

# *On the Thoughts and Morals Training and Law Basic Course Infiltrated with Ocean Consciousness Education*

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**Abstract**—Adding the education of ocean consciousness into the *Thoughts and Morals Training and Law Basic* course is the requirement of the new era where China is developing itself as a maritime power. In the teaching activities, it is necessary to cultivate students' consciousnesses of maritime power, maritime territory and marine environment, the attitudes towards the ocean and deliver the marine law education, so as to stimulate their sense of historical mission, cultivate the marine ecological morality and the concept of the rule of law. It is expected that they can actively assume the responsibilities to safeguard our national sea power and realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. This paper adopts the theories with the practices to summarize the teaching experience based on the achieved research results and explore the way to raise college students' ocean consciousness.

**Keywords**—*thoughts and morals training and law basic; ocean consciousness; maritime power*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since the entry into the new century, there has been a heat on blue state territory around the world. To conform to the tendency of the age, the Communist Party of China has proposed the maritime power strategy in the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2012, 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road construction in 2013, and accelerating the development of China as a maritime power in the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. In order to build China into a maritime power in an all-round way, its citizens must cultivate good marine literacy and strong ocean consciousness. In particular, as the main force for the future development of marine cause, college students should have solid maritime knowledge, deep marine emotion and noble Marine ecological morality. The launching of ideological and political theory course is to train qualified successors for the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics. It should assume the responsibility to implement marine consciousness education, which not only reflects the characteristics of ideological and political theory courses keeping pace with the Times, but also accords with the requirements of the Marine era.

As one of the subjects of the ideological and political theory course, *Thoughts and Morals Training and Law Basic* (hereinafter referred to as the “basic” course) is carried out to cultivate the moral and legal quality of college students. Compared with other ideological and political theory subjects, “basic” course is more closely related to the cultivation of college students' ocean consciousness in terms of the teaching content. What's more, through the permeability-based teaching, it can help students get acquaintance with the ocean comprehensively, guide them to protect the marine territory, safeguard the maritime rights and interests, treasure Marine environment and resources. With the ocean consciousness rooted in students' mind, they can enhance the patriotic emotion and historical sense of mission; strive for the realization of a maritime power.

## II. THE NECESSITY OF INFILTRATING MARINE CONSCIOUSNESS EDUCATION IN *THOUGHTS AND MORALS TRAINING AND LAW BASIC COURSE*

### A. *The need to implement the “maritime power” strategy*

The implementation of the maritime power strategy will not only enhance hard power such as marine economy, marine military and marine science and technology, but also trigger a reform of value concept and way of thinking. The scientific marine consciousness of the public is the most extensive and profound spiritual power for the marine cause, which directly affects the prospect and pattern of China's marine development. However, having been under the traditional condition of emphasizing land and despising sea, people are far from meeting the strategic requirements of sustainable development of the ocean with weak awareness of the ocean. Under the circumstances, it is urgent to improve the marine consciousness of the whole nation, especially college students, to scientifically grasp the rich connotation of the marine power strategy. The cultivation of marine consciousness is, in essence, the edification of national culture, the cultivation of moral concepts and the promotion of patriotism. Therefore, with the objectives to help students set up the correct world outlook, outlook on life, values, ethics and the concept of law, the “basic” course should be carried out to strengthen the marine consciousness education of college students. We should make good use of this course to deliver marine knowledge to cultivate students' marine emotions and inform them of the

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strategic position of the ocean, and stimulate their sense of responsibility to build a maritime power.

#### *B. The need to change the absence of Marine consciousness education*

Colleges and universities are important bases for cultivating talents. Talents in the new century must establish a strong sense of ocean and sustainable development, and undertake the tasks of developing and utilizing marine resources, innovating marine technology and protecting marine environment. At present, China's sea-related colleges and universities have come to pay attention to the cultivation of students' ocean consciousness and set up relevant courses. But most universities still haven't been aware of that. Although most colleges and universities have opened the "Military Theory" course, the content covers little of marine national defense.<sup>[1]</sup> The course "Situation and Policy" of each school has, to some extent, presented the marine knowledge, yet in narrow scope, without depth and continuity. The lack of marine consciousness education leads to the indifference of college students towards the ocean. It remains common that college students don't have a strong awareness of safeguarding maritime rights and interests, the belongings of more than 3 million square kilometers of "maritime territory". Terms like the Territory Waters, Continental Shelf and Exclusive Economic Zone are even new to these youngsters who lack the understanding of the risks of China's jurisdictional sea lanes. Given this, colleges and universities must introduce marine consciousness education into the existing teaching system. The "basic" course is opened for freshmen. It penetrates marine awareness education into the teaching, so that students can immerse in the Marine knowledge from entrance, realize the engine role of marine economic development which is not only the business of the government, but also the responsibility of every citizen. In this way, they can come to love the ocean, and the moral spirit will be further consolidated and sublimated in the other three ideological and political theory courses, so as to realize the normalization and systematization of marine consciousness education.

