



ANALYSIS OF THE LOGICAL STRUCTURE AND PRACTICAL PATHS OF YOUTH HISTORICAL EDUCATION IN THE NEW ERA

Zhang Weiman

School of Marxism, Zhaoqing University, Zhaoqing, Guangdong, China

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36713/epra19560>

DOI No: 10.36713/epra19560

ABSTRACT

Whether one's historical perspective is correct affects the unity of people's hearts, the rise and fall of nations, and the prosperity and decline of civilizations. Strengthening youth historical education is not merely an educational task but also an extremely important and serious political task. The logical starting point of youth historical education in the new era is to cultivate new youth capable of undertaking the great task of national rejuvenation; the logical intermediary is to master Marxist positions, viewpoints, and methods; the logical endpoint is to strengthen historical consciousness and confidence. Diversified ideological trends and historical nihilism have brought significant impact and obstacles to youth historical education in the new era. Under the guidance of Marxist historical views, it is necessary to consolidate the "main channel" of youth historical education in the new era, expand its "micro-channels", and enhance youth's historical responsibility through social practice as auxiliary means.

KEYWORDS: New Era; Youth; Historical Education; Logical Structure; Practical Paths

I. ORIGIN OF THE ISSUE

General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out: "The future belongs to the youth, and hope lies with the youth". The youth of the new era are growing up against the backdrop of the strategic landscape of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and unprecedented changes unseen in a century. To strive to cultivate new youth capable of shouldering the great task of national rejuvenation, we must guide them to study history, summarize historical experiences and lessons, grasp the initiative spirit of history, and clarify goals for struggle. Guiding the younger generation to form correct Marxist historical views is of great significance in helping youth better assume the responsibilities and missions bestowed by the times.

1.1 The Party and State's High Attention to Historical Education

The 19th Party Congress report pointed out: "We must strengthen education in patriotism, collectivism, and socialism, and guide people to establish correct views of history, ethnicity, state, and culture" (Xi, 2017, p. 43). The historical view being placed in the primary position among the "four views" highlights its importance. Learning history is for better moving toward the future, but learning history must be guided by correct historical views.

Historical perspective represents people's fundamental views and overall understanding of social history, influencing and even determining people's views of history, thereby affecting their worldview, outlook on life, values, and identification with the Party and state. Therefore, firmly establishing correct historical views is not merely a personal matter but a major issue concerning ideological security and maintaining long-term stability of the country. Youth are the future of the country and hope of the nation. Their historical views directly affect their cognition of history, understanding of reality, and attitude toward the future, thereby influencing their healthy growth and even the country's future destiny. Whether historical views are correct relates to the unity of people's hearts, the rise and fall of nations, and the prosperity and decline of civilizations. Thus, strengthening youth historical education is not merely an educational task but also an extremely important and serious political task. Since the 18th Party Congress, General Secretary Xi Jinping has attached great importance to inheriting and developing Party history and revolutionary history, mining historical wisdom to conduct correct historical education for youth in the new era. He emphasized,



"The future of the nation, the destiny of the people, and the happiness of the people are responsibilities that contemporary Chinese youth must and will shoulder" (Xi, 2015).

1.2 The Party and State's Care and Protection for Youth Development

Since the 18th Party Congress, General Secretary Xi Jinping has consistently focused on the development of the younger generation, caring for their growth and success, and emphasizing their education and training. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized, "The Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation will eventually become reality through the relay struggle of generations of youth. The whole Party must care for and protect young people, building stages for them to achieve brilliance in life" (Xi, 2017, p. 70). This fully demonstrates the Party and state's high attention and earnest hopes for the younger generation. The Third Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee clearly pointed out that the current and upcoming period is key for comprehensively advancing strong nation-building and national rejuvenation through Chinese-style modernization. Achieving strong nation-building and national rejuvenation is not a matter of simply beating drums and gongs or taking it easy; it requires continuous struggle by generations of Chinese youth. The next 30 years are crucial, precisely the 30 years when the youth of the new era need to consciously take on the historical responsibility of national rejuvenation.

