

On the Evolution and Differentiation of Human Emotional Culture

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Abstract

The evolution of human culture manifests in the differentiation of human culture. So does the evolution of spiritual culture. Emotional culture, as a part of spiritual culture, is differentiated from the matrix of spiritual culture. The process of human emotional culture differentiated from spiritual culture and developing independently is the process of continuous liberation and freedom of human emotions. This process also clearly marks the degree and level of human cultural evolution. In the future society, the evolution of human emotional culture will increasingly become the domination of human cultural evolution.

Key words: Emotional culture; Arts; Differentiation; Evolution

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INTRODUCTION

Darwin's theory of evolution produced in the 19th century is a revolution of scientific thoughts. After Darwin, the thoughts of evolution and development have been quickly applied to various fields of science. Therefore, to apply Darwin's theory of evolution to the research field of human culture is also significant. This paper attempts to

study the development issues of human culture by using Darwin's theory of evolution to explore some basic laws of human cultural evolution and differentiation.

1. HUMAN EMOTIONS

Human emotions are evolved from the emotions of animals. The evolution of emotions of animals from lower levels to higher levels and from simple emotions to complex emotions has passed a very long time. Its essence has a long evolutionary history of the life system and the nervous system. Humans differ from animals. In addition to the natural feelings, cultural emotions are increasingly important for humans so that they have become the fundamental sign of humans transcending animals.

However, opposed to the long history of the evolution of material culture, the spiritual culture of humans originated quick late. Prior to the production of human language, the human spiritual culture appears to be difficult to form stable cultural traditions. For example, in the Paleolithic, humans inherited emotional sounds and body languages from apes, but their accumulation and evolution are extremely slow. It was after the era of Homo sapiens that human beings gained a solid spiritual cultural carrier due to the generation of language and thus accelerated their development.

1.1 Witchcraft Culture

The first type of human spiritual culture is witchcraft culture which has many similarities with artistic culture such as the vivid way of thinking, symbolic symbol system and the expression of human emotions and so on. However, witchcraft culture is not art and it is the whole spiritual culture. In the totem worship and witchcraft ritual performances, representational symbol system first expresses faith and values system, followed by the emotional culture and knowledge culture. Therefore, witchcraft culture is an organic whole where ideological

culture, emotional culture and intellectual culture don't differentiate, and the emotional culture is only a part of this organic whole of spiritual culture.

1.2 Myth Culture

The second type of human spiritual culture is myth culture which is based on the language and is passed and disseminated through oral cultural traditions. Compared with witchcraft thinking, mythological thinking is a revolution in thinking. It indicates that the way of thinking of humans has leaped from the original imagery way of thinking to conceptual way of thinking and the conceptual-like system has leaped from the surface symbol system to conceptual-like symbol system. The reason of this revolution of thinking is the origin of the human language. However, the original language of mankind, just as the Italian philosopher Vico and German philosopher Herder put it, is a kind of poetic language rather than a wisdom language, and that is a kind of conceptual-like symbol system rather than a conceptual symbol system. As a result, the primitive mythological culture is just of poetry in modern society, full of emotions and charm. That is because it is just like poetic and symbolic way of thinking in terms of the way of thinking and the fitting form. In fact, as a literary culture as a language art is also originated from the mythological culture. In mythological culture, the conceptual-like ideographic system is both ideological ideas and a symbol of human emotions, and it also bears the knowledge and information of primitive men and the like. Obviously, mythological culture is also an ideographic system which has not differentiated, a primitive organic whole spiritual culture. In this spiritual culture, emotional culture is also only an organic part of the whole.

1.3 Religious Culture

The third type of mankind spiritual culture is religious culture which is a civilized tradition established on the basis of the literal text. The generation of letter code system enables the human way of thinking has undergone another revolution, so that the human way of thinking gradual changes from the conceptual-like way of thinking to the conceptual way of thinking and thus the conceptual system also changes from original religion to the ancient theoretical religion. In ancient religious culture, various arts have been produced and increasingly developed, but they are still divorced from the matrix of religion and culture and are under strict control and bound on the matrix. From the sociological perspective, religious culture is just the sacred ideology of the ruling class. It is not just the conceptual reflection of the power and interests of the ruling class, but also an ideological weapon serving for the power and interests of the ruling class. Therefore, art has become a tool serving for the power and interests of the ruling class and emotional culture has become a symbol to express the emotions of the ruling class.

