

The Value Implication and Practical Path Yan'an Spirit into Middle School Education

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Abstract: During the Yan'an period, the Chinese Communists cultivated and formed the Yan'an spirit. The main contents of the Yan'an spirit include the firm and correct political direction, the ideological line of emancipating the mind and seeking truth from facts, the fundamental purpose of serving the people wholeheartedly, and the entrepreneurial spirit of self-reliance and hard work. The Yan'an spirit has played an important role in various periods of China's revolution, construction, and reform. In the current era of socialism with Chinese characteristics, it is essential to extract the educational value of the Yan'an spirit. By incorporating the Yan'an spirit into middle school education, students can adhere to the correct political orientation, adhere to their ideals and beliefs, adhere to mind emancipation and seeking truth from facts, adhere to the people-centered approach, and adhere to self-reliance. The integration of the Yan'an spirit into classroom teaching, campus activities, project-based learning, and study trips plays a vital role in educating students about the Yan'an spirit, contributing significantly to the cultivation of successive generations of socialist builders and successors.

Keywords: Yan'an spirit; Middle school education; Value implication; Practice path

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1. Introduction

In September 2021, the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee approved the first batch of the great spirit of the Publicity Department of the CPC and released it on the 72nd anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, which included the Yan'an spirit. As early as April 2020, General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that "The Yan'an spirit has nurtured generations of Chinese Communists and is a valuable spiritual wealth of our Party." Currently, as socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era, it is of great significance to carry forward the Yan'an spirit, excavate its profound spiritual connotation and educational value, integrate the Yan'an spirit into middle school education, and explore the educational practice path of the Yan'an spirit, in order to train qualified builders and reliable successors of socialism[□].

2. Integration of Yan'an spirit into the value implication of middle school

education

On January 13, 1937, Mao Zedong led the central leading organs to enter Yan'an, and they left Yan'an in March 1948. The span of 13 years was a critical period for the Communist Party of China to transition from weak to strong under the leadership of China. It was during this period that the great Yan'an spirit was formed. The main contents of the Yan'an spirit include the firm and correct political direction, the ideological line of emancipating the mind and seeking truth from facts, the fundamental purpose of serving the people wholeheartedly, and the entrepreneurial spirit of self-reliance and hard work, which are the concise summary of the Yan'an spirit. In the new era, with China's rapid economic and social development and profound changes in the global situation, new missions and challenges have emerged. Completing these missions requires the training of generations of young people with ideals, morality, culture, and discipline. Reflecting on the glorious history of the Party, the enduring vitality of the Yan'an spirit holds great significance for the cultivation of young people in the new era, with profound educational value in middle school education in this contemporary era.

2.1. Adhering to the political direction and upholding the ideals and beliefs

A firm and correct political direction is the soul of the Yan'an spirit. Since the founding of the Communist Party of China, communism has been written on its own banner. In the Yan'an period, Mao Zedong said in the Task of the Communist Party of China during the Anti-Japanese Period: "The Communists will never abandon their ideals of socialism and communism. They will go through the stage of bourgeois democratic revolution and reach the stage of socialism and communism. The Communist Party of China has its own political and economic program, the highest of which is socialism and communism." After the Communist Party of China entered Yan'an, Yan'an became the holy land of revolution, and people with lofty ideals from all over the country rushed to Yan'an, which was called the revolutionary ideal of the Communist Party of China and attracted by the great banner of communism. In the course of the revolution, construction, and reform, the direction and lofty ideals of socialism and communism have encouraged generation after generation of people with lofty ideals to work hard for the national rejuvenation of the people[□].

Teenagers are in a transition stage in their lives, during which they most require careful guidance and cultivation. General Secretary Xi Jinping has stressed that "the path of life is determined by one's own choices. The key to choosing the right path is having firm ideals and beliefs." Today, the complex situation of economic globalization, cultural diversification, value diversification, and a multi-polar world are intertwined. Western liberalism, hedonism, and money-worship are constantly introduced into China via the Internet and Western cultural products, causing a serious impact on the ideals and beliefs of Chinese teenagers. In the face of the profound changes in the world in a century and the realistic challenges of international and domestic ideological struggle, it is of profound political and practical significance to carry forward the Yan'an spirit and help middle school students establish the common ideal of socialism with Chinese characteristics and the lofty ideal of communism.