Youth are at a critical juncture in their ideological development and maturity, a key period for establishing their worldview, outlook on life, and values. To ensure healthy growth of youth and their courage to take on missions, we must help them establish correct values and historical views, guide them to firm up their ideals and beliefs, and maintain a clear stand against historical nihilism. Li Dazhao pointed out: "Therefore, historical view is actually the criterion for life; to obtain a correct view of life, one must first obtain a correct historical view" (Li, 1984). For youth in the new era, they must first establish correct historical views by understanding the history of the Chinese Communist Party, using history as a mirror to draw lessons from the past, and thereby establish correct worldviews, outlooks on life, and values.

1.3 The New Era Background Urgently Needs Improvement and Innovation in Youth Historical Education

After 46 years of reform and opening up, China has gradually moved from closed to open, and youth's ideological concepts have changed significantly. Entering the new era, China's social landscape and international status have both undergone significant improvements, with widespread application of network media and information technology. Against this new era background, youth historical education faces new environments and situations. Compared with traditional youth historical education, it requires improvement and innovation in youth historical education, enhancing its targeting and effectiveness to better adapt to new era development.

However, through reviewing CNKI, it can be seen that there are relatively few research results on youth historical education in the new era from the perspective of ideological and political education, with even fewer high-quality and influential research results. There is an even greater lack of research results providing scientific theoretical guidance for youth historical education practice activities in the new era. The theoretical deficiency forms a huge contrast with our country's practical needs, which constrains the development of youth historical education in the new era, is unfavorable for the formation of correct historical views among new era youth, and is unfavorable for the development of the Party and state's future great cause. Therefore, studying youth historical education in the new era and focusing on improving its effectiveness, providing value guidance and practical guidance to help new era youth resist the erosion of historical nihilism and establish correct historical views, has become an important topic that needs to be urgently solved in the new era context.

II. LOGICAL STRUCTURE OF YOUTH HISTORICAL EDUCATION IN THE NEW ERA

2.1 Logical Starting Point: Cultivating New Youth Capable of Undertaking the Great Task of National Rejuvenation

General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out in the 20th Party Congress report: "The whole Party must treat youth work as strategic work, arm youth with the Party's scientific theory, and inspire youth with the Party's original mission" (Editorial Team, 2022, p. 53). This indicates the extreme importance of the Party's youth work and puts forward clear requirements for new era youth to grow into new youth capable of shouldering the great task of national rejuvenation on the new journey of the new era.

The 20th Party Congress clearly stated the comprehensive advancement of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation through Chinese-style modernization. Understanding and grasping Chinese-style modernization requires, on one hand, grasping the historical process and essence of human modernization through historical study, deeply recognizing that



the modernization history of Western developed countries is a history full of violence and bloodshed, deeply recognizing that modernization \neq Westernization, and must be based on each country's historical and cultural traditions. On the other hand, it requires not only understanding human modernization history through historical study but also recognizing the historical origins, essential characteristics, and realization paths of Chinese-style modernization through historical study. Since the Self-Strengthening Movement, China has begun exploring the path to wealth and military power, which is essentially the beginning of exploring the path to modernization. The more than one hundred years of modern Chinese history from the Opium War to the founding of the People's Republic of China is a history of the Chinese people pursuing national independence and people's liberation, while also containing the historical logic of the Chinese people pursuing modernization. Since the founding of New China, the Chinese Communist Party has begun exploring a modernization path that suits China's reality.

New era youth must systematically conduct historical study and place Chinese-style modernization development within the entire modern history for overall grasp and examination to deeply understand the fundamental transformation of Chinese-style modernization on the historical destiny of the Chinese nation. Through in-depth sorting of Chinese-style modernization development concepts and realization paths, they can form a comprehensive and thorough understanding of Chinese-style modernization, recognizing that the essence of Chinese-style modernization is socialist modernization led by the Chinese Communist Party, deeply understanding that Chinese-style modernization is modernization with a huge population scale, common prosperity for all people, coordination between material and spiritual civilization, harmony between humans and nature, and following a path of peaceful development. It is our path to strong nation-building and national rejuvenation, and also China's necessary path to seek human progress and world unity. Through historical study, youth can comprehensively grasp the development laws and fundamental principles of Chinese-style modernization, seize precious opportunities, freely display their talents, and contribute youth strength to Chinese-style modernization construction.

