

Academic Interpretation of Xi Jinping's Important Discourses on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests

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Abstract: *General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourses on the protection of women's rights and interests represent an organic integration of the Marxist view on women, the revolutionary and governance experience of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in leading efforts to safeguard women's rights and interests, and the fine traditional Chinese culture. They form a systematic ideological framework and actionable guide characterized by contemporary relevance, originality, and coherence. General Secretary Xi Jinping has elaborated incisively on key dimensions of women's rights protection, including political participation rights, personal and dignity rights, cultural and education rights, labor and property rights, and marriage and family rights. These expositions have facilitated the systematic incorporation of women's rights and interests protection into laws and regulations, its elevation to the level of state will, and its internalization as norms of social conduct. Faced with the convergence of both emerging and longstanding challenges in protecting women's rights and interests, we should, guided by these important expositions, embed women's rights and interests protection into the thematic priorities of contemporary Chinese women's movements, align our efforts with the new features and requirements of safeguarding women's rights and interests in the new era, continuously strengthen Party leadership over such endeavors, and unswervingly follow the path of developing women's cause with Chinese characteristics.*

Keywords: Xi Jinping's important discourses on the protection of women's rights and interests ♦ Marxist view on women ♦ gender equality ♦ women's all-round development ♦ path of developing women's cause with Chinese characteristics

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), the CPC Central Committee, with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core, has attached great importance to the protection of women's rights and interests. Xi Jinping, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee has explicitly stated that "women's rights and interests are basic human rights," specifically emphasized that "they must be protected by laws and regulations and integrated into national and social rules and norms,"¹ and clearly advocated for "strive to afford all women full and equal enjoyment of various rights,"² opening up a new realm for the

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¹ Xi Jinping, "Speech at the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Promoting Women's All-round Development and Building a Better World for All Remarks" (September 27, 2015), *Guangming Daily*, September 28, 2015.

² Xi Jinping, "Keynote address at the opening ceremony of the Global Leaders' Meeting on Women: Carrying Forward the Spirit of the Beijing World Conference on Women and Promoting the New and Accelerated Process for Women's All-round Development" (October 13, 2025), *People's Daily*, October 14, 2025.

protection of women's rights and interests in the new era. Regarding the protection of women's rights and interests, General Secretary Xi Jinping has delivered a series of important discourses, forming a complete theoretical system with distinct themes, rich connotations, a clear structure, and rigorous logic, which serves as the fundamental guideline and action plan for protecting women's rights and interests in the new era. This paper intends to make a systematic study and academic interpretation of General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourses on protecting women's rights and interests from three perspectives: first, interpreting their theoretical generation from the perspective of the "Two Integrations"; second, interpreting their basic connotations from the perspective of problem orientation; and third, interpreting their practical requirements from the perspective of subsequent development.

I. The Formulation of Theory

The Marxist view on women and its practical accumulation of the revolutionary and governance experiences gained from the CPC's leadership in women's work, as well as the long-standing and profound fine traditional Chinese culture, jointly constitute the theoretical sources of General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourses on protecting women's rights and interests. In essence, these important discourses are an outstanding example of the "Two Integrations," namely, "integrating the basic tenets of Marxism with China's specific realities and traditional culture,"³ forming an ideological system that is both contemporary, original, and systematic.

A. Innovative development of the Marxist view on women

In his speech at a grand gathering marking the 200th anniversary of the birth of Karl Marx, General Secretary Xi Jinping stated, "The most valuable and influential legacy which Marx left for us is the theory that has been named after him, Marxism. This theory is just like a magnificent sunrise, illuminating the road on which humankind explores the patterns of history and seeks its own emancipation."⁴ The Marxist view on women is an integral part of Marxist theory, representing a concrete manifestation of the Marxist worldview on women's liberation and development, with the protection of women's rights and interests being one of the core issues. In his speech at the ceremony commemorating the 80th anniversary of International Women's Day in 1990, Comrade Jiang Zemin pointed out, "The Marxist view on women employs the worldview and methodology of dialectical and historical materialism to scientifically analyze and summarize fundamental issues such as the evolution of women's social status, their social roles, their social rights, and the paths they pursue for liberation."⁵ General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourses on the protection of women's rights and interests apply the worldview and methodology of dialectical and historical materialism precisely, inheriting and upholding the fundamental stances and viewpoints of the Marxist view of women's rights while achieving an innovative development.

First, acknowledging and highly valuing the role women play in creating human

³ Xi Jinping, "Speech at the Ceremony Marking the Centenary of the Communist Party of China (July 1, 2021)," (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2021), 13.

⁴ Xi Jinping, "Speech at a Grand Gathering Marking the 200th Anniversary of the Birth of Karl Marx (May 4, 2018)," *People's Daily*, May 5, 2018.

⁵ Jiang Zemin, "The Entire Party and Society Should Embrace the Marxist View on Women (March 7, 1990)," *Selected Works of Jiang Zemin*, vol. 1 (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2006), 106.

civilization and driving social development serves as the cognitive foundation for protecting women's rights and interests. Marx once remarked, "Every educated person knows that without the 'leaven' of women, no great social transformation is possible."⁶ Lenin also stated, "Unless we have millions of women with us, we cannot exercise proletarian dictatorship, nor can we build along communist lines."⁷ In other words, women's rights and interests should be protected not because they are a vulnerable group in society, but rather based on an objective evaluation of their contributions to human development and social progress, thus granting them fair treatment. Applying Marxist stances, viewpoints, and methods, General Secretary Xi Jinping highly values women's significant contributions to social development and socialist modernization, proposing that "women play an important role in creating, promoting and carrying forward human civilization."⁸ He pointed out that "women are creators of material and spiritual wealth, and represent an important force driving social development and progress,"⁹ and that "in the glorious journey of our Party leading the people in unremitting struggle, every victory has been achieved with the active participation and outstanding contributions of the vast numbers of women."¹⁰

Second, the status of women's rights and interests reflects the overall level of human rights protection in a country, while the extent of such protection depends on the country's overall socioeconomic conditions, which serves as the realistic foundation for protecting women's rights and interests. Marx emphasized that "from this relationship (the relationship between men and women) one can therefore judge man's whole level of development."¹¹ In this sense, the protection of women's rights and interests holds universal and shared value for all humanity. Meanwhile, due to the varying realities faced by different countries, "women's liberation cannot be divorced from the objective realities of social development, and women's issues should be fully recognized and simultaneously addressed in the context of social development."¹² The paths and methods for protecting women's rights and interests are closely linked to a country's national conditions, largely constrained by its historical and cultural heritage, social system, and level of socioeconomic development. Ultimately, the scope and level of protection should align with the actual needs and realities of the country's social development. General Secretary Xi Jinping has emphasized this point, stating, "We should formulate more scientific and rational development strategies that take into account the national conditions of each country, gender differences, and the special needs of women,

⁶ Karl Marx, "Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann (December 12, 1868)," in *Selected Works of Marx and Engels*, vol. 4 (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1995), 586.

⁷ Clara Zetkin, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, translated by Ma Qinghuai (Beijing: SDX Joint Publishing Company, 1979), 77.

⁸ Xi Jinping, "Keynote address at the opening ceremony of the Global Leaders' Meeting on Women: Carrying Forward the Spirit of the Beijing World Conference on Women and Promoting the New and Accelerated Process for Women's All-round Development" (October 13, 2025), *People's Daily*, October 14, 2025.

⁹ Xi Jinping, "Speech at the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Promoting Women's All-round Development and Building a Better World for All Remarks" (September 27, 2015), *Guangming Daily*, September 28, 2015.

¹⁰ Xi Jinping, "Always Regarding the Vast Numbers of Women as an Important Force in Promoting the Development of the Party and the People's Cause (October 31, 2013)," in *Xi Jinping: On Upholding the People's Position as Masters of the Country* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2021), 31.

¹¹ Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, translated by Liu Pikun (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1979), 72.

¹² Pan Ping, "The Essence and Contemporary Value of Marxist Theories on Women's Liberation," *Guangming Daily*, March 8, 2019.

ensuring that women equally share in the fruits of development. Meanwhile, we must innovate policy measures to unleash women's potential and promote their participation in economic and social development."¹³ Within this dialectical and unified relationship between universality and particularity, it is both theoretically inevitable and morally justified to open up and stay committed to the path of women's development with Chinese characteristics.

Third, encouraging and supporting women's participation in social labor is a crucial approach to protecting women's rights and interests and promoting their comprehensive and free development. Engels once pointed out that "as long as women are excluded from social productive labor and confined solely to private household labor, the emancipation of women and their equality with men will remain impossible, both now and in the future."¹⁴ Under the socialist system, women can truly break free from feudal shackles and capitalist exploitation through participation in social labor, thereby escaping dependence and subordination, and asserting and establishing the subjectivity and initiative of women. General Secretary Xi Jinping has repeatedly emphasized the "half-the-sky" role of women, noting that "the vast number of Chinese women have actively engaged in the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, demonstrating remarkable courage and dedication, truly serving as a pivotal force ("half the sky") in national development."¹⁵ The ultimate goal of fully protecting and implementing women's rights and interests is to promote their comprehensive and free development. General Secretary Xi Jinping has stressed that "protecting the lawful rights and interests of women and children, promoting gender equality, and achieving comprehensive development for women and children are important components of Chinese modernization."¹⁶ Thus, protecting women's rights and interests essentially involves restoring women's ability to realize their self-worth and achieve comprehensive development in political, economic, cultural, social, and family life, and with this ability, realizing the comprehensive and free development of every individual. It is also in this sense that the comprehensive and free development of women is more deeply intertwined with the prosperity and strength of the country and the great cause of national rejuvenation. General Secretary Xi Jinping has pointed out in this regard that "the Chinese Dream is the dream of the Chinese nation and also the dream of all Chinese women,"¹⁷ and "on the new journey of Chinese modernization, every woman is a star."¹⁸

Lastly, gender inequality is a product of specific historical conditions, and achieving true equality between men and women is a long-term historical process. Opposing gender

¹³ Xi Jinping, "Speech at the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Promoting Women's All-round Development and Building a Better World for All Remarks" (September 27, 2015), *Guangming Daily*, September 28, 2015.

¹⁴ Friedrich Engels: *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staats (The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State)*, compiled by the Compilation and Translation Bureau of the CPC Central Committee for the Works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2018), 180.

¹⁵ "Prioritizing the Protection of People's Health and Building a High-Quality and Balanced Basic Public Education Service System," *People's Daily*, March 7, 2021.

