

Cai Yuanpei's Thought on Aesthetic Education and Its Implications for Aesthetic Education in Contemporary Chinese Families

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Abstract: The family is the smallest unit structure of the state and society, and it is the millions of families that make up a huge nation. The family is the first teacher of the child, and the education the child receives in the family will have an important influence on his growth and success. This paper starts from the study of Mr. Cai Yuanpei's thought on aesthetic education, analyzes the historical logic, basic connotation and significance of his thought, discusses the status quo and problems of family aesthetic education in contemporary China under the background of the country's comprehensive implementation of quality education, and puts forward the targeted measures for the promotion of the development of family aesthetic education in contemporary China by taking Mr. Cai's thought on aesthetic education as the guiding concept.

Keywords: Cai Yuanpei; Family; Aesthetic Education; The Contemporary Era.

1. The Historical Logic, Basic Connotation and Significance of Cai Yuanpei's Thought on Aesthetic Education in the Times

1.1. The Historical Logic of Cai Yuanpei's Thought on Aesthetic Education

Although the Xinhai Revolution overthrew the Manchu government, it did not fundamentally save China from national peril. After the death of Yuan Shikai, the warlords were at war, and China was once again in a state of disintegration. The hearts of the common people were crushed and collided, and the lack of faith and the helplessness of spiritual life wandered in their hearts. Although the New Culture Movement had been carried out for some time, the actual implementation of it did not reach the ideal value. After experiencing the failure of various patriotic progressives in saving China from national peril, Mr. Cai Yuanpei was deeply aware of the weakness and incompetence of the current government and the darkness and division of society. He realized that the current government was weak and incompetent and the society was dark and divided, and that the status quo could not be changed only by the efforts of some upper-class intellectuals. To push the country and the nation forward, it was necessary to rely on the concerted efforts of all the people to enlighten the people and save the country through education and improvement. In the face of the dilemma of whether to choose to respect Confucianism or to introduce religion, Mr. Cai Yuanpei proposed to "replace religion with aesthetic education", i.e., to emphasize the independence of the discipline and the functional permeability of aesthetic education in education, and then to generally improve the people's scientific and cultural literacy and noble and sound character through education.

Mr. Cai Yuanpei took the perfect personality of traditional culture as the premise of his understanding, and critically absorbed the results of Kant, Schiller and other philosophers' thoughts on aesthetic education. Mr. Cai Yuanpei took "the

'perfect personality' of traditional culture as the 'pre-understanding', and selectively absorbed the essence of ideas including Kant and Schiller, etc. On the one hand, he retained the spirit of pleasure and moral rationality of traditional culture, and overcame the defects of traditional culture in suppressing individuality and closing the subject; on the other hand, he drew on the western ideas of aesthetic education, and critically absorbed them. On the one hand, it retains the spirit of pleasure and moral rationality of traditional culture, and overcomes the defects of traditional culture that suppresses individuality and closes off the subject; on the other hand, it draws on the characteristics of self-emancipation and freedom of the subject of Western aesthetics, and breaks through the fence of Kantian aesthetics that is confined to discursive thinking, and rejects the theory of pure appreciation of formalism, and ingeniously supplements the practical connotations of the idea of aesthetic education."¹

1.2. Important Connotations of Cai Yuanpei's Thought on Aesthetic Education

With regard to aesthetic education for personality, the road to building an ideal personality is long and complex, and needs to be perfected through aesthetic education. In the course of social practice, human beings recognize and transform the world according to the "law of beauty", and human beings themselves, as a constituent part of the living world, have to be constructed according to the "law of beauty" as well. That is to say, shaping personality in the sense of aesthetics is an indispensable inquiry for people to shape an aesthetic personality. In terms of self-discipline and other-discipline in aesthetic education, Cai Yuanpei believed that self-discipline is a manifestation of the integration of emotions into aesthetic education, and that the sense of beauty itself is an emotional activity. Other-discipline is a distinct manifestation of the integration of aesthetic education in education. Aesthetic education cannot be absolutely independent from education, if education lacks the color of aesthetic education, it will become dull and boring, without its own characteristics. Aesthetic education should be incorporated into the educational equation with "moral

education", "intellectual education" and "physical education". Cai Yuanpei in the "for the education policy of the proposal" will be given different weight, "military nationalism should account for 10%, realism should account for its 40, moral education should account for its 20, aesthetic education and worldview account for its 30²". A healthy development of personality is a harmonious development of morality, intelligence, physicality and aesthetics as a whole, and aesthetic education must not be divided from the other three, and there is a complex relationship of integration between aesthetic education and education.

1.3. The Contemporary Significance of Cai Yuanpei's Thoughts on Aesthetic Education

Mr. Cai Yuanpei's idea of aesthetic education is also an important reference for quality education nowadays. When the idea of aesthetics was put forward, it aimed to open up people's wisdom through aesthetic education and science, inspire people to think about the value of the supremacy of life, and thus positively change the old China's backward and dilapidated appearance.

