

The Enlightenment of Shaanxi Academies' Development in Ming and Qing Dynasties to Modern Private Education Development

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Abstract: Academy education is a crucial part of Chinese traditional culture. Shaanxi Academies' Development in Ming and Qing Dynasties plays a vital role in local education development, including molding the folk-customs, developing the talents, accelerating society's development. A research on the educational history, teaching content, and management mechanism of Shaanxi Academies in Ming and Qing Dynasties benefits Shaanxi Private Education improving its educational level, exploiting, and inheriting Shaanxi's rich educational heritage and resources. Based on the historical data of Shaanxi Academies in Ming and Qing Dynasties, it is necessary to do the textual research on it and analyzing the typical academies' features to have realistic referential significance.

1. Introduction

Academy education has three advantages, that is, the harmonious relationship between teachers and students, free research mode, and a simple course. The instructional model is open to all, with no regional restriction. Besides, it gives priority to self-study, pays attention to cultivate students' self-study ability, and emphasizes the research ability, which can give Private Education helpful reference. Shaanxi Province had experienced ten several dynasties. Thus, it has deep cultural heritage, rich spiritual and cultural life. Thus, all of these factors lay the foundation for Shaanxi's educational development. Shaanxi Academies in Ming and Qing Dynasties formed a unique culture in Guanzhong plain. Therefore, the study of Shaanxi Academies in the Ming and Qing Dynasties is of great significance for the reform of local private education.

2. The Developing History of Shaanxi Academies in Ming and Qing Dynasties

2.1 The Developing History of Shaanxi Academies in Ming Dynasty

In the early Ming dynasty, Shaanxi Academies still retained the tradition of free lecturing and commentary on political affairs, which is the advocator and disseminator of the style of study in that period. However, just because of the above phenomenon, Shaanxi Academies were banned and destroyed four times, including the Hongdao Academy, the Green Field Academy, and so on. In Ming Hongli's 8th year (1495), due to illness, Wang Chengyu, the son of Wang Shu, returned to his hometown and built the Hongdao Academy in Puzhao Temple, Yongqing Alley, North of Sanyuan County (today's Sanyuan county, Xianyang, Shaanxi Province), which was one of the most famous academies in Shaanxi Ming Dynasty. In the same year, grand coordinator Xiong Xiu established Yuyang Academy in northern Shaanxi (today's First Primary School in Yulin). In the second year, the inspector Li Hanshi, the vice-governor Yang Yiqing suggested that Song Xuotong, the magistrate of Wugong County (today's Wugong County, Xianyang, Shaanxi Province), built the Green Field Academy in which Zhang Zai, the great educator, made his lecture. At Ming Longqing years (about 1570), the deputy director Yang Jinxiu built the Longtu Academy. During Ming Wanli years (1573 -1620), Wen Zaizhong from Sanshui County (today's Xunyi County, Xianyang, Shaanxi Province), the official of The Organizing Department, got the No.1 Scholar then came back

home and built Leyu Academy in his hometown (today's Wenjia Villiage, Taicun Town). He lectured theory related to spiritual cultivation and social activity, which attracts many students, and most of them became government officials. In the northwest corner of Li Quan County, Guo Yuzhu built the Gathering Stars Academy, which still existed until the late Ming Dynasty. During the following years, the most influential academy in Shaanxi was Guanzhong Academy, founded by Feng Congwu, a famous Neo-Confucianist and educator in the Ming Dynasty. Gradually, Guanzhong Academy had developed from a small and limited space to a cultural and educational center for scholars. In August, Ming Tianqi's 5th year (1625), the eunuch and his followers destroyed Guanzhong Academy and abandoned the saint's statue to the corner of the county.

2.2 The Developing History of Shaanxi Academies in Qing Dynasty

In the early Qing Dynasty, the development of academies was more restrained. The ruler was afraid that academies would spread the idea of opposing the Qing Dynasty and recovering the Ming dynasty. Thus he released the imperial edict that changing the academy into the free school. In Shunzhi's 9th year (1652), the imperial court released edict that commissioners of education should lead all teachers to focus on their lecture about philosophy and put them into practice. Besides, people were forbidden to establish new academies. Then, to further control people's thoughts, the ruler reformed the academy policy, changing from negative suppression to actively supporting. In Yongzheng's 11th year (1733), each province began to establish new academies with the financial support of the government. At this period, the form of academy belongs to the conventional education system focusing on assessment, which became the appendage to imperial examinations. In Qianlong's 10th year (1745), the Ministry of Rites regulated that the academy's monthly curriculum should take the eight-legged essay as the principal thing, which lasted until the end of the Qing Dynasty. Throughout the Qing Dynasty, the period with the largest number of academies was the Qianlong Dynasty, followed by the Kangxi Dynasty, Guangxu Dynasty, Daoguang Dynasty, Tongzhi Dynasty Jjiaqing Dynasty, Yongzheng Dynasty, Xianfeng Dynasty, and Shunzhi Dynasty. There were 210 academies built in Shaanxi Province during the Qing Dynasty, among which 24 academies were rebuilt, and 186 were newly built. According to the statistics, most academies were intensively built in the years of Emperor Qianlong (78 academies), followed by Emperor Guangxu (30 academies), Emperor Daoguang (13 academies), and Emperor Jiaqing (15 academies) [1].