#### *C. The need to improve the teaching effect of "basic" course*

The "basic" course plays an important role in the cultivation of students' moral and legal qualities. However, how to achieve the ideal teaching effect is an unsettled issue for the ideological and political teaching. The relatively static teaching content of the course is hard to meet the diverse needs of students, which requires the changes in teaching according to the situation. According to the ideological development and social practice of contemporary college students, the teaching content should be constantly enriched to enhance the appeal of ideological and political courses. In the new century, the strategic position of the ocean is becoming more and more prominent. Under this circumstance, the education of marine consciousness will be included in the teaching content of "basic" course to guide students to take care of the ocean and understand the economic and social value of the ocean to human development, so as to stimulate students' sense of responsibility and mission in building a maritime power. In this way, we not only enrich the teaching content and perspective, but also help to give full play to the ideological and political

education value carried by the marine consciousness education and greatly improve the teaching effect.

### III. THE CONTENT OF *THOUGHTS AND MORALS TRAINING AND LAW BASIC COURSE* WITH MARINE CONSCIOUSNESS EDUCATION

#### *A. Strengthen education in the maritime power conscientious and inspire a sense of historical mission*

The purpose of teaching the introduction of the "Basic" course is to let students consciously undertake the great duty to implement the great rejuvenation of China which is ended by the new era. First of all, it will let the students understand that the new era has started a new journey of constructing China into a country which is strong in the field of maritime. The development of marine undertakings cannot stand still, but to follow the national strategic deployment to establish China into a powerful modern maritime country with a well-developed marine economy, advanced marine technology, robust marine system, stable marine safety and powerful marine control.<sup>[2]</sup> Every college student should shoulder this historical mission. In addition, this part discusses significance of implementing the strategy of "maritime power" from the perspective of history and reality. It can be seen from the long history that the ocean territory is closely linked to the destiny of the Chinese nation. China's ancient maritime cause was glorious, as evidenced by the prosperity of the maritime silk road. However, during the Ming and Qing dynasties, the rulers enforced the Sea Forbidden. As the consequence, the national strength gradually weakened. Since the first Opium War, foreign invaders have started 470 maritime harassments in our ocean territory. The loss of sea power led to a century of humiliation. From a practical point of view, as the tide of the ocean century is rolling in, all coastal countries across the world have adjusted their marine development strategies, and gained momentum in marine economy. The competition for marine resources is intensifying, and disputes over maritime rights and interests keep cropping up. China has also witnessed a remarkable development in the marine economy. In 2017, China's gross marine product reached 7761.1 billion-Yuan, accounting for 9.4 percent of the country's gross domestic product.<sup>[3]</sup> Large maritime country as China is, its marine industry and strength are obviously weaker than those of developed countries. Therefore, it is of importance to let students realize on the basis of the history and the reality that the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation cannot be realized without the marine strategy.<sup>[4]</sup> It is the historical mission of every college student to build a maritime power in the new era.

Together with the content of the first chapter "Keep Firm in Their Ideal and Faith", it lets the student realize the relationship between "Chinese Dream", the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and the "Marine Dream" to construct a maritime power, make unremitting efforts for ocean business, put the their own dreams closely associated with the "China dream", as to build our country into a sea power.