¹⁶ "Unswervingly Following the Path of Women's Development with Chinese Characteristics and Organizing and Mobilizing the Vast Number of Women to Contribute to Chinese Modernization," *People's Daily*, October 31, 2023.

¹⁷ Institute of Party History and Literature of the CPC Central Committee, *Excerpts from Xi Jinping's Discourses on Women, Children, and Women's Federations* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2023), 22.

¹⁸ Xi Jinping, "Keynote address at the opening ceremony of the Global Leaders' Meeting on Women: Carrying Forward the Spirit of the Beijing World Conference on Women and Promoting the New and Accelerated Process for Women's All-round Development" (October 13, 2025), *People's Daily*, October 14, 2025.

discrimination is an integral part of implementing the national policy of gender equality. As Marx observed, “Social progress can be precisely measured by the social status of women.”¹⁹ General Secretary Xi Jinping elucidated the process and profound significance of humanity’s pursuit of gender equality, stating emphatically: “The cause of pursuing gender equality is a noble endeavor. Throughout history, without the emancipation and progress of women, there would be no emancipation and progress of humanity. To realize the lofty ideal of gender equality, humanity has traversed an arduous and extraordinary journey. From the birth of the world’s first declaration on women’s rights over 200 years ago, to the establishment of International Women’s Day, to the founding of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, to the adoption of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*, every step forward in women’s causes has propelled the progress of human civilization.”²⁰ To a significant extent, the degree of protection afforded to women’s rights and interests reflects the level of progress and enlightenment in human society, and this progress represents a phased victory in the long-standing struggle against gender discrimination and inequality. Precisely because gender inequality persists and is even deeply entrenched, promoting gender equality and opposing gender discrimination have become increasingly urgent. As General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out, “We still have a long way to go and need to work really hard to build a world in which women are free from discrimination as well as a society of inclusive development.”²¹ Under this guidance, the basic state policy of gender equality has been further implemented in the new era. Both the reports of the 19th and 20th National Congresses of the CPC reiterated the commitment to “upholding the basic state policy of gender equality and protecting the lawful rights and interests of women and children.” Each of the 13th and 14th Five-Year Plans includes a dedicated chapter outlining measures to promote the development of women and children. The *Recommendations of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China for Formulating the 15th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development* explicitly proposed “remaining committed to the basic state policy of gender equality and protecting the lawful rights and interests of women and children,” and that “better health services should be ensured for women and children.” China has formulated and implemented the third cycle of the *Outline for Women’s Development in China*, revised the *Law on the Protection of Women’s Rights and Interests*, enacted the *Anti-domestic Violence Law*, and amended the *Criminal Law* multiple times to strengthen protection for women. The Central Economic Work Conference has specifically addressed the issue of gender discrimination, marking a leap forward in the historical process of promoting gender equality at the political, policy, legal, and economic levels. In his keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the 2025 Global Summit of Women, General Secretary Xi Jinping comprehensively reviewed the historic transformations in China’s women’s causes and highlighted a series of impressive statistics: “We have won the largest battle against poverty in human history, and thereby

¹⁹ Karl Marx, “Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann (December 12, 1868),” in *Selected Works of Marx and Engels*, vol. 4 (Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1995), 586.

²⁰ Xi Jinping, “Speech at the Global Leaders’ Meeting on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Promoting Women’s All-round Development and Building a Better World for All Remarks” (September 27, 2015), *Guangming Daily*, September 28, 2015.

²¹ Xi Jinping, “Speech at the High-level Meeting on the 25th Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women (October 1, 2020),” *People’s Daily*, October 2, 2020.

brought moderate prosperity to 690 million women, achieving ahead of schedule the poverty reduction goal of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” “Women make up more than 40 percent of the workforce, more than half of internet start-up founders, and more than 60 percent of all medalists in the past four Summer Olympic Games.”²²

B. Historical experience of the Party’s leadership in protecting women’s rights and interests

The protection of women’s rights and interests has been an integral part of the Party’s leadership over the revolution, construction, and reform spanning more than a century, resulting in rich and effective local experiences. As General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out, “In every historical period of revolution, construction, and reform, our Party has consistently enshrined the realization of women’s liberation and development, as well as gender equality, on its banner of struggle. It has always regarded the broad masses of women as a vital force in advancing the cause of the Party and the people, and has consistently placed women’s work in a prominent position, leading China’s women’s movement to achieve historic accomplishments and forging a path for women’s development with Chinese socialist characteristics.”²³ Across different historical stages, the Party’s policies on protecting women’s rights and interests have demonstrated both continuity and adaptability to different historical tasks, marked by their stage-specific and innovative nature. General Secretary Xi Jinping’s important discourses on protecting women’s rights and interests represent a summary and sublimation of the Party’s historical experience in leading this endeavor, forming scientific guidelines for protecting women’s rights and interests in the new era.

First, it is essential to uphold the Party’s comprehensive leadership over the work of protecting women’s rights and interests. During the Agrarian Revolutionary War, the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, and the War of Liberation, the Party led women in actively striving for their political, economic, and familial rights and interests through revolutionary struggles, institutional construction, and participation in production. After the founding of the People’s Republic of China, the Party’s leadership in protecting women’s rights and interests entered a new stage characterized by institutionalization, standardization, and formalization. The principles of gender equality and freedom of marriage were established through the *Common Program of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference* and the four constitutions. Women’s familial and political rights were realized through the formulation and implementation of laws such as the *Marriage Law* and the *Electoral Law of the National People’s Congress and Local People’s Congresses of the People’s Republic of China*. Women were empowered as masters of the country and society through movements such as land reform, marriage law enforcement, the abolition of prostitution, literacy campaigns, and general elections. Since the launch of reform and opening-up, the protection of women’s rights and interests has become the core of the Party’s leadership in women’s work. The basic national policy of gender equality has been established, a deliberation and coordination body for women’s and children’s work has been

²² Xi Jinping, “Keynote address at the opening ceremony of the Global Leaders’ Meeting on Women: Carrying Forward the Spirit of the Beijing World Conference on Women and Promoting the New and Accelerated Process for Women’s All-round Development” (October 13, 2025), *People’s Daily*, October 14, 2025.

²³ Xi Jinping, “Always Regarding the Vast Numbers of Women as an Important Force in Promoting the Development of the Party and the People’s Cause (October 31, 2013),” in *Xi Jinping: On Upholding the People’s Position as Masters of the Country* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2021), 31.

set up at the State Council level, and laws such as the *Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests*, the *Employment Promotion Law*, and the *Law on the Contracting of Rural Land* have been formulated and implemented. Three cycles of the *Outline for Women's Development in China* have been promulgated and put into effect. Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core has attached great importance to the development of women's causes, "systematically incorporating the protection of women's rights and interests into laws and regulations, elevating it to the will of the state, and internalizing it as social behavioral norms."²⁴ It has led to the formulation of the *Civil Code* and the *Anti-domestic Violence Law*, and revised the *Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests* and the *Law on the Contracting of Rural Land*. Moreover, it has achieved historic accomplishments in poverty alleviation for women, provided more comprehensive protection for their rights to education and labor, and offered a Chinese solution for achieving global gender equality.²⁵ In particular, the *Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests* revised by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in 2022 explicitly stipulated "staying committed to the leadership of the CPC in the work of protecting women's rights and interests," which established for the first time in legal form the principle of the Party's leadership in this area.

This demonstrates that upholding the Party's leadership is the fundamental guarantee for ensuring women's rights and interests. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized, "The cause of women and the work of women's federations must always adhere to the correct political orientation and march in unity with the Party. We must uphold the Party's overall leadership, resolutely safeguard the authority and centralized, unified leadership of the CPC Central Committee, and always maintain full alignment with the CPC Central Committee."²⁶ Ultimately, the Party's leadership over the protection of women's rights and interests is determined by the unique nature of this endeavor. First, protecting women's rights and interests encompasses all aspects of politics, economy, culture, and society. In particular, in the allocation of social benefits and the dividends of reform, issues of trade-offs inevitably arise. In such contexts, only the Party possesses the authority and capability to oversee the overall situation and coordinate all parties concerned, thereby firmly promoting the concept of protecting women's rights and interests across all levels and areas of work. Second, the protection of women's rights and interests involves multiple departments, including labor, education, civil affairs, justice, health, social security, development and reform, agriculture and rural affairs, as well as women's federations at all levels, with horizontal and vertical divisions of labor and geographical and sectoral barriers. Only through the centralized and unified leadership of the CPC Central Committee can these jurisdictional barriers, policy bottlenecks, and interest-related obstacles be effectively removed to foster a high-quality governance framework where "the whole country works as one cohesive unit with a unified

²⁴ Xi Jinping, "Speech at the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Promoting Women's All-round Development and Building a Better World for All Remarks" (September 27, 2015), *Guangming Daily*, September 28, 2015.

²⁵ Party Leadership Group of the All-China Women's Federation, "Promoting More Secure Women's Rights and Interests in the New Era," *Qiushi* 12 (2022): 33-37.

²⁶ "Unswervingly Following the Path of Women's Development with Chinese Characteristics and Organizing and Mobilizing the Vast Number of Women to Contribute to Chinese Modernization," *People's Daily*, October 31, 2023.

mindset” in protecting women’s rights and interests. Third, we face challenges from Western ideologies in the protection of women’s rights and interests. Without a firm political orientation, it is easy to fall prey to gender antagonism, discourse traps, and public opinion risks. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized, “Our women’s federations are mass organizations of women led by the Party. They must firmly rally the vast number of women around the Party and must never become the kind of feminist organizations or societies of elite women seen abroad.”²⁷ The aforementioned three reasons imply that the Party’s leadership over the protection of women’s rights and interests is an effective experience accumulated by the Party during the processes of revolution, construction, and reform, and also an objective and practical necessity for ensuring the protection of women’s rights and interests both now and in the future.

