

# Three Dimensions of Cultivating New Generations: Value Implication, Scientific Connotation, and Cultivation Path

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**Abstract:** The new generation of the times is the latest requirement for young people in the new era, and it is the latest training goal for young people put forward by the Party and the country in the face of the second centennial goal. At the 19th National Congress, it was put forward by the country that the concept of “new generation of the times” for the first time, indicating the training direction and theoretical guidance for the new generation of the times. The new age requires young people to have firm ideals and beliefs, excellent skills, and a great spirit of responsibility. The proposition of cultivating a new generation of the times is a deep exploration and summary of Marx’s theory of “all-round human development,” Lenin’s youth view and the education view of excellent traditional Chinese culture, and the proposition needs to strengthen the leadership of the Party, give play to the leading role of socialist core values, and the youth themselves should actively act to realize the transformation of theoretical and practical results.

**Keywords:** New generation of the times; Value implication; Scientific connotation; Cultivation path

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## 1. Introduction

In his report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the Chinese president put it this way: “The young people of contemporary China are born at the right time. The stage for displaying their talents is vast and the prospects for realizing their dreams are bright”<sup>[1]</sup>. From the advanced youth of the May Fourth Movement to the “three good” youth of the socialist revolutionary construction period, from the “four new talents” proposed in the reform and opening up period to the “ideal, moral, cultural, and disciplined” new talents in the new era, these titles all reflect the ardent expectations that the Communist Party of China has placed on generations of Chinese youth. History has proved to us that the Chinese youth have always had a good character of indomitable struggle, courage, and perseverance, and the strength of the Chinese youth has always been an inexhaustible source of pushing the Chinese nation forward and gradually standing in the forest of nations in the world.

## **2. The value implication of cultivating the new generation of the times**

Marx and Engels' discourse on the all-round development of people, Lenin's view of youth, and the "view of educating people" in Chinese excellent traditional culture all provide direct theoretical sources for the cultivation of new generations in the new era.

### **2.1. The inheritance and development of Marx's theory of "the all-round development of man"**

Marx said: "The first premise of all human history is undoubtedly the existence of living individuals"<sup>[2]</sup>. Marx believed that man is conscious, that man is engaged in all social practice activities with a purpose, and that man is the subject of social practice. Marx once said in his *Theses on Feuerbach* that man is the sum of all social relations. He believed that people do not exist in isolation, but are connected to each other. However, in the capitalist era at that time, under the oppression of capitalism and the destruction of alienated labor, man was not regarded as a human being, but a tool for exploitation by the bourgeoisie, and the communication between people was alienated into a simple material exchange. He believed that such a deformed relationship is not good for personal development. Therefore, when he conceived the communist society and described the characteristics of the future communist society, he put forward the view of "the free and comprehensive development of human beings." He believed that only under the premise of the communist society classified according to needs, people can have their own free time to control, and realize the free and comprehensive development of human beings.

When Marx studied youth, he said that youth are energetic, optimistic, and lively. He believed that youth was a crucial period for a person to grow up and that young people must receive education in order to promote the development of social revolution. He believed that education was "not only a way to increase social production but the only way to create well-rounded human beings"<sup>[3]</sup>. Marx's theory of the free and comprehensive development of man has made a great contribution to the development of mankind and society. Under the guidance of Marx's theory on human development and combined with the background of social development in the new era, our Party and country creatively put forward the proposition of "new generation of the times," providing new development ideas, mission responsibilities, and goals for the new youth in the new era.

### **2.2. The inheritance and reference of Lenin's youth view**

After the October Revolution in Russia, Lenin deeply realized the important role of youth in participating in socialist construction. He believed that all efforts of the revolutionary struggle were ultimately aimed at "cultivating fully developed members of communist society"<sup>[4]</sup>. During the period of building socialism in Russia, he attached great importance to young people and put forward many requirements for them, believing that young people should have excellent skills in building the country and society as well as noble moral qualities and firm communist beliefs, but he believed that the most important thing was to learn and apply Marxism. He took the lead in guiding young people to learn Marxist theory, instructing them to arm themselves with the Marxist theory they have already mastered, use theory to guide practice, make them advanced elements of society, and "replace old opportunists with new, young, inexperienced, proletarian revolutionaries"<sup>[5]</sup>.

Lenin believed that young people should have a distinctive communist spirit and learn to apply Marxist theory to socialist construction with the times. Lenin enriched and developed Marx's theory of all-round human development, put forward the theory of "new era" under the background of socialist construction, and provided a rich theoretical reference for our country to study "new era" theory.

