

# Brief Discussion of the Ideological and Political Education Function of Literary Works

Miaomiao Hu  
Hubei Business College  
Wuhan, China

**Abstract**—Chinese traditional culture has a long history, and literature is an important manifestation of the traditional culture. In the thousands of years of development course of China, literature has influenced generations of Chinese students based on its extensive knowledge and profound thoughts. Literary works containing many educational resources and functions have important reference and promotion effects on ideological and political education resources. Excellent literary works can have a positive impact on the ideological education of college students. This paper makes a discussion and analysis on literary works from many aspects such as its subtle influence on ideological and political education, its ability to play the ideological and political education function through different carriers of the education activities, and its ability to put into life the content and objective of this education.

**Keywords**—*ideological and political education; literary works; college students; strategy*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In this new era, ideological and political education is an important part of education. At the National Conference on Ideological and Political Work in Colleges and Universities held in 2016, General Secretary Xi Jinping proposed to carry out ideological and political education throughout the entire process of college education. Properly, literary works containing rich and colorful educational resources are important materials for enriching people's spiritual world; and they can give full play to their powerful ideological and political education functions. Especially, with the increasing ideological problems appeared on college students, ideological and political education becomes an important course for guiding students to form a correct outlook of life and values. Those thoughts and cultures can affect students in a subtle way and help them establish correct views of the world, life and values, and correct value judgment criteria.

## II. LITERARY WORKS AFFECT IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION IN AN IMPERCEPTIBLE WAY

### A. *Excellent Traditional Literary Works Can Have a Positive Impact on the Ideological Education of College Students*

The fundamental goal of ideological and political education is to promote individual's free and all-round

development and serve the development of a civilized society; the specific goal is to promote people's healthy growth and scientific development from the aspects of knowledge, emotional ethics and ability. As an infectious art, literary work can enrich and refine those fundamental goal and specific goals of ideological and political education. Reading literary works can help college students to accurately understand the relationship between individuals and the collective, so that they can have stronger resistance to the temptation from the outside world and better identify various potential traps. This view had been explained in many excellent works in ancient China, this issue was elaborated. For example, in the Confucian classics "The Analects of Confucius · Liren", Confucius treated the seeking for righteousness and interest as the criterion for judging gentleman and villain. This point is to test a person's morality. Confucius believed that a gentleman would pay more attention to righteousness, while a villain would focus on interest. In terms of college students, many of them currently lack the concept of "gentlemen" in the process of growing up, and attach more importance to the interests of individuals. For instance, some of them are not willing to undertake more work and tasks at the beginning of their work, and are overly ambitious; hence, they are easier to suffer losses in the society.

### B. *Positive Thoughts in Literature Education Can Help College Students Cultivating Tenacious Qualities and Will*

Most of the current college students are from only-child family, enjoy the love from the whole family and become the "little prince" and "little princess" at home. They are the center of the family. They have been accustomed to the feeling of being concerned by everyone, as well as constant requests to and unconditional assistance from parents while forgetting to give equal love and respect. When communicating with people, they often show egoistic feature, which may make them lose a lot. They may gradually lose the ability to think and solve problems independently; with this feature, they will suffer a lot after entering the society, and need to make up for the previous mistakes through countless failures. In the literary works, there are many glorious images that can help college students to recognize and form tenacious will, such as the spirit of hard work reflected in the story of "凿壁偷光 (meaning: boring a hole on the wall to make use of the neighbor's light to study)", the

spirit of self-discipline by constant reflection, summing up every case, absorbing experience from success and drawing lessons from failure as reflected in the saying of "吾日三省吾身(meaning: I will reflect on myself three times a day)", the self-improvement spirit as shown in the painting of "卧薪尝胆(meaning: enduring present hardships to revive)", as well as the firm and inflexible nature and the noble quality of preserving one's moral integrity from mixing with evil forces as reflected in the famous poem sentence "粉身碎骨浑不怕, 要留清白在人间(meaning: I'm not afraid of laying down my life for justice)".

