

The historical experience and contemporary enlightenment of cadres' anti-corruption education in Yan'an period

Yize Dong ¹, Yang Luo ^{2,*}

¹Faculty of Education Sichuan Normal University, Chengdu 610066, China;

² Organization Department of Party Committee Sichuan Normal University, Chengdu 610066, China.

Corresponding Author: Yang Luo

Abstract

The Yan'an period was an important stage in which the anti-corruption education system of the Communist Party of China was initially formed and achieved remarkable results. In an extremely difficult natural and political environment, the Party attached great importance to the ideological construction of cadres, institutional norms and work style rectification, and gradually formed a clean government education model that is systematic and adaptable to the times. This paper takes the cadre clean government education during the Yan'an period as the research object, systematically combs its historical background, implementation path and practical results, and combines it with the background of comprehensive and strict governance of the party in the new era to deeply explore its practical enlightenment in terms of ideological party building, system construction, work style formation, supervision mechanism and cadre management. The study shows that the core experience of Yan'an clean government education not only played a decisive role in the purity of the party style and political style at that time, but also provided valuable ideological resources and institutional references for the current anti-corruption and promotion of national governance modernization.

Keywords

Yan'an Period; Cadre Clean Government Education.

1. Introduction

The Yan'an period was an important exploration stage for the construction of the party style and clean government of the Communist Party of China^[1]. In the complex revolutionary environment, the party always insisted on strengthening the construction of the cadre team through clean government education, and promoted the continuous consolidation of the party's political character and mass base. Faced with harsh natural conditions, difficult economic environment and severe tests from hostile forces, the clean government education during the Yan'an period not only focused on ideological guidance and style rectification, but also accumulated valuable experience in system construction, supervision mechanism, and mass participation. Through a series of educational practices, the party has forged a cadre team with firm beliefs, good style, and honest and self-discipline, laying a solid foundation for the victory of the Chinese revolution and the subsequent construction of the party style and clean government. This paper takes the clean government education of cadres during the Yan'an period as the research object, sorts out its historical background, main measures, and practical results, and combines it with the contemporary background of party governance to explore its practical enlightenment and reference value.

2. Historical Background of Integrity Education in the Yan'an Period

The Yan'an period was an important historical stage for the Communist Party of China to strengthen organizational construction, standardize cadre behavior, and carry out integrity education. During this period, the party faced multiple pressures from complex domestic and international situations, especially the war environment, financial constraints, and the increasingly prominent contradictions between mass needs and organizational development^[1]. It is in this context that integrity education has been placed in an extremely important position and has become an important means to improve the quality of cadres, consolidate the relationship between the party and the masses, and maintain the purity of the party organization. The key factors that contributed to the formation of this integrity education system are mainly reflected in the following aspects:

2.1. Harsh natural environment and difficult economic conditions

Yan'an is located in the Loess Plateau, with barren land, dry climate, and scarce water resources. Agricultural production is extremely difficult, grain production is low, and the problem of food and clothing for the people has not been solved for a long time^[2]. Traffic is blocked, information is not smooth, and resource allocation and military supply guarantee face severe challenges. In the early days of the War of Resistance Against Japan, it could still rely on some Kuomintang-controlled areas and international aid. However, as the relationship between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party deteriorated and the Japanese blockade intensified, Yan'an and surrounding areas were almost completely dependent on self-sufficiency, and the finances were stretched. Cadres insist on working and living in an environment of poverty and material shortages. They not only need to resist physiological difficulties, but also face the risks of corruption caused by uneven resources and conflicts of responsibilities. Therefore, the adverse environment forces the party to strengthen discipline construction and clean government education, strengthen the ideological and political defense line, and enable the majority of cadres to maintain their integrity in hardship^[2].

