The Current Condition and Thoughts of Researches on the Party Culture of CPC in the Yan’an Period

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Abstract: As a brand new research area, the party culture of CPC in the Yan’an Period has increasingly aroused the concern of the academia. Chinese scholars, in particular, have learnt the inherent formation law of the party culture of CPC by making investigations on aspects including its content system, basic characteristics, major historical conferences, relations between major political movements and political culture, relations between the cultural construction of the revolutionary base and the political party, etc. Through the analysis on the research results of preceding scholars, we have found the researches on the party culture of CPC in the Yan’an Period still needs further deepening.

Introduction

The party culture is formed in the historical course of the political practice and scientific development of western political parties. When making researches on the political party and its relevant political issues, western scholars tend to focus on the cultural phenomenon of the political party. By contrast, the research of Chinese academia on the party culture originated from 1980s and through hard explorations and great efforts of scholars for decades, the party culture (especially the party culture of CPC) has developed rapidly and made periodic theoretical achievements. As a crucial period for the formation and maturity of the party culture of CPC, the Yan’an Period is a milestone in the construction history of the party culture of CPC. Therefore, the research on the party culture of CPC has become a key area concerned by the academia.

I. Researches of Foreign Academia on the Party Culture of CPC in the Yan’an Period

Currently, specific and systematic researches of foreign academia on the publications concerning the party culture of CPC are still in vacancy. However, western scholars have paid great attention to the party culture of CPC in the Yan’an Period when making researches on relevant publications about Chinese problems.

In The Cambridge History of the Republic of China (volume 2) compiled by Fei Zhengqing and Fei Weikai, they have discussed at length the communist party of China and its philosophical culture. The party cultural construction of CPC in the Yan’an Period is involved in some parts of the book. The last chapter, in particular, has elaborated the Mao Zedong Thoughts before 1949 in detail, described the life experience of Mao Zedong and the development track of Mao Zedong thoughts and finally concluded that Mao is a conservative “nationalist”. Meanwhile, the Mao Zedong thought before 1949 is the combining product of the conservative factor in “Chinese tradition” and the practical factor of “Marxism”, thus it possesses apparent colors of “unorthodox” and “heterodoxy”.

In The Rise of Maoism: Mao Zedong, Chen Boda and Their Explorations on the Theory of China, Ramond F. Wylie has made researches on the process in which Mao Zedong thoughts rises to a formal ideology and official “guiding thought” and pointed out that the party culture of CPC is “a true communist ideology with special characteristics”. Mao Zedong thoughts have attracted great attention from many youth intellectuals in the city, demonstrating apparently that CPC have been
seeking for some Chinese culture independent of that in western countries (including Soviet Union).
The reason for the party culture of CPC to take this distinct ideology as the core is that “CPC
needed to put forward a relatively clear ideology that can win the support of the public in China and
use this to fight against the blandishments in the ideologies of Chiang Kai-shek and Kuomintang.”
The development track of Mao Zedong thoughts depicted by Ramond has reflected from one side
the development history of the party culture of CPC in this period. The culture mainly consists of
the establishment and consolidation of the ideology, or as can be called, the realization of the
Sinicization of Marxism and the Sinicized Marxism.
Besides, while discussing the building of Yan’an mode in his representative work, China in
Revolution: Yan’an Road, Mark·Selden, an American scholar, has also involved many aspects of
the party cultural construction of CPC, including the party ideology, system norm, party spirit and
behavior style. For example, it is mentioned in Yan’an Road that to deal with the clouded
administrative organs in border area, the CPC Central Committee has discharged inefficient officers
and reduced administrative work, adjusted the organizational structure within the party and the
administrative department and improved the organizational system of the political party. Yan’an
Road is not a book specifically discussing the party culture of CPC and there are controversies in
some of the opinions concerning the party cultural construction in the book (including a relatively
optimistic description of “Yan’an Road”, a positive attitude towards the political and economic
systems of CPC, the ignorance of the dark side of the mass line and Yan’an rectification movement,
the oversight of problems existing in the democratic politics during the Yan’an Period). However,
according to the argument of Mark·Selden, the communism of China is no longer a pure and blind
copy of the communism in Soviet Union, because Chinese communists have opened a Yan’an road
with Chinese own characteristics by using their wisdom and courage and realized the Sinicization of
the cultural construction of the political party.

II.Researches of Domestic Academia on the Party Culture of CPC in the Yan’an Period

According to the current research condition, the researches of domestic academia on the party
culture of CPC in the Yan’an Period mainly involve the content system, basic characteristics, major
historical conferences, relations between major political movements and political culture, relations
between the cultural construction of the revolutionary base and the political party, etc.

1.Researches on the Content of the Party Cultural System of CPC in the Yan’an Period

The academia has reached an agreement on the party cultural form of CPC in the Yan’an Period,
believing that an independent ideology with Mao Zedong thoughts as the core, a party spirit with
Yan’an spirit as the symbol, a party behavioral style with “three styles” as the main body, a party
image featuring patriotism, democracy and friendliness, a party sign standardized and fixed by the
systematic party rule and a party culture system with the guidelines on appointing competent cadres
have all been formed in the Yan’an Period. The party culture in this period have been highly
integrated in the distribution of CPC and become an organic whole in terms of the structure and
content. Therefore, as can be said, the party culture of CPC in this period had been increasingly
mature and a basic form of the party culture with Chinese own characteristics was formed, though it
still failed to get rid of the building mode for the political party culture of Soviet Union.