2. THE EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CULTURES

2.1 The Evolution of Social Culture

Modern society is a product of class struggle and it also an inevitable product of the evolution and differentiation of social culture. From the perspective of social cultural evolution, modern society is a continuous differentiation process of social culture. It differentiates into three main areas in the social aspect: the political field, the cultural field and the economic field. It differentiates into three fields in cultural aspect: Norms culture, spiritual culture and material culture, and each side is also highly differentiated. So does the spiritual culture. From the spiritual cultural point of view, the ancient unified religious culture is gradually divided into three different areas: ideological culture, knowledge culture and emotional culture. Emotional culture has become increasingly independent and free and developed along their value target. It has become one of the basic features of modern society. However, with the decline of the ruling class culture, it is replaced by the strong culture which is not spiritual culture but material culture. Market economy and its ideology is increasingly become the mainstream of society, and the promoted scientific and technological culture therewith becomes the dominant one in spiritual culture, and emotional culture is also undergoing transition to adapt to the market economy: changing from the emotional culture of ancient ruling class to the emotional culture of modern civil society, i.e. mass culture.

2.2 The Evolution of Social and Religious Culture

Independent art liberated from religious culture develops toward two directions. One is that the popular culture adapting to the market economy strong culture has become the mainstream of modern society; the other is that elite culture beyond the market economy has become a marginal culture of modern society. They originate from romantic art and have reached the modern aesthetic art. From the perspective of basic nature, the two arts have both commonalities and differences. What is the same is that they are independent and free emotional culture and they both get rid of the shackles of religious culture and also get rid of the suppression of knowledge culture and develop toward their own independent value direction. The difference is that mass culture is a emotional secular culture which is closely connected with the daily life of modern civil society; however, elite culture is an elegant emotional culture which is precisely to go beyond everyday mundane life to pursue another ideal world. Their unity of opposites has become the basic trend of the development of modern social emotional culture. In the post-modern cultural atmosphere, the colorful diverse development

of emotional culture is its basic feature and leading direction. Therefore, the evolution and differentiation of emotional culture will be speeded up.

3. THE EVOLUTION AND DIFFERENTIATION OF EMOTIONAL CULTURE

The evolution and differentiation of emotional culture contain two basic aspects. One aspect is the differentiation of emotional content. Laterally, it can be divided into individual life emotion and species life emotion; vertically, it can be divided into basic life emotion and transcendent emotion. Therefore, emotional culture can differentiate into its four basic types, namely: fundamental individual life emotional culture, basic species life emotional culture, transcendent individual life emotional culture and transcendent species life emotional culture. Among them, the basic life emotional culture is the essence of mass culture. The basic life emotional culture is primitive, fundamental and universal, and therefore the cultural products which express it must have wide acceptance and market selling and thus become the mainstream products in the cultural market. Matei Calinescu once wrote that:

The actual connection between Kitsch Art (its dependence on fashion and rapid obsolescence can make it the main form of “consumption” art) and economic development is actually so closely so that the appearance of kitsch art in the “second” and “third world” is taken as an accurate sign of “modernization”. Once kitsch art is technically feasible and economically profitable, and only the market can constraint the surge of cheap or not so cheap mimics, and these mimics can be a mimic of all things - from primitive or folk art to the most recent avant-garde. (Calinescu, 2003, p.243)

Art, as a recreation and entertainment, is convenient and easy to get, and quick results can be expected. Authors “merchant spirit” (compared with the reputation obtained, they focus more on direct economic returns) and the psychological needs of the reader public to escape from the tedious daily life—in most sociologically oriented definitions of kitsch art, they are common elements. (Calinescu, 2003, p.257)

On the other hand, the popularity of elementary species life emotional culture is also best footnoted by the rise of psychoanalysis school. The leader of psychoanalysis school, Sigmund Freud, once wrote in his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*: “The concept of the aesthetic is rooted in sexual agitation.” (Freu, 1986). In his later years, in his *Civilization and Its Discontents* he fully elaborated this point of view and presented a challenge to exaggerate and empty theories of aestheticians in the past. He said,

Aesthetic enjoyment has an emotional, special, gentle intoxicated nature. Aesthetic does not have obvious use or require deliberate cultivation. However, civilization cannot even exist without it. Aesthetic science investigates the aesthetic conditions of things, but it cannot make any explanation towards the nature of aesthetic, and as usual, the failure lies in endless,

loud but empty words. Unfortunately, psychoanalysis almost could not say nothing to aesthetics. It seems that all of these are indeed derivatives of the sexual field. Love for the aesthetics seems to be the perfect example of suppressed impulses. “Aesthetics” and “charm” are the most original features of the sexual object. (Freu, 1987).