3. The Teaching Content and Management Mechanism of Shaanxi's Typical Academies in Ming and Qing Dynasties

3.1 The Teaching Content of Shaanxi's Typical Academies in Ming and Qing Dynasties

During the Song and Yuan Dynasties, the teaching content of Shaanxi's academies was dominated by Neo-Confucianism, and the curriculum was much the same as that of the official academy. In the Ming and Qing Dynasties, as the deans changed their guiding ideology, it raised the times' changing as well as the teaching content's revolution. In Tongzhi's 12th year (1873), Xu Zhenya, the commissioner of education, created Weijing Academy. This academy focused on practical knowledge and researched books like Qing Ding Qi Jing, Zi Zhi Tong Jian, Da Xue Yan Yi, Yan Yi Bu, Wen Xian Tong Kao, etc. The academy's most excellent teaching method was emphasizing students' self-study ability. It mainly reflected in three ways. First was a seminar, which required teachers and students to have an academic talk regularly once to three times half a month. During the seminar, the students spoke freely without constraint. The second was attaching importance to the effect of learning. Teachers would do research and finally put the theory into effect according to a scientific point of view. Finally, was inviting foreign intelligence to give a lecture. During the lecture, not only the students but also all personnel from everywhere were welcomed to attend the lecture [2]. When it came to Guangxu's 21st year (1895), Liu Guyu, the dean of Weijing Academy, opened the Current Affairs Class for advocating the fact that one should deal with particular matters related to work, publicize the current affairs and initiate a new academic trend. At the same time, it instructed western knowledge and published western books, which made

the Weijing Academy the center of spreading new knowledge in the northwest part of China. The courses of Weijing Academy were mainly based on practical learning, and the monthly classes included Confucianism, history, Daoism, and politics. Besides, there were also classes like astronomy, geography, arithmetic, and so on. In Guangxu's 28th year (1902), Weijing Academy combined with Hongdao Academy. Since Liu Guyu was the dean of both Weijing Academy and Chongshi Academy, thus the academic revolution was similar, but Chongshi Academy's content and purpose were more explicit and distinctive. The curriculum of Chongshi Academy's study included analyzing the phenomena of nature to acquire knowledge, English, arithmetic, manufacture, and so on [3].

In Ming Dynasty, Feng Congwu, the great Neo-Confucianist and educator, founded Guanzhong Academy in South Gate Alley, Xian, Shaanxi province. The academy was based on the rules of the Bai Lu Dong Rules, while Feng Congwu, Zhou Shuyuan, and other scholars gave the lecture. In the late Qing Dynasty, the academy's teaching courses were a subset of Confucianism, history, religion, poetry, and the examination courses were poetry, essay, etc. [4]. The learning content would be adjusted according to different times. For example, students usually tended to be in a drowsy state during 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. , therefore, the academy would select poems and articles of Wei and Han Dynasty, such as Gu Feng, Chu Shi Biao, Gui Qu Lai Xi, Zheng Qi Ge, Que Pin Shu, etc. , for the students to read, and when the sun went down, they would read Zi Zhi Tong Jian. After the lunch, they would read The Four Books (The Great Learning, The Doctrine of the Mean, The Analects of Confucius, Mencius), Da Xue Yan Yi, Yan Yi Bu, etc. Students were required to reflect themselves after reading each chapter and thought about if the content had any influence on their minds. One should bear them in mind and put the theory into practice [5].

3.2 The Management Mechanism of Shaanxi's Typical Academies in Ming and Qing Dynasties

In Ming and Qing Dynasties, Shaanxi Academies were mainly managed by formulating and implementing strict academic curriculum arrangement, forming a relatively perfect management mechanism, which has a positive impact on the reform and development of academies.