Second, it is crucial to closely integrate the protection of women’s rights and interests with central tasks. On the one hand, the protection of women’s rights and interests is not isolated or detached but is embedded in the central tasks of revolution, construction, and reform at different stages. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized, “The cause of women has always been an important component of the cause of the Party and the people,”²⁸ and “in China, the cause of women has always been an integral part of the epic Chinese modernization endeavors.”²⁹ During the revolutionary period, advocating for women’s rights was directly related to mobilizing women to participate in the revolutionary cause, fighting bravely for national independence, national liberation, and democratic freedom. During the construction period, protecting women’s rights served the country’s construction efforts. As emphasized in the Central People’s Government’s order promulgating and implementing the *Marriage Law*, “Proper implementation of the *Marriage Law* will not only liberate Chinese men and women — especially women — from the centuries-old, barbaric, and backward old marriage system but also establish new marriage systems, new family relations, new social lives, and new social ethics, thereby promoting the development of political, economic, cultural, and national defense construction in New Democratic China.”³⁰ Since the reform and opening up, China has closely integrated the protection of women’s rights and interests with national development, that is, promoting economic growth and socialist modernization through the protection of women’s rights and interests. In the new era, in its endeavor to protect women’s rights and interests, China further emphasizes unleashing women’s enthusiasm and initiative to “contribute women’s wisdom and strength to the great cause of building a strong country and achieving national rejuvenation.”³¹ General Secretary Xi Jinping stated, “Realizing the grand blueprint for the development of the Party and the

²⁷ Xi Jinping, “Strengthening and Improving the Party’s Mass Organization Work (July 6, 2015),” in *Selected Works of Xi Jinping*, vol. 1 (Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2023), 364.

²⁸ Xi Jinping, “Always Regarding the Vast Numbers of Women as an Important Force in Promoting the Development of the Party and the People’s Cause (October 31, 2013),” in *Xi Jinping: On Upholding the People’s Position as Masters of the Country* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2021), 32.

²⁹ Xi Jinping, “Keynote address at the opening ceremony of the Global Leaders’ Meeting on Women: Carrying Forward the Spirit of the Beijing World Conference on Women and Promoting the New and Accelerated Process for Women’s All-round Development” (October 13, 2025), *People’s Daily*, October 14, 2025.

³⁰ Order of the Central People’s Government on Promulgating and Implementing the Marriage Law, *People’s Daily*, May 1, 1950.

³¹ Wen Yan, “Contributing Women’s Wisdom and Strength to the Great Cause of Building a Strong Country and Realizing National Rejuvenation — Learning from the Excerpts from Xi Jinping’s Discourses on Women, Children, and the Work of Women’s Federations,” *People’s Daily*, November 22, 2023.

country requires the joint efforts of all Chinese people, including women. I hope that women will act as builders of great causes, advocates of civilized customs, and strivers who dare to pursue their dreams, making even greater contributions to realizing the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation on the new journey of building a modern socialist country in all respects.”³² Therefore, closely integrating the protection of women’s rights and interests with central tasks is a process of rallying collective strength, and also a Chinese approach to “gender mainstreaming,” which combines the protection of women’s rights and interests with the country’s central tasks at different stages and, consequently, with the performance of duties by various departments, thereby substantially promoting the fuller realization and incremental advancement of women’s rights and interests.

Third, it is imperative to establish women’s subjectivity in protecting their own rights and interests. During the revolutionary period, leading CPC figures such as Mao Zedong maintained that “for women to achieve emancipation, it is essential to awaken their subjective consciousness and rely on their own efforts to secure rights.”³³ In the construction phase, “we implemented a policy centered on mobilizing and organizing women to participate in production, gradually transforming the vast majority of women into builders of New China.”³⁴ During the reform period, “reform has enhanced the competitiveness of Chinese women and also revitalized their subjective consciousness, which had been diluted or even suppressed.”³⁵ Entering the new era, General Secretary Xi Jinping further underscored the importance of women’s subjectivity and empowerment. In essence, the governmental responsibilities and national obligations corresponding to the protection of women’s rights and interests do not conflict with women’s subjectivity in realizing their own rights. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out the need to “launch activities that highlight women’s unique strengths and encourage them to make contributions, thereby maximizing their enthusiasm, initiative, and creativity.”³⁶ General Secretary Xi has reiterated the concept of “women’s empowerment” on multiple occasions. For instance, he proposed at the High-level Meeting on the 25th Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women at the UN General Assembly that “gender equality and women’s empowerment are now important goals of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.”³⁷ He also exchanged views on issues, including women’s empowerment at the 12th G20 Summit,³⁸ and emphasized in his keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the 2025 Global Leaders’ Meeting on Women that “prominent progress has been achieved in women’s empowerment. Their educational attainment has been

³² “Prioritizing the Protection of People’s Health and Building a High-Quality and Balanced Basic Public Education Service System,” *People’s Daily*, March 7, 2021.

³³ Fan Hongxia, “Mao Zedong’s Thoughts on Women’s Emancipation and Their Contemporary Value,” *China Women’s News*, December 26, 2023.

³⁴ Deng Yingchao, “A Basic Summary of Chinese Women’s Movement Over the Past Four Years and Future Tasks (April 16, 1953),” in *Selected Works on Women’s Emancipation by Cai Chang, Deng Yingchao, and Kang Keqing (1938-1987)* (Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 1988), 237.

³⁵ People’s Daily Commentator, “Facing the Challenges of the Times — Commemorating International Women’s Day,” *People’s Daily*, March 8, 1989.

³⁶ “Following the Path of Women’s Development with Chinese Characteristics and Organizing and Mobilizing Women to Forge Ahead and Make Achievements in the New Era,” *People’s Daily*, November 3, 2018.

³⁷ Xi Jinping, “Speech at the High-level Meeting on the 25th Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women (October 1, 2020),” *People’s Daily*, October 2, 2020.

³⁸ “Xi Jinping Continues to Attend the 12th G20 Summit,” *People’s Daily*, July 9, 2017.

steadily improving, and women are playing an ever more important role in economic, political, cultural, and social affairs.”³⁹ The essence of “women’s empowerment” lies in promoting women’s acquisition of greater voice and agency by recognizing and leveraging their inherent abilities and potential, thereby achieving the goal of gender equality.

Last, it is important to emphasize the institutional and mechanism-building for the protection of women’s rights and interests. “Mobilizing and organizing women”⁴⁰ represents a vital approach to protecting women’s rights and interests. The CPC has established organizational and institutional frameworks for protecting women’s rights and interests by continuously building and improving relevant institutions and mechanisms. In the early days following the founding of the CPC, women’s departments and women’s movement committees were established to guide and carry out women’s movements.⁴¹ During the Agrarian Revolutionary War, the Soviet government strengthened organizational leadership over women’s work through various means, requiring the establishment of women’s work committees or women’s departments at all levels of Party organizations and the creation of women’s life improvement committees in Soviet governments above the county level. During the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, organizations such as the Women’s Rescue Association of All Sectors and the Women’s Federation of All Sectors for the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region were established in the anti-Japanese bases under Party leadership, consolidating and rallying the anti-Japanese united front. During the War of Liberation, women’s organizations under Party leadership further expanded and ultimately led to the convening of the First National Congress of Chinese Women in March-April 1949, which established the All-China Democratic Women’s Federation. After the founding of the People’s Republic of China, the Party elevated the protection of women’s rights and interests from a political proposition to a national commitment. It has continuously improved women’s social status and enhanced the level and scope of women’s rights and interests protection through institutional frameworks involving Party organizations, government departments, people’s organizations, and social organizations. Since the beginning of the new era, General Secretary Xi Jinping has attached great importance to the protection of women’s rights and interests and made a series of important instructions on institutional and mechanism-building in this regard. In terms of institutions, following the guidelines of General Secretary Xi’s speech at the Central Conference on the Work of Mass Organizations, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee issued the *Reform Plan for the All-China Women’s Federation*, proposing a series of reform measures, including “enhancing the capacity to serve women and protect their lawful rights and interests.”⁴² In accordance with the decisions and deployments of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on optimizing and adjusting advisory and coordination bodies, the responsibilities of the National Working Committee on Children and Women of the State Council have been optimized, and it remains

³⁹ Xi Jinping, “Keynote address at the opening ceremony of the Global Leaders’ Meeting on Women: Carrying Forward the Spirit of the Beijing World Conference on Women and Promoting the New and Accelerated Process for Women’s All-round Development” (October 13, 2025), *People’s Daily*, October 14, 2025.

⁴⁰ Deng Xiaoping, “On Women’s Work” (July 25, 1957), *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping (1949-1974)*, vol. 2 (Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2014), 332.

⁴¹ Yu Chunrong, “An Analysis of the CPC’s View on Women Before and After Its Founding,” *Beijing Dangshi (Beijing Party History)* 4 (2007): 19.

⁴² “The General Office of the CPC Central Committee Issues the Reform Plan for the All-China Women’s Federation,” *People’s Daily*, September 22, 2016.

an advisory and coordination body of the State Council, with its responsibilities incorporating those of the State Council Leading Group for the Protection of Minors. In terms of mechanisms, based on General Secretary Xi's series of discourses on the protection of women's rights and interests, the revised *Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests* in 2022 has established a "working mechanism for protecting women's rights and interests led by the government, coordinated by all parties concerned, and involving social participation."

C. The creative transformation of fine traditional Chinese culture

General Secretary Xi Jinping has stated, "China's fine traditional culture represents the wisdom and essence of Chinese civilization, is the root and soul of the Chinese nation, and serves as the foundation for China to gain a firm footing amidst global cultural interaction"⁴³. In terms of protecting women's rights and interests, fine traditional Chinese culture also contains numerous positive elements that, through inheritance, excavation, and collation, creative transformation, and innovative development, can provide a richer backdrop and a more positive environment for the protection of women's rights and interests. Of course, traditional Chinese culture also contains content that contradicts the protection of women's rights and interests, such as patriarchy, male superiority over female, and the principle of the husband as the master of the wife, which clearly do not fall within the scope of traditional Chinese culture. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized, "We should conduct a scientific analysis of traditional culture, inherit and promote the beneficial and good aspects, resist and overcome the negative and bad aspects, taking the essence and discarding the dross, rather than adopting an absolutist attitude of accepting everything or rejecting everything outright."⁴⁴ On the following two levels at least, traditional Chinese culture can highly align with and advance the protection of women's rights and interests through creative transformation and innovative development.