2.2. The sources of cadres are diverse and their quality is uneven

The revolutionary war developed rapidly, the party organization continued to expand, the number of party members increased rapidly, and the composition of cadres changed significantly. In addition to the backbone of workers and peasants, more and more urban intellectuals, local gentry, exiled students, and even those who left the old bureaucratic system joined the party organization. On the one hand, this enriched the party's mass base and intellectual resources, and on the other hand, it also led to the intensification of differences in ideological concepts within the party. Some new party cadres have a tendency to speculate, lack political determination, and do not have a deep understanding of the party's ideals and purposes, and even bring in the original hierarchical concepts, self-interest thinking, and bureaucratic habits. In addition, because most cadres have limited cultural level and cannot deeply grasp the party's theories and policies, they often deviate from their original intentions in implementation. Faced with the reality of complex organizational team structure and uneven quality, it is imperative to carry out universal and in-depth anti-corruption education, which is not only the starting point of the party's internal rectification, but also the foundation of organizational discipline unification.

2.3. The emergence of style problems and the need to consolidate the mass base

Although the overall style of the party, government and military organs in the Yan'an period was simple, with the concentration of power and the expansion of functions, some party members and cadres appeared to be out of touch with the masses, favor relatives and friends,

and abuse their power for personal gain. Against the background of frequent interpersonal and economic exchanges, the expectations of the masses for cadres are also increasing. Any privileged behavior, formalism or extravagant life may cause strong dissatisfaction and weaken the emotional bond between the party and the masses. Especially in the case of extreme scarcity of materials, some cadres take advantage of their positions to obtain living resources first and influence policy allocation, causing public resentment and even shaking people's hearts. In order to prevent the abuse of power and the degeneration of style, the party put forward slogans such as "strict party governance", "clean and honest", and "close contact with the masses" to promote the full launch of the rectification movement. Anti-corruption education has not only become a weapon for governing stubborn style problems, but also an important support for rallying the masses and reshaping the image^[3].

3. Severe external struggles, political ecology faces challenges

As the seat of the CPC Central Committee, Yan'an has long faced the triple suppression of the Kuomintang's military siege, economic blockade and political smear. At the same time, the Japanese invasion forces continued to carry out sweeps in the border areas, seriously threatening political security and social stability. Under this heavy pressure, Yan'an is not only a base, but also a "model area" for the Chinese Communist Party's governance capabilities and governance concepts. In order to establish legitimacy and moral commanding heights in external games, it is necessary to demonstrate the purity of party spirit and administrative efficiency through self-construction. Especially in the context of bureaucratic corruption and people's livelihood in the Kuomintang-controlled areas, the image of clean government in the border areas has become a key resource for rallying people's hearts and expanding political influence^[3]. In order to cope with the infiltration and differentiation of hostile forces, the party must build a strong defense line in the organization, enforce strict discipline on cadres, and shape its image among the masses. Therefore, clean government education is not only a need for internal governance, but also a strategic means of external struggle.

4. Implementation Path of Clean Government Education in Yan'an Period

During the Yan'an period, the Communist Party of China faced the grim reality of national crisis, financial constraints in border areas, and uneven quality of cadres. In order to fundamentally solve the problems of ideological decline, behavioral deviance, and unrealistic work style among the cadre team, it explored a clean government education path with Chinese characteristics and in line with the actual war environment^[4]. Clean government education in the Yan'an period is not only reflected in the normalization of ideological and political education, but also covers multiple dimensions such as institutional constraints, mass supervision, and punishment of corruption, forming a systematic and efficient education model.

4.1. Strengthen ideological guidance and build a political defense line of integrity and self-discipline

During the Yan'an period, the party attached great importance to the ideological and political construction of cadres and always insisted on arming their minds with Marxist-Leninist theory. Mao Zedong and other leaders repeatedly emphasized that "strengthening theoretical study" is the fundamental strategy to prevent cadres from corruption and degeneration. The party has guided the majority of party members and cadres to deeply study classic theories such as "The Communist Manifesto", "History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)", "On Practice", and "On Contradiction" through the establishment of party schools and the holding of rectification study classes, and deepened their understanding of the essence of proletarian clean politics. Theoretical study not only strengthens the cadres' ideals and beliefs, but also

strengthens their sense of discipline and purpose, helping them to keep a clear mind and bottom line when facing the temptation of power and conflicts of interest^[3].

