

Original Paper

Commonality between Red Boat Spirit and Zhejiang Spirit

Qiu Chenxi^{1*}

¹ Jiaying University, Jiaying City, Zhejiang Province 314000, China

Received: September 26, 2019 Accepted: September 30, 2019 Online Published: October 11, 2019

doi:10.22158/jecs.v3n4p373

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/jecs.v3n4p373>

Abstract

The Red Boat spirit is the concentrated embodiment of the party building spirit of the CCP (Note 1), and the Zhejiang spirit is the common value understanding and spiritual pursuit of the Zhejiang people. The forming processes of the Red Boat spirit and Zhejiang spirit have shown the profound historical and cultural origins, have relatively obvious connotative commonalities, and are also given a new meaning and value in the present era. This paper will combine the historical backgrounds of the Red Boat spirit and Zhejiang spirit, analyze their theoretical connotations and explain their value of times, so as to illustrate the commonalities of the two spirits and hope that it will help to carry out a more in-depth and systematic study of the spirit of the Red Boat and the spirit of Zhejiang.

Keywords

Red Boat spirit, Zhejiang spirit, Commonality, "Eight Advantages - Eight Strategic Measures"

1. Introduction

Individuals with spiritual temperament can win the respect of others, and a nation can only be greater if it has national spirit. The Red Boat spirit that indicates the initial heart and mission of the CCP is the concentrated embodiment of the party building spirit of the CCP. The Zhejiang spirit is the common value understanding and spiritual pursuit of the Zhejiang people. The forming processes of the two have shown the profound historical and cultural origins, have relatively obvious connotative commonalities and shine a dazzling light in China in the new era. Studying the commonalities of the two spirits is conducive to clarifying the inner relationship between the two spirits and inheriting and carrying forward the values of the two spirits in the new era.

2. The Historical and Cultural Origins of the Red Boat Spirit and the Zhejiang Spirit

No spirit is born out of nothing. From the historical and cultural origins, the Red Boat spirit is the combination and sublimation of scientific socialism and traditional Chinese culture. The Zhejiang spirit is the imprint of ideology, values and codes of conduct with distinct regional characteristics

accumulated in the history of civilization. The forming processes of the two have shown the profound historical and cultural origins.

2.1 The Regional Overlap of the Forming Process of Two Spirits

Zhejiang is where the red boat of the Chinese revolution set sail. On August 3, 1921, the first National Congress of the CCP was transferred from Shanghai to a cruise ship on South Lake in Jiaxing, Zhejiang province. The congress passed the party's first guiding principle and resolution, elected the party's central leading agency, and announced the formal establishment of the CCP. In 2005, Comrade Xi Jinping proposed the "Red Boat Spirit" for the first time, summarized its connotation and pointed out its historical status (Xi, 2005). In 2017, General Secretary Xi Jinping stressed that the Red Boat spirit should be vigorously promoted in light of the characteristics of the times (Xi, 2017).

Zhejiang is also the leading place for China's reform and opening up. The people of Zhejiang have taken the lead in the reform and opening up. They have started their own business early, participated in so many projects and developed rapidly, which attracted the attention of the world. It can be said that the glorious history of Zhejiang's development after the reform and opening up is an epitome of modern China's gradual progress towards prosperity and strength. Therefore, Zhejiang spirit has commonalities with the spirit of the Chinese nation. In 2005, Comrade Xi Jinping further refined the spirit of Zhejiang (Xi, 2005). In 2016 and 2018, General Secretary Xi Jinping kept pace with the times and summarized and developed the spirit of Zhejiang twice (Xi, 2018).

It can be seen that Zhejiang is not only the birthplace of the Red Boat spirit, but also the cradle of the spirit of Zhejiang. It is in this land of 105,500 square kilometers that the unique Red Boat spirit and the spirit of Zhejiang are bred.

2.2 The Intersection of the Creators of the Two Spirits

Spirit is a unique phenomenon of human beings and a unique feature that distinguishes human beings from animals. The historical and cultural origins of the spirit of the Red Boat and the spirit of Zhejiang are also reflected in the intersection of the creators of the two spirits.