2.2 Logical Intermediary: Mastering Marxist Positions, Viewpoints, and Methods

How to treat history is the core issue of establishing correct historical views. Correctly treating history means learning to handle historical issues with correct attitudes and scientific principles, learning to use Marxist positions, viewpoints, and methods to evaluate history. "Marxist positions, viewpoints, and methods are an internally unified organic whole, where position is the premise, viewpoint is the support, and method is the application" (Li, 2020).

2.2.1 Adhering to the People's Position

The masses are the creators of history, and the continuous forward development of human history consistently confirms the powerful subjective force of the masses. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized, "Always stand on the position of the masses, everything for the people, everything believing in the people, everything relying on the people, sincerely seeking benefits for the people" (Xi, 2010), which is a consistent yet developing thought line that has always existed in Marxist theory. Therefore, seeking benefits for the proletariat and the broadest masses is the fundamental position of Marxism, and we must adhere to evaluating history from the people's position. At any time, we cannot forget or deviate from this position, otherwise problems will arise. Historical nihilists essentially forget and deviate from the position of the masses, standing in opposition to the masses. Youth historical education in the new era must make youth clearly recognize that evaluating history must adhere to the basic standard of "people-centered", cannot issue any historical comments and historical views that tarnish the image of the masses, and must resolutely safeguard the fundamental interests of the broadest masses.

2.2.2 Adhering to Historical Materialism and Correct Party History Views

Great practice cannot be separated from the guidance of scientific worldview and methodology. In Marx's intellectual journey, historical view has always been his focus. Historical view is not just a field or component of Marx's entire doctrine but is also the core and concern of his entire doctrine. Before Marx's historical materialism appeared, there existed various historical views such as objective idealism, subjective idealism, and mechanical determinism, but all these historical views could not truly understand the significance of human practical activities, especially the fundamental role of human material life production, thus could not achieve scientific understanding of human social historical development. In human society, "the mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life" (Marx & Engels, 2009). Historical materialism's revealed law of historical development itself is the unity of objective law and subjective choice, and historical materialism is the only scientific historical view.



Adhering to historical materialism in the field of Party history requires adhering to correct Party history views. Historical lessons must be forever remembered. An important reason for the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Communist Party was that the ideological struggle was extremely intense, completely negating Soviet history and Soviet Communist Party history, negating leaders like Lenin, promoting historical nihilism, ultimately leading to serious ideological confusion and political chaos. Finally, the mighty Soviet Communist Party scattered like birds and beasts, and the mighty socialist country of the Soviet Union disintegrated. Therefore, Party history issues must be viewed from political and strategic heights.

Historical materialism and correct Party history views are the fundamental methods for Chinese Communists to understand and grasp history, and are a red line running through our Party's hundred-year struggle history. We must adhere to historical materialism and correct Party history views as the fundamental method of grasping history, help new era youth establish correct historical views, and consciously resist historical nihilism.

2.2.3 Implementing the Grand Historical View

The grand historical view takes historical materialism as its theoretical foundation and is a landmark achievement in the Sinicization and modernization of Marxist historical theory. It is also the implicit methodology for the Chinese Communist Party to conduct historical research, analysis, and interpretation. The so-called "grand" view, at a superficial level, refers to broad coverage, building historical overall coordinates in a broader space-time background, "seeing clearly from the Party's hundred-year struggle why we could succeed in the past, figuring out how we can continue to succeed in the future" (Xi, 2021a), and better adhering to and developing socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era. At a deeper level, it reveals internal laws from the essence of historical movement, providing wisdom and methodological guidance for solving practical problems through grasping historical "themes, mainlines, and main essences". "Theme" concerns flag-raising and direction-setting; the third historical resolution takes "realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation" as its theme, which is an important reference point for evaluating historical figures and events in Chinese Communist Party history. "Mainline" concerns path selection, including histories of struggle, sacrifice, theoretical exploration, self-building, and benefiting the people. "Themes and mainlines" require using dialectical thinking to grasp "main essence"; only in this way can one achieve comprehensive understanding and grasp the essentials.

