

# After Forty Years of Reform and Opening up: A Multi-perspective Analysis of the Innovation and Development of Ideological and Political Education

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## ABSTRACT

In the past 40 years of reform and opening up, the political, economic and cultural exchanges and cooperation between China and other countries have been increasing. In particular, with the opening of the doors to the outside world, the intermingling and collision of various cultures and trends from the East and the West have affected the practice and development process of ideological and political education to a certain extent. With the continuous penetration of network technology, the ideological and political theoretical system under the leadership of the Party has been constantly innovated and improved. Although it has gone through the course of cancellation, restoration, development and then integration and deepening, it has also pointed out a series of new diversified development paths for ideological and political education. Therefore, against such a background, it is important to deeply understand the distinctive features of ideological and political education in the context of pluralism. Adhering to the principle of keeping pace with the times and the people-oriented education policy and exploring new paths, methods and means of ideological and political education in the context of pluralism are not only in line with the trend of development of the times, but also continue to promote the reform and development of ideological and political theory in the new era.

## 1. Introduction

Since the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Party, China's ideological and political education has gradually stepped into the right track and developed in an orderly manner along with the influence of the ups and downs of the tide, and in the practical exploration of reform and opening up, it has embarked a unique path of development. This article mainly analyzes the innovation and development of ideological and political education from multiple perspectives. From the period during reform and opening up to the new era, culture aris-

es and develops from practice. Moreover, it is the power source of national reform and development, and a good recipe for educating people to enhance the construction of cultural confidence in ideological and political education. The concept of shared development is the starting and ending point for the Party and state leaders in the new era to adhere to the people-oriented approach, and it is also the characteristic of the times given to ideological and political educators. The current ideological and political education should find the right fit and promote its innovation and integration under shared development. As a new teaching mode in the Internet era, MOOC (massive

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open online course) breaks the traditional thinking pattern and the boundaries of time and space to meet the needs of different types of people for information and networked educational resources. It makes ideological and political education more influential in the process of dissemination, promotes ideological and political education to enhance the diversity of art forms and continue to push the new things and keep pace with the times.

## **2. Adhering to Cultural Confidence, and Continuing to Develop and Innovate are New Ways to Enhance Ideological and Political Education**

Culture is the foundation of a country and the spiritual pillar of its prosperity; a prosperous culture brings a prosperous country, and a strong culture brings a strong country. Establishing cultural confidence is connected with cultural inheritance and value cultivation, which is the mission and responsibility undertaken by universities. In the new era, the ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities should promote the excellent Chinese traditional culture. In other words, cultivating cultural confidence is not only important contents of the teaching of ideological and political theory courses, but also a significant purpose and new path of ideological and political education.

### **(1) Adhering to Cultural Confidence, and Improving Cultural Confidence and Identity**

China has a history of five thousand years. Its outstanding culture still has great charm to modern society. Adhering to cultural confidence and cultivating the new generation to assume the great responsibility of the nation must enhance the cultural soft power and enhance the sense of national cultural identity, so as to establish a sense of responsibility to actively inherit and promote the excellent national cultural traditions. Deng Xiaoping, as the chief architect of reform and opening up, pointed out at the closing session of the Working Conference of the Communist Party of China that “only by emancipating our minds, insisting on seeking truth from facts, starting everything from reality, and linking theory with practice can our socialist modernization be carried out smoothly and our Party’s theory of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought be developed smoothly”<sup>[1]</sup>. This has clearly expounded that ideology and culture are the soul of social development and the inexhaustible source of socialist construction, which has laid the theoretical foundation for the proposal and construction of reform and opening up. Since entering the new era, the new generation of Party leadership with Xi Jinping as the core, attaches great importance to cultural construction. “We must firmly

adhere to cultural confidence to promote the prosperity of socialist culture. Without a high degree of cultural confidence and without cultural prosperity, there will be no great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. We must adhere to the road of socialist cultural development with Chinese characteristics, stimulate the whole nation’s cultural innovation and creativity, and build a socialist country with powerful culture”<sup>[2]</sup>.

On the one hand, the theoretical composition of ideological and political education contains the generative elements of cultural confidence, leading and helping the educated by worldview, outlook on life and values. On the other hand, in the new era, it is necessary to draw not only from historical and socialist culture, but also from traditional culture and place it on top of the strategic decisions and deployments of priority development to improve the sense of identity and cultural confidence.