The Red Boat Spirit originated from the founding process of the Communist Party of China. The early party members from Zhejiang are outstanding representatives of the elite in the CCP's founding process. They put forward a series of pioneering revolutionary ideas and carried out revolutionary practices that had never been done before. They are an important part of the CCP's founding history and are also the glory and pride of the Zhejiang people. For example, the *People's Daily*, edited by Shao Lizi, first published news reports about Russia's October Revolution. The *Weekly Review* sponsored by Shen Xuanlu and others was a star publication promoting Marxism. Shao Piaoping's monograph *The Study of New Russia* first introduced and praised the achievements of the Soviet-Russian revolutionary construction. Chen Wangdao even spread the fire of Marxism on China with the first Chinese translation of the *Communist Manifesto*. Before the First National Congress of the CCP, there were 58 members in 8 early organizations in China, among which 7 were from Zhejiang, only second to Hunan and Hubei. They played a pivotal role in the establishment process of the early organizations of the

CCP in Shanghai and Guangzhou and the early organizations that traveled to Japan. At the same time, Yu Xiusong and Shi Cuntong successively served as the leaders of the Central Committee of the CCP. In the process of brewing and preparing for the establishment of the CCP, early party members from Zhejiang made contributions and participated in the most important major events in modern history. The early party members from Zhejiang province contributed a lot to the successful establishment of the CCP and its rapid development into a powerful core of leadership and practice in the Chinese revolution. In September 1921, the Xiaoshan Yaqian peasant movement led by early party members from Zhejiang under the guidance of Marxism promoted the vigorous development of the new peasant movement.

The spirit of Zhejiang has brought together the spiritual pursuits of the sages of the past generations and the masses in Zhejiang for thousands of years. During the Southern Song Dynasty, Yongjia School and Yongkang School were unique, emphasizing the positive significance of meritorious service to social development and breaking through the traditional Confucian emphasis on classical interpretation. In the Ming Dynasty, Wang Yangming emphasized the importance of practice and criticized the academic atmosphere of empty talk. At the end of the Ming Dynasty and the beginning of the Qing Dynasty, Huang Zongxi showed Zhejiang people's spirit of defying monarchical power. At the end of the Qing Dynasty, Zhang Binglin strongly criticized the theory of protecting the emperor, which was popular at that time. Xu Xilin, Qiu Jin and others established the Guangfu Association to launch an uprising, which greatly impacted the corrupt rule of the Qing Dynasty. In the New Culture Movement, Zhejiang's new intellectuals, represented by Lu Xun and Qian Xuantong, were the main force in criticizing Chinese traditional ethics. Since the 1980s, Zhejiang people have persisted in the spirit of reform and opening up, constantly seeking new things and changes, and have written amazing legends of bold entrepreneurship and unremitting struggle. For example, the famous "Wenzhou mode" and Yiwu's small commodity market are typical family industries and professional market forms, which are imitated by all parts of the country.

It can be seen that the Zhejiang people have attached great importance to practice and innovation during their thousands of years' struggle. As an outstanding representative of the creators of the Red Boat spirit, advanced elements from Zhejiang have made outstanding contributions in spreading socialist theory, establishing the CCP and practicing Marxism. The creators of the Zhejiang spirit include intellectuals, revolutionary heroes and working people of all ages in Zhejiang. The intersection of the creators of the two spirits endows Zhejiang with unique historical and cultural significance.

3. The Connotative Commonalities of the Red Boat Spirit and Zhejiang Spirit

The Red Boat Spirit and Zhejiang Spirit embody the quintessence of China's excellent traditional culture and national spirit, both inheriting and sublimating. Both spirits are the treasures of the Chinese nation's spiritual treasures, with immeasurable value and utility. Therefore, it can be seen that the two spirits have obvious connotative commonalities whether they are qualitatively reflected from the spirit

essence on the macro level or analyzed from the spirit itself on the micro level.

3.1 Spiritual Pursuit for the Future and Daring to be the First

“Facing the future” is not about empty talk about the future, but to better base on the present and better guide the current practice. The practice of not being able to “face the future” is bound to lack direction. Although the Red Boat Spirit and Zhejiang Spirit came into being in different times, the spiritual pursuit of facing the future and daring to be the first is in the same vein.