### *C. Positive Thoughts in Literary Works Can Help College Students to Establish Correct View of Values*

With the rapid development of the society in modern times, people's material life is getting richer and richer, but their spiritual world is more and more barren. In the world full of materialistic desires, there are more and more events indicating the loss of morality such as murdering, blackmailing and even driving old parents away from home; people become servants of money and powers. Thereby, establishing correct view of values becomes a crucial course; whereas, the spirits of morality can be found in Chinese traditional literature. For example, in the literary works, there are many moral images such as Tao Yuanming who won't bow to the superior in order to get the scanty pay, Dayu who was too busy with flood control to go home even when he passed by his home for three times, the dutiful son Wang Xiang who fished on ice for his stepmother, and someone who prefer to give up high-salary official position to be a farmer; they are either willing to make contribution to people, or indifferent to fame and wealth, or brave; all of their deeds can provide students with spiritual nourishment in an irresistible force, guide students to form correct view of values, improve their ideological and moral levels, stimulate their love for the country and establish ideals and beliefs.

## III. THE IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION FUNCTION OF LITERARY WORKS CAN BE PLAYED THROUGH DIFFERENT CARRIERS OF THE EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

### *A. As a Special Educational Resource with Long History, Literary Work Can Influence Ideological and Political Education in Different Forms in a Subtle Way*

Ideological and political education activities can be carried out through different carriers such as network, classroom, school-enterprise cooperation, community, and campus culture. Among them, novel teaches people in form of literary narration; poetry teaches people by using refined and beautiful diction; prose educates people in narration and comment combined way; drama infects people in forms of sorrow, joy, separation and union. Every coin has two sides. There are a thousand Hamlets in a thousand people's eyes. For example, the story of "塞翁失马 (Blessing in disguise)" tells people that there is big difference between seeming ending and actual ending of many things; so it is necessary to hold a dialectical attitude when recognizing a thing. For another example, in the work of "Cinderella", Cinderella learns to be strong and achieve her dream in a very difficult

environment, which is a good educational example for those who have the same experience. When reading literary works, it is needed to try to strengthen the exploration of various positive attitudes, and draw more life philosophies from those positive attitudes, and live on the basis of those life philosophies.

### *B. Literary Works Can Make Ideological and Political Education More Attractive and Infectious*

The healthy development of ideological and political education in colleges and universities needs to advance with the times from the aspects of adapting to social development and students' development. From the perspective of social development, the popularity of the Internet and the wide application of new media have diversified the carriers of ideological and political education. The characteristics of literary works can enhance the attractive and infectious natures of ideological and political education. From the perspective of students' development, college students are not only curious about new things but also more willing to accept new things in a complex social environment. This requires adopting a way of content and method combined ideological and political education to enhance the attractive and infectious natures of the education.

## IV. LITERARY WORKS CAN PUT INTO LIFE THE CONTENT AND OBJECTIVE OF IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION

### *A. Ideological and Political Education Has Rich and Colorful Contents*

The contents include the Chinese revolution and the history of the Communist Party of China, as well as the theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics, the basic principles of Marxism, ideological and moral cultivation and legal basis, and the situation and policies. In ideological and political education course, those contents focus on interpreting from the perspective of politics and ideology, which seems to be insufficiently close to people's life. With contents close to people's life, thought and society, literary works can be used to get various contents of the ideological and political education expressed in more popular-style and more lifestyle discourses to enhance the attraction of ideological and political education.

### *B. Literary Works Can Make a Fine Division on the Individual Goals and Social Goals of Ideological and Political Education*

The individual goals, such as the political quality, ideological quality, moral quality, psychological quality and other promotion goals, are all visualized and expressed in literary works; the social goals, such as serving the economic, cultural, political, ecological and other construction of the society, are also reflected in the thematic expressions of different literary works to some extent. Therefore, literary works can detail and visualize the various goals of ideological and political education. From the level of knowledge, literary works can get the knowledge goals of ideological and political education further divided into

historical knowledge, literary knowledge, moral and ethical knowledge, legal knowledge, religious knowledge, geographical knowledge, political knowledge, and other aspects of knowledge goals; from the level of psychology and emotion, literary works can get the emotional goals of ideological and political education divided into sub-goals of various emotions, such as communicational emotion, professional emotion and psychology, learning emotion and psychology, online emotion and psychology, and national identity emotion and psychology, as well as psychological goals in many aspects such as road confidence, theoretical confidence, institutional confidence and cultural confidence; from the perspective of ability cultivation, literary works can get the ideological and political education divided into the thinking and analyzing ability, verbal expression and fluent interpretation ability, job-seeking skills, writing ability, and communication ability and so on.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Whereas, the ideological and political teachers in colleges and universities should make full use of the resources and functions of various excellent literary works, and drive the ideological and political education to make reform and innovation in popularization, art and lifestyle on the basis of the content, goal and form of the education, so as to constantly enhance the attractiveness and influence of ideological and political education.

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