### **2.3. The continuous innovation of the concept of educating people in the excellent traditional Chinese culture**

The long-established, extensive, and profound fine traditional Chinese culture has nurtured the views of self-cultivation, family harmony, governance, and peace. All generations of scholars and writers regard “gentleman” as the highest evaluation of a person, and take the gentleman’s way as their own behavior norms. In traditional Chinese culture, “the road ahead is long and winding; I will search high and low” and “as heaven maintains its vigor through movement, a gentleman should constantly strive for self-improvement” reflect the virtue that “the gentleman” should have, that is, to actively forge ahead and constantly improve their own skills. Even more, universities take “self-improvement” as the school motto to encourage students not to slack off. The patriotic thoughts that have been passed down to the present day, such as “the rise and fall of the nation is the responsibility of every individual” and “to seek death without concern for good or bad fortune is for the benefit of the nation,” are highly condensed to the lofty ideals and beliefs that a “gentleman” should pursue and the great spirit of responsibility. It can be seen that Confucianism believes that a “gentleman” should have noble moral qualities and lofty ideals and beliefs. In the process of learning and practice, it is necessary to first improve their own cultivation, and only under the premise of “self-cultivation” can they finally realize the lofty ambition of governing the country and leveling the world.

## **3. The scientific connotation of the new era**

### **3.1. Firm ideals and convictions**

The Chinese president has repeatedly stressed the importance of ideals and convictions and compared them to the calcium of the Chinese nation’s spirit. Ideals and beliefs are Marxist beliefs, the lofty ideal of communism, and the common ideal of socialism with Chinese characteristics, among which “the most important thing is to build a solid spiritual foundation with firm ideals and beliefs, firm faith in Marxism, faith in socialism and communism, and confidence in the path, theory, system, and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics.” Firm ideals and convictions mean, first and foremost, establishing the common ideal of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Socialism with Chinese characteristics is the fundamental direction of China’s development and progress at present and in the future. It is the common ideal of all the people, and it is also an ideal and belief that the young people must firmly establish. Although our country is currently and will remain in the primary stage of socialism for a long time, the realization of communism is the highest ideal that our Party constantly pursues.

Secondly, while striving to achieve all-round development, young people in the new era must closely link their dreams with the great rejuvenation of the Chinese dream. Due to different family conditions, interests, social environment, and education received, young people will have different questions or pursuits for their future, and they are in the stage in which their worldview, outlook on life, and values have not been completely finalized, and may deviate from the right direction in the road of pursuing dreams. Young people should always bear in mind that in the process of pursuing their dreams, they should cultivate their patriotic feelings, plant patriotic feelings when pursuing their dreams, and realize their value in forging ahead and having the courage to take on the great task of national prosperity and rejuvenation.

Lastly, it is necessary to correctly understand the relationship between individual ideals and great ideals. The great ideal of communism and the individual ideal are dialectically unified, the great ideal is based on the individual ideal, and the realization of the individual ideal is the premise of the realization of the common ideal. Only when every Chinese realizes their individual ideal of a better life can the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and the great ideal of Communism be steadily realized.

### **3.2. Excellent skills**

If the young people of the new era do not have a strong ability, all the good ideals will be on paper. Having a strong ability is a necessary condition for young people to assume the great responsibility of the great rejuvenation of the nation. Nowadays, with the changing times, young people have a strong ability, which is not only the need to face the complex and changing international situation but also the fundamental guarantee to overcome difficulties and continuously achieve self-development in the new era. One must first acquire enough basic knowledge to have strong skills. At present, we are in a new era of the Internet with a lot of information, and knowledge is being updated and iterated with each passing day with the development of society. As a young person who has great curiosity about everything, he should conscientiously study basic theoretical knowledge and keep up with the pace of the times to constantly accept the baptism of new knowledge. Especially in the current favorable social background that China attaches great importance to the priority development of education, we should actively make good use of all educational resources, actively learn professional knowledge in the process of receiving higher education, and establish a world view, outlook on life, and values in line with the mainstream trend of socialist thought, so as to achieve success in learning. Secondly, if young people in the new era want to stand firm in the changes of the times, they also need to have a certain spirit of innovation. Innovation is the soul of national progress, the inexhaustible source of a country's prosperity, and the deepest national endowment of the Chinese nation. The new generation should have the ability to innovate continuously, creatively transform theoretical knowledge, innovate and develop, and solve new problems with new technologies. Only with a certain innovation ability, can we stand firm in the changes of the times and enhance our competitiveness and international competitiveness.

### **3.3. Great sense of responsibility**

Looking back on the founding of the Communist Party of China, we can be proud to see that countless young people have been fearless, dedicated body and soul, and left a bright mark in the history of the Party's 100-year struggle. The present era is a crucial time for the Chinese people to stand up and become rich and strong. It is an era closer than any other in the past to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. All this does not come easily, which means that the young people of the new era should consciously shoulder their own responsibilities and social responsibilities. Every independent individual should be responsible for himself in the process of his development and realization of his value, which is his responsibility. Young people should first be responsible for themselves, and constantly improve themselves and their skills while cherishing life. Social responsibility refers to the unity of social members' cognition, identification, and practice of their social roles and responsibilities while recognizing, understanding, and handling their relations with society and the country. In the new era of changing circumstances, young people should recognize their social responsibilities, enhance their collective consciousness and feelings of family and country, and realize that the Chinese dream cannot be realized by a single person or a certain leadership group, but requires every member of society to consciously play their social role and take the initiative to assume the social responsibility due to the country and the nation.