The founding of the Communist Party of China is a great event combining the pioneering spirit and revolutionary practice in modern history. The pioneering spirit of “being open-minded and daring to be the first” is the core of the Red Boat spirit. The spiritual pursuit of building a “future-oriented” communist society has made the struggle and dedication of the communists have a clear meaning. Focusing on the goal of communism, the party has made many important arrangements, such as taking the workers’ movement as the party’s central task, proposing the elimination of exploitation and establishing revolutionary armed forces to overthrow the reactionary government. The whole party is committed to building a society of equality for all. The lofty ideals and revolutionary determination of the Chinese communists to completely overthrow the old world have been highlighted everywhere, inspiring countless communists to struggle for this lofty revolutionary ideal.

In the spirit of Zhejiang, “walking in the forefront and bravely standing in the forefront” also reflects the “facing the future” spiritual pursuit of the Zhejiang people. In the tide of reform and opening up, Zhejiang people dare to take the lead in breaking through traditional concepts and unrealistic policy provisions in the tide of commodity economy. In 1979, Changcheng Commune in Zhejiang was the first commune in China to implement the household contract responsibility system. After that, Zhejiang’s urban economy has rapidly changed from a single public ownership lacking vitality to a system of common development of various economic components, among which the private economy has developed rapidly, with a group of well-known private entrepreneurs represented by Bu Xinheng, director of the Shirt Factory in Haiyan. In 1978, the opening of Ningbo Port opened the prelude of Zhejiang’s opening to the outside world. In 1984, Wenzhou and Ningbo were listed by the state as the first 14 coastal cities. Zhejiang has continuously expanded the scope of opening up to the outside world and has completed the comprehensive advancement of opening up from the coast to the inland.

3.2 The Spiritual Pillar of Self-improvement and Unremitting Struggle

Individuals who cannot make continuous self-improvement will go to destruction, and nations that cannot constantly improve themselves will eventually decline. The spirit of the Red Boat is the spiritual crystallization of the struggle of the early Chinese communists. The spirit of Zhejiang comes from the unremitting struggle of the local people for thousands of years, and it is the condensation of their self-improvement spirit. Therefore, the spiritual pillar of self-improvement and unremitting struggle is the common theme of the Red Boat spirit and the spirit of Zhejiang.

The Red Boat is the historical starting point of the Chinese people’s revolution led by the CCP, and is the carrier of the spirit of unremitting self-improvement and unremitting struggle of the early Chinese

communists. The Red Boat spirit was born in the turbulent revolutionary era. Early party members adhered to the lofty ideals of communism and embraced the ambition of saving the country and the people. In the face of enemies and difficulties, they were unyielding and hard-working, and they even sacrificed their lives. It was precisely because they had bled and sacrificed their lives one after another that the successful establishment of the CCP and the final victory of the revolution had been achieved. The spirit of Zhejiang carries the hard work, enterprising and struggle of Zhejiang people from generation to generation. Zhejiang is the third smallest resource province in China, and people's lives and property are often threatened by floods, super typhoons and other natural disasters. The spirit of adventure and entrepreneurship that Zhejiang people have shown in the face of various objective difficulties and human constraints has led them to take the lead in the new era of reform and opening up. Textile City of Shaoxing, Leather City of Haining and Yueqing Household Appliances Enterprise are all typical examples of Zhejiang People's continuous efforts in the face of difficulties. At the same time, it can timely change the mode of development and take the lead in building a service-oriented government, such as the "Run Once at Most" government reform that has been vigorously pushed forward, thus realizing sustainable and rapid development and composing a triumphant song of struggle to cut through all obstacles, develop vigorously, enrich the people and strengthen the province.

3.3 Emphasizing the Spirit of Practice, Seeking Truth and Being Pragmatic

Great practice is the precious soil for cultivating spirit. Without a realistic and pragmatic style, the beautiful ideals and blueprints are only beautiful Utopia after all. The spiritual essence of attaching importance to practice and seeking truth and pragmatism is a concentrated manifestation of the commonalities of the Red Boat spirit and the spirit of Zhejiang.

Marxism attaches special importance to practice. It does not exist only in the study of academic theory, but always emphasizes the purpose of transforming the world through practical activities. With the two historic missions of national independence and national prosperity, the CCP was born. In the early stage of the founding of the CCP, by combining Marxism with the practice of the Chinese revolution, it formulated a democratic revolutionary program, completed the establishment of a revolutionary united front, promoted the arrival of the climax of the Great Revolution, and changed the Chinese revolution.