At the same time, during the Yan'an period, "self-criticism and mutual criticism" education was widely carried out. Cadres were required to write ideological reports regularly, accept mass supervision, and publicly report their duties and integrity at party meetings. This institutionalized ideological rectification mechanism strengthens the cadres' sense of self-discipline, effectively curbs the breeding of privileged ideas, and lays the ideological foundation for clean government education.

4.2. Promote the rectification movement and comprehensively clean up work style and ideological impurities

The rectification movement is a concentrated embodiment of clean government education during the Yan'an period. Its core goal is to "punish the past and prevent the future, cure the disease and save people", aiming to rectify the cadres' work style and purify the party organization through education and organizational means. Since 1942, the Party Central Committee has carried out the Yan'an Rectification Movement throughout the party, focusing on cleaning up the three styles within the party: subjectivism, sectarianism and party stereotypes^[4].

This movement adopts the four-step method of "learning theory - checking thoughts - doing self-criticism - building systems", requiring party members to conduct in-depth analysis from the perspectives of world outlook, outlook on life, and values, and write autobiographies, analyze their own growth experiences and ideological changes, and clean up ideological impurities through a combination of mutual evaluation by the masses and organizational talks. The rectification movement deeply touched the souls of party members and cadres, not only purifying the political ecology, but also enhancing organizational cohesion and disciplinary constraints, becoming a landmark practice in the history of party style and clean government construction.

4.3. Establish institutional regulations and form a rigid constraint system

Institutional construction is the guarantee for the normalization and sustainability of clean government education. During the Yan'an period, the border government formulated a series of disciplinary systems and administrative norms based on the actual wartime environment^[5]. For example, the "Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region Policy Program", "Government Personnel Convention", "Provisional Regulations on Financial and Economic Systems" and other systems have specifically defined and clearly constrained the behavior of cadres, covering financial disclosure, clear separation of public and private, office funding review, and prohibition of specialization.

In addition, the cadre management system is constantly standardized, such as the establishment of a cadre registration system, a resume review system and a promotion assessment mechanism, which clearly selects and appoints cadres based on moral and talent standards to prevent nepotism and official seeking. Through the implementation and supervision of rigid systems, the boundaries of cadre behavior are clarified and the awareness of integrity is continuously enhanced.

4.4. Strengthen mass supervision and build an external evaluation mechanism

During the Yan'an period, the Party attached great importance to the main role of the masses in the construction of clean government, encouraged the masses to supervise, report and comment on the behavior of cadres, and promoted the realization of a benign interaction of "the masses supervise cadres and cadres serve the masses". On the one hand, through the establishment of suggestion boxes, reporting systems, and regular mass forums, the channels for mass supervision are unblocked. On the other hand, newspaper and public opinion

supervision is encouraged, such as the "Liberation Daily" and "Masses" magazines, which regularly publish typical deeds or expose unhealthy practices, to create a clean and upright political atmosphere.

The integrity of cadres has become an important criterion for whether they can gain the support of the masses, and the evaluation of the masses directly affects the promotion and job adjustment of cadres. This supervision method with the masses as a mirror not only enhances the sense of responsibility and urgency of party members and cadres, but also enables clean government education to truly advance from the organization to the society, improving the overall effectiveness of clean government construction.

4.5. Severely punish violations of discipline and build a mechanism combining education and punishment

During the Yan'an period, the party always adhered to the principle of "everyone is equal before discipline" and adopted a zero-tolerance attitude towards violations of discipline. Organizations at all levels strengthened disciplinary review, dealt with corrupt elements in a timely manner, publicly reported, and held them accountable. For example, once cadres who embezzled materials, intercepted donations, and embezzled finances were verified, they would be dismissed and investigated at the lightest, and transferred to trial and execution at the most serious^[4].