## **4. The cultivation path of the new era**

Cultivating the new generation is a long and arduous work. We must uphold the leadership of the Communist Party of China and give play to the leading role of core socialist values. Young people should realize the tasks entrusted by the times, grasp the opportunities of the new era, actively participate in social practice, and strive to be the tide of the new era.

#### **4.1. Political guarantee: Giving play to the Party's role as the core of leadership**

The Communist Party of China has always regarded youth work as an important part of its work. First of all, in order to cultivate a generation of excellent new people for the future of the motherland, the Party must take the initiative to enter the youth group, carefully listen to the requirements and expectations of the youth, understand the love of the youth, explore the confusion of the youth, and help the youth to solve problems, only in this way can we truly integrate into the youth and better guide the youth. Secondly, strengthening the Party's overall leadership over education is the fundamental guarantee for running education well. Nowadays, ideological and political thinking is attracting attention, and schools and colleges have launched ideological and political courses to impart relevant policies of the Party and the state to students of different ages, and arm young people's minds with Marxism. At the same time, it is necessary to combine college students' hot issues, adhere to the combination of unity and diversity, adapt to local conditions, teach students according to their aptitude, innovate educational means and methods, make ideological and political courses full of vitality, enhance young people's interest in ideological and political courses, and make ideological and political theory courses popular with young people. While optimizing ideological and political courses, we should pay more attention to the construction of ideological and political courses, so that ideological and political education runs through every course of young people, and subtly guides young people to move forward in the correct political direction. Lastly, we should strengthen the Party's guidance to the teaching team. The Party should build a high-level talent team and improve the professional and professional qualities of teachers. It is also necessary to improve the talent cultivation and incentive mechanism, enhance the benefits of teachers in their professional fields, and take the lead in creating a good atmosphere of respect for teachers in the whole society.

#### **4.2. Value leadership: Giving play to the leading role of core socialist values**

Socialist core values are the "root" and "soul" of a nation. The socialist core values are elaborated from three different levels, which puts forward "patriotism, dedication, integrity, and friendliness" at the individual level as the requirement for each citizen and the overall regulation of people cultivation in the new era. Youth is a key period for the formation of a person's world outlook, outlook on life, and values, and the value orientation of youth also determines the value orientation of the whole society. Nowadays, with the in-depth development of the Internet, thoughts from all over the world are rapidly introduced into China through the Internet. Some young people have not yet formed a correct value orientation and may be tempted by various ideological trends, and the status of mainstream ideology in society is facing challenges. We must correctly guide young people to establish core socialist values.

Secondly, the ancient, extensive, and profound fine traditional Chinese culture has always been the most valuable spiritual wealth of the Chinese nation. It is necessary to carry forward the fine traditional Chinese culture in the whole society, dig deep into the excellent parts of traditional Chinese culture, take its essence and discard its dross, combine it with the new content of the new era, give it a new connotation of the times, carry out creative transformation and innovative development of fine traditional Chinese culture, and give play to the leading role of fine traditional Chinese culture in the new era.

#### **4.3. Self-cultivation: Active participation of young people in social practice**

A person is an individual in a certain social relationship. Social practice, social activities, and various student club activities on campus are students' second classroom, which is highly beneficial to broaden students' vision and ability and enrich students' social experience and life. Young people should actively participate in various volunteer services and grassroots activities, and test their theoretical knowledge in social practice. Participating in different kinds of social practice activities can make young people more deeply understand the hardships and

the patriotic feelings of Party members and cadres who are always on the front line, and feel the strong Chinese confidence, strength, and responsibility in real life, so as to further enhance the confidence in the system, theory, culture, and road. Secondly, we should pay attention to the role of example. In the history of ideological and political education of the Party, model education has played an extremely important role in the period of revolution, construction and reform, and opening up. Young people should strive to be pioneers, take the initiative in the classroom, actively participate in activities outside the classroom, grasp the national activities open to college students, show the vitality of youth on a larger stage, and use their positive performance to drive the whole society to action. At the same time, leading groups such as Party members and student cadres in the youth should give full play to the vanguard role of the “key minority,” lead college students to unite, go to the places where the people need it most, and strive to be pioneers of the times.

## 5. Conclusion

After a journey of 101 years, the Communist Party of China has led the Chinese people into a new era. The new era is a new era of building on the past and forging ahead, and the young people of the new era must take up the great historical mission of national rejuvenation. In 2017, standing in the historical period of two hundred years of convergence, the Chinese president clearly put forward in the report of the 19th National Congress an important discussion of “training new people to assume the great responsibility of national rejuvenation.” Young people should establish firm ideals and beliefs, develop skills on the road of growth and pursuit of dreams, cultivate patriotic feelings, closely link their individual ideals with the Chinese dream, and have the courage to shoulder their responsibilities and the responsibilities of the family and the country and strive to become new talents who meet the requirements of the new era.

## Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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