### **(2) Continuing to Develop and Innovate to Inject New Vitality into the Development of Cultural Innovation**

The inheritance and development of culture has always been the core of education, and ideological and political education, as the top priority in cultivating political talents, plays an indispensable role in cultural confidence. Cultivating the innovation and thinking ability of the educated can awaken the sense of identity and self-confidence in traditions and new culture. To establish cultural confidence, it should be nurtured in the process of ideological and political education. In turn, ideological and political education should be carried out in cultural confidence cultivation. Whether it is inheriting or innovating traditional Chinese culture, we must take practice as the main body, cultivate people with scientific methods, and absorb the essence of culture with an open mind, so that its essence and highlights can be known and used by us<sup>[3]</sup>. As the saying goes, if you want to educate people, you must educate yourself first; if you want to cultivate talent, you must cultivate morality first. As communicators and educators of ideological and political thoughts, it is necessary to focus on key links and persistently cultivate persons with cultural confidence in all-round development of moral, intellectual, physical, social and aesthetic development. The cultivation of cultural confidence must always be included into the education of talents, and we must constantly develop and innovate to enhance the ideological and political education and strive for fast and new development, so as to inject new vitality into the development of cultural innovation.

## **3. Integrating the Concept of Shared Development into Ideological and Political Education to Promote the Innovation and Integration of Ideological and Political Education**

As socialism with Chinese characteristics enters a new

era, the philosophy that development must be innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared is of great significance to ideological and political education. Integrating the concept of shared development into the whole process of ideological and political education can not only provide new research perspectives but also plan new strategies, form educational synergy, strengthen connotation and enhance professionalism. The concept of shared development should be firmly established, scientifically grasped and accurately understood when carrying out daily ideological and political education. We should take shared development as an important theory of development throughout the entire education system, and as a guide for action and a goal for development.

### **(1) Promoting Shared Development and Guiding Youth to Establish a People-oriented Life Goal**

Over the past forty years of reform and development, China's society has gone through rapid development, and ideological and political education should also keep pace with the times and inspire young students' ideals and beliefs. The introduction of socialist core values has injected brand-new contents into ideological and political education, and the concept of shared development has laid the theoretical foundation for practicing socialist core values<sup>[4]</sup>. Integrating shared development concept into ideological and political education helps carry forward the characteristics of young people with high aspirations, promotes college students to establish a sense of social responsibility, and pushes ideological and political education to form a new normal. Contemporary college students are born in the new era and grow up after the reform and opening up, which provides a wide stage for them to display their vitality. The spiritual power of youth is directly related to the ambitious goals and beliefs. Spiritual power is the result of the stimulation of goals and beliefs. Goals guide the direction of life, and beliefs determine whether a career can be successful. Promoting shared development requires youth to have the spirit of the times. The logical starting point of adhering to people-oriented development focuses on the requirement of a people-centered education concept. Centering on the healthy growth and development of young people is conducive to fostering the main force that will fuel the development of society in the new era.

### **(2) Applying the Concept of Shared Development to Stimulate the Free and Comprehensive Development of Youth**

The five development concepts unify and promote the continuous reform and development of colleges and universities. Integrating the concept of shared development organically into ideological and political education can continuously improve the effectiveness of ideological and political education of college students to help them

develop freely and comprehensively. The free and comprehensive development of people establishes the subject position and value of people. It is the highest value pursuit of Marxism. Shared development covers all people, highlighting the fundamental position of the people to achieve the happiness of the people for the purpose. Moreover, the interests of the masses are the starting point and destination of the cause of the Party. Shared development corresponds to the period of socialist development that is in continuous improvement. As youth, we must be clear about the situation we are in and not be conformist. As the main force for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, we must develop freely and comprehensively in the process of promoting the realization of the Chinese Dream in the new era. For this reason, ideological and political education for youth must serve the free and comprehensive development of youth, start from the subtleties of youth development, put into practice the guidelines and policies for the training of youth, and give them the maximum amount of independent choice. The various educational entities in the social system must give strong support to young people in various fields. Shared development is about people's living conditions and enhancing their well-being. It motivates individuals to actively participate in the great cause of building socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era. The ideological and political education and activities for youth should play their due role under the concept of shared development. It should inspire youth to shoulder the responsibility of honor and unify personal and social values in the historical journey to achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, so that the shared development and the innovative development of youth ideological and political education go in the same direction and achieve synergy.

## **4. The Innovation of Ideological and Political Teaching under the MOOC Mode in the New Era**

MOOC is the product of large-scale online open courses in the new era, which provides an unprecedented platform of communication and innovation for innovating ideological and political education, breaking through geographical boundaries and transforming teaching modes. President Xi Jinping has pointed out at the propaganda and ideological work conference that "we should adapt to the new situation where social informatization continues to advance to speed up the integrated development of traditional and emerging media, fully use new technologies and applications to innovate media communication methods, and occupy the high ground of information

dissemination”<sup>[5]</sup>. “The Internet is the most dynamic area of development in our era”<sup>[6]</sup>. MOOC, as a new teaching and dissemination method, education method and teaching method in the Internet medium, transmits helpful and beneficial cultural knowledge, carries out ideological and political education, strengthens the initiative and consciousness of the educated, strengthens political stance, improves political literacy, guards the ideological position in the face of complicated Internet information interference, and makes the value of ideological and political education penetrate into people’s hearts.