In Ming Wanli's years, Feng Congwu ordered eight stipulations for the academy. First, having a seminar three times a month, that is, the 1st day, 11th day, and 21st day. Second, the content of the workshop should not involve in imperial matters and war matters. Third, all social intercourse should be avoided during the seminar. Fourth, when discussing with each other, one should keep calm and modest. Fifth, when it came to an enjoyable mood, anyone wished to recite poems that could recite ones. Sixth, Confucius would be anxious if one could not do further research about knowledge. Seventh, great scholars of Neo-Confucianism had various theories. Eighth, to err is human.

In Qing Kangxi's years, Li Yong ordered ten stipulations for the Guangzhong Academy. First, having a seminar in the second month of each season. Second, the scale should be reasonable, and the atmosphere should be comfortable. Third, it should take steps to follow the example of wise men. Fourth, to begin with, correcting the fault and focus on the practice of regeneration. Fifth, it was beneficial not to hide things from others. Sixth, one should gather his energy and meditate. Seventh, one should try his best to get the gist. Eighth, be diligent in thinking and inquiring. Ninth, to ask questions and think about the current situation. Tenth, Meditation could peace one's mind and made one not be disturbed by the desire for fame and wealth. In Qing Tongzhi's 12th year (1873), Tan Zhonglin, the governor of Shaanxi, reorganized Guanzhong Academy and ordered five stipulations, that is, attaching importance to personal practice, lecturing Confucian classics argumentation, studying history, thoroughly understanding current affairs, arranging strict curriculum. There were two examination forms; one should be conducted once a month while two governors took turns to supervise it, the other should be done twice to three times a month supervised by the dean.

4. The Function of Shaanxi's Academies in Ming and Qing Dynasties Toward Shaanxi's Educational Development

Even though the development of academies in the Ming and Qing Dynasties was in ups and downs state, but it broke the original educational system and pattern, and promoted the profound reform of the inclusive education in the aspects of the management system, operation mechanism, and fund-raising ways. The innovative academy-running model expanded the sources of funds, aroused the enthusiasm of social forces to invest in education, and made the government and social forces form a joint force to run educational cause jointly.

4.1 Promoting the Formation of Good Folk Customs in Shaanxi

Folk culture is the symbol of the national spirit, which reflects the educational value of one region. Academy, as a particular form of an educational organization in ancient times, was of considerable significance to the development of local folk customs. Take Guanzhong Academy, one of the most famous academies in Shaanxi; as an example, its regulations had cultivated a large number of talents in Shaanxi and formed an excellent folk custom of applying knowledge to practice.

Feng Congwu, the dean of Guanzhong Academy, formulated rules for scholars' communication, including Study Regulation, Scholar-officials' Regulation in Guanzhong, and so on, to correct the problems related to the academic atmosphere. Besides, Guanzhong Academy also advocated the behavioral norms and collected them into the Quotation of Guanzhong Academy, which regulated scholars' daily behavior, words, and other specific requirements.

4.2 Cultivated and Shaped a Large Number of Outstanding Talents for Shaanxi

In Ming and Qing Dynasties, Shaanxi Academies were the cradle of cultivating a large number of outstanding talents. Took Feng Congwu as an example that he taught in the Guanzhong Academy for more than 20 years and developed the disciples of more than 5 000. For another example, Li Yong, whose hometown was Zhouzhi County in Shaanxi, owned several disciples in Changzhou, Wuxi, Jiangyin. Many of them became famous scholars and officers with profound knowledge in later years [4].

The famous scholars and officers cultivated from Shaanxi Academies like Kang Hai, Ma Li, Qin Wei, Hao Shijia, Luo Ang, Zhang Yuan, Li Shen, Zhao Ying, Qin Ning, Wang Pei, Li Jie, and so on[6]. Guanzhong Academy cultivated many talents. For example, the first Number One Scholar in Shaanxi during the Qing Dynasty became a member of the standing committee. Liu Guyu, who was the famous ideologist and educator in the late Qing Dynasty. Niu Zhaolian, who was the Neo-Confucianist with the nickname Niu Gifted Scholar in the late Qing Dynasty. Wang Ding, who was the successful candidate in the highest imperial examinations in Jiaqing years and later became a member of the standing committee in Daoguang years. Yan Jingming was a successful candidate in the highest imperial examinations in Daoguang years and later became a member of the standing committee in Guangxu years. Zhao Shuqiao was a successful candidate in the highest imperial examinations in Tongzhi years and later became a foreign minister. Besides, the academy cultivated not only exams-oriented talents but also talents who met the needs of society. For example, Zhang Fu, who was the assistant minister in the ministry of penalty in the Ming Dynasty with the nickname of Zhang Qinghai. Liu Jun, the honest and clean man, was the assistant minister in the ministry of works in the Ming Dynasty. Yan Zhongyu was the assistant minister in the ministry of war in the Ming Dynasty. Bai Luan, the inspector of Shanxi, was upright and enforced the law strictly in the Ming Dynasty. Wang Lun, who dared to tit for tat towards the bigwigs. Dang Chongya, the minister of ministry of penalty, the minister of ministry of revenue, the minister of ministry of a penalty, and the great scholar of national history, who presided over the By-laws of the Qing Dynasty. All of the above talents were deeply influenced by academy education.