The first level involves traditional Chinese family culture and women's family rights and interests. General Secretary Xi Jinping has pointed out that, "The Chinese nation has always placed great importance on the family. As the saying goes, 'The foundation of the world lies in the family'. Traditional Chinese family virtues, such as respecting the elderly and loving the young, having a virtuous wife and a content husband, a loving mother and filial children, friendly brothers, cultivating knowledge and virtue through farming and reading, maintaining a diligent and thrifty household, being knowledgeable and courteous, abiding by laws and regulations, and harmony bringing prosperity to the family, are engraved in the hearts and integrated into the bloodstream of the Chinese people. They serve as an important spiritual force that supports the continuous vitality and passing down of the Chinese nation from generation to generation, and are precious spiritual wealth for family civilization."⁴⁵ General Secretary Xi Jinping has also highlighted the public nature and educational function of the family, with women (especially as mothers) playing a central role. Unlike Western cultures that view the family as a purely private sphere, traditional Chinese culture emphasizes the integration of family and state, harbors deep feelings for family and country, focuses on the

⁴³ Xi Jinping, "Speech at the Symposium on Literature and Art (October 15, 2014)," *Qiushi* 20 (2024): 20.

⁴⁴ "Remembering Historical Experiences, Lessons, and Warnings to Provide Useful Insights for the Modernization of National Governance Capacity," *People's Daily*, October 14, 2014.

⁴⁵ Xi Jinping, "Speech at the Meeting with Representatives of the First National Civilized Families (December 12, 2016)," *People's Daily*, December 16, 2016.

public nature of the family, and underscores women's pivotal position in connecting social and family life. General Secretary Xi Jinping has said that, "We should pay attention to the unique role of women in both social and family life, as well as their unique role in promoting traditional Chinese family virtues and establishing good family traditions."⁴⁶ This implies that strengthening women's equal status can promote effective connections between social and family life. The better the principle of gender equality is implemented, the greater the role women play in both social and family life; the deeper women's participation in social life and the greater their contributions, the higher their autonomy and contributions in family life will be.

The second dimension concerns China's intangible cultural heritage and women's cultural rights. Women bear a special responsibility in the inheritance of fine traditional Chinese intangible culture, as a considerable number of intangible cultural heritage inheritors are women. "The inheritance and protection of intangible cultural heritage is closely linked to women, who even surpass men in certain fields. For instance, in terms of folktales, male inheritors predominantly focus on narratives related to history, ethnicity, and clans, while female inheritors are more inclined towards epic poems, love songs, and other folktales. In performing arts such as opera, dance, and music, as well as in traditional handicrafts like embroidery, printing and dyeing, and weaving, women constitute the majority of inheritors."⁴⁷ During his inspection tours, General Secretary Xi Jinping engaged in exchanges with numerous female representative inheritors of intangible cultural heritage, and his "heartfelt expectations have inspired women to pass down fine traditional Chinese culture from generation to generation with confidence."⁴⁸ China has incorporated a gender perspective into the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage, with relevant officials from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism stating that "equal importance is attached to inheritors of different genders in the identification of representative inheritors of intangible cultural heritage," and efforts have been made to break down barriers and exclusions that previously limited women, such as the tradition of "passing down skills only to males."⁴⁹ Additionally, intangible cultural heritage possesses economic value, and women can achieve self-fulfillment through the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage projects. During his inspection of a Miao village in Guizhou Province, General Secretary Xi Jinping said to women engaged in Miao embroidery, "We must carry forward Miao embroidery, which is both an industry and a culture. Its successful development can promote ethnic and traditional cultures, and also contribute to industrial poverty alleviation and rural revitalization."⁵⁰ General Secretary Xi Jinping's aforementioned instructions vividly and

⁴⁶ Xi Jinping, "Always Regarding the Vast Numbers of Women as an Important Force in Promoting the Development of the Party and the People's Cause (October 31, 2013)," in *Xi Jinping: On Upholding the People's Position as Masters of the Country* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2021), 37.

⁴⁷ Liu Yamin and Liang Hong, "Female Wisdom and Strength in the Inheritance of Intangible Cultural Heritage," *Women of China* 7 (2017): 9.

⁴⁸ Huang Yue, Dong Boting, and Wang Mingyu, "Women's Flowers Bloom in the New Era: A Chronicle of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at Its Core Leading and Promoting the Development of Women's Cause," *People's Daily*, October 23, 2023.

⁴⁹ Song Licai, "Equal Importance Attached to Different Genders in the Identification of Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritors," *China Women's News*, July 4, 2018.

⁵⁰ Zhang Xiaosong, Zhu Jichai, and Du Shangze, "Qian Mountain's Scenic Beauty Welcomes Spring: General Secretary Xi Jinping Visits Officials and People of All Ethnic Groups in Guizhou Province Before the Spring

accurately illustrate how women can achieve both cultural and economic rights through the inheritance of Chinese intangible cultural heritage.

In summary, the theoretical formulation of General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourses on the protection of women's rights and interests represents a shining example of the "Two Integrations," providing methods and guidance for the development of women's rights and interests in the new era. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized, "The prerequisite for 'integration' is mutual compatibility. 'Integration' is not a forced union. Marxism and fine traditional Chinese culture originate from different sources, yet they share a high degree of compatibility."⁵¹ In the protection of women's rights and interests, Marxist views on women and fine traditional Chinese culture converge at the following points, enabling their integration into the historical experience and current practice of the Party's leadership in the protection of women's rights and interests: first, recognizing women's irreplaceable contributions to society and the family; second, acknowledging the dilemmas women face in the economic and cultural spheres; and third, observing and addressing women's rights and interests from a historical perspective. These points of convergence enable the "Two Integrations" in the protection of women's rights and interests to be truly integrated into practical processes.

II. Basic Connotations

General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourses on protecting women's rights and interests provide macro-level guidance on the path and direction, and also offer detailed instructions on the safeguarding methods and development strategies for various specific rights and interests of women. They provide a methodology and toolkit to address the difficulties, pain points, and bottlenecks in women's rights and interests in reality. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that "The development levels of women in different countries and regions remain unbalanced, with unequal distribution of rights, opportunities, and resources between men and women, and insufficient recognition of women's potential, talents, and contributions by society." "Even today, various forms of discrimination against women persist, and incidents of abuse and even maltreatment of women still occur from time to time."⁵² This indicates a significant gap between women's rights and interests in theory and in practice, with prominent issues of imbalance, inequality, and insufficiency. To address and resolve these issues, General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourses on protecting women's rights and interests have formed a profound and systematic framework, whose fundamental connotations mainly include the following aspects.

A. Protecting women's right to participation in politics

As early as 1993, when serving as the Secretary of the CPC Fuzhou Municipal Committee, Xi Jinping, upon invitation, attended a symposium for female officials organized by the Fuzhou Women's Federation and provided insightful guidance, pointing out that "women's participation in politics is a hallmark of social civilization, women's emancipation,

Festival," *People's Daily*, February 7, 2021.

⁵¹ Xi Jinping, "Speech at the Symposium on Cultural Inheritance and Development (June 2, 2023)," *Qiushi* 17 (2023): 7.

⁵² Xi Jinping, "Speech at the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Promoting Women's All-round Development and Building a Better World for All Remarks" (September 27, 2015), *Guangming Daily*, September 28, 2015.

and the superiority of the socialist system. Accelerating the cultivation of female officials is essential for expediting reform, opening up, and economic development, and it is also an important part of our Party's organizational work."⁵³ General Secretary Xi Jinping's understanding of women's right to participation in politics has been consistent and continuously evolving. In his keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the 2025 Global Leaders' Meeting on Women, General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that "we should broaden the channels for women to participate in and deliberate on political affairs, and support their extensive engagement in state and social governance."⁵⁴ The significance of promoting women's participation in politics and cultivating female officials lies in the fact that women's political participation serves as a necessary channel for them to transition from the private sphere to public life, thereby acquiring the institutionalized ability to influence policy agendas and shape public policies. It also enables government decision-making to incorporate more gender perspectives, enhancing the fairness and acceptance of public policies. This is precisely what General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized: "We should enhance women's ability to participate in political and economic activities, improve their level of participation in decision-making and management, and enable women to become leaders in politics, business, and academia."⁵⁵ In this process, the women's federation, a people's organization under the leadership of the Party, serves as a bridge and bond connecting the Party and the government with women. It is an important social pillar of the state power, and has become the main entity for cultivating and selecting female officials. General Secretary Xi Jinping has put forward clear requirements: "We should attach great importance to the official team-building of the women's federation, integrate the cultivation, selection, appointment, and transfer of women's federation officials, and make the women's federation an important base for cultivating, training, and transferring outstanding female officials."⁵⁶ Thus, General Secretary Xi Jinping's discourses on protecting women's right to participation in politics comprehensively elaborate on the importance, necessity, and feasible channels for women's political participation.

B. Protecting women's personal and dignity rights

Women's personal and dignity rights serve as the foundation and prerequisite for the realization and development of their other rights. General Secretary Xi Jinping has shown profound concern for women's personal safety, right to health, and right to reproduction, demanding that cases involving violations of women's personal and dignity rights be handled in accordance with the law and be fundamentally resolved through institutional and systemic reforms. General Secretary Xi Jinping stated, "Some issues are extremely serious, such as the

⁵³ Huang Yue, Dong Boting, and Wang Mingyu, "Women's Flowers Bloom in the New Era: A Chronicle of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at Its Core Leading and Promoting the Development of Women's Cause," *People's Daily*, October 23, 2023.

⁵⁴ Xi Jinping, "Keynote address at the opening ceremony of the Global Leaders' Meeting on Women: Carrying Forward the Spirit of the Beijing World Conference on Women and Promoting the New and Accelerated Process for Women's All-round Development" (October 13, 2025), *People's Daily*, October 14, 2025.

⁵⁵ Xi Jinping, "Speech at the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Promoting Women's All-round Development and Building a Better World for All Remarks" (September 27, 2015), *Guangming Daily*, September 28, 2015.

⁵⁶ Xi Jinping, "Always Regarding the Vast Numbers of Women as an Important Force in Promoting the Development of the Party and the People's Cause (October 31, 2013)," in *Xi Jinping: On Upholding the People's Position as Masters of the Country* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2021), 43.

persistent problem of trafficking in women, recurring cases of brutal harm inflicted upon women, and numerous instances of women being forced into obscene activities. These issues concern the immediate interests of women and affect family happiness, and also undermine social harmony and stability, and in some cases, even tarnish the national image. These problems require focused attention and resolution, and women's federations should conduct in-depth research and propose practical solutions. They should strive to undertake tasks within their own capacity, and report to the central government for decision-making in case support and coordination from various sectors, particularly from the central government, are required. For some issues, they can focus on identifying problems through research, propose solutions, and work with relevant parties to resolve them, while for others, they can report to the central government for guidance and resolution."⁵⁷ This demonstrates General Secretary Xi Jinping's profound insight into the complexity and interconnectedness of protecting women's personal and dignity rights, which involve the authority of multiple departments and multi-level coordination, with some issues requiring decision-making, guidance, and resolution by the central government. This provides the strongest political support and confidence for protecting women's personal and dignity rights.