### **(1) Innovating Ideological and Political Education and Exploring New Teaching Ways**

The education and teaching methods in the new era should respect various characteristics of students and consider their individual differences. The reform and innovation of ideological and political education in colleges and universities should inevitably promote the innovation of teaching methods, and colleges and universities in the new era should adapt to the unique innovative strategies brought by the Internet to ideological and political education in the new era. First, the use of “flipped classroom” in the teaching practice of colleges and universities. In the process of using flipped classroom in education and teaching, the traditional classroom teaching mode is overturned, and the traditional classroom teaching mode is broken, so that the main body of classroom teaching shows a trend of diversity. With corresponding videos and teaching materials before class, students can watch videos repeatedly and ask for help from teachers and partners. It has aggregated scattered teaching resources together to serve the teaching, increasing interactivity in learning. Focusing on the concept of classroom communication, cooperation and inquiry, it is a breakthrough and innovation in the education model and learning style. Combined with the actual situation of students, it arranges and controls learning of students, and teaching can be carried out in a relaxed atmosphere in and out of classroom. Second, the use of blended teaching mode under MOOC. The development of science and technology has strongly promoted the change and innovation of teaching mode, and advanced the deep integration of information technology and curriculum teaching. Blended learning is student-centered. It opens up students’ thinking space, and is no longer teacher- and textbook-centered, making teachers more flexible and diverse in their teaching methods. In the blended teaching mode, teachers are knowledge communicators and become facilitators to guide learning. Teachers can provide students with the latest resources of subjects and develop online learning plans, daily homework, classroom discussions, examinations, evaluation and feedback mech-

anism through micro-class and micro-video, etc., which can effectively make up for the defects of single online learning type and traditional classroom type. It will analyze comprehensively and systematically from the aspects of knowledge and skills, process and method, emotion, attitude and value, etc., so that the teaching form can be used throughout the whole process.

### **(2) Strengthening Mutual Communication and Exchanges among Colleges and Universities to Optimize Educational and Teaching Achievements**

As a center for cultivating informational talents in the new era, colleges and universities need to rely on various forms of communication to meet their educational and management goals and requirements. Strengthening interpersonal communication, especially information exchange between colleges and universities, deepening teaching structure, improving teaching quality and conducting academic research are important. First, strengthening communication between universities is conducive to deepening education reform and improving teaching quality, and strengthening communication between various departments and schools is conducive to be understood by other departments, absorbing the results of others’ experience and making up for shortcomings, so that education can be carried out in depth. Second, it is conducive to the scientific management of universities. In order to improve management, the importance and necessity of interpersonal communication and unity and collaboration among college leaders should be recognized. Regular exchanges of ideas and communication should be organized among universities (e.g. academic seminars, college students’ entrepreneurship cooperation forums, establishment of university alliances, etc.), which is conducive to unifying ideological understanding and improving educational and teaching achievements, eliminating misunderstandings and resolving conflicts in a timely manner, conducting criticism and self-criticism, enhancing mutual understanding and trust, and better cooperating and working together to accelerate the synergy of educational development. Universities should twin with each other, learn from each other and promote the development of each other. On the basis of trust, universities can work together to accomplish the difficulty in ideological and political education development.

## **5. Implications for Continuing to Promote Ideological and Political Theory Reform and Development in the New Era**

In the new era, we should continue to push forward the reform and opening up. Reviewing the glorious course of reform and opening up in the past 40 years, it has greatly



changed the image of China, and the Chinese nation has ushered in a historic leap from standing up, becoming rich to being powerful! Only in line with the historical trend of innovation can we continue to enrich and develop in practice with the times, to unify the promotion of ideological and political construction with reform, development and stability, and to facilitate the sustainable development of ideological and political theory in the new era. President Xi Jinping has put forward at the opening ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia that “China’s 40 years of reform and opening up have provided many invaluable inspirations, the most important of which is that for a country or a nation to revitalize, it must advance in the logic of history and develop in the trend of the times”<sup>[7]</sup>.

We should insist on the unification of the great practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics and ideological and political education in colleges and universities, gather strength, guide colleges and universities to integrate personal growth and progress into national construction, and give full play to the conscious initiative of ideological and political education of college students in colleges and universities. We should also focus on comprehensive and coordinated development to grasp regularity, enhance creativity, and adapt to the changing new pattern of reform and opening up. “Reform and opening up is the great awakening of the Party, and it is this great awakening that has given birth to the great creation of the Party from theory to practice. Reform and opening up is a great revolution in the history of the development of the Chinese people and the Chinese nation, and it is this great revolution that has driven the great leap forward in the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics!”<sup>[8]</sup> China’s innovation and development cannot be separated from the world, and the world’s innovation and development cannot be separated from China. China’s reform and opening up has not only developed itself but also benefited the world. We

should adhere to Marxist theory and socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era as guidance, adhere to reform for development, strive to explore and follow the laws of ideological and political construction, continue to innovate and develop a new situation of ideological and political education, so as to let the fountain of vitality of China’s politics, economy and culture gush to the fullest, and strive to achieve the Chinese dream of great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

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