In the spirit of Zhejiang, the spirit essence of attaching importance to practice and seeking truth and pragmatism can be summed up by "stressing practical results". Zhejiang is one of the smaller provinces in mainland China, with particularly shortage of land resources. The shortage of land and the large population are serious constraints to Zhejiang's development. In order to solve this contradiction, Zhejiang people have gradually begun to face up to the reality, developing efficient agriculture on the one hand, and vigorously developing industry and commerce on the other. They used industry and commerce to promote the province. Businessmen from Zhejiang have spread all over the country, and have traveled across the ocean to seek development, recreating Zhejiang outside of Zhejiang. Geely Group successfully acquired Volvo, a luxury car brand, in 2010 and became the only Chinese private auto enterprise shortlisted in the world's top 500 in 2012. Jack Ma led Taobao to successfully create a

unique path of localization, becoming the first mainland Chinese private entrepreneur to appear on the cover of *Forbes* magazine. In 2018, Zhejiang's Gross national economy (GDP) totaled 5619.7 billion Yuan, ranking fourth in the country, with a growth rate of 7.1%. The achievements of Zhejiang's economic development are the result of seeking truth and pragmatism and paying attention to actual effect.

4. The Value of the Red Boat Spirit and Zhejiang Spirit in the New Era

The spirit of the Red Boat is the historical starting point of the revolutionary spirit of the CCP. The spirit of Zhejiang is a precious spiritual wealth left by the sages and working people of Zhejiang for future generations. The spiritual power they contain is timeless, and the times will endow them with brand-new value and meaning.

4.1 Internalized in Xi Jinping's Socialist Thought with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era

From the perspective of the formation and development of the Red Boat spirit and the spirit of Zhejiang, the Red Boat spirit was first proposed and explained by General Secretary Xi Jinping, and then was once again elaborated and emphasized by him. While the spirit of Zhejiang has been summarized and developed by Xi Jinping three times. Up to now, the spirit of the Red Boat and the spirit of Zhejiang have been internalized in Xi Jinping's Socialist Thought with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era. For example, "innovation" has been listed as the first of the five development concepts by General Secretary Xi Jinping, which is consistent with the "pioneering spirit" in the Red Boat spirit and "bravely standing in the forefront" in the spirit of Zhejiang.

Under the initiative of General Secretary Xi Jinping, the Red Boat spirit has been well spread and inherited, and has also become an important part of his ideological system. Among them, the new era thesis, which is based on the pioneering spirit, reflects the communists' innovative grasp of the development of the times. The communists, with the spirit of struggle as their inheritance, emphasized hard work and built a strong socialism modernized country, thus providing spiritual strength for the realization of national rejuvenation. Taking the spirit of dedication as the inheritance and paying attention to comprehensively strengthening Party discipline is the profound consciousness of the communists to their original intention of governing. The development environment of China is changing, but the Red Boat spirit of the communists will not change, but will continue to be passed down in the deep thoughts of every generation of communists.

General Secretary Xi Jinping has summarized and developed Zhejiang spirit many times, which shows his concern for Zhejiang's development in the new era and under the new situation. In 2003, Xi Jinping, secretary of the Zhejiang Provincial Party Committee, put forward the general strategy for the development of Zhejiang Province - "Eight Advantages - Eight Strategic Measures", which fully demonstrates the governance concept of all-in-mind for the people, which can be regarded as an important embodiment of the germination of Xi Jinping's Socialist Thought with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era in Zhejiang, "providing it with direct ideological preparation and

practical experience support” (He, 2018).

4.2 Consolidating Consensus and Providing Spiritual Impetus for the Construction of Socialism for a New Era in Zhejiang

The spirit of the Red Boat originated from the Red Boat in Zhejiang. Although there are accidental factors in the selection of Zhejiang as the development site of the Red Boat in history, this historical accident also illustrates the uniqueness of Zhejiang. Therefore, the spirit of the Red Boat belongs not only to the Chinese Communists and the Chinese nation, but also should be the core spirit inherited by Zhejiang people in the new era.

On June 21, 2005, Comrade Xi Jinping published a signed article on how to carry forward the “Red Boat Spirit”, combining Zhejiang’s economic and social development and undertakings of party building. It can be seen that the spirit of the Red Boat is based on the practice of contemporary reform and opening up in Zhejiang and serves the purpose of leading Zhejiang’s actual development. “Eight Advantages - Eight Strategic Measures” has been implemented for 16 years in Zhejiang, Zhejiang Provincial Committee has made a number of decision-making deployment, with the spirit of the Red Boat to continuously promote the “Eight Advantages - Eight Strategic Measures”, it will be deepened and refined, and strive to build a beautiful, rich and powerful, rule of law, clean and cultural Zhejiang. It can be said that the “Eight Advantages - Eight Strategic Measures” have consolidated the consensus of the people of Zhejiang and made great contributions to the economic development and social progress of Zhejiang region.

