

The Logical Path of Socialist Modern Family Building

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Abstract:

Family is the foothold of social progress and human modernization. In China, the traditional family view is the spiritual lineage of “family is the smallest country, and the country is made up of millions families”, which needs to deal with the dialectical relationship between the interests of small family and everyone based on self-cultivation. The classic Marxist family view is “where there is a country, there is a family”, which starts with the social attribute of the family and points out that purifying the family relationship through social transformation makes the family become the basic unit of real emotional union. Therefore, the construction of the social state is the prerequisite for the construction of the family. In contemporary China, family building has entered a new stage. The logic of modern family building should be based on the Marxist theory of social relations, weakening the macro research path of the relationship between the state and the family, and strengthening the dimension of daily life of individuals. Starting from the criticism of daily life, it aims to transform people’s way of life, people’s family consciousness and the relationship between family members and social environment, to grasp the rules of family life from the perspective of the relationship between family and environment, and between man and nature. Finally, a family external environment that is closely related to social development is formed, and a healthy family internal environment is constructed to cultivate modern families and modern citizens, providing internal driving force for social construction.

Keywords: *family building; family relations; logical path.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In his speech at the New Year’s greeting party in 2015, Xi Jinping pointed out, “No matter how much changes have taken place in the times and life pattern, we should pay attention to family building, family education and family style, closely combine and cultivate and carry forward the socialist core values, carry forward the traditional family virtues of the Chinese nation, promote family harmony, mutual love, the healthy growth of the next generation and a sense of security for the elderly, so that myriads of families will become an important basis for national development, national progress and social harmony.” Here, Xi Jinping clearly defined the connotation of family building, which should focus on family, that is, the construction of family life, family education and family morality. Obviously, four aspects of family life, family relations, family education and family moral culture are also important contents of family building.

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II. FAMILY BUILDING THEORY IN CHINESE TRADITIONAL CULTURE

“Family” is the foundation of the Chinese people’s life. “To cultivate the moral self, regulate the family, maintain the state rightly and make all peaceful” embodies the essence of Chinese family building and is also the logical path of Chinese family building. From oneself to others, from oneself to one’s home, from oneself to one’s country. The family should be constructed from two aspects of personal sensibility and rational life, i.e. to construct an orderly family relationship, to carry out family education and to construct family ethics. Therefore, family is not only of sociological significance, but also of philosophical significance and role in China.

The basic point of Chinese traditional family building lies in the rational growth of individuals, especially the ethical relationship interaction between family members. Therefore, the construction of “family culture” is the core content of traditional family building. Family culture mainly refers to the sum total of values, living styles, life styles, behavioral norms and living habits that are gradually formed, accumulated and passed down from generation to generation in the long-term common life of families or family members, with the core of moral standards, moral outlook and ways of dealing with people. Family is the initial field of individual socialization. The new generation of family members are socialized through families or clans, thus forming the order of family relations and social relations, so that the clan controls the direction of the family building and the smooth progress of the family building through the strong family culture construction.

Social traditional “family” culture is characterized by “private group”, and its emergence and existence have material basis. First of all, human survival and reproduction of life is private, that is, individual from the perspective of the basis of life. The development of individual life plays a fundamental role in the development of family. Secondly, judging from the material basis of life existence, traditional social

economy is a farming economy, individual family production is the main form of production, and family production is the lifeblood of the country's social existence. Therefore, the purpose of family culture is to consolidate the foundation of family and society. Finally, from the perspective of the spatial basis of life existence, the family is the original space for individual survival and the place for the transformation of individuality and sociality, and individuals grow up in this space and gradually understand the rules of social space. As a result, the lifestyle, values, behavior habits and living habits of this space affect the quality of individual and social links.

In traditional society, "family culture" is a male-centered cultural system. The traditional mode of production and human reproduction determine the family and social position of women and men. Specifically, the reproductive function of women and the productive advantage of men have contributed to the pattern of gender division of labor between men and women. In essence, the pattern of gender division of labor between men and women does not show male chauvinism. When such a pattern of gender division of labor rises to the level of social consciousness, the idea of male dominance and female subordination dominates the construction of "family" culture, and male power gradually takes shape. The traditional male-centered "family" culture aims at stabilizing the development of the family and society and forming an orderly social life. The social male chauvinism began to take shape when the traditional "family" culture was combined with politics. The "same structure of the clan and country", in turn, affects family building. By strengthening of social system and cultural awareness, a path of family ethics construction with male authority as the center and filial piety culture as the core has been formed in the traditional family building.