By investigating and handling typical cases, the party, on the one hand, maintained the authority of discipline and deterred potential violators of discipline. On the other hand, it carried out clean government education by "explaining discipline through cases", so that the majority of cadres were alerted by negative examples, forming a dual effect of institutional deterrence and psychological alertness, and promoting self-purification, self-discipline, and self-innovation of party members and cadres.

5. Historical Achievements of Clean Government Education in the Yan'an Period

During the Yan'an period, through the all-round, multi-level and institutionalized clean government education for party members and cadres, remarkable and far-reaching historical achievements were achieved. These achievements are reflected in multiple aspects such as party style and political style, social customs, organizational ecology, and cadre style. They not only effectively curbed the breeding of corruption, but also won the broad support of the people for the Communist Party of China, and forged a good pattern of party-mass unity and cadre-mass unity. The practical results of Yan'an clean government education prove that its educational philosophy and governance methods are highly systematic, effective and sustainable.

5.1. The party style is increasingly pure, and cadres are honest and self-disciplined

During the Yan'an period, through the combination of rectification movement, ideological education and institutional norms, the party style has undergone a fundamental change. Cadres generally established the purpose of serving the people wholeheartedly and abandoned bureaucracy, privileged thinking and formalism. Most party members and cadres are able to consciously be honest in politics and be upright, and strictly abide by discipline and do not seek personal gain in an environment of extreme material scarcity. The mainstream value concept of "self-denial, hard work, honesty and dedication" has gradually formed within the party, becoming an important cornerstone for shaping the image of clean cadres.

The party's strict punishment of those who violate discipline also plays a significant warning and normative role, curbing the signs of corruption at the source. A large number of outstanding models emerged during the rectification, such as Zhang Side and Wu Manyou, who inspired party members and cadres with the spirit of selfless dedication, forming a virtuous cycle in which everyone strives to be a model of integrity.

5.2. The political ecology is clean and upright, and the overall social atmosphere has improved

With the continuous advancement of clean government education, the Yan'an Border Region has formed a good political ecology with strict discipline, simple folk customs and clear politics. Mao Zedong highly praised the political advantages of the "ten no" in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region, and clearly pointed out that there are "no corrupt officials, no drug addiction and gambling, no bandits and bullies" here, fully affirming the important role of clean government construction in creating a good social environment^[4].

The masses in the border region widely participate in anti-corruption and clean government activities, and the words and deeds of government officials are subject to social supervision, promoting the operation of public power to be more open, transparent and standardized. This kind of clean and upright political culture not only enhances the government's credibility, but also promotes the promotion of social integrity, and greatly enhances the people's sense of identity and satisfaction with the Party.

5.3. The cadres' style is pragmatic and enterprising, and the mass base is more solid

Integrity education has strengthened the concept and action path of cadres to go deep into the masses, serve the masses, and rely on the masses. During the Yan'an period, a large number of cadres went deep into the countryside, factories, and the front line to participate in production labor, eat, live, and work with the masses, and truly understand the sufferings of the masses and solve the problems of the masses, which greatly improved the effectiveness of work and the reputation of the masses.

The Yan'an Great Production Movement was not only a practical measure to deal with the shortage of materials, but also a practical platform for tempering the style of cadres. In the process of fighting side by side with the masses, the cadres' style became more pragmatic and their attitude became more humble. The cadres and the masses formed a close relationship of sharing destiny and weal and woe, and the party's mass base was unprecedentedly consolidated.

5.4. The organization is pure and efficient, and the cadre selection mechanism is constantly optimized

During the Yan'an period, relying on integrity education, a relatively standardized cadre management and selection system was established. The appointment and removal of cadres is not only based on work performance, but also pays more attention to the reputation of the masses, moral character and integrity. Through democratic evaluation, organizational inspection, mass feedback and other mechanisms, a benign mechanism of promoting the capable, demoting the mediocre and eliminating the inferior has been formed within the party, which has greatly improved the efficiency of organizational operation and the scientific nature of personnel decision-making.