#### *B. Strengthen education in maritime and territorial awareness and patriotism*

In the third chapter, "Carry Forward the Chinese Spirit", the important content of patriotism, "love the great rivers and mountains of the motherland", is used to infiltrate the

knowledge of Marine land and cultivate students' feelings of loving the ocean. First, the historical background of the formation of the concept of Marine territory is introduced. In a very long period of history, the concept of territory in the world was limited to land. Since the middle of the 16th century, with the development of navigation and the rise of colonization and plundering, the value of the ocean has been highlighted. In order to capitalize on the oceans of all countries in the world, some maritime powers have put forward the idea of maritime territorialization. By the early 19th century, coastal states claimed jurisdiction over their adjacent waters, and the concept of "territorial sea" emerged. Since the 20th century, countries began to care about marine natural resources and national strategic interests, and constantly asked for expanding the breadth of territorial waters. Finally, the disorder was concluded by the release of the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea* which has provided legal basis for the formation of the concept of maritime territory. Since the 1980s, the ocean has contributed more and more to China's economy, generating the concept territorial water which has been widely spread. By sorting out the vicissitude process of the concept of marine territory, students can understand that the concept is formed along with its importance. Territorial waters, like the mainland territory, are the foundation of national survival and development and a treasure for sustainable social development.

On this basis, inform the students of the basic state of China's marine territory. Maritime territory is the general term of a country's inland sea, territorial waters, contiguous zone, exclusive economic zone, continental shelf and other waters under its jurisdiction.<sup>[5]</sup> According to the standards in the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*, there are about 3 million square kilometers of sea areas under China's sovereign jurisdiction. China not only enjoys sovereignty over its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone, but also boasts high seas and international seabed areas, which are potential land resources for China to develop its marine economy. Due to the complex historical and practical realities, there hasn't been a relatively clear and recognized boundary line in maritime land, resulting in serious challenges in marine land protection in China. Nearly half of China's maritime territory is under dispute. China and Japan have long argued about the sovereignty over the Diaoyu Islands in the East China Sea. China and South Korea have not reached an agreement on the demarcation of the exclusive economic zone. Countries like Philippines and Malaysia have involved China in the disputes on sovereignty over some islands in the South China Sea. Through the education of these cases, students can fully understand the value of maritime territory and the significance of maritime rights and interests pay more attention to the completeness of maritime land, link the protection of maritime land with the protection of national interests, security and honor. Transform the patriotism into the action of consciously maintaining the security of blue state territory.

### *C. Strengthen education on maritime values and foster the values of "harmony"*

Running through the "basic" course, socialist core values are also the main content of the fourth chapter. "Harmony", one of the important contents of the core values, is manifested as the harmony between human beings, man and nature, and

man and society. The ocean is an integral part of the natural ecosystem, and "harmony between human beings and the sea", namely the correct relationship between human beings and the ocean, should become the teaching content. The important factor that affects the relationship is the ocean values which are human's subjective evaluation of the value of the ocean. Along with the constant changes of human subjective needs, people's understanding of the value of the ocean is also in dynamic development, thus constantly changing the relationship between people and the sea. In the agrarian age, human benefited from ocean as it produced fishes and salt and carried boats. From the 15th to the early 20th century, new shipping routes were opened, and the sea became an important channel for colonial plunder and an important channel for world trade. After the First World War, in order to fight for the priority of trade and maritime passage, countries launched the competition of maritime military force, and the military strategic value of the sea was treasured. In the 21st century, with the rapid development of science and technology, countries' understanding of the value of the sea has been raised to a strategic height. The sea has not only become a new space for national economic development, but also an important place for political and military activities, as well as a barrier to national security. From a single content in the past, marine values have been developed into a comprehensive value system that includes the value of marine space, the value of marine resources, the value of marine economy and the value of marine security. But awareness of Marine values is far from balanced. People put much emphasis on the growth of the output value of Marine economy while ignoring the cultural, ecological and ethical relations between the sea and people. The marine economy, marine society, marine culture and marine ecology have not been developed in a harmonious and comprehensive way. From the awe and worship of the sea in ancient times to the endless plunder of the sea today, it can be seen that the relationship between human beings and the sea has gone from harmony to tension. By reviewing this historical process, students can establish scientific modern marine values and understand that the ocean is not only the object of human beings, but also the object that needs to be protected. Learn to examine the value of the sea from the standpoint of equality and realize the harmonious coexistence of the sea and people.

The meaning of "harmony" should be further explored in the teaching of marine values. From the perspective of the journey of marine development, "harmony" is the core value of China's marine civilization. The Chinese people have long held the tradition to explore the ocean in awe of it, which embodies their gratitude towards the sea. "Harmony" is manifested in today's comprehensive, coordinated and sustainable scientific development. Under the concept of sustainable development, human beings and the sea should coexist harmoniously. We should discard the anthropocentric concept that blindly seeks resources and wealth from the sea, but hold a harmonious attitude to respect the sea and nature. Healthy external relations mean peaceful development and mutual benefit. About 600 years ago, Zheng He, one of the greatest sailors in the Chinese history, had made seven voyages to the western seas, which embodied the maritime values of "seeking harmony but not uniformity and harmonious coexistence". Today, bearing in mind the concept of "harmonious ocean", we will actively

strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation with coastal countries and making efforts to build a fair and harmonious international maritime order. Through the teaching, students can understand that the harmonious development should refer to the coordination between economic boom and social development internally, and the firm position externally that China will not seek for maritime hegemony, and the resolution to build a new maritime order together with other countries.