Nowadays, China’s development has entered a new era. The change of social contradictions means that China’s development is facing more arduous tasks. In the face of new social contradictions and another test of history, it is imperative to unite the strength of all sectors of society and work hard for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. As Secretary Che Jun pointed out, “We must further promote the spirit of the Red Boat and uphold the spirit of Zhejiang... Under the guidance of the spirit of the 19th National Congress of the CCP, we will write a high-level Zhejiang chapter to achieve the Two Centenary Goals (Che, 2017). The Red Boat Spirit and Zhejiang Spirit should be the spiritual guidelines for uniting the consensus of the Zhejiang people and making unremitting efforts to build a new era of socialist in Zhejiang and provide strong spiritual impetus for the development of Zhejiang and even China.

5. Conclusion

In short, the forming processes of the Red Boat spirit and Zhejiang spirit have shown the profound historical and cultural origins, have relatively obvious connotative commonalities, and are endowed with brand-new significance and value by the times. The times are always moving forward. For us, on the one hand, we must give an accurate understanding and grasp of the inheritance of the Red Boat spirit and the Zhejiang spirit in the contemporary era, and more importantly, we should guide the construction of Zhejiang and even China in the new era with the two spirits in practice. Only in this

way can the Red Boat spirit and the spirit of Zhejiang be truly inherited and carried forward in the new era.

References

- Xi, J. P. (2018). In 2016, in his speech at the end of the G20 summit, General Secretary Xi Jinping further summarized the spirit of Zhejiang as “to be practical, to be in the forefront, and bravely standing in the forefront”. *On July 8, 2018, General Secretary Xi Jinping gave instructions on the 15th Anniversary of the implementation of the Eight Advantages - Eight Strategic Measures of the Zhejiang Provincial Committee, expanding the spirit of Zhejiang into “never stop being practical, keep innovating while stay in the forefront, bravely standing in the forefront and take on the responsibility”*.
- He, X. M. (2018). “The Eight Advantages - Eight Strategic Measures” and the Germination of Xi Jinping’s Socialist Thought with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era in Zhejiang. *Zhejiang Academic Journal*, 5, 15.
- Xi, J. P. (2005). Carry Forward the Red Boat Spirit and Advance in the Forefront of Our Times. *Guangming Daily*, 6(21), 3.
- Che, J. (2017). Carry forward the “Red Boat spirit” and promote the “Two High-level” construction. *Policy Outlook*, 7, 4.
- Xi, J. P. (2005). In July 2000, The Fourth Plenary Session of the 10th Zhejiang Provincial Committee (enlarged) meeting summarized the Zhejiang spirit as “self-improvement, perseverance, innovation and striving for practical results”. In 2005, Xi Jinping, secretary of the Zhejiang Provincial Party Committee, refined the Zhejiang spirit as “seeking truth and pragmatism, honest and harmonious, opening up and pursuing Strength”.
- Xi, J. P. (2005). *On June 21, 2005, comrade Xi Jinping, secretary of the Zhejiang Provincial Party Committee, published a paper entitled Carry Forward the Red Boat Spirit and Advance in the Forefront of Our Times in Guangming Daily, which scientifically summarizes the profound connotation of the Red Boat spirit as “the pioneering spirit and daring to be the first, the spirit of determination, the spirit of perseverance, the spirit of dedication of the party for the public, and loyalty for the people”, and expounds its historical status as “the source of Chinese revolutionary spirit” and “the source of the advancement of the CCP”*.
- Xi, J. P. (2017). *On October 31, 2017, just one week after the closing of the 19th National Congress of the CCP, General Secretary Xi Jinping led the new Politburo Standing Committee members to Shanghai and Jiaxing, Zhejiang Province. On visiting the Red Boat on South Lake, General Secretary Xi Jinping once again expounded the spirit of the Red Boat, stressing that “the spirit of the Red Boat should be vigorously promoted in the light of the characteristics of the times”*.

Note 1. CCP - Chinese Communist Party.