

Talk about the clan society in Chinese traditional society briefly

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Abstract: *In the long development process of history, the clan is a basic social organization form of China's traditional society. On the basis of clan society, China has developed into a clan society. The change of the development mode of clan society has the common influence of many factors, which then leads to the emergence of clan thought. Here, this paper briefly explains the definition and characteristics of Chinese clan society, analyzes the generating factors of clan society, and analyzes the clan society of Chinese traditional society by interpreting the social function of clan society.*

Keywords: *clan society, clan order, clan social function*

1. Introduction: Clan society in the traditional Chinese society

Traditional society is an ethical society based on family control and basic operation mechanism. Social control is basically attached to family control, while ancient Chinese families were based on families, and the patriarch took power. Xu Yangjie thinks "family is based on the family, refers to the descendants of the same male ancestors, although already separated, wealth, formed many individual families, but generations also together (such as living in a village), according to certain norms, with kinship form a special form of social organization".^[1] Zhu Fenghan believes that "the original meaning of 'clan' refers to the family with a common ancestral temple, that is, the family with clear patriarchal ancestors". In ^[2]'s view, the clan is a social group composed of various patriarchal blood-related families, under the norms of ancestor worship and patriarchal concept. Briefly, the clan is a kind of social organization formed by men as the main body, based on blood relationship, and with a set of specific core figures. This kind of social organization is established based on genealogy, clan fields, ancestral hall, and has its own specific set of social relations and social system.

2. The characteristics of the clan society

2.1. Take the paternal kinship as a link

From the perspective of the clan form of ancient society, maintain the main link of the clan is the patriarchal blood relationship, whether the western Zhou patriarchal slave society, or the feudal dynasty of future generations, individuals in the family or the status of the clan in the family kinship, family children rely on patriarchal kinship is divided into direct and collateral, to distinguish the status in the family, the difference of family resources

2.2. There is a strict hierarchy within the family

The family is not equal, there is a strict hierarchy, and the standard of classification is the paternal kinship, positive and partial, direct and collateral between food and clothing.^[3]'s internal code of conduct of its members has relatively strict grade standards, which are embodied in the division between clan division and concubine division, which can not be arrogated.

2.3. Take the common paternity as the fundamental basis for its existence

From the definition of the clan, we can know that the clan group has a common ancestral temple, that

is, a common male ancestor. The basis and maintenance of the internal division of the clan is the paternal blood relationship, and the origin of the paternal blood relationship is the common male ancestor. Without a common male ancestor, there is no fundamental existence and division.

The reason why the Western Zhou Dynasty could last for a hundred years was inseparable from their patriarchal system. The vassal and the king of Zhou were related. This kinship prompted the vassal to be loyal to the king of Zhou, and the origin of their kinship was that they had a common ancestor, King Wen of Zhou. Moreover, the eastern Han dynasty Liu Xiu can establish the eastern Han dynasty, Wei Jin period Liu Bei can establish Shu Han, a very important factor is that they uphold the banner of righteousness, and the so-called "righteousness" source is that they are the descendants of Liu Bang, which makes them have the blood on the blood, is the destiny of the monarch. So, the common paternal ancestor is the foundation of a family existence.

2.4. As the patriarchal clan concept that maintains the clan system

In the process of developing and maintaining the clan system, it was accompanied by the naturally formed moral concept, which further strengthened and consolidated the clan system and formed the patriarchal clan concept. For example, the Duke of Zhou added the content of "ritual and music" to the content of "virtue" on the basis of the concept of destiny, which regulated people's daily behavior norms, and then elevated the status of "king" to the position of "son of heaven". The social status of the king of Zhou has been greatly promoted. In addition, the patriarchal concept of the clan system further emphasizes its core "filial piety", filial piety, filial piety; loyalty, loyalty, honesty, not chaos, not chaos, state stability. Confucius, a famous Chinese Confucian scholar, carried it forward on the basis of the Zhou Dynasty culture and formed a complete set of Confucian moral rule theory system.

2.5. Clans have a complete economic and cultural system

Clan is the close body of blood and geography, which is maintained by the kinship of paternity and blood relationship, and is the extension of geography. In ancient times, clans in local society often lived in families together.

Economically, there are "public fields" set up within the clan to produce material materials (such as grain and cloth) for the clan, and some clans also operate various commercial and economic models. As one of the "four big families", they have huge land and participate in various commercial activities in the society. The "manor economy" in the Eastern Han Dynasty is also a form of clan, who are self-sufficient in a complete economic production unit and have a sound economic production system. Culturally, there is a special school within the clan, responsible for educating the cultural knowledge of the children of the clan, so that there is a sound cultural education system within the clan. It can be seen that the clan has a complete economic production system and cultural and education system.