*D. Permeate the marine environmental consciousness and cultivate the marine ecological morality*

With the intensification of marine exploitation, the problems of marine environmental pollution and the decline of fishery resources become more and more serious. The fundamental way to solve these problems is to bring the relationship between human beings and sea into the moral category and cultivate the marine ecological morality of human beings. College students are the reserve force for the construction of marine undertakings. So, their marine ecological morality has direct relationship with the development of the causes. First, we will let the students know the current situation of our marine environment. Although the marine environment has improved through years of efforts, the pollution of local coastal areas is still serious and the situation of marine ecological environment remains grim.<sup>[6]</sup> About one tenth of bays in China have been seriously polluted, and the percentage of natural shorelines on the mainland is less than 40%.<sup>[7]</sup> Ecosystem degradation has become a serious problem, and red tides and other disasters occur frequently. The main causes of marine pollution include land source pollutants entering the sea, sudden pollution damage events and offshore oil field development, which are all caused by human factors. Therefore, the key to solve the problem of marine environment is to establish marine ecological morality, which means the moral code and code of conduct to be followed in the treatment of marine environment and the core is to extend the object of moral concern to the sea and treat and protect the sea with awe. Through teaching, students can understand that to eradicate marine environmental problems, we must fully respect the laws of nature, and change the past concept of "man is the master of the sea", establishing a sense of moral obligation to the sea and the concept of marine ecological civilization.

To cultivate marine ecological morality, we should first cultivate students' view of good and evil towards marine ecology in the teaching process. "Good" contains the love of the ocean, the behavior to protect the marine environment and make contributions to the marine cause. Whereas, Activities such as destroying marine ecology and polluting marine environment are regarded as "evil". In addition to the correct moral cognition, we should strengthen ecological moral practice education. By carrying out marine practical teaching activities, enhance students' moral feelings of marine ecology and their moral qualities. All these are geared up to inform students of protecting the marine ecological environment conscientiously, and cultivate their ability to protect the Marine environment.

*E. Infiltrate Marine legal knowledge and cultivate the concept of rule of law*

In the ocean century, the construction of maritime powers, the settlement of maritime disputes and the maintenance of maritime rights and interests should all be based on maritime laws. Since the reform and opening up, China has promulgated a number of laws and regulations concerning the ocean, which has promoted the development of its marine causes. However, there has not been a complete maritime legal system yet, let alone the foreign-related marine legal system. It was not until 1992 that China approved *The Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone*, and 1996 that it claimed the baselines of the territorial sea of the mainland. Due to inadequate publicity of marine laws, there are numerous illegal fishing, illegal occupation of sea areas and other marine illegal acts. College students are rarely exposed to the marine law, leading to the weak awareness of marine law. As an important part of China's socialist legal system, marine law should be the content of college students' legal education. In the sixth chapter, the teaching of "Respecting the Law and Abiding by the Law" can infiltrate the knowledge of marine law to help students establish a correct concept of the rule of law.

First, we can introduce contents like marine law and policy in the course; make good use of legal policies like the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*, *The Marine Environmental Protection Law of the People's Republic of China*, and the *China's Ocean Development Report* to make detailed illustration of their legislative basis and basic content. Through the understanding of marine laws and policies, college students may establish a good sense of law-abiding and dare to fight against illegal behaviors that damage marine resources and environment. What's more, the application of legal knowledge in the analysis of hot maritime issues enables students to get to know how to deal with marine issues on the basis of comprehensive understanding of marine laws and policies, and to learn to use laws and regulations to safeguard maritime rights and interests.

In a word, the *Thoughts and Morals Training and Law Basic* course must conform to the needs of the ocean era, in line with the marine power national strategy. We should find the joint point of the ocean consciousness education for college students and the teaching, to integrate the marine power, marine homeland consciousness, marine values, marine environment, and marine law into the chapters teaching, in a bid to help students set scientific ocean values and take active part in marine construction

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