Regarding the protection of women's personal safety, General Secretary Xi Jinping advocated at the 2015 Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment to "strive to eliminate all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence";⁵⁸ at the High-level Meeting on the 25th Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women at the UN General Assembly in Beijing, he proposed that "we need to eliminate prejudice, discrimination and violence against women and make gender equality a social norm and moral imperative observed by all";⁵⁹ and at the 2025 Global Leaders' Meeting on Women, he suggested the "we should improve mechanisms against violence and resolutely crack down on all forms of violence against women".⁶⁰ Criminal acts that seriously harm women's personal safety, such as assault, abuse, rape, trafficking, sexual harassment, and forced prostitution, have been the targets of severe crackdowns and punishment under the law in China. General Secretary Xi Jinping places great emphasis on violent crimes against women's personal safety, explicitly demanding that "party committees and governments at all levels fully recognize the significance of developing the women's cause and doing a good job in women's work, increase their attention, care, and support, severely crack down on criminal acts that infringe upon women's rights and interests, and protect women's rights and interests in accordance with the law."⁶¹ The approach to protecting women's personal safety is embedded in General Secretary Xi Jinping's various specific instructions, such as the special requirement in a speech on rural revitalization to

⁵⁷ Ibid., 38-39.

⁵⁸ Xi Jinping, "Speech at the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Promoting Women's All-round Development and Building a Better World for All Remarks" (September 27, 2015), *Guangming Daily*, September 28, 2015.

⁵⁹ Xi Jinping, "Speech at the High-level Meeting on the 25th Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women (October 1, 2020)," *People's Daily*, October 2, 2020.

⁶⁰ Xi Jinping, "Keynote address at the opening ceremony of the Global Leaders' Meeting on Women: Carrying Forward the Spirit of the Beijing World Conference on Women and Promoting the New and Accelerated Process for Women's All-round Development" (October 13, 2025), *People's Daily*, October 14, 2025.

⁶¹ "Prioritizing the Protection of People's Health and Building a High-Quality and Balanced Basic Public Education Service System," *People's Daily*, March 7, 2021.

“crack down on illegal and criminal acts such as pornography, gambling, drug abuse, and those infringing upon the rights and interests of women and children in rural areas in accordance with the law,”⁶² and the earnest instruction during a collective conversation with the new leadership of the All-China Women’s Federation to “protect women’s rights and interests in accordance with the law and severely crack down on criminal acts that infringe upon women’s rights and interests.”⁶³ Under the dual guidance of macro-objectives and specific instructions, various legal systems and working mechanisms for protecting women’s personal safety have been improved since the beginning of the new era, including the rapid implementation and effective operation of personal safety protection orders, special campaigns against trafficking in women and children, and mechanisms to prevent sexual harassment.

Regarding the protection of women’s health rights, General Secretary Xi Jinping has stated, “We must ensure women’s access to basic medical and health services, with special attention to the health needs of women in rural areas, women with disabilities, migrant women, middle-aged and elderly women, and women from ethnic minorities.”⁶⁴ Ensuring women’s health is a vital component of enabling equitable access to health services for all citizens, yet it often represents a weak link in terms of effectiveness. This is because the realization of women’s health rights typically relies on the government’s proactive provision and effective actions, characterized by high difficulty, substantial investment, and far-reaching impacts. Accordingly, General Secretary Xi Jinping has identified women as a key demographic group for health protection, stating that “we must stay committed to the principles of shared health for all through joint efforts and government leadership, mobilizing the entire society to participate, and focusing on addressing the health issues of key groups such as women and children, the elderly, people with disabilities, migrant populations, and low-income individuals.”⁶⁵ These important remarks place women at the forefront of key health groups. General Secretary Xi Jinping also provided specific instructions on how to protect women’s health rights: “We should improve management over family planning services, safeguard maternal and child health, rationally allocate service resources, and strengthen the provision of health services such as obstetrics and childcare. We should also advocate for prenatal and postnatal care, address prominent public health issues that threaten the health of women and infants, such as birth defects, nutritional diseases, and critical illnesses, and implement cervical and breast cancer screenings for rural women, thereby building a robust maternal and child health protection network.”⁶⁶

Regarding women’s reproductive rights, General Secretary Xi Jinping has explicitly

⁶² “Attaching Greater Importance to Enhancing the Overall Agricultural Production Capacity and Making Sustained Efforts to Promote the High-Quality Development of Social Security Undertakings,” *People’s Daily*, March 7, 2022.

⁶³ “Upholding the Basic National Policy of Gender Equality and Giving Full Play to the Great Role of Chinese Women,” *People’s Daily*, November 1, 2013.

⁶⁴ Xi Jinping, “Speech at the Global Leaders’ Meeting on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Promoting Women’s All-round Development and Building a Better World for All Remarks” (September 27, 2015), *Guangming Daily*, September 28, 2015.

⁶⁵ “Xi Jinping Presides over a Meeting of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee to Review the Outline of the ‘Healthy China 2030’ Plan,” *People’s Daily*, August 27, 2016.

⁶⁶ *Excerpts from Xi Jinping’s Discourses on the Construction of a Socialist Society*, compiled by the Document Research Office of the CPC Central Committee (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2017), 106-107.

proposed “protecting women’s reproductive rights and increasing women’s labor and employment opportunities.”⁶⁷ In terms of their function, women’s reproductive rights have dual meanings of both “human rights” and “human resources.” At the human rights level, women’s reproductive rights encompass both negative rights (reproductive autonomy) and positive rights (reproductive security). General Secretary Xi Jinping proposed to “address women’s special needs, and implement the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*.”⁶⁸ It is stated in the *Beijing Declaration* that “the explicit recognition and reaffirmation of the right of all women to control all aspects of their health, in particular their own fertility, is basic to their empowerment,” which represents the negative aspect of women’s reproductive rights. In terms of the positive aspect, comprehensive protection should be provided throughout the reproductive process for women. General Secretary Xi Jinping has called for “conscientiously carrying out various tasks such as publicity and education, reproductive health counseling services, prenatal and postnatal care guidance, support for family-planning families, rights protection, and services for migrant populations.”⁶⁹ At the human resources level, protecting women’s reproductive rights is of great significance for increasing the labor supply and promoting long-term, balanced population development. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized, “The comprehensive implementation of the two-child policy for couples can further unleash reproductive potential, alleviate the pressure of population aging, increase the labor supply, and promote balanced population development. This is a major initiative to promote balanced population development from a strategic perspective of the long-term development of the Chinese nation.”⁷⁰ The human rights and human resources significance of women’s reproductive rights are closely interconnected, jointly pointing to the national obligation to protect women’s reproductive rights, that is, to stimulate women’s subjectivity and enthusiasm in the population strategy by means of institutional guarantees, material provision, and policy support.

C. Protecting women’s cultural and educational rights

Protecting women’s cultural and educational rights is a fundamental measure to facilitate women’s self-development and empowerment, transform their dependent and subordinate status, and realize their social value. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that “we should take measures to ensure that all girls can afford to attend school and do so safely, develop vocational and lifelong education tailored for women, and help them adapt to changes in society and the job market.”⁷¹ Women’s cultural and educational rights have dual dimensions. From a macro perspective, protecting these rights is an important part of China’s strategy to rejuvenate the nation through science and education. General Secretary Xi Jinping

⁶⁷ Xi Jinping, “Supporting Chinese Modernization with High-Quality Population Development,” *Qiushi* 22 (2024): 8.

⁶⁸ Xi Jinping, “Together, Let Us Fight COVID-19 and Create a Better Future — Speech at Session I of the 15th G20 Leaders’ Summit (November 21, 2020),” *People’s Daily*, November 22, 2020.

⁶⁹ “Promoting the Implementation of the Basic National Policy on Family Planning to Foster Long-Term Balanced Population Development and Family Harmony and Happiness,” *People’s Daily*, May 19, 2016.

⁷⁰ Xi Jinping, “Explanation of the ‘Recommendations of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China for Formulating the 13th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development’,” *People’s Daily*, November 4, 2015.

⁷¹ Xi Jinping, “Speech at the Global Leaders’ Meeting on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Promoting Women’s All-round Development and Building a Better World for All Remarks” (September 27, 2015), *Guangming Daily*, September 28, 2015.

pointed out that “China will resolutely implement the strategy of reinvigorating the country through science and education, and will always give priority to education. China will increase its investment in education, promote universal and lifelong education, and build itself into a society in which people enjoy learning. Moreover, the country will work hard to ensure that every child has the opportunity to go to school, and enable its 1.3 billion people to enjoy a better and fairer education, so that they can acquire the ability to develop themselves, contribute to society, and help others.”⁷² This implies that women’s educational and cultural rights are pivotal in achieving educational equity, addressing gender disparities in education, and subsequently mitigating imbalanced gender-based resource allocation. Accordingly, the government shall adopt proactive measures to “assist women in opening up career development opportunities for themselves with a positive attitude toward creation and innovation, facilitate their career development in emerging fields and new industries, and advance gender equality across various educational domains, from basic and compulsory education to vocational and higher education.”⁷³ From a micro perspective, protecting women’s cultural and educational rights is a necessary prerequisite for “ensuring that every woman has the opportunity to shine and fulfill her dreams,”⁷⁴ enabling more women to transform their lives and realize their life values through education. In these two respects, women’s cultural and educational rights encompass collective rights and directly concern each individual within the female population.

General Secretary Xi Jinping closely links women’s cultural and educational rights with issues of family, parenting, and family traditions, endowing these rights with an intergenerational perspective and a dimension of inheritance. He pointed out that “we should give full play to women’s unique role in carrying forward the traditional family virtues of the Chinese nation and fostering good family traditions, which has a bearing on family harmony, social harmony, and the healthy growth of the next generation.”⁷⁵

This demonstrates that women’s cultural and educational rights are directly related to the quality of family education. Highly educated mothers are better equipped to raise highly qualified children and perpetuate family virtues and good family traditions. At the 2015 Spring Festival Gathering, General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that “the family is the basic cell of society and the first school of life. No matter how much the times or the patterns of life change, we must always value family building, pay attention to the family, parenting, and family traditions, and closely integrate the cultivation and promotion of socialist core values. We should carry forward the traditional family virtues of the Chinese nation, promote family harmony, foster love among family members, promote the healthy growth of the next generation, and ensure that the elderly are well cared for, making millions of families an

⁷² “President Xi Jinping Delivers a Video Message at the Commemoration of the First Anniversary of the UN Global Education First Initiative,” *People’s Daily*, September 27, 2013.