2.2. Emancipating the mind and seeking truth from facts

Seeking truth from facts is the essence of the Yan'an spirit. Since its founding, the Communist Party of China has taken Marxism-Leninism as its guiding ideology, and seeking truth from facts is the fundamental view of Marxism. In order to combine the universal principles of Marxism with the concrete realities of China, it is necessary to emancipate the mind and seek truth from facts. To establish the ideological line of emancipating the mind and seeking truth from facts, the Party has experienced a difficult and tortuous process of exploration. From 1941 to 1945, the Communist Party of China carried out the Yan'an Rectification Movement. Through the

communist Marxist education movement, the Marxist ideological line was established, proceeding from reality, combining theory with practice, and seeking truth from facts, which had a profound impact on the Chinese revolution, construction, and reform. Seeking truth from facts and emancipating the mind are dialectical unity. In the reality of change, adhering to the principle of seeking truth from facts and achieving the concrete historical unity of theory and practice is the magic weapon for the Party to defeat the enemy.

On July 1, 2021, General Secretary Xi Jinping solemnly declared in Tiananmen Square, “After the continued struggle of the Chinese people of all ethnic groups, we have achieved the first centenary goal of building a moderately prosperous society in an all-round way, and marching toward the second centenary goal of building our country into a great modern socialist country in all respects.” In the new journey of struggle, we are bound to face many new situations and solve many novel problems. All of these require us to emancipate our minds, proceed from China’s actual national conditions, combine theory with practice, constantly carry out hard works, and create great undertakings. The realization of the second centenary goal requires the continuous struggle of generations. Integrating the Yan’an spirit into middle school education and bringing the ideological line of seeking truth from facts into the hearts of young people is of great significance to realize the new goals in the new era.

2.3. Adhering to putting the people first

Serving the people wholeheartedly is the fundamental purpose of the Communist Party of China. During the Yan’an period, the Communist Party of China implemented the mass line well, and the party, the government, the army, and the people launched a great revolutionary movement around the interests of the people. On September 8, 1944, Mao Zedong delivered a famous speech titled “Serving the People” at the memorial service of Zhang Side in Yan’an, saying that “our Communist Party and the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army led by the Communist Party are a revolutionary team. Our team is working completely for the liberation of the people and thoroughly for the interests of the people”¹¹. Serving the people wholeheartedly runs through the course of the Party’s centenary struggle, the Communist Party of China represents the fundamental interests of the majority of the people and has no special interests of its own. All the pursuit of the Party is to put the people first.

With the development of the market economy, some bad interests follow. Although erroneous ideas such as extreme individualism are only tributaries, they can still affect their life choices. In the new era of education, setting up the correct world outlook and the outlook on life and values fundamentally guides our teenagers to establish the value pursuit of serving the people wholeheartedly, to adhere to meet the fundamental interests of the people as an important criterion for all value judgments and value choices, in order for middle school students to adhere to putting the people first.

2.4. Adhering to self-reliance and hard work

Self-reliance and hard work is the fine spiritual quality of the communists. The Yan’an spirit originated in the ancient city of northern Shaanxi, where the natural conditions were extremely challenging, during the special period when the Chinese revolution was facing internal and external difficulties. Hard work was the foundation of the Yan’an spirit. After the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression entered a stage of “stalemate” in 1938, due to the brutal “mopping-up” of the Japanese invaders, the military attack, and the economic blockade of the Kuomintang diehards, the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia border region and the North China anti-Japanese base area faced severe difficulties coupled with the occurrence of natural disasters. In order to overcome the difficulties, break the blockade, and win the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, the Communist

Party of China led the army and the people to launch a vigorous mass production movement, realizing economic self-sufficiency, and wrote a song of self-reliance and hard work. Independence and self-reliance are the soul of the Chinese nation and the important principles for building the Party and the country.

In the new era, China's economic development has achieved brilliant results. In 2021, China's gross domestic product (GDP) will exceed 114 trillion yuan, increased 8.1% year on year. The per capita GDP exceeds RMB 80,000, exceeding the world per capita GDP and close to the lower per capita level of high-income countries. The rapid and steady economic and social development and the stability of the people's lives are achieved through the hard work of the Chinese people under the leadership of the Party. Today's middle school students have not experienced difficult times, as living conditions are favorable, which can potentially cultivate a sense of complacency. Integrating Yan'an spirit into middle school education aims to educate middle school students to never forget the spirit of self-reliance and hard work, to understand that no country or nation in human history can rely on external forces to achieve strength and revitalization, and no nation can achieve prosperity through laziness, as well as to guide middle school students to adhere to the spirit of independent self-reliance and actively undertake the historical mission of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

3. The practical path of integrating Yan'an spirit into middle school education

The Yan'an spirit plays a significant educational role in the growth of middle school students. To truly give full play to the educational value of the Yan'an spirit, it is necessary to carry out various educational activities to guide students to understand, explore, and practice the Yan'an spirit.

3.1. Integration of Yan'an spirit into the classroom

Classroom is the primary space for teaching. To give full play to the educational role of the Yan'an spirit, it is necessary to deeply explore the historical significance and era connotation of the Yan'an spirit, find the meeting point between the Yan'an spirit and subject content, and integrate Yan'an spiritual science into classroom teaching, so as to realize subject education and subtly nurture understanding.