On the one hand, Mr. Cai Yuanpei's idea of aesthetic education manifests the spirit of innovation. The development of aesthetic education cannot be separated from innovation, and innovation is the source of power for the development of aesthetic education. The psychological process of aesthetics is a creative process, but at the same time it also provides a nurturing environment for the creation of creation. From the viewpoint of the intrinsic stipulation of aesthetic education, aesthetics is the synergistic effect of rational and perceptual forces contradicting each other and harmonizing all the time, and the mutual induction of intuition and imagination, which is homogeneous with creation, and the difference between the two is manifested in the difference in the amount of components in the construction of the mental activities. "Freedom, too, is a virtue. If the mind, if the body, if the speech, if the residence, if the profession, if the assembly, there is not a degree of freedom. If it is suppressed by the outside world to an extent that is not within its bounds, then it is fought with all its might, and even though it bleeds, it is said that 'freedom or death' is the same. However, if it is too much, and it is shameful to oneself and harmful to others, then it is no longer freedom, but is called indulgence. Indulgence, the enemy of freedom!"³ Only people with innovative personalities can manifest their innovative power and unify convergent thinking and divergent thinking, rational thinking and irrational thinking, logical thinking and intuitive thinking.

On the other hand, Mr. Cai Yuanpei's idea of aesthetic education also reflects the concern for a fully developed human being. Psychologically speaking, man is an organically integrated whole of emotion, will and knowledge. The human psyche can be dissected into two parts, rational and emotional, which are the objects of moral, intellectual, physical and aesthetic roles. As a social animal, man has multiple needs. Aesthetic education is an important component of the overall development of human beings, is a creative meaning of strong emotional stimulation machine, can show the freedom of transcendent personality characteristics, the sensibility and rationality of the intermingling of the mixture. Aesthetics in the sensual content mixed with the rational spirit of the kernel, through the intuitive imagination makes it possible for the subject of aesthetics to come into contact with the inner spirit of the

content. In today's utilitarian education thinking orientation, exam-oriented education is prone to only the theory of scores, will originally have a difference in personality of the students into a uniform machine, to change this status quo, it is necessary to change the concept of education, pay attention to the aesthetic education in the process of quality education, "silent" important effect.

2. Analysis of the Current Situation of Family Aesthetic Education in Contemporary China

2.1. The Gradual Dilution of the Traditional Idea of Filial Piety and Fraternal Duty

Out of the need for social division of labor and regional distribution among industries, many laborers flow from the countryside to the cities, which, while bringing about rapid economic development, also results in the gradual disregard and dilution of the traditional concept of the family, and the Confucian concept of loyalty and filial piety as the core is subject to the impact of modern values. In addition, due to the influence of the policies of the times, the lack of siblings also tends to cause the dilution and indifference of the concept of filial piety and fraternal duty. In a traditional extended family, out of blood and kinship, people would take care of each other, be respectful and modest, and be kind to their fathers and filial to their sons. However, for many one-child families, these children lack the process of growing up with other siblings, and it is difficult for them to have the mentality of humility and forbearance, and they are unable to experience and practice empathy for others. Especially in today's multi-cultural era, the new educational thinking and concepts of the West have impacted the traditional education model of our country, and some of the excellent family virtues inherited from our ancestors have also been impacted, and there is a phenomenon of dilution of filial piety and brotherly love, which will have a lot of negative impacts on the family education in the future.

2.2. Alienation in the Development of Quality Education

Education requires faith. When Jaspers talks about the nature of education and the crisis of education, he argues that the nature of education is in question when the faith of education is shaken. Education requires faith, without which it cannot be called education, but is only a teaching technique.⁴ It is only when we have a strong faith in education that our education will not go astray. At present, the purpose of our national education is to promote human development, and the fundamental goal of quality education is to cultivate physically and mentally healthy, sound and well-rounded people. The Ministry of Education's policy of giving full support to arts education has once again raised quality education to a high level of national concern. However, many parents blindly enroll their children in many art training courses in order to be able to attach more scores out of utilitarian considerations of education. "To enroll children in art training courses is to emphasize aesthetic education." This is the realization of many parents. Although some parents realize that this is a misunderstanding of aesthetic education, but they are also helplessly wrapped up in the art training fever, comparing each other to enroll their children in a variety of art training courses, and how many art certificates

to evaluate the "results of aesthetic education".