In terms of cadre management, during the Yan'an period, the system of cadre registration, regular assessment, and performance review was strictly implemented, which effectively prevented the spread of bad practices such as nepotism, factionalism, and nepotism, and injected the principle of fairness, justice, and openness into the party's organizational ecology.

5.5. The initial formation of institutional construction, and the culture of integrity has been deeply rooted in the hearts of the people

During the Yan'an period, an institutional framework covering all aspects of cadre behavior was gradually established, and specific rules and regulations were formed in financial discipline, material management, and official reception. These systems are not only rigid constraints on the behavior of party members and cadres, but also strengthen the concept of institutional governance of the party and rule of law.

The culture of integrity has gradually been integrated into the political life within the party and the public consciousness of society. Through typical propaganda, literary and artistic works creation, mass education activities and other forms, the value orientation of being honest and being shameful is deeply rooted in the hearts of the people. The awareness of clean government has shifted from organizational indoctrination to cadres' awareness, and from passive compliance to active advocacy, providing cultural nourishment and value foundation for the subsequent discipline and style construction of the Communist Party of China.

5.6. Win social praise and establish a good image of the party

During the Yan'an period, the Communist Party of China was highly recognized by people at home and abroad for its image of clean and self-discipline and pragmatic service to the people. After visiting Yan'an, many democratic parties and patriots expressed their appreciation for its clear politics, clean cadres and pragmatic policies. After visiting, Chen Jiageng exclaimed that "hope is in Yan'an", reflecting the positive role of Yan'an's clean government construction in the construction of the united front and political attraction.

At the same time, through the writings of foreign journalists such as Snow and Smedley, Yan'an showed the outside world the clean image of the Communist Party of China, which is different from the Kuomintang. This international reputation laid the foundation for the party to win the support of world public opinion, and also added legitimacy and moral capital for it to become the dominant force in China's future politics.

6. Contemporary enlightenment of the clean government experience in the Yan'an period

The clean government education in the Yan'an period is not only a strategic measure for the Communist Party of China to deal with the wartime dilemma, stabilize the cadre team, and strengthen the relationship between the party and the masses, but also provides a valuable historical mirror for strengthening the party's style and clean government construction and anti-corruption struggle in the new era. Faced with the new situation of comprehensively and strictly governing the party in the new era, the core experience of the clean government education in the Yan'an period still has practical significance and practical value. By summarizing and transforming the experience in ideological education, system construction, supervision mechanism, cadre management, etc., it will help deepen the modernization process of party governance and promote the continuous development of clean politics in the new era.

6.1. Adhere to ideological party building and build a solid foundation for ideals and beliefs

The primary experience of the clean government education in the Yan'an period is to attach great importance to the ideological and political education of party members and cadres. Ideals and beliefs are the spiritual "calcium" of the Communists. Yan'an has effectively enhanced the party spirit and discipline awareness of party members by strengthening theoretical learning, promoting the rectification movement, advocating self-criticism and mass supervision.

Entering the new era, facing the impact of multiple values and the test of realistic temptations, we must always insist on arming our minds with Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, strengthen party spirit education and education on ideals and beliefs, and guide party members and cadres to firmly believe in Marxism, socialism with Chinese characteristics, and the Chinese dream of realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. We must innovate the form of education, comprehensively use red cultural resources, advanced typical deeds, new media carriers and other methods to make clean government education more appealing and contemporary, and enhance the effectiveness and penetration of education.

6.2. Improve system construction and build a long-term mechanism for clean government

During the Yan'an period, we focused on preventing the abuse of power through institutional norms, such as financial discipline, official system, and cadre code of conduct, and built a relatively complete clean government system framework. The key to promoting the modernization of the national governance system and governance capacity in the new era lies in institutional construction and institutional execution.

