

## On the Value Orientation in the Selection of the Role Models of Filial Piety

Mingxia Lu

School of Marxism, Baicheng Normal University, Baicheng City, Jilin Province, China

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**Abstract:** In recent years, there have been labels such as "poor", "sick", "bitter" and "tired" in the selection of models of filial piety. In fact, compared with "bitter", "joy" is a more common and more realistic educational value factor in filial piety. On the one hand, taking "joy" as beauty is more acceptable to people; On the other hand, taking "joy" as beauty helps to transform filial piety from external moral requirement to internal aesthetic experience, which can educate people invisibly. When parents agree that filial piety take "joy" as beauty, they will feel happy for the birth of their child. When children agree that filial piety take "joy" as beauty, they will enjoy it. When parents and children both agree that filial piety take "joy" as beauty, they will be happy and harmonious.

### 1. Introduction

Once upon a time, "poor", "sick", "bitter" and "tired" have become the standard configuration in the selection of filial piety. Take the activity of "Looking for the Most Beautiful Filial Teenagers" launched by CCTV as an example: among the 11 filial teenagers selected in 2013, 9 are from single-parent families, 7 have a sick father or mother, and 5 are both single parents and their father or mother is ill. All the filial teenagers are from poor families without exception; 2014 selected 10 filial piety youth are also poor without exception. Among them, four teenagers must took the responsibility of taking care of grandma and grandpa because of some reasons such as their parents divorced, died, worked, fell ill. The bitter child needs care paralyzed in bed alone dad, grandma and deaf brother with cerebral thrombosis, and this day has lasted for eight years. It is very pitiful that these teenagers should bear the burden of life at such a young age.

However, after moving, the rational people is not difficult to find that the so-called "most beautiful filial piety boy" is all bitter, and it seems that the more bitter the more "beautiful". This touching "filial piety in suffering", in fact, there are many problems.

First, although hard conditions can highlight filial piety, but can filial piety only be developed under hard conditions? Is there no filial piety in ordinary or rich families? Obviously, we can see from real life experience that the cultivation of filial piety is not the opposite of family economic conditions. Good economic conditions in the family, there are also a lot of filial piety good character young; In families with poor economic conditions, there will also be unfilial people. Morality itself has a universality that is feasible to everyone. As a kind of moral code, filial piety can also be practiced by everyone. The underlying logic of "taking hardship as beauty" easily leads people to misunderstand that filial piety can only be attributed to "poor families", thus providing some people with the excuse that "non-poor families do not have to perform filial piety", thus adversely affecting the cultivation of filial piety.

Secondly, from the perspective of education, if the purpose of setting an example of filial piety is to promote filial piety, is this kind of filial piety "taking suffering as beauty" universal? The answer is clearly no. In contemporary China, poor families are only a minority, and with the in-depth implementation of targeted poverty alleviation and targeted poverty alleviation, it will continue to be gradually reduced. And the meaning of the example of filial piety is to inspire, guide and demonstrate. If people take suffering for beauty, then for the majority of people in well-off or wealthy families, the chance of becoming a filial son is very slim. If you want to be a dutiful son or daughter, the precondition is that your parents divorce, illness or make yourself poor first. Otherwise, there is no chance. It's not hard to understand why some kids watch the show and say, "I didn't meet that situation, if I had, I could have done it." There is a big problem with the logic

behind the evaluation of filial piety based on the beauty of suffering. Such filial son or filial daughter is hard to promote. Therefore, there is no great educational significance

So, how should we evaluate filial piety? On this issue, a filial piety reality show (hereinafter referred to as "X Program") with the theme of filial piety may be able to provide us with some useful enlightenment.