2.Research on the Basic Characteristics of the Party Culture of CPC During the Yan’an
Period

About the analysis of the characteristics of the party culture of CPC during the Yan’an period, some
scholars, taking the anti-Japanese war period as the breakthrough point, think that during this period
the party culture of CPC not only includes the basic characteristics of the party culture, but also
expresses the characteristics which are different from other historical periods, which are embodied
in the characteristics of nationality, scientific, popularity, democracy and epochal character. Some
scholars propose that the characteristics of the party culture of CPC during this period are that first
the combination of the Marxism and China’s reality, and second is to march arduously in the
conflicts within the party. Thus it can be seen that there is an internal unity between the exploring course of the party culture construction of CPC and the progress of the Sinicization of Marxism, it is through the usage of Marxism-Leninism thought the CPC settles the China’s real problems, to realize the ideological unity within the party to advance the communist movement in China.

3. Research on CPC Important Historical Meetings, Important Political Movements and Party Culture Construction Relationship During the Yan’an Period

It’s an important breakthrough of the academia research on the the party culture of CPC during the Yan’an period in recent years, that through the import historical meetings and important political movements, to explore the system structure of the party culture of CPC during the Yan’an period. Through the systematic pectination of the important issues of the CPC sixth Plenary Session of the sixth Central Committee, some scholars find that this committee has powerfully promoted the innovative development of the the party culture of CPC from the aspects of party spirit culture, system culture and behavior culture etc. There are some other scholars point out that the rectification movement in Yan’an creates the history of the party culture construction of CPC. This rectification movement improves the party’s quality in the aspects of ideology, group psychology, behavior attitude, and system criterion, and makes the party culture of CPC be the social dominant culture of that time within the local scope. The above research inspires us that in the future research we should specially focus on the prominent role of the key historical node to the party culture construction of CPC in the Yan’an period, and dig up the internal relations between the key historical node and the party culture construction.

4. Research on the Relationship between the Revolutionary Base Areas Culture Construction and Party Culture Construction During the Yan’an Period

During the Yan’an period, revolutionary base area culture construction activities is the important social way of the party culture construction of CPC. Some scholars, from the views of intellectual history and literary history, analyze some problems like the spread of the revolutionary base area literary propaganda to the CPC party ideology in this period, and the relations between culture construction measures and the party culture construction of CPC, etc. These researches think that by using literary propaganda as the ideological weapons, CPC fight against Japanese imperialist invaders, Kuomintang reactionaries, and Wang regime, praise the good image of CPC. Some scholars summarize the culture construction of Yan’an into a few characteristics of politicization, popularity, and heroism etc. think that through the transmitting the political information, spreading political culture, influencing the public political acknowledge and inspiring the warmth of the army and the people participation in the politic in the resistance base, to make the mass communication of the party culture of CPC. Through the various modes of literary propaganda, and literary activities, etc., CPC carries forward and spreads the party culture kernel of its own ideology, political conviction, and concepts of value etc. the party culture of CPC has made the linkage reactions in the people of the border regions, and its political thought, behavior attitude, standard of behavior has gotten the extensive identification of the people in the border regions, and with the expansion of the CPC sphere of influence, party culture has gotten the approval of more people in the Kuomintang-ruled areas.

III. Some Thoughts of the Deepening of the Research on the Party Culture of CPC in the Yan’an Period

The researches of the party culture of CPC in Yan’an period of the academia mainly focus on the basic research level of the party culture, and have made some achievements in the field, which lay the necessary academic foundation of research of the party culture construction of CPC in Yan’an period on the whole. But there are some insufficiency of the above research, such as the research content is not thorough enough, research perspective is narrow, the research methods are single, etc. Therefore, we must strengthen the intensity, profundity and extent of the party culture of CPC in the Yan’an period.
1. Deepen the research contents, structure the party culture of CPC theoretical system in Yan’an period. The existing research of the party culture of CPC in Yan’an period mainly rests on the basic research level, limited by the problems of CPC party culture’s concept, features, and system construction etc., fail to expend the research to the levels of the development power, political logic and practice strategy of the formation of the party culture of CPC. In the future, the research should grasp these weak links, key breakthrough, further expand the research field of the CPC party culture, structure and perfect the party culture of CPC theological system in the Yan’an period.

2. Expand research perspectives, innovate research methods. The past researches are mainly from the literary disciplinary view, penetrating the party culture phenomenon of CPC during the Yan’an period, lacking the comprehensive and multi-dimension consideration of the party culture phenomenon of CPC in this period, while the features of the research contents like complexity and diachrony determine that the research fields need to be expend, and the research methods need to be diversified. It’s necessary to insisting on the guidance of Marxism, and combine the theory and knowledge of the relevant subjects of politics, culturology, and sociology, etc. comprehensively use the literature research method, research method of unity of history and logic, method of comparative research, and multidisciplinary crossover method, etc., to enrich the research methods of the the party culture of CPC in the Yan’an period.

Summary

As a brand new research area, the party culture of CPC in the Yan’an Period has increasingly aroused the concern of the academia. Western scholars have paid great attention to the party culture of CPC in the Yan’an Period when making researches on relevant publications about Chinese problems. The researches of domestic academia on the party culture of CPC in the Yan’an Period mainly involve the content system, basic characteristics, major historical conferences, etc. But there are some insufficiency of the above research, and we must strengthen the intensity, profundity and extent of the party culture of CPC in the Yan’an period.

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