⁷³ Research Team on “China’s Practices in Protecting Women’s and Children’s Rights in the New Era”: “China’s Practices in Protecting Women’s and Children’s Rights in the New Era,” *China Women’s News*, December 10, 2024.

⁷⁴ Xi Jinping, “Speech at the Global Leaders’ Meeting on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Promoting Women’s All-round Development and Building a Better World for All Remarks” (September 27, 2015), *Guangming Daily*, September 28, 2015.

⁷⁵ “Upholding the Basic National Policy of Gender Equality and Giving Full Play to the Great Role of Chinese Women,” *People’s Daily*, November 1, 2013.

important foundation for national development, national progress, and social harmony.”⁷⁶ All these underscore the irreplaceable role of women in family building. “The family is the first classroom in life, and parents are the first teachers of children.”⁷⁷ Protecting women’s cultural and educational rights ensures the continuation of family, parenting, and family traditions.

D. Protecting women’s labor and property rights

As the latest development of the Marxist view on women in contemporary China, Xi Jinping’s important discourses on protecting women’s rights and interests place great emphasis on protecting women’s labor rights, calling for “launch activities that highlight women’s unique strengths and encourage them to make contributions, thereby maximizing their enthusiasm, initiative, and creativity.”⁷⁸ General Secretary Xi Jinping has consistently paid close attention to women’s employment issues, listing women as a key group for employment support and demanding “efforts to facilitate employment for groups such as women”⁷⁹. Protecting women’s labor rights requires a proper balance between family and work: On the one hand, we should encourage women to transition from the family to the workplace to make achievements and contributions in society, as “Chinese practice has proven that promoting women’s participation in social and economic activities can effectively elevate women’s status and significantly enhance social productivity and economic vitality”;⁸⁰ on the other hand, we should emphasize women’s special family responsibilities and their role in fostering family values, parenting, and family traditions, as “women should consciously shoulder the responsibilities of respecting the elderly and caring for the young, as well as educating their children, play a role in building family virtues, help children form beautiful minds, promote their healthy growth, and enable them to become useful members of the country and the people when they grow up.”⁸¹ General Secretary Xi Jinping’s emphasis on “leveraging women’s unique roles in both social and family life”⁸² precisely refers to these two aspects.

Regarding encouraging women to transition from the family to the workplace and deeply participate in social labor, General Secretary Xi Jinping, while presiding over a meeting of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, stressed that “it is important to improve maternity leave and maternity insurance systems, strengthen supportive policies in areas such as taxation and housing, and protect women’s lawful employment rights.”⁸³ In February 2019, nine ministries, including the Ministry of Human Resources and Social

⁷⁶ Xi Jinping, “Speech at the 2015 Spring Festival Gathering (February 17, 2015),” *People’s Daily*, February 18, 2015.

⁷⁷ Xi Jinping, “Speech at the Meeting with Representatives of the First National Civilized Families (December 12, 2016),” *People’s Daily*, December 16, 2016.

⁷⁸ “Following the Path of Women’s Development with Chinese Characteristics and Organizing and Mobilizing Women to Forge Ahead and Make Achievements in the New Era,” *People’s Daily*, November 3, 2018.

⁷⁹ Xi Jinping, “Promoting High-Quality and Full Employment,” *Qiushi* 21 (2024): 7.

⁸⁰ Xi Jinping, “Speech at the Global Leaders’ Meeting on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Promoting Women’s All-round Development and Building a Better World for All Remarks” (September 27, 2015), *Guangming Daily*, September 28, 2015.

⁸¹ “Upholding the Basic National Policy of Gender Equality and Giving Full Play to the Great Role of Chinese Women,” *People’s Daily*, November 1, 2013.

⁸² Xi Jinping, “Always Regarding the Vast Numbers of Women as an Important Force in Promoting the Development of the Party and the People’s Cause (October 31, 2013),” in *Xi Jinping: On Upholding the People’s Position as Masters of the Country* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2021), 37.

⁸³ “The Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee Holds a Meeting,” *People’s Daily*, June 1, 2021.

Security, jointly issued the *Notice on Further Regulating Recruitment Practices to Promote Women's Employment*, explicitly prohibiting gender discrimination in the recruitment process in accordance with the law. Specifically, all kinds of employers and human resources service agencies are not allowed to limit gender (except in cases specified by the state regarding labor prohibitions for female workers) or give preference to a particular gender when formulating recruitment plans, releasing job advertisements, or hiring personnel. They are prohibited from restricting women's job seeking and employment, refusing to hire women on the grounds of gender, inquiring about women's marital and childbearing status, using pregnancy tests as part of pre-employment physical examinations, making restrictions on childbirth a condition for employment, or differentially raising employment standards for women. In October 2022, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress revised the *Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests*, further strengthening the responsibilities of governments at all levels in promoting gender equality in employment, clarifying specific scenarios where employers are prohibited from engaging in gender discrimination during the recruitment process, and incorporating gender discrimination into the scope of labor security supervision. Regarding women's special family responsibilities, General Secretary Xi Jinping proposed that "we should help women balance family and work responsibilities, so that they can become women in the new era who can both be responsible to society and contribute to their own families. Men should not shirk their family responsibilities and should share responsibilities such as caring for the elderly and raising children with their wives, as well as sharing household chores."⁸⁴ The *Civil Code* explicitly recognizes the social and economic value created by household labor, aiming to advocate public recognition of household labor, promote a reasonable division of labor within the family, and foster social harmony. In essence, women's dual roles in society and the family are not conflicting but rather integrated into the shaping of a complete image of women in the new era.

Women's property rights constitute the material and economic foundation for safeguarding their personal independence and are a natural extension of their participation in both social and household labor. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that "we should formulate more scientific and rational development strategies that take into account national conditions, gender differences, and the special needs of women, ensuring that women can equally share in the fruits of development. Meanwhile, we should take new policy measures to unleash women's potential and facilitate their participation in economic and social development."⁸⁵ Ensuring that women equally share in the fruits of development is specifically manifested in women's property rights, meaning that by benefiting all people, including women, through development, we can increase both the quantity and proportion of property owned and controlled by women. This requires incorporating a gender perspective throughout the "three distributions" process. During the primary distribution, allocation should be based on women's contributions in the production process, focusing on preventing

⁸⁴ Institute of Party History and Literature of the CPC Central Committee, *Excerpts from Xi Jinping's Discourses on Emphasizing the Family, Parenting, and Family Traditions* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2021), 71.

⁸⁵ Xi Jinping, "Speech at the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Promoting Women's All-round Development and Building a Better World for All Remarks" (September 27, 2015), *Guangming Daily*, September 28, 2015.

gender discrimination in employment and implementing equal pay for equal work between men and women, “promoting women’s mastery and application of production factors such as knowledge, technology, management, and data, and enhancing women’s professional competitiveness.”⁸⁶ During the secondary distribution process, the government ensures that women receive substantially equalized public services through taxation, social security, and transfer payments. In the tertiary distribution, attention should be paid to developing philanthropy in the field of women. In his congratulatory letter on the 80th anniversary of the China Welfare Institute, General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out the need to “unite and rally a vast number of workers in the fields of women and children to continuously dedicate themselves to shaping the future and promoting the sound development of women and children.”⁸⁷ Therefore, the ideas and methods for protecting women’s property rights should be integrated throughout the entire process of the “three distributions,” enabling women to equally enjoy the fruits of reform and development and achieving common prosperity for all people, including the vast number of women.

E. Protecting women’s rights and interests in marriage and family

Recognizing women’s irreplaceable contributions to the family represents the convergence between the Marxist view on women and fine traditional Chinese culture. When translated into subjective rights, this convergence manifests as the protection of women’s rights and interests in marriage and family. Regarding the right to marital autonomy, General Secretary Xi Jinping has stated that “it has become a social consensus that women should have access to education, freedom of marriage, and freedom of occupation.”⁸⁸ In response to emerging issues in marriage and childbearing, General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized at a meeting of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee the need to “prioritize family education and family traditions, foster a new culture of marriage and childbearing, advance reforms in wedding customs, and eliminate outdated practices such as exorbitant betrothal gifts.”⁸⁹ He explicitly called for “taking a clear stand against exorbitant betrothal gifts and making it clear that opposing extravagance and waste, as well as lavish wedding and funeral ceremonies, and resisting feudal superstitions are important components of rural cultural and ethical progress, thereby promoting the transformation of social mores and fostering a civilized rural ethos.”⁹⁰ Regarding family relationships, General Secretary Xi Jinping stressed that “we must stay committed to the core socialist values as guidance and foster a family outlook for the new era. We should guide women to love both their own families and the country, and lead family members in jointly elevating their patriotic and family-oriented sentiments, building affectionate family relationships, promoting positive family virtues, and

⁸⁶ Outline for Women’s Development in China (2021-2030), *State Council Gazette* 29 (2021): 20.

⁸⁷ “Uniting and Rallying a Vast Number of Workers in the Work of Women and Children to Serve in Cultivating Socialist Builders and Successors with Knowledge, Virtue, and Ability,” *People’s Daily*, June 15, 2018.

⁸⁸ Xi Jinping, “Speech at the Global Leaders’ Meeting on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Promoting Women’s All-round Development and Building a Better World for All Remarks” (September 27, 2015), *Guangming Daily*, September 28, 2015.

⁸⁹ Xi Jinping, “Supporting Chinese Modernization with High-Quality Population Development,” *Qiushi* 22 (2024): 8.