First of all, in the selection of teaching materials, we should combine the task of knowledge teaching and the goal of literacy teaching, and select the content of the Yan'an spirit scientifically, so that the Yan'an spirit can become a powerful complementary teaching material and students can have the opportunity to understand the story of Yan'an and experience the Yan'an spirit. Secondly, the Yan'an spirit should be integrated into situation shaping, and the immersive teaching mode of situation shaping should be adopted to shape a variety of real teaching situations, and guide students to deeply understand the Yan'an spirit in the situation. Thirdly, the Yan'an spirit is transferred in the teaching design. The teaching task is the bridge connecting the teaching situation and the real society. Progressive tasks should be consciously designed to help students break through the barriers between the historical connotation of the Yan'an spirit and real life, and help students realize the transformation from understanding to practicing the Yan'an spirit.

3.2. Integration of Yan'an spirit through campus activities

Campus activities are an integral part of school education. To carry forward the Yan'an spirit, it is necessary to give full play to the role of campus activities and the educational role of school moral education activities, expand the realization path of the educational value of Yan'an spirit from classroom to campus activities, and enrich the activity field of education.

First of all, we should seize the opportunity to make good use of major festivals and anniversaries and organize activities, in order to deepen students' emotional experience and enhance their rational understanding

of the activity. For example, on the anniversary of the Anti-Japanese National Salvation Movement on December 9, a chorus competition was organized, and revolutionary songs from the Yan'an period were selected as the main theme of patriotism. Secondly, we should explore the content of subject teaching, carry out discipline activities, and organically combine the education of Yan'an spirit with discipline education. For example, to conduct performances of the plays from the Chinese discipline textbooks, the classic articles that are typical and related to the Yan'an spirit are selected, and the textbook plays are compiled for the campus performances, so as to expand the influence of the Yan'an spirit. Thirdly, we should give full play to the role of environmental education, make use of the unique role of campus cultural environment construction, and allow the integration of the Yan'an spirit into the construction of cultural environment. For example, the blackboard newspaper design activities of the Yan'an spirit and the hand-copied newspaper display activities are carried out, so that the strength of the Yan'an spirit can be displayed and its influence can be exerted in the construction of the campus cultural environment.

3.3. Integration of Yan'an spirit through project-based learning

Project-based learning is one of the important means to realize deep learning as well as a new way to learn the Yan'an spirit. Project-based learning is a learning method in which students work towards specific goals within a project framework. In the process of completing specific tasks, they can acquire knowledge, cultivate emotion, and shape value. The outcomes of project-based learning are products.

In the path of carrying forward the Yan'an spirit, carrying out project learning is conducive to making students' participation more three-dimensional and generating the real understanding of the Yan'an spirit. At the same time, the results of the project can also expand the influence of the Yan'an spirit and stimulate students' enthusiasm to participate in the project. To carry out project-based learning and give full play to the educational role of Yan'an spirit, it is necessary to pay attention to the design of projects. First of all, we should strive to achieve the effective connection between project design and social needs. Secondly, students should be guided to acquire powerful resources for project learning. Thirdly, efforts should be made to promote the effective transformation of the project results. To carry out project learning among middle school students, realistic projects in social practice such as cultural and creative design competition can be carried out to guide students to carry forward the Yan'an spirit as the theme and integrate the Yan'an spirit into the cultural and creative products. In this process, it can not only enhance students' understanding and identification of the Yan'an spirit, but also expand the social influence of Yan'an spirit.

3.4. Integration of Yan'an spirit through study trips

It is better to travel ten thousand miles than to read ten thousand books. The educational role of Yan'an spirit should be promoted in and out of the campus, and research and trips to the place of origin of Yan'an spirit should be carried out. Through study trips, students can directly experience the Yan'an spirit, which make it more vivid and tangible for them.

First of all, the educational goals of the study trips are determined. Study trip is not merely a trip but it is a field study with educational goals. Before the study trip, the goals of the study should be established scientifically, ensuring that the study trip aligns with these goals. Secondly, the route of the study trip should be carefully arranged. We need to carefully plan the routes to Yan'an and the relevant learning points, so that we can effectively narrate the story of Yan'an and carry forward the Yan'an spirit. Lastly, it is also necessary to design research activities and adopt diversified and meaningful forms of activities for the study trip, such as the Yan'an story field sharing meeting, Yan'an song singing meeting, etc., so as to elevate the Yan'an spirit and

integrate it more deeply into the hearts and minds of participants.

In short, Yan'an spirit, as one of the important spirits in the early birth of the Party's revolution, has rich educational value and practical significance. To give full play to the educational value of Yan'an spirit and integrate it into middle school education, it is necessary to broaden the avenues for learning and implement comprehensive educational initiatives. Only through such efforts can the banner of Yan'an spirit be raised ever higher.

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