4.3 Effectively Promoted the Stable Development of Shaanxi

Academy not only has the function of educating people but also can stabilize society and promote family harmony. In the middle of the Ming Dynasty, Shaanxi's commerce and trade developed at high speed, and a group of super-rich people gradually emerged, which enlarged the disparity between the rich and the poor. However, Fengxiang, the hometown of many successful candidates in the highest imperial examinations located in the west of Guanzhong, didn't appear in such a scene, on the opposite side, it reflected a simple social atmosphere. The concept advocated by Shaanxi Academies towards the civilians was of great importance. Besides, there were large families in Fengxiang devoted to donating money to help the establishment of academies and the development of young poor, and they also returned a large number of profits to the society [7]. It can be seen that the educational thoughts put forward by academies played an important role in the stable development of Shaanxi society.

5. The Influence and Enlightenment of Shaanxi Academies in Ming and Qing Dynasties Towards the Development of Private Education in Shaanxi

According to statistics from the Ministry of Education, the proportion of private schools in China rose from 34.57 percent in 2017 to 35.35 percent in 2018, with an increase of 0.78 percent. The proportion of students in private schools in China has increased from 18.96 percent in 2017 to 19.51 percent in 2018. Private education has become an important part of China's education. As a major educational province, private education in Shaanxi province has absorbed the good essence of academy education in history. As an important part of Shaanxi's education, private education in Shaanxi should summarize useful and excellent experience from the running and management of academies, effectively increase the supply of educational service, improve the quality and level of education, meet the diversified educational needs of educatees, and give full play to the role of private education.

5.1 The Government Should Actively Change Concept and Support the Development of Private Education

In Ming and Qing Dynasties, the emergence and development of Shaanxi Academies were closely related to the attitude of the ruling class; that is to say, the rulers' positive or negative attitude would directly determine the survival of academy education. Nowadays, private education also relies much on the support of the government. It could be retrospected that at the beginning of the Ming Dynasty, Shaanxi Academies were banned and destroyed four times because of their free lectures and comments on political affairs. In the first year of Ming Taichang years, Emperor Xi (Zhu Youxiao) took his place. However, the imperial court was in chaos. In August of Tianqi's 5th year, Wei Zhongyan and his followers destroyed Guanzhong Academy. In Chongzhen's 1st year, the academy was rebuilt, and the result of academy education in the following years was remarkable. At that time, most of the students from Guanzhong who got outstanding grades in the examination were from Guanzhong Academy. Thus, the academy was once again flourishing. In Guangxu 29th year (1903), Guanzhong Academy developed into Shaanxi First Normal School [4].

From the perspective of historical experience, the current development of private schools in Shaanxi cannot be separated from the strong support of government at all levels. The Shaanxi provincial party committee and government-issued related laws in 2000, 2008, and 2011 respectively, and especially put forward specific policies and measures to support the development of the private higher education in Shaanxi. For many years, private colleges and universities in Shaanxi have insisted on running schools with characteristics and reforming measures, which makes private colleges and universities in Shaanxi always stand at the forefront and become a banner leading the development of private higher education in China. In February 2018, Shaanxi's government issued Opinions on the Implementation of Encouraging Social Forces to Run the School and Promote the Healthy Development of Private Education, which proposed to implement classified management and enhance the vigor of private schools. Besides, the opinions also put

forward to continue setting up special funds for the development of private higher education with the amount of 400 million yuan every year, which aims at supporting the connotational development of non-profit private colleges and universities. In the following years, as society develops, it required the government to formulate more regulations to standardize and promote private education.

5.2 Society Should Allocate Resources Reasonably to Promote the Development of Private Education

In Ming and Qing Dynasties, Shaanxi Academies integrated social resources effectively, absorbed, and revitalized many social resources, expanded the increase of social education resources, and made contributions to the popularization of education in Shaanxi. Liu Guyu, for example, after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895, he raised funds to create six private schools in Tiange Town, Mazhuang Town, Weijiaquan Town, Xiyang Town in Xianyang and Wujing Town, Liquan Town in Fufeng. In Guangxu's 10th year, Liu Guyu organized people to donate private schools and established Qiuyou School, whose courses included history, Daoism politics, and many other classes. Later, he lectured in Weijing Academy and especially paid attention to guide the student to study western science [4].