### **First, taking "joy" as beauty is easier to be accepted by people**

Compared with "bitter", "joy" is an emotional experience that people are more willing to pursue. Because of this, today's variety shows can be very popular. X program is a reality show about filial piety. The show starts with "filial piety" and invites celebrity guests to return to their hometown with their father (or mother) for six days and five nights to fulfill his wish. Different from other filial piety programs of suffering and sensationalism, the concept of the program is: the correct way to practice filial piety is to be happy. At the same time of making parents happy, the sons and daughters are also very happy. It is refreshing. Under this concept, not only the guests and their parents who participate in the program can feel happy, but also the TV viewers who watch the program can feel the aesthetic experience of "joy" from their filial piety.

In fact, since ancient times, "joy" has been praised by the ancient sages. Confucius said "he worked so hard that he forgot to eat, he was so happy that he forgot all his worries."<sup>[1]</sup> Eat coarse grain, drink cold water, bend your arms as pillows, and the fun is in "<sup>[2]</sup>. Confucius' student Yan Yuan ate only a small bowl of rice, drank only a gourd of water, and lived in a poor little house. No one else could stand such poverty, but Yan Hui still did not change his love and pursuit for Tao<sup>[3]</sup>. Confucius was very appreciative of this spirit. In the Analects of Confucius, the word "joy" appears 24 times. Mencius said, "Reflection and sincerity are the greatest pleasures."<sup>[4]</sup> Wang Gen said that "the heart is based on its own joy" and "learning is learning this joy". Kang Youwei said, "abandon the pain, and pursue pleasure". These classic phrases all show the importance of "joy" in people's mind.<sup>[5]</sup>

### **Second, taking "joy" as beauty helps to transform filial piety from external moral requirement to internal aesthetic experience**

For individuals, filial piety is not only an external moral requirement, but also an internal aesthetic experience. Morality requires filial piety to distinguish good from evil -- the so-called "all good filial piety first" is based on the judgment of moral filial piety. The filial piety of aesthetic experience distinguishes beauty from ugliness -- when parents show joy and joy due to filial piety, and when children obtain inner harmony and joy due to filial piety, people can have pleasant aesthetic feelings. In the Twenty-Four Filial Piety, the 70-year-old Lao Lai Zi wore colorful clothes and played rattle drums just to amuse his parents. When he and his parents looked at each other and smiled, the sense of happiness that filled each other's hearts was beautiful. The "fan pillow warm coverlet" in the Twenty-Four Filial Piety, when the nine-year-old Huang Xiang carefully fan the cool pillow mat for her parents in summer, in winter with the body like a young stove for their parents to warm the bed, this kind of subtle flashes of love can not let a person produce warm and beautiful aesthetic feelings?

The difference is that the filial piety of moral requirements lays emphasis on the order of human relations, while the filial piety of aesthetic experience lays emphasis on the inner harmony. The filial piety required by morality lays emphasis on the code of conduct, while the filial piety of aesthetic experience is embodied in the nature of mind. The filial piety required by morality contains more rational content, while the filial piety of aesthetic experience contains more perceptual content. The filial piety of aesthetic experience is inseparable from the filial piety of moral requirements, which is the sensibility and individualization of the filial piety of moral requirements. At the same time, the aesthetic experience is more individualized and feels more relaxed than the semi-mandatory moral requirements. Therefore, in the education of filial piety, more emphasis on the aesthetic experience of filial piety is easier to be accepted by the education object.

In order to realize the transformation of filial piety from moral requirement to aesthetic experience in the course of education, "joy" is an indispensable factor. The so-called "joy" contains

the meaning of happiness and pleasure, "formally refers to the joy, pleasant mood, in essence refers to the spiritual focus, investment and feeling, is a harmony of physical and mental stretch of the realm of beauty".<sup>[6]</sup>The "joy" mentioned here is by no means the temporary physical happiness of "hedonism", but the lasting and stable happiness of spirit, which is a natural pursuit in accordance with human nature. The foundation of "joy" lies in the harmony of truth, goodness and beauty, which is a noble spiritual feeling.

