by the previous people’s commune system. Later along with the development of urbanization and industrialization, the rural population gradually presents a “hollowing out”, in the face of a large number of land management, the state and implement the contracted management of land into contract right and management right, let management orderly circulation, countries have land ownership, farmers have contract right, and the management marketization circulation such a “separation” mode, this is in the “two power division” on the basis of innovation and upgrade, on the basis of the marxist basic theory, in the road to explore constantly theoretical innovation and practice innovation.

We are to have the courage to explore road, in accordance with the basic law of social development, adhere to the people as the center, adhere to seeking truth from facts, actively explore to meet the productivity development of rural land system reform and innovation, the farmers’ enthusiasm and creativity, found and adhere to the “topic”, dig out and abandon the “thesis”, completes the rural land policy this “topic”, promote the continuous improvement of rural land policy.

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