The traditional path of family building strengthens the dominant position and responsibility of men in family building. First of all, at the level of family life, women take on the tasks of housework and reproduction of individual life, assisting the husband and bringing up children, while men are mainly responsible for the construction of family external relations. Secondly, on the level of family relations, the family role relations of "kind father and filial son", "righteous husband and obedient wife", "friendly and respectful brothers" as well as the family order principle of distinction between sexes and respect for seniority have been formed. Thirdly, in the aspect of family education, a family education system with family culture ethics as the core, family responsibility as the guide, words and deeds as the main way is constructed, emphasizing the importance of self-cultivation and family ethics.

There are the following problems in traditional family building: First, from the perspective of gender power relations, male chauvinism hinders the construction of equal relations and women's family role is limited to some extent. Secondly, from the main content of family education, attention should be paid attention to the construction of family ethics and family precepts, especially the education of the five cardinal relationships. Attaching importance to the construction of family relations is a precious heritage of traditional family building, but the content of this unequal construction of family relations is not conducive to the modernization of family relations. Third, in the traditional family building, attention is paid to the construction of the family as a unit, and privacy has become its disadvantage, because such privacy refers to a private group, damaging the formation of a civil society and forming a social network with numerous

personal relationships, in which human feelings are more important than law and the rule of man is more important than the rule of law.

III. THE CLASSIC MARXIST THEORY OF FAMILY BUILDING

Since it was introduced into China, Marxism has been combined with China's national conditions to guide China's revolution and socialist construction. Classic Marxists have made a detailed exposition of family issues, and many of them have had a profound influence to this day.

Marxism enters into the theme of family building through the reproduction of labor force. In the *German Ideology*, Marx put forward that, as the starting point of philosophical research, the "realistic person" is the product of activities in a certain historical environment, generated in the relationship with others. Their activities include two aspects, one is the need for "clothing, food, shelter and other things", the other is the need for human beings to continue their activities, that is, "people who reproduce their lives every day begin to produce others, that is, multiplication, which is the relationship between husband and wife, the relationship between parents and children, which is also the family. At first, the family was the only social relationship"[1]. In other words, the realization of the essence of "realistic person" needs to be realized not only in the sum of production relations, but also in the sum of family relations.

In the Marxist discourse system, family life mainly refers to the activities of the family as a unit to produce their own life, which includes not only family production activities, but also the activities of reproduction. Marx revealed the nature of family life, and he believed that "human nature is just the free and conscious activities". In other words, family life refers to the activities that family members consciously live in freedom and produce their own lives, including family production activities and family reproduction activities, which include routine of daily life and other activities, the material basis and prerequisite for the existence of the family. Family relations, family education and family moral culture focus on the construction of family spirit, which embodies the social attributes of people.

On the one hand, Marx connected family life with capitalist mode of production through "realistic person" and labor reproduction theory. He believed that the female reproductive function is closely related to the capitalist mode of production, and the intergenerational replacement, especially the intergenerational replacement of labor force, is the condition of capitalist production. In the class society, the root of the oppression of women lies in their unique position in the process of intergenerational replacement. The family is contracted into the capitalist mass production through the reproduction of labor force, and the family relationship is also linked with the production relationship. The oppression of women in capitalist society is closely related to capitalist mode of production. Lenin also put the issue of women's subordinate status in the context of class social labor reproduction, and repeatedly stressed the decisive role of housework. Therefore, in the discourse system of classical Marxism, family life activities need to enter the public domain, and women participate in social production and get complete liberation, so the socialization of housework plays an important role in the theory of family building of classical Marxism.

On the other hand, the classical Marxists inherited Hegel's view of family. They agreed with Hegel's thought that family is based on love, and believed that the most important part of family building is related to love, marriage and family affection. To put it another way, family building is mainly the cultivation of the ability to love. It is only when the private economic foundation of marriage is eliminated, the family is no longer a social and economic unit, the housework is made public, and the raising and education of children become public events that personal love really becomes the foundation of marriage. A family based on love and marriage is a communist family. Engels described the family under the communist social system in the *Grunds atze des Kommunismus* in this way: "The communist social system will make the relationship between the two sexes a purely personal relationship that is only related to the parties and does not require social intervention. The reason why this can be achieved is that private ownership will be abolished and children will be educated by society, thus eliminating the two bases of modern marriage, i.e. the pattern that the wife depends on her husband and the children depend on their parents, which is produced by private ownership"[2]. For this reason, marriage will not become a matter of interest. According to Engels, "a man's rule in marriage is a simple consequence of his economic rule, and it will naturally disappear with the disappearance of the latter"[3]. When the marriage based on economic relationship disappears, it will be replaced by the marriage based on true love, which is not the sacrifice of women obtained by means of money or other social power, but equal to both men and women. Therefore, it is both human and moral. From this point of view, the classic Marxists are trying to make the family pure, which is the connection of a loving family relationship.