To examine filial piety with the value of "joy", the goodness of filial piety required by morality naturally sublimates into the beauty of aesthetic experience, and then the self-cultivation of morality sublimates into the realm of aesthetic life. As Confucius said, "(for any knowledge, skill, etc.) know it, not as good as love it; Those who love it are not as good as those who enjoy it."<sup>[7]</sup>The person who knows is not as good as the person who likes, the person who likes is not as good as the person who enjoys it. The highest state of filial piety is to treat filial piety with an aesthetic attitude and to be happy with filial piety. In this way, filial piety surpasses utility and morality, surpasses the additional responsibilities and obligations, and turns from heteromorphism to the essence of the mind, and makes people "moved the gods of heaven and earth" and "enjoy great happiness". Mencius once said, "Both father and mother live, brothers are safe"<sup>[8]</sup>As a gentleman one of the most important three kinds of fun, therefore, to filial piety for happiness, can be called the most beautiful filial piety.

Based on this point, it has become a common method of filial piety education in ancient and modern times to stimulate the aesthetic experience of "happy filial piety" through the way people like to see. From ancient times to the present, there are numerous works of art, such as poems, operas and paintings, which contain the educational significance of filial piety. Many current pop songs (such as "Go Home Often", "Where Has the Time Gone", "Listen to Mom's Words", etc.), with touching melodies and sincere lyrics, convey the small and unspeakable subtle feelings of filial piety. A lyric, a paragraph of notes, will inadvertently touch the heart, the heart of the most soft part to stimulate and magnify. The reason why X program can transform the original filial piety norms that are slightly rigid and preached into aesthetic experience integrated into daily nuances, "making" people invisible, also relies on the aesthetic experience of "joy".

### **Thirdly, three kinds of value expression with taking "joy" as beauty**

The purpose of morality is to promote a happy life or good life. The inherent warmth and kindness of filial piety, as well as the spiritual joy and pleasure brought by it, all make filial piety emit its precious charm of shining. The so-called "happiness of family" is the highest happiness that the Chinese people strive for. Filial piety with "joy", in the parents, children and parent-child each has different performance.

#### **(1) parents: they will feel happy for the birth of their child**

In the X show, every celebrity guest is required to abide by the "Six Principles of Supporting Parents", one of which is to "make your parents laugh at least once a day". Laughter is a more intuitive and external manifestation of the beauty of filial piety "joy" on the parents. Huang Feng, the most beautiful child with filial piety in 2013, took care of her father who was injured by an accident and was paraplegic at the age of 6. She never gave up, no matter how tired and bitter the rain and snow were. In an interview, the 16-year-old said: "When I see my dad smiling, it's OK." A simple words, is the true meaning of filial piety of natural flow, let a person see a most beautiful filial piety.

The beauty of filial piety "Le" in the parents more internal performance, is "Le Zi born". Yao Tingjie wrote in Teaching Filial Piety in the Qing Dynasty that "If they do what is their nature and do what is their filial duty, then the parents will be happy about the birth of their child and not hurt by melancholy."<sup>[9]</sup>As the object of filial piety, parents are the direct feelings of their children's filial piety. When their children are disobedient, parents will lash out at them: "How could I have given birth to such a hell-child", "I really regret having given birth to you", etc. Apart from expressing anger, such a rebuke is also the truest assessment of filial piety. The Book of Filial Piety · Shizhang says: "Don't disappoint your parents". Don't let parents regret giving birth to you, let parents feel that gave birth to you is the greatest pride and happiness in this life, this is the realization of filial

piety, to achieve the beauty of filial piety "joy" on the parents.

(2) Children: they will enjoy it.

From the point of view of children, the beauty of filial piety "joy" is that children can always "enjoy themselves" when they fulfill their filial piety. This is the fundamental difference between the modern filial piety and the traditional social autocratic filial piety. The contemporary parent-child relationship is no longer the father is inferior to the son, is no longer subordinate and dependent, more is no longer "the father makes the son to die, the son has to die", but two different independent individuals. In accordance with this, the modern filial piety can not contain any oppression and slavery, nor can it contain any inequality and unwillingness, but the children from the heart of the emotional expression. When filial piety is fulfilled, the state of the children must be happy, otherwise it will cause injustice to the children.