Secondly, transcendent species life emotional culture can be seen as an accurate characterization of the romantic art. This is very well illustrated in the German mystic romantic aesthetics and Nietzsche’s Dionysian spirit. Schlegel once said: “The longing in its original form is an uncertain infinite impulse, an uncertain activity which extends itself to all aspects.” “Longing is a kind of love... so it is the source of consciousness and the beginning of the world.” (Li, 1986, p.45) Nietzsche once said:

I call on you to draw a picture of Beethoven’s *Ode to Joy*. Let the imagination continues to highlight the theme and imagine millions of terrified and trembling people fall into the dust, so you will be in a position to grasp the essential characteristics of Dionysus. Then the slaves became free men, and all the strong and hostile barriers that poverty, arbitrary or “shameless fashion” establish between people fell apart. Now, universally harmony gospel is ringing in the air, and everyone feels united, reconciled, integrated and even becomes one with people around them, as if the veil of Maya has been broken, leaving some fragmentations drifting in front of the mysterious das Ur-Eine. (Nietzsche, 2000, p.23)

Finally, transcendent individual life emotional culture can be seen as the cultural connotation of prevailing aesthetic art. German poet and philosopher Nietzsche’s superman philosophy has laid the originally ideological foundation for his generation. Nietzsche said:

Prior to me, people did not know what they can do with German - generally speaking, what can be finished with the language. The skills of great rhythm and great styles of rhetoric to express the passionate emotions of noble superhuman are firstly found by me; with an ode like *Die Siegel Siegel*, I soar one thousand miles above the so-called poetry. (Nietzsche, 1986, p.342)

Another aspect of the differentiation of emotional culture is the differentiation of art form. With respect to the emotional content of art, perhaps the form of the arts is more important. That is the root cause why the emotional romantic aesthetics has increasingly evolved to the modernist formal aesthetics, because essentially although art is emotion, it is not a natural emotion or life emotion; instead, it is aesthetically formalized emotion or artistically formalized emotion. Therefore, it is an aesthetic emotion or artistic emotion and it is a kind of transcendence of everyday life and a negation of secular values as well as is another spiritual world or the ideal world created by mankind beyond the mundane world. Therefore, in this sense, the art form is the organization of art. As the famous American esthetician Susan Lange said: “Art is the development of the symbolic form of human emotion.” (Langer, 1986, p.51) From the perspective of artistic forms, emotional culture can be divided into the following four areas, namely: a) emotional culture

in visual artistic form; b) emotional culture in auditory artistic form; c) emotional culture in language artistic form; d) emotional culture in comprehensive artistic form, and each area is highly differentiated. The main factors in the form of visual art are graphical elements: line, plane, space, light and shade, color, image, and shape and so on. It uses optical representative symbols to express human emotions. The main factors of auditory artistic form are auditory factors: rhythm, melody, timbre, harmony and tonality and so on. It uses auditory expressive symbols to represent human emotions. The main factors in language artistic forms are language factors: vocabulary, sentence, rhetoric, metrics and the art of composition and so on. It utilizes conceptual-like symbols to express human emotions. And emotional culture in the integrated artistic form just uses the synthesis of the above artistic forms to express human emotions.

CONCLUSION

The evolution of human culture is inextricably linked to the differentiation of human culture. The evolution of human culture is achieved through the differentiation of human culture and through the differentiation of human culture. Social culture has become more complex, and thus drives the development of society from simple to complex and from a lower level to a higher level. In the process of the evolution and differentiation of human culture, the evolution and differentiation of emotional culture are only an integral part of it, whose evolution and differentiation interacts and mutually reinforces with the evolution and differentiation of human culture. In modern society, regardless of the fact that emotional culture has differentiated from the overall spiritual culture, it does not mean that it has nothing to do with ideological culture and knowledge culture. In fact, they are interacting and mutually reinforcing. Among them, especially ideological culture has the morals and guiding function towards emotional culture and knowledge culture. However, in future advanced culture, values will increasingly turn to the intrinsic values of emotional culture, namely advanced emotional values, fraternity values, aesthetic

values and creative values will increasingly become the dominant ideology in future society. From the perspective of this tendency, emotional culture which has already differentiated from spiritual culture will no longer continue to be engulfed by other cultures, but will increasingly transcend other cultures and become the dominant culture in future society. In other words, emotional culture, especially the aesthetic culture and creative culture in it, is a higher form of human cultural evolution. Its increasing development and growth mean greater freedom and liberation of humans and mean that human beings evolve toward a more perfect and loftier realm.

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