2.6. The clan relies on the clan rules to maintain the clan rule

The so-called "no rules, no circumference", the clan wants to maintain its rule must rely on strong rules and regulations to restrict the children of the clan. There is a folk saying, "the state has the state law, the family has the family rules", "state law" refers to the laws of the country, and "family rules" refers to the family rules within the family, from this saying can see the status of the family law or family rules in China's traditional society. In essence, family law is a written regulation governing the social system within the family based on the Confucian concept of etiquette and law and the blood relationship within the family. Clans in different places have different ethnic rules, and a set of unwritten and agreed ethnic rules, which involve all aspects of the social life of clan groups and have an important impact on the construction of social grass-roots social governance and social structure. Clan system can be roughly divided into three development stages, namely before the Tang Dynasty, Tang, Song, Yuan dynasties and Ming and Qing Dynasties. The earliest clan rules were produced in the autonomous norms of the original society and folk, and the source can be traced back to the late family organization of the parent clan, and the early clan rules are mostly manifested as the unwritten customary law of words and deeds within the family.^[4]

3. The generating factors of the clan society

3.1. Socioeconomic and natural environmental factors produced by the clan society

Since ancient times, China has been a feudal small-scale peasant country with self-sufficient small-scale peasant economy as the main economy, but the small-scale peasant economy has had the fatal defects of closure, backwardness and vulnerability since its birth. These congenital defects also cause the traditional small farmers as the main production unit is subject to the single production unit farmers are unable to expand the production scale, also unable to resist violent natural disasters and social unrest. In this situation, farmers only rely on each other and help each other to maintain the basic stable life, and the family this organization has innate blood affinity to farmers, combined with the influence of natural conditions and living environment, the advantages of economic and natural living conditions provides the necessary conditions for the clan society.

3.2. Political factors arising from the clan society

Although ancient China was in the autocratic feudal society era for a long time, this feudal dynasty was not a simple feudal country. China's feudal dynasty created the political organization mode of "homogeneous home and country" after the integration of the patriarchal clan concept of the pre-Qin era. And the political pattern of "home country homogeneous" lasted until the modern qing dynasty to extinct, in two thousand years of feudal dynasty era, "country" and "home" has been a pair of inseparable twins, country is composed of a small family, family is the most basic social unit, and countries can be said to be a wider range of "home", or "family".

The emperors and ministers of the feudal dynasty had "dual nature" in identity. The emperors and ministers were not only the relationship between emperors and ministers in the political sense, but also the "father-son" relationship in the patriarchal sense. In ancient China, one should be "filial piety" and his parents, "loyalty" in the court, and must not betray the king. The essence of this equivalence between "loyalty" and "filial piety" is to establish the king as the "father" of the subjects, so that there is the title of "king father" and the idea of "loyalty to the king". The king is not only the king of the minister, but also the "father" of the minister. The minister is loyal is not the court, loyalty is the father.

In essence, the distribution of power in the feudal dynasty was also a familial power distribution mode. The feudal dynasty was generally divided into internal and external organizations. The inner organization was composed of the emperor's patriarchal relatives, maternal and wife relatives and the emperor's internal eunuchs, and the outer organization was composed of ministers selected by the state. The feudal dynasty always restricted the relationship between the power of the imperial ministers and the power of the imperial court to strengthen the imperial power. The feudal king restrained the ministers of the outer court, so that the Han, Tang and Ming dynasties had eunuchs. It is this political organization form of "isomorphism of home and country" that provides political reasons for the insertion of clan into the distribution mode of state power, and it is the homogeneous political mode of home and country that creates political reasons for the emergence of clan society.

3.3. Cultural factors arising from the clan society

Since ancient times, China has been dominated by Confucianism. Confucianism advocated human relations. Confucius spent his life trying to rebuild the legal system of the Western Zhou Dynasty. Confucius attached great importance to the Zhou rites. Confucius believed that rites and rites are unified, rites are fundamental, rites are subordinate, and ritual is the "verse" or form of rites. "Instrument" is to consolidate and reflect the social order and system in the form of social norms and etiquette. "Yi" is actually the concrete form of "social order and social system". Therefore, Confucius advocated "the restoration of rites" is actually advocated the establishment of a "etiquette society" like the Zhou Dynasty, that is, "order and system society". The core of the rites of Zhou is the clan legal system, representing the clan, so the Book of Rites says, "close, respect, long and long". The essence of Confucian culture with benevolence and rites as the core is the national social model with clan as the core. The traditional Confucianism of ^[5] provided ideological support for the generation of clan society.

3.4. Historical factors arising from the clan society

The biggest historical deduction of the clan is the legal system of the Western Zhou Dynasty, the Western Zhou Dynasty uses the political system of the country of the vassal of the vassal ".The king of

Zhou not only had political affiliation, but also became blood kinship through patriarchal means, turning the whole country into a huge royal family clan of Zhou, and the whole world was a huge family, or clan with the king of Zhou as the core.

After the Western Zhou Dynasty, although the patriarchal system was annihilated with history, the patriarchal concept which embodies the patriarchal system of the Western Zhou Dynasty was handed down and became an extremely important culture in traditional Chinese society. In the central dynasty, the state constructed a political system of "home and country", introduced the clan into the political field, made the central government a huge "differential pattern" family system with the king as the core, the blood and the trust; at the local level, the family is the core. It can be said that the historical tradition of patriarchal concept formed since the Zhou Dynasty constructed historical factors for the emergence of clan.