The core of filial piety, whether in ancient times or in modern times, is "be nice to your parents", which is the collection of emotion, psychology, knowledge and behavior of all "be nice to your parents". After thousands of years of living practice of the Chinese nation, a set of basic code of conduct system has been formed in the tradition of filial piety and virtue. However, filial piety can not only be expressed through fixed etiquette and norms. The practice of filial piety is different for each individual. In the X program, every couple of stars have different relationships with their parents. They are all filial, but the way of expression varies from person to person. Some give their parents elaborate delicacies, some obey the habits of the elderly, some are happy to chat with their parents, some play tricks with their parents, etc. The way is different, each has its own characteristics, but can make parents laugh, feel the warmth.

Everyone is different, and everyone's parents are different, so the treatment of their relationship is bound to be personalized, which determines that filial piety cannot be fixed. The series of codes of conduct in the tradition of filial piety can only be used as reference, but not as absolute. In other words, when an individual fulfills filial piety, he or she can choose some ready-made filial piety norms according to specific circumstances, or express them in his or her own way. Only enjoy it, filial piety is natural, just become the individual's own initiative. Otherwise, the filial piety displayed by the individual is either a false attitude and behavior under the pressure of authority, or it fails to achieve the original purpose of filial piety despite sincerity. In addition, with the change of people's living situation, both parties in filial piety are changing, which determines that the process of choice, practice, experience and reflection is not a static and objective process, but a dynamic and constantly developing and changing process. The pursuit of filial piety is the continuous improvement of people's own, is a continuous process of good, rather than a road to the end of existence. Through this continuous process to the good, life gets happiness, to achieve perfection, the beauty of filial piety "joy" in the children to get a perfect display.

(3) Between parents and children: they will be happy and harmonious.

On the basis of the parent's "feel happy for the birth of their child" and the child's "enjoy practicing filial piety", the beauty of filial piety "joy" also manifests itself in the "happiness and harmony" of the parent-child relationship.

The inscriptions on ancient bronze objects

In the inscriptions on ancient bronze objects, the character for filial piety is "孝". On top is an old man and below is a child. The combination of the two constitutes filial piety. Therefore, filial piety represents the community of parents and children. In this community, parents and children exist independently and depend on each other. In this interdependence, parents and children construct their own existence while discovering a kind of deep and lasting happiness in life for each other. No matter the parent or the child, the "joy" they feel is generated by the other party and is strengthened by the "joy" of the other party. The "joy" of both sides is perfectly blended, forming a subtle emotional field between them. In this field, parents and children do not need to follow the specific requirements of filial piety, do not have to worry about the rules and regulations, just follow each other's natural performance, then there is a natural parent-child love flowing slowly.

In a "happy and harmonious" state, both parents and children are happy, rather than making one's happiness dependent on the other's pain.

" A son must obey his father unconditionally " in the traditional society, the gnaw-aging phenomenon in the contemporary society, the production of these irrational phenomena because it breaks the harmonious coexistence between parents and children, and only pays attention to the happiness of the parent or the child, which is difficult to accept. In addition, no matter pure "pretend" perfunctory filial duty, or completely give up the filial duty, or in the name of "filial piety" rigid implementation of hurt oneself harm close fool filial piety (such as Guo Ju buried son), will never let a person feel really happy. Therefore, maintaining and strengthening the benign interaction between parents and children, so that they are always in a "happy" life state, is also an important manifestation of the beauty of filial piety "joy".

In short, filial piety requires people to enjoy the joy and happiness when they practicing it in daily life. Thinking of the word filial piety, people's first feeling should not be heavy, sad, crying, but should be relaxed, natural and happy. Filial piety originates from natural nature and exists in daily life. Therefore, "joy" should be regarded as the beauty in the selection of filial piety.

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