In addition, Marx stressed the importance of family education in family building. He believes that parents should treat their children with kindness and gentleness. "There is no more sacred treasure house than parents' heart, the kindest judge, the most considerate friend, the sun of love, which warms the most secret center of our wishes with its own flame"[4]. But this kind of warmth is rare due to the money relationship of bourgeois families. "The empty talk of the bourgeoisie about family and education, about the intimate relationship between parents and children, becomes more and more disgusting"[5]. The bourgeois family education, in other words, is the relationship between money and interests. When there is a conflict in such family, the wife and children will blindly obey, and the husband unilaterally controls. In proletarian families, poor women with low income had to sell their labor to make a living, so they had no time to take care of their children's education, let alone spare time to participate in their children's growth. What's more, many parents would buy and sell their own children, or force them to sell their own labor and bear heavy labor. "The first slogan for capitalism to use machines is the labor of women and children!" "Forced labor for capitalists not only deprives children of playing time, but also deprives families of the time they normally need for free labor within the family"[6]. In the long run, more and more children from proletarian families are just commodities that can be bought and sold and cheap labor for the capitalist society.

In the classic Marxism, attention is paid to the construction of loving family relationship in family building. However, family life needs to be based on material life, for both the maintenance of marriage and family education. It is difficult to realize the ideal model of family building expected by classical Marxism if people live in the period of striving for survival. The purity of mass marriage and family life can become

a reality only when public undertakings can provide better material guarantee for family building. So, it is bound to be the way of family building to vigorously develop modern family service.

IV. CONSTRUCTING A MODERN FAMILY BUILDING THEORY BASED ON “DAILY LIFE THEORY”

Based on the changes of modern family structure in China, the nuclear family has increasingly become the mainstream form of family structure. Some of the family functions tend to be weakened due to the transfer to the society, such as the family support function, economic function, etc., while some functions are continuously strengthened, such as emotional function, cultural function, educational function, etc. In the meantime, science and technology are also changing family building. “Science and technology are permeating into daily life to a greater extent. For example, the importance of home science and technology cannot be ignored. However, we also know that science and technology and home-based science and technology have not eliminated the most trivial daily life affairs. By reducing the time spent doing boring housework, science and technology have produced a very obvious problem of increasing free time”[7]. The development of domestic service industry makes it possible for family building to focus on spiritual construction.

Building a modern family should begin with the construction of domestic education.

First, a modern “theory of daily life” should be constructed to transform the corruptible into mysterious life and make family life a science, an art and an activity to cultivate one’s temperament, so as to truly realize one’s human nature. Helping family members master the art of building a good family living space through home economics education will greatly improve the overall level of family life quality in China, thus improving the national quality. Domestic education in China should be aimed at all family members instead of women only. The goal of contemporary domestic education in China is not only to cultivate women’s housekeeping ability, but also to improve the quality of whole family members, give full play to family functions and promote the transformation of Chinese families from tradition to modernity. A clear understanding of the characteristics of family changes is the basic premise to grasp the commanding heights of modern home economics research in theory and choose the breakthrough point of practice.

Second, marriage and family education should be carried out so that marriage and family relations are truly based on love. With the development of economy, family relations are no longer mainly fettered by economic relations, but have been developed in a benign way. The family life in modern society is no longer confined to the mere material field, but is developing towards satisfying people’s high-level spiritual needs-emotional needs and self-development needs. As the construction of the family is in the process of transforming from “life-oriented” to “spirit-oriented”, it is necessary to incorporate the content of improving the family’s spiritual life into the domestic economics education system, which is the basic principle for constructing China’s domestic economics education framework system. Home economics has no vitality if it is not combined with reality, so it can only be combined with the practice of

family civilization construction.

Third, the traditional Chinese family style and family education thought should be inherited, so that the essence of family education is the cultivation of children's loving ability and accomplishment.

In the content of modern home economics education, while paying attention to the teaching of operational skills such as family management and family material construction, the spiritual content such as family culture construction, interpersonal relationship adjustment and children's education should be highlighted. The focus of domestic education should be on the needs of realizing social development and people's all-round development, on realizing the change of family concept and improving people's quality in an all-round way. We should regard the development of domestic economics education as an educational strategy to improve the quality of our population and make a practical educational plan.

Family building is the eternal dream of mankind and the most basic platform to realize people's life. In the family, marriage relationship and parent-child relationship are the core family relationship and the prototype of all social relationships. They occur in daily life and are composed of trivial events of daily life. After more than 30 years of rapid social development, China has deconstructed the traditional family structure and formed a diversified family form. The construction of husband-wife relationship and parent-child relationship is facing the challenge of a new lifestyle, so are family education and family support for the elderly, which have become important issues in people's daily life. Therefore, it is necessary to study and practice a daily life model that is beneficial to the construction of Chinese families.

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