2.2.4 Adhering to Comprehensive and Dialectical Views

Historical materialism applies scientific attitudes and methods throughout the analysis of human social history, emphasizing the use of comprehensive and dialectical views to evaluate historical figures, distinguishing between principal contradictions and principal aspects of contradictions, not allowing the merits or demerits of a certain stage or aspect to replace understanding of their lifetime merits, demerits, right and wrong. Historical figures are always products of specific historical conditions. "The evaluation of historical figures should be analyzed under the historical conditions of their era and society, cannot be separated from comprehensive understanding of historical conditions and processes and scientific grasp of historical laws, cannot ignore the relationship between historical necessity and historical contingency" (Xi, 2021b). Since the 18th Party Congress, General Secretary Xi Jinping has successively attended symposiums commemorating the tenth anniversaries of leaders like Mao Zedong, Sun Yat-sen, Zhou Enlai, and Liu Shaoqi, making objective and fair historical evaluations of them, providing methodological guidance for correctly evaluating historical figures.

2.3 Logical Endpoint: Strengthening Historical Consciousness and Confidence

The youth of the new era are the vanguard force in building a modern socialist strong country and realizing national rejuvenation. Whether they possess firm historical confidence relates to the future of the country and nation. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out: "On the new journey of examination, whether we can continue to deliver excellent answers depends on whether we have firm historical confidence" (Xi, 2021c). Historical confidence, as identification with the Party and national history, is not only confidence in the Communist Party's achievements and promotion of the spirit of struggle but also confidence in the future development path and bright prospects. Confidence in history determines confidence in the present and future. Firm historical confidence relates to whether we can unite the magnificent force to achieve the goals of fully building a modern socialist strong country and realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

The value logic of historical confidence is centrally embodied in it being the historical foundation for new era youth to firmly establish the "four confidences". Historical confidence is completely consistent with confidence in the path,



theory, system, and culture, all being spiritual motivation and wisdom sources for Chinese people moving toward the future, and the foundation of confidence guiding youth growth and success. The 20th Party Congress report pointed out: The broad youth must "never forget the original aspiration, keep the mission in mind, must be modest and prudent, work hard, must dare to struggle and be good at struggling, firmly establish historical confidence, enhance historical initiative" (Editorial Team, 2022, p. 2). Only by grasping historical initiative and firmly establishing historical confidence to enhance their sense of responsibility can youth forge ahead vigorously and steadfastly realize national great rejuvenation.

"Historical confidence is the historical subject's confidence and belief in the history of the nation, state, and political party" (Chen, 2022). Historical cognition is an important foundation of historical confidence. The more solid the foundation of historical cognition, the deeper the degree of historical confidence; we must establish firm historical confidence based on correct historical cognition. "History is the root of reality, and today of any country comes from yesterday. Only by understanding where a country comes from can one understand why this country is like this rather than that today, and also figure out where this country will and will not go in the future" (Xi, 2014).

III. PRACTICAL PATHS OF YOUTH HISTORICAL EDUCATION IN THE NEW ERA

While historical education is certainly important, youth historical education also has distinct contemporary significance. Diversified ideological trends and historical nihilism have brought significant impact and obstacles to youth historical education in the new era. Under the guidance of Marxist historical views, we must continuously enhance the targeting and effectiveness of youth historical education in the new era.

3.1 Consolidating the "Main Channel" of Youth Historical Education in the New Era

Ideological and political theory courses are the "main channel" for conducting ideological and political education for new era youth, and also the "main channel" for strengthening youth historical education. First, we must stimulate high consciousness of teaching subjects. Ideological and political course teachers must fully recognize that if youth do not understand Party history and do not clearly understand the path the Party has taken over the past hundred years, they cannot have profound cognition of the Party. When facing the impact of diverse and complex information, they will lack the ability to distinguish right from wrong, to guide new era youth to establish correct historical cognition. Second, we must grasp the laws of youth growth and innovate teaching methods. New era ideological and political course teachers must fully combine major changes in the contemporary youth growth environment, strengthen research on contemporary youth growth laws, grasp contemporary youth growth characteristics, adopt teaching forms and methods that conform to their characteristics, make history storied and vivid, thereby stimulating new era youth's enthusiasm and initiative in learning history.