We should strengthen the systematic integration and dynamic updating of the clean government system, and build a full-coverage, closed-loop system covering the entire process of power operation. We should improve the system of party regulations, strengthen the authority and execution of the system, and form a full-chain system guarantee from source prevention, process supervision to result accountability. At the same time, we should strengthen the connection between system supply and system implementation, so that "the system can stand firm, workable and really work".

6.3. Carry forward the fine style and cultivate the soil of clean culture

During the Yan'an period, through the mass production movement and the way of working with the masses, we cultivated the fine style of hard work, seeking truth from facts and close contact with the masses, which became the deep foundation of clean government education. In the new era, anti-corruption and integrity should not only rely on institutional constraints, but also cultural nourishment and value guidance.

We should adhere to the party spirit as the soul, the people as the basis, and the hard work as the honor, and guide cadres to consciously practice the party's purpose consciousness and adhere to the bottom line of integrity. We should strengthen the construction of clean culture, integrate it into the party's life, education and training, community construction, media communication and other fields, and promote the transformation of clean consciousness into social consensus and conscious behavior. We should use red education resources, historical model figures, clean government film and television literature and other carriers to promote the mainstream values of integrity and honesty, and guide the majority of cadres to know fear, keep the bottom line and attach importance to integrity.

6.4. Deepen the supervision system and improve the power restriction mechanism

During the Yan'an period, the interactive combination of mass supervision and organizational supervision was emphasized, and effective mechanisms such as democratic evaluation, public performance reporting, and mass reporting were created, which effectively curbed the loss of control of power and the spread of corruption. In the new era, the comprehensive and strict governance of the party is advancing in depth, and more attention must be paid to the all-round construction of the supervision system.

It is necessary to coordinate the use of various forms such as intra-party supervision, national supervision, audit supervision, social supervision, and public opinion supervision to build a

supervision network with clear rights and responsibilities and interlocking links. Promote the extension of supervision to the grassroots level, open up the "last mile", make mass supervision more powerful, and organizational supervision more precise. Adhere to supervision to promote implementation, supervision to promote standardization, and improve the execution of the system and governance efficiency.

6.5. Combine strict management with love and improve the mechanism for selecting, cultivating and using cadres

During the Yan'an period, cadre management emphasized both moral integrity and ability, focused on performance, and had a clear orientation for mass evaluation, which established a good atmosphere for selecting and using people within the party. The construction of the cadre team in the new era faces new tasks, and we should inherit the Yan'an experience and strengthen cultivation from the source and full-cycle management.

We must highlight political standards, strictly control the political aspects of selecting and employing people, adhere to the standards of good cadres in the new era, and focus on discovering cadres at the grassroots level and in major struggles. We must establish and improve the cadre supervision and management mechanism, and promote the normalization of daily supervision, regular assessments, and heart-to-heart talks. We must improve the cadre incentive and restraint mechanism, strictly govern the Party and strictly manage cadres, and also show warmth in terms of organizational care, career development, and psychological adjustment, so as to promote the formation of an atmosphere of daring to act, daring to manage, and daring to be strict.

7. Conclusion

The anti-corruption education during the Yan'an period was a successful experience explored in an extremely difficult political, economic and social environment. It not only reflects the political wisdom of the Communist Party of China in the construction of the cadre team, but also shows the party's high degree of self-consciousness in terms of work style and discipline. Through scientific institutional arrangements and comprehensive ideological guidance, the party effectively prevented the corruption and degeneration of the cadre team and ensured the steady progress of the revolutionary cause. At present, under the new situation of deepening the comprehensive and strict governance of the party, the anti-corruption education experience during the Yan'an period still has important practical significance. We should deeply understand and inherit its institutional advantages and ideological core, further strengthen the construction of anti-corruption systems, optimize supervision mechanisms, innovate education methods, and continue to promote the in-depth development of anti-corruption construction, so as to provide a strong guarantee for the party's self-purification, self-improvement, self-innovation and self-improvement.

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