⁹⁰ Xi Jinping, “Inheriting, Developing, and Enhancing Agricultural Civilization, and Pursuing the Path of Rural Cultural Prosperity (December 28, 2017),” in *Xi Jinping: On the Party’s Publicity and Ideological Work* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2020), 295.

having a shared vision of family pursuits.”⁹¹ This demonstrates that General Secretary Xi Jinping does not view women’s rights and interests in marriage and family as purely private matters but places them within a broader familial and national perspective, highlighting the public nature and social functions of marriage and family. He emphasized that “no matter how times change or how the economy and society evolve, the family’s role as a source of life support, its social functions, and its civilizing influence remain irreplaceable for any society.”⁹²

Women’s rights and interests in marriage and family are individual human rights, and also possess distinct social attributes and spillover effects. Take domestic violence as an example; it directly infringes upon women’s personal rights, dignity, and family interests, and also affects social harmony and stability, as well as the long-term peace and order of the country. The explanation of the *Anti-domestic Violence Law (Draft)* points out that “domestic violence harms the physical and mental health and life safety of family members and also affects social security and stability.”⁹³ Family education follows a similar logic, as it directly relates to mothers’ guardianship rights and represents the social transmission of family education and traditions. It is also stated in the explanation of the *Law on Family Education Promotion (Draft)* that “family education is the foundation of education, concerning the lifelong development of minors and the happiness and tranquility of families, as well as national development, ethnic progress, and social harmony and stability.”⁹⁴ This shows that important family-related legislation since the 18th CPC National Congress has thoroughly implemented the guidelines of General Secretary Xi Jinping’s important discourses on developing family education and traditions. The same applies to women’s rights and interests in marriage and family; the right to marital autonomy, the prohibition of domestic violence, the shared responsibility of spouses for family obligations, and equal parental guardianship rights should all be considered in the context of the family’s social functions to foster a more comprehensive understanding and protection of women’s rights and interests in marriage and family. Taking women’s household labor as an example, Article 1088 of the *Civil Code* stipulates, “If one spouse has shouldered more obligations in raising children, caring for the elderly, and assisting the other spouse in work, among others, he or she shall have the right to request compensation from the other spouse upon divorce, and the other spouse shall provide such compensation.” In the fourth batch of typical cases published by the Supreme People’s Procuratorate on the implementation of the *Civil Code*, the prosecutors handling the “Procuratorial Recommendation Case for the Retrial of the Divorce Dispute between Liu Zhen and Kang Qing” pointed out that “the value of household labor should not be overlooked; it should be recognized, respected, and protected, enabling more family members to recognize each other through reasonable division of labor and live together with mutual

⁹¹ Institute of Party History and Literature of the CPC Central Committee, *Excerpts from Xi Jinping’s Discourses on Emphasizing the Family, Parenting, and Family Traditions*, 70.

⁹² Xi Jinping, “Speech at the Meeting with Representatives of the First National Civilized Families (December 12, 2016),” *People’s Daily*, December 16, 2016.

⁹³ Song Xiuyan, “Explanation of the *Anti-domestic Violence Law of the People’s Republic of China (Draft)*—Delivered at the 16th Session of the Standing Committee of the 12th National People’s Congress on August 24, 2015,” *Bulletin of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress* 1 (2016): 30.

⁹⁴ He Yiting, “Explanation of the Law of the People’s Republic of China on Family Education Promotion (Draft)—Delivered at the 25th Session of the Standing Committee of the 13th National People’s Congress on January 20, 2021,” *Bulletin of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress* 7 (2021): 1279.

respect.”⁹⁵

F. Advancing the global cause of gender equality

General Secretary Xi Jinping has made comprehensive arrangements and systematic plans for protecting the rights and interests of women in China, and also attached great importance to the development of the global women’s cause. He has put forward a series of important initiatives to pragmatically promote international exchanges and cooperation on the protection of women’s rights and interests. He emphasized that “China actively provides opportunities and support for global women’s cause through its development”⁹⁶ and that “Chinese women will also continuously promote the development of the global women’s movement through their own development and make greater contributions to the global cause of gender equality.”⁹⁷ General Secretary Xi Jinping presided over the chaired the Global Leaders’ Meeting on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment co-hosted by China and UN Women in 2015, attended the High-level Meeting on the 25th Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women at the UN General Assembly in 2020, sent a congratulatory letter to the 2024 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Forum on Women, and attended and delivered a keynote speech at the 2025 Global Leaders’ Meeting on Women co-hosted by China and UN Women, among other events, proposing a Chinese solution to accelerating the realization of gender equality and promoting the development of the global women’s cause.

China has faithfully fulfilled the relevant provisions on protecting women’s rights and interests in international conventions such as the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*. It has promoted women’s enjoyment of human rights through legislation, law enforcement, the judiciary, and all other appropriate measures. For example, the Chinese government formulated and implemented the *Outline for Women’s Development in China (2021-2030)* “in reference to the purposes of international conventions and documents such as the UN *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” To systematically summarize China’s latest practices in implementing the *Beijing Declaration*, the *Platform for Action*, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, China actively conducted reviews and assessments at various levels and submitted the *Comprehensive National-level Review on the 30th Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* to the UN in June 2024. On October 13, 2025, General Secretary Xi Jinping attended the opening ceremony of the Global Leaders’ Meeting on Women and delivered a keynote speech titled “Carrying Forward the Spirit of the Beijing World Conference on Women and Promoting the New and Accelerated Process for Women’s All-round Development.” He comprehensively reviewed the achievements in the development of the global women’s cause over the past three decades and the historic transformations in China’s women’s cause, analyzed the challenges facing the global

⁹⁵ Liu Yuhong, “The Value of Household Labor Should Not Be Overlooked,” *Procuratorate Daily*, May 17, 2025.

⁹⁶ Xi Jinping, “Keynote address at the opening ceremony of the Global Leaders’ Meeting on Women: Carrying Forward the Spirit of the Beijing World Conference on Women and Promoting the New and Accelerated Process for Women’s All-round Development” (October 13, 2025), *People’s Daily*, October 14, 2025.

⁹⁷ Xi Jinping, “Speech at the Global Leaders’ Meeting on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Promoting Women’s All-round Development and Building a Better World for All Remarks” (September 27, 2015), *Guangming Daily*, September 28, 2015.

women's cause, elaborated on China's proposals, and contributed China's strength to accelerating the new process of women's all-round development.⁹⁸ China has actively practiced its proposals to promote global women's cooperation and conducted in-depth dialogues and exchanges with women from countries around the world. It has maintained friendly exchanges with 145 countries, 429 women's organizations and institutions, as well as relevant UN organizations and specialized agencies. It has also established women's cultural exchange mechanisms under the frameworks of national exchange mechanisms such as the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, and the Group of Twenty (G20)⁹⁹.

In summary, General Secretary Xi Jinping has made profound discourses on all important aspects related to the protection of women's rights and interests, including women's rights to political participation, personal and dignity rights, cultural and educational rights, labor and property rights, and rights and interests in marriage and family, actively promoting the development of the global women's cause. These constitute the basic connotations of General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourses on the protection of women's rights and interests. The core idea running through these basic connotations is to "systematically incorporate the protection of women's rights into laws and regulations, elevate it to the will of the state, and internalize it into social behavioral norms."¹⁰⁰ Whether it is laws and regulations, the will of the state, or social behavioral norms, they all imply the systematization and integrity of the "system for protecting women's rights and interests," meaning that there are inherent connections among various rights and interests that form an inseparable whole. In other words, only by fully protecting women's rights to political participation can legal norms and the will of the state further incorporate a gender perspective, thereby effectively enhancing women's social and family status. On the basis of an elevated status, women's personal and dignity rights can be fully protected, enabling them to gain self-confidence and self-esteem in their personhood and personality. Based on women's self-confidence and self-esteem, their self-reliance and self-improvement become expectable, and they can continuously obtain fair opportunities for cultural education, employment, and career development, and property possession and disposition. Self-confident, self-esteemed, self-reliant, and self-improved women can better play their unique roles in social and family life. Thus, every woman will have the opportunities for self-fulfillment and realize her dreams while becoming inheritors of family education, traditions, and the traditional family virtues of the Chinese nation.

III. Practical Requirements

⁹⁸ "Jointly Writing a New Chapter in the Development of the Global Women's Cause — President Xi Jinping's Keynote Speech at the Opening Ceremony of the Global Leaders' Meeting on Women Injects Confidence and Momentum into Accelerating the New Process of Women's All-round Development," *Guangming Daily*, October 14, 2025.

⁹⁹ Party Leadership Group of the All-China Women's Federation, "Promoting More Secure Women's Rights and Interests in the New Era," *Qiushi* 12 (2022): 33-37.

¹⁰⁰ Xi Jinping, "Speech at the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Promoting Women's All-round Development and Building a Better World for All Remarks" (September 27, 2015), *Guangming Daily*, September 28, 2015.

While significant all-around progress and historic achievements have been made in protecting women's rights and interests, this endeavor is confronted with the interwoven complexities of traditional and modern issues. Regarding traditional challenges, General Secretary Xi Jinping has pointed out that, "Due to the long-standing influence of history and culture, outdated notions such as male superiority and female inferiority have not been completely eradicated in our society. Discriminatory social phenomena against women still occur from time to time, and women continue to face numerous difficulties and problems in their development and the protection of their rights and interests"¹⁰¹. In terms of modern challenges, General Secretary Xi Jinping has noted that, "New issues have also emerged under new circumstances, such as challenges related to women's career development following the implementation of the two-child policy and the protection of women's rights and interests in the digital age."¹⁰² Against the backdrop of these intertwined old and new issues, the task of fully implementing General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourses on protecting women's rights and interests is both arduous and urgent. Thus, his discourses ultimately aim at practical application, constituting a scientific program and action guide for protecting women's rights in the new era.

Firstly, centered around the theme of the times, protecting women's rights and interests serves the purpose of realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. In October 2013, General Secretary Xi Jinping proposed that "Achieving the goals and tasks set forth at the 18th CPC National Congress and realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation constitute the overarching work of the Party and the country, as well as the theme of the contemporary Chinese women's movement. It is essential to firmly grasp this theme and more closely integrate China's development and progress with the process of promoting gender equality, thereby endowing China's women's cause with richer connotations of the times and enabling hundreds of millions of Chinese women to shoulder more important responsibilities."¹⁰³ In advancing the protection of women's rights and interests, it is crucial to first elevate the political stance and serve the theme of the contemporary Chinese women's movement. Specifically, protecting women's rights and interests holds significance for realizing the theme of the times at three levels: In terms of the driving mechanism, protecting women's rights and interests aims to restore women's subjectivity as rights holders, stimulate their enthusiasm for making contributions and achieving success, and play their role as an indispensable force for national rejuvenation and modernization. With regards to the distribution of achievements, protecting women's rights and interests emphasizes upholding the basic state policy of gender equality, ensuring that the fruits of modernization benefit women equally. This requires upholding equal protection for both genders, and also providing special protection by taking into full consideration the realistic differences between the two genders and the special interests of women. This is precisely what General Secretary Xi Jinping has emphasized: "We should formulate more scientific and rational development

¹⁰¹ Xi Jinping, "Always Regarding the Vast Numbers of Women as an Important Force in Promoting the Development of the Party and the People's Cause (October 31, 2013)," in *Xi Jinping: On Upholding the People's Position as Masters of the Country* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2021), 38.