Academy education explores the cooperation of multiple subjects in running schools, which foreboded the revolution of education model, that is, changing from the initial government-oriented training to the later academic popularization. Luzhou Academy, located in Xianning County, Shaanxi (today's suburb of xi 'an), was built in Yuan Yanyou's 2nd year. It was made because of the inspector Zhao Shiyan, who proposed to build academies. Then Wang Yanrui, Zhao's fellow-villager, built the academy by demolishing his residence. Besides, Wang Chongjing, also Zhao's fellow-villager, donated to the school. In Qing Guangxu's years, Huang Xiangdong, the inspector of saltworks, donated to continue building the academy, which was later lectured by He Ruilin [4], the famous Neo-Confucianist and educator in late Qing Dynasty. It could be seen that without the help of social forces, the government was unable to continue to expand the education scale and the multiple changes laid a solid foundation for the feudal society. Also, this kind of diversified reforms provided enlightenment and reference for the transformation and development of modern private education in Shaanxi. If Shaanxi private education wants to achieve long-term development, it is vital to get the financial support and educational investment of social forces.

In the development of private education in Shaanxi, the role of social forces should not be underestimated, especially for organizations providing educational services, such as Shaanxi Private Education Association which studies the laws of private education, tries to construct the theory of private education with Shaanxi's characteristics and constructs the model of private schools. Other examples like China Alumni Association, Entrepreneurship Association and so on. Such organizations independently evaluate various educational institutions in the form of a third party to provide a reference for the development of private schools and all fields of the society's to better understand private education. Besides, other regional industrial organizations organically integrate different types of schools and enterprises. For example, the Bailuyuan University Alliance in Shaanxi, established in 2015, provides a platform for effective integration of information and resource sharing among private colleges and universities.

5.3 Schools Should Adapt to the Requirements of the Times and Promote the Development of Private Education

The teaching activities of Shaanxi Academies were not limited to Neo-Confucianism but paid more attention to the practical contents. The teaching management paid more attention to the very significance of non-intellectual factors, such as the loose and harmonious teacher-student relationship. First of all, the academies emphasized the cultivation of students' ability to self-study. Scholars mainly lectured the ideological significance, such as the Quotation of Guanzhong Academy regulated that the scholar could only illustrate the outline and encouraged students to explore knowledge by themselves. Second, the Quotation of Guanzhong Academy encouraged students to argue with each other, it is just like the teaching method, discussion, teachers now use in

the modern class. Finally, to eliminate the gap between teachers and students, teachers often kept an eye on the students' food and accommodation situation [3]. It is required that the academy dean should communicate with students regularly. This was aimed at striving to establish a harmonious relationship between teachers and students and making two parts understand each other. At this point, Private Colleges and Universities in Shaanxi may draw lessons from the relevant experience to improve communications between teachers and students, for example, to establish the academy system paying attention to activities such as Innovation and Entrepreneurship, cultural activities and academic discussion. In this way, the teacher may not only guide the student academic knowledge but also affect the students in various aspects.

In August 2018, the Ministry of Education issued Notice on the Implementation of the National Conference Focused on Undergraduate Education in the New Era, which put forward that colleges and universities should comprehensively sort out the teaching content of each course, eliminate inferior courses to create quality courses, reasonably enhance the degree of academic challenge, increase the difficulty of courses, expand the depth of courses, and effectively improve the quality of course teaching. This is the first time that the Ministry of Education formally used the word quality courses, which means that the future of school curriculum, especially the college courses tend to have a more difficult challenge, therefore, Shaanxi private schools especially private universities and colleges should reorganize teaching order in time, eliminate inferior class and make quality class, use more diversified teaching means, cultivate the students' comprehensive ability and advanced thinking, innovative course content and teaching mode, which can make teachers and students promote themselves commonly.

6. Conclusion

During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, Shaanxi Academies' ups and downs were the inevitable trends of social development. Academy education makes more and more people learn to attach importance to teachers' status, in return, the quality of teaching has increased and they may cultivate a large number of talents who devote themselves to the development of Shaanxi's economy and the improvement of people's living standard. Shaanxi's private education is regarded as an important part of the development of education in China, even though many aspects still need improvement because of continuous reform. However, it can absorb the essence of Shaanxi Academy education and effectively innovate the education mode and the characteristic of private education to better serve society.

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