2.3. The New Wave of Thinking that is Impacting Traditional Authoritarian Education

The traditional Chinese educational ideology believes that filial children come out from under the stick, advocates authoritarian education, and emphasizes the supremacy of paternal authority. Due to the one-way education and training model, there is a lack of effective communication between parents and children, which often leads to tension and antagonism with children and stimulates their rebelliousness. As a result, children who grow up in an authoritarian atmosphere often do not have a strong sense of self-esteem. On the contrary, some parents are deeply influenced by the new western concept of education, which advocates the liberation of nature and freedom of individuality, and no longer guides their children at all. These concepts generally believe that all of a child's characteristics can be attributed to his or her nature, and that his or her innate liveliness and passion cannot be suppressed or defended. Parents submit to their children, do not allow them to be frustrated, and allow them to grow up in a hotbed. Although they no longer scold their children, children who grow up in an overly relaxed, unrestrained home environment are prone to go to the other extreme. Dr. Montessori said that every character defect is caused by some kind of wrong treatment experienced by children in their early years. A major feature of modern education is its openness, but openness is not the same as indulgence, and individuality is not the same as caprice. Aesthetic education can mold sound, individualistic individuals and thus advance the inner character of a society. Both authoritarian and democratic education have their own drawbacks and can be harmful to the growth and success of children. Therefore, there is a need for aesthetic education at home to help children gain a better perception.

3. Implications of Cai Yuanpei's Thought on American Education for Contemporary Chinese Families

3.1. Aligning Self-directed Learning with Active Guidance

Family education is a lifelong education for everyone, an important platform for the implementation of quality education at all levels and in all types of schools, and has an important and far-reaching impact on the academic success of every student and his or her lifetime achievements. In the face of the current problem of the lack of alienation of aesthetic education in family education, on the one hand, parents should change the concept of family education and implement a diversified evaluation system for their children. Parents should not only pay attention to the children's test scores and other explicit contents, but also should realize that the children's aesthetic sentiment and interest in life are important contents for the development of a sound personality. Parents should pay attention to and participate in the process of children's learning and growth, and be good at providing sufficient time for children's learning to overcome difficulties, creating more ways for children to acquire more cultivation skills and form learning strategies, and promoting children's enthusiasm and initiative in learning through a variety of ways and means. In the family's daily evaluation system,

parents should choose a suitable evaluation method for their children according to their children's personality, interests and other psychological characteristics and strengths.

3.2. Integration of Traditional Culture and Creative Education

The long-standing and profound Chinese culture is an important asset for us to draw on for our educational resources. With the development of the times, traditional culture should be transformed to take on an innovative and sustainable look that is more suitable for the development of society. As parents, we should learn more about good traditional culture and set a good example for our children to follow. The things left behind by the old ancestors should not be completely abandoned, parents in their daily lives to find opportunities to find time to learn some excellent traditional culture, widely read books about family customs, family education, family training, these books can greatly enhance the parents' ideological concepts and cultural literacy, for family education has an important role. A country infused with excellent traditional culture can be more harmonious and rich in the flavor of life, and parents also have the ability to carry out family education according to the actual situation of their own families and children, and promote the healthy development of children's physical and mental health. After parents have some traditional culture skills, they need to utilize the excellent contents of traditional culture to guide the development of their children's thinking and activate the new vitality of traditional culture.

3.3. Harmonization of Rational Enlightenment and Emotional Cultivation

A correct view of sensibility and rationality is crucial to a child's growth and education. Parents should mainly cultivate their children's aesthetic education in their early childhood, and strive to realize the unity of rational enlightenment and sensual cultivation. First, as parents should cultivate their children's good emotional control ability. Correctly view the sensibility and rationality haveism children to develop good emotional control ability. Children in the process of growing up will experience many emotional moments, such as by the teacher's praise or classmates ridicule and so on. In the face of these inevitable processes in life, the correct emotional and rational education can help them immediately and express their own emotions, and learn to use rational thinking to balance and control emotions, to avoid emotional over-excitement and impulsive behavior. Second, parents should cultivate children's independent thinking and calm judgment. In the age of information explosion, children are easily influenced by emotions and emotions and make blind and irrational decisions in the face of the massive influx of information and opinions. Through proper education and guidance, parents can help children learn to think rationally and form independent thinking and judgment, thus avoiding the behavior of blindly following the crowd. Third, parents need to guide their children to form a sunny and healthy attitude towards life. Emotionality can bring joy and happiness, but it is also easy for children to pursue temporary happiness, which leads to the neglect of long-term goals and efforts. Rational thinking can help children understand the importance of long-term goals and values, so that they can better plan their future development and develop a positive mindset and healthy attitude towards life. Parents should educate and guide their children to form good values and

concepts of life in their daily lives, and to integrate their personal development goals into the development needs of the country and the nation.

4. Conclusion

Mr. Cai Yuanpei's idea of aesthetic education has a very rich theoretical connotation, and many of his educational concepts are ahead of their time and informative. In the face of the problems that exist in contemporary Chinese family education, such as too utilitarian, framing children's growth by uniform standards, neglecting children's individuality and other faults, the author analyzes the deep-seated reasons behind the emergence of these problems, and puts forward some solutions and measures that can be improved on the basis of absorbing Mr. Cai Yuanpei's ideas of aesthetic

education in the hope that they can provide help for the development of China's family education cause.

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