¹⁰² Institute of Party History and Literature of the CPC Central Committee, *Excerpts from Xi Jinping's Discourses on Respecting and Protecting Human Rights* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2021), 125.

¹⁰³ "Upholding the Basic National Policy of Gender Equality and Giving Full Play to the Great Role of Chinese Women," *People's Daily*, November 1, 2013.

strategies that take into account national conditions, gender differences, and the special needs of women, ensuring that women equally share in the fruits of development. Additionally, we should take new policy measures to unleash women's potential and promote their participation in economic and social development."¹⁰⁴ As for intergenerational inheritance, fully protecting women's rights and interests ensures the future development of the country and the nation. General Secretary Xi Jinping has pointed out that "realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is a glorious yet arduous endeavor that requires the joint efforts of generations of Chinese people."¹⁰⁵ By protecting women's rights and interests, we can cultivate highly-educated mothers, promote the unique roles of women in both social and family life, and thereby nurture highly qualified builders and successors. This will undoubtedly inject an inexhaustible impetus for the great cause of national rejuvenation from generation to generation.

Second, we should address real-world needs and align with the new characteristics and requirements for protecting women's rights and interests in the new era. New technologies, industries, business formats, and models offer opportunities for the advancement of women's rights and interests and present issues and challenges. General Secretary Xi Jinping stated, "China stands ready to work with all parties to promote scientific and technological innovation and the development of women's causes through digital empowerment."¹⁰⁶ This clearly points to new opportunities for the development of women's rights and interests. Meanwhile, General Secretary Xi Jinping has also profoundly highlighted the new challenges posed by new technologies and business formats to the protection of women's rights and interests. These challenges include the "gender digital divide,"¹⁰⁷ the difficulty in reaching people engaged in flexible and mobile employment by traditional means as "many people are now in self-employment or flexible jobs, constantly on the move rather than staying in their workplaces or homes,"¹⁰⁸ as well as issues in marriage and childbirth, including "exorbitant betrothal gifts," and the demographic trends of "lower fertility rates and an aging population."¹⁰⁹

These issues and challenges imply that we face more arduous tasks in the protection of women's rights and interests in the new era. Therefore, it is essential to align with the new characteristics and requirements in the new era and apply new approaches and mechanisms for protecting women's rights and interests: The first is to promote high-quality development, apply development approaches to address imbalances and inadequacies in the protection of

¹⁰⁴ Xi Jinping, "Speech at the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Promoting Women's All-round Development and Building a Better World for All Remarks" (September 27, 2015), *Guangming Daily*, September 28, 2015.

¹⁰⁵ "Building on the Past and Ushering in the Future: Continuing to Forge Ahead Toward the Goal of the Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation," *People's Daily*, November 30, 2012.

¹⁰⁶ "Xi Jinping Sends a Congratulatory Letter to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Forum on Women," *People's Daily*, September 12, 2024.

¹⁰⁷ Xi Jinping, "Speech at the High-level Meeting on the 25th Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women (October 1, 2020)," *People's Daily*, October 2, 2020.

¹⁰⁸ Xi Jinping, "Always Regarding the Vast Numbers of Women as an Important Force in Promoting the Development of the Party and the People's Cause (October 31, 2013)," in *Xi Jinping: On Upholding the People's Position as Masters of the Country* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2021), 35.

¹⁰⁹ Xi Jinping, "Supporting Chinese Modernization with High-Quality Population Development," *Qiushi* 22 (2024): 4 and 8.

women's rights and interests, and actively take measures to tackle new challenges. This is precisely what General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized: "We must uphold the principle of protecting women's rights and interests through development, improve women's livelihoods through development, and achieve synchronous development between women's causes and economic and social progress,"¹¹⁰ thereby helping women adapt to and harness new business formats and technologies. The second is to update the working methods of women's federations and leverage organizational forms to more closely unite women. Women's federations should better rally women around the Party, ensuring that new industries and models will not become barriers to women's unity. As General Secretary Xi Jinping stressed, "To connect with the masses, we must establish face-to-face connections through door-to-door visits and in-depth research. We should collaborate with other women's organizations to establish extensive connections with women at all levels and leverage modern IT tools to establish connections. Websites, web pages, blogs, QQ, Weibo, WeChat, and other means should all be utilized. As long as we can connect with the masses, we should explore all possible means."¹¹¹ The third is to cultivate a new culture of marriage and childbirth and develop a culture that matches the protection of women's reproductive rights and interests. This requires "strengthening guidance on young people's views on marriage, childbirth, and family" guiding young people's attitudes toward marriage, childbirth, and family at the ideological level,¹¹² and also necessitates the establishment and improvement of a series of reproduction support policy systems at the policy level, including inclusive childcare services, maternity insurance, and support policies for housing, education, and employment¹¹³, thereby providing institutional guarantees for women's reproductive rights and interests.

Third, we should maintain confidence in our path and continuously strengthen the Party's leadership over the work of protecting women's rights and interests. Organization is the greatest advantage and political foundation for the Party to lead the work of protecting women's rights and interests. General Secretary Xi Jinping has demanded that "Party committees and governments at all levels should fully recognize the great significance of developing the women's cause and doing a good job in women's work, increase their attention, care, and support, severely crack down on criminal acts that infringe upon women's rights and interests, and protect women's rights and interests in accordance with the law."¹¹⁴ Currently, we face the resurgence of feudal remnants and the disturbance of Western radical feminist ideologies in the protection of women's rights and interests. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that "nowadays, Chinese women are experiencing accelerated mobility

¹¹⁰ Xi Jinping, "Speech at the High-level Meeting on the 25th Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women (October 1, 2020)," *People's Daily*, October 2, 2020.

¹¹¹ Xi Jinping, "Always Regarding the Vast Numbers of Women as an Important Force in Promoting the Development of the Party and the People's Cause (October 31, 2013)," in *Xi Jinping: On Upholding the People's Position as Masters of the Country* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2021), 35-36.

¹¹² "Unswervingly Following the Path of Women's Development with Chinese Characteristics and Organizing and Mobilizing the Vast Number of Women to Contribute to Chinese Modernization," *People's Daily*, October 31, 2023.

¹¹³ Xi Jinping, "Supporting Chinese Modernization with High-Quality Population Development," *Qiushi* 22 (2024): 7-8.

¹¹⁴ "Prioritizing the Protection of People's Health and Building a High-Quality and Balanced Basic Public Education Service System," *People's Daily*, March 7, 2021.

and differentiation with diverse ideological concepts and varied interest demands, giving rise to numerous new situations and problems.”¹¹⁵ Under such complex circumstances, it is urgent to grasp the political orientation of protecting women’s rights and interests in contemporary China and unswervingly follow the path of women’s development under socialism with Chinese characteristics. Efforts to strengthen the Party’s leadership over the protection of women’s rights and interests can be made in the following aspects: First, at the legal level, the newly revised *Law on the Protection of Women’s Rights and Interests* explicitly stipulates the Party’s leadership over the work of protecting women’s rights and interests. Based on this, we should fully implement the guidelines of General Secretary Xi Jinping’s important remarks on strengthening women’s work and protecting women’s rights and interests, and resolutely implement the CPC Central Committee’s decisions and arrangements on upholding the basic national policy of gender equality and protecting the lawful rights and interests of women and children. Second, at the organizational level, we should strengthen the Party’s comprehensive leadership over the work of women’s federations and further leverage the role of women’s federations as a bridge linking the Party and the government with women. General Secretary Xi Jinping has required that “we should continue to deepen the reform of women’s federations around maintaining and enhancing their political nature, advanced nature, and mass character, focus on addressing weaknesses, strengthening areas of deficiency, laying a solid foundation, and enhancing vitality, and comprehensively strengthen all aspects of Party building within women’s federations”¹¹⁶. Third, at the ideological level, we should be brave and adept in combating erroneous ideologies in the protection of women’s rights and interests. General Secretary Xi Jinping has demanded that “officials of women’s federations should frequently browse the internet, engage in online discussions, express their opinions, and use ‘online language’ to spread positive energy and uphold the main theme. They should guide ambiguous understandings, refute erroneous remarks, resolutely resist the infiltration of various erroneous ideologies, and gather women’s strength for the Party to the greatest extent.”¹¹⁷

IV. Conclusion

The protection of women’s rights and interests is an important indicator for measuring social civilization and progress. It concerns the all-round development and self-realization of women, the implementation of the basic national policy of gender equality, and the cause of comprehensively advancing the rule of law and human rights protection. General Secretary Xi Jinping’s important discourses on the protection of women’s rights and interests address fundamental and practical issues related to women’s liberation and development. They

¹¹⁵ Xi Jinping, “Always Regarding the Vast Numbers of Women as an Important Force in Promoting the Development of the Party and the People’s Cause (October 31, 2013),” in *Xi Jinping: On Upholding the People’s Position as Masters of the Country* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2021), 34.

¹¹⁶ “Unswervingly Following the Path of Women’s Development with Chinese Characteristics and Organizing and Mobilizing the Vast Number of Women to Contribute to Chinese Modernization,” *People’s Daily*, October 31, 2023.

¹¹⁷ Xi Jinping, “Unswervingly Upholding the Party’s Leadership and Uniting and Leading Women with the Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era (November 2, 2018),” in *Xi Jinping: On Upholding the Party’s Leadership over All Work* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2019), 287.

comprehensively set specific standards for protecting women's rights and interests in politics, economy, culture, society, and family life. Moreover, they closely integrate national development and progress with the protection of women's rights and interests, endow their work in the new era with new connotations and requirements, facilitate its systematic incorporation into laws and regulations, elevate it to the will of the state, and internalize it into social behavioral norms. We should integrate the protection of women's rights and interests into Chinese modernization, uphold the Party's leadership over the work of protecting women's rights and interests, and follow the path of women's development under socialism with Chinese characteristics. We should adopt a problem-oriented approach, leverage legal thinking and methods, and use development means to address issues related to women's rights and interests that arise in the course of development. We should achieve new increments in protecting women's rights and interests and ensure that the fruits of economic and social development benefit the vast number of women more extensively and fairly, thereby writing a new chapter in the protection of women's rights and interests in China in the new era.

(Translated by *LI Chunyan*)