3.2 Expanding the "Micro-channels" of Youth Historical Education in the New Era

While ideological and political theory courses are the "main channel" for conducting ideological and political education for new era youth, playing a direct and primary role, beyond the "main channel", we should also fully utilize the role of "micro-channels" such as network media, student associations, and campus culture construction. Taking network communication as an example, in today's networked world, the internet has become the main way for contemporary youth to obtain information and broaden their horizons. We should fully utilize modern youth-favored media platforms like TikTok, Weibo, and WeChat public accounts. Therefore, to strengthen youth historical education, we must also keep pace with the times, advance with the times, spread history in ways that youth love, make history electronic, and make history come alive. Fully utilize the power of network communication to convey correct historical views to youth, establishing historical responsibility and realistic crisis awareness among new era youth.

3.3 Using Social Practice as Auxiliary to Enhance New Era Youth's Historical Responsibility

Theory must combine with practice to have more vitality; practice is the most vivid classroom. In the process of the Party leading all people in arduous entrepreneurship and struggle, many precious red resources have been left behind, such as revolutionary museums, memorial halls, Party history museums, and martyrs' cemeteries, which are the Party and state's red gene banks. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out: "We must do well in youth education, focus on telling well the stories of the Party, revolution, and heroes, cultivate feelings of loving the Party, country, and socialism, let red genes and revolutionary fire be passed down from generation to generation" (Xi, 2021d). Youth historical education in the new era should use social practice as auxiliary, fully utilizing the hidden educational function of red resources. Through organizing red research activities, visiting revolutionary old areas, commemorating



major events and important figures, organizing commemorative or memorial activities, remembering revolutionary martyrs' meritorious achievements, receiving the baptism of red resources, arousing new era youth's struggle passion, and improving their sense of historical responsibility and realistic mission.

IV. CONCLUSION

The great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is absolutely not something that can be achieved easily or with beating drums and gongs. Against the new era background, we must highly value the educational guidance of youth historical views and resolutely resist historical nihilism trends. However, youth historical education in the new era faces many challenges, including youth's own reasons, insufficient educational targeting and effectiveness, and challenges brought by diverse social trends. From currently available materials, academic research results regarding youth historical education are inadequate, unable to support the historical task of cultivating new youth capable of shouldering the great cause of national rejuvenation. Therefore, in the new era background, we must carry new missions with the spirit that time waits for no one and seize the day, conduct more systematic and in-depth research on youth historical education, and provide theoretical guidance for youth historical education practice activities in the new era.

REFERENCES

1. Editorial Team. (2022). *100 Questions on Learning and Understanding the 20th CPC National Congress Report*. Beijing: Party Building Books Publishing House.
2. Chen, J. (2022). Confidence in the history of the Communist Party of China from the perspective of the third historical resolution. *Marxism and Reality*, 2022(2), 202.
3. Li, D. (1984). *Selected Works of Li Dazhao (Volume II)*. Beijing: People's Publishing House.
4. Li, H. (2020). On the Marxist stance, viewpoint, and methodology contained in Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. *Guihai Tribune*, 2020(6), 23-30.
5. Marx, K., & Engels, F. (2009). *Collected Works of Marx and Engels: Volume II*. Beijing: People's Publishing House.
6. Xi, Jinping. (2010). Deeply study the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics and strive to master the Marxist stance, viewpoint, and methodology. *Seeking Truth*, 2010(7), 17-24.
7. Xi, Jinping. (2014, April 2). Speech at the College of Europe in Bruges. *People's Daily*.
8. Xi, Jinping. (2015, July 25). Congratulatory letter to the 12th National Congress of the All-China Youth Federation and the 26th National Congress of the All-China Students Federation. *People's Daily*.
9. Xi, Jinping. (2017). Securing a decisive victory in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and striving for the great success of socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era: Report at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. Beijing: People's Publishing House.
10. Xi, Jinping. (2021). Resolution of the CPC Central Committee on the Major Achievements and Historical Experience of the Party over the Past Century. Beijing: People's Publishing House.
11. Xi, Jinping. (2021). *On the History of the Communist Party of China*. Beijing: Central Literature Publishing House.
12. Xi, Jinping. (2021, December 29). Speech at the special democratic life meeting of the CPC Central Committee. *People's Daily*.
13. Xi, Jinping. (2021). Speech at the mobilization meeting for Party history learning and education. *Seeking Truth*, 2021(7).