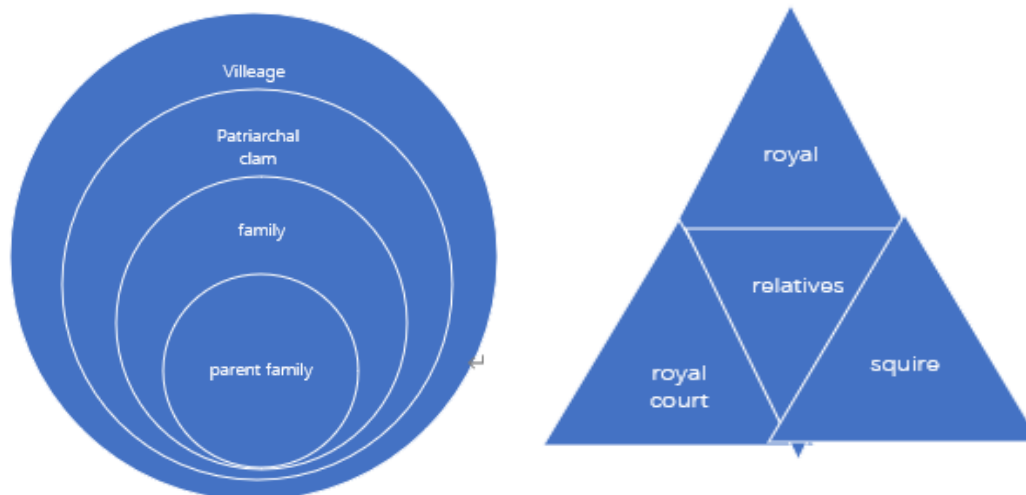


Figure 1: Clan autonomy system in the village Figure 2: Family power structure of the Dynasty

4. To analyze the function of clan in our society

As a social organization that runs through our traditional society, clan has an important influence on the social governance and social operation of our society. It has constructed the grassroots social governance mode, and normally operated this social governance mode. In the following, the social function played by the clan in the Chinese society will be tentatively analyzed.

4.1. The positive function of the clan

4.1.1. Make up for the defects of the small-scale peasant economy

Clan as a united blood group, clan through joint unity in organization, expand the means of production, at the same time through the group agricultural facilities (such as canal) to make up for the labor shortage, production means of production, strengthen the small-scale peasant economy farmers resistance to natural disasters, to a certain extent, make up for the closure of small-scale peasant economy, backwardness and vulnerability.

4.1.2. Cultivate the villagers, cultivate good moral character, and form good folk customs

The word family style was originally born from the family, the ancient famous "Yan Family Instructions", "Zhu Zi letter" is produced in the clan. In ancient society, the general family will conclude the family law, family law will set up the fierce, evil, gambling, drinking, theft and other regulations, and severely punish the people who break the law, and the family will encourage the people to work hard and study hard. The family law established by the family is generally good and suppressing evil, and the family law plays an important role in shaping the good moral character of the family. At the same time in ancient China often a family or several families is a village, the family, shape the role of good moral character through the family children gradually extended to the grassroots society, and the grassroots social social traditions, enlightenment villagers, form good folk customs has a huge role.

4.1.3. Assist vulnerable groups and ease class conflicts

Ancient society due to the vulnerability of the peasant economy, national political turmoil, often natural and man-made disasters, once this happens, the bottom of the people often displaced, hungry, and clan in which often set up relief, compulsory relief social poor people, in the clan clan often free support the elderly and orphans, the behavior of relief to make up for the ancient social defects in social welfare, ease the social contradictions. Chen Rui's article "Internal Relief of Huizhou Clans in the Ming and Qing Dynasties" believed that huHuizhou clan attached great importance to the relief of poor people and actively carried out internal relief by setting up Yitian, Yicang, Xueda, Yiwu and Yizu to help vulnerable groups tide over difficulties.^[6]

4.1.4. Stabilize the grassroots society and maintain the political power rule

In ancient China, due to the limitation of terrain, traffic conditions and limited political control, the control of the central government was very limited, and the government power was only established at the county level. In order to ensure the stability of the political power and the rule of the ruling class, the central government adopts the means of drawing over the local clans, so that the political power presents the pattern of central bureaucratic rule and local clan autonomy. The local clans maintain the stability of the grass-roots society by controlling the land and culture. Chen Lijun pointed out in the article "On the Impact of the Clan in the Southeast Society of Modern Guangxi" that "in the southeast villages of Guangxi, ancestral halls must be built to sacrifice ancestors and industries should be built for the clan group to sacrifice. These are the material basis for maintaining the social order of the clan". The influence of^[7] clan in the southeast of modern Guangxi was mainly manifested in the organization of rural political power, economic infiltration and control of rural education.

4.2. Negative function of the clan

4.2.1. Merger of land and endanger agricultural production

Small-holder economy state of ordinary farmers often unable to resist natural and man-made disasters, and the clan in peasant society through the family has the human, material resources and financial advantages, the clan tend to use fraud, forced merger farmers land, the landlord of the eastern han dynasty is typical, local powerful clan land, cause "rich fields, the poor" situation, the clan through land merger strongly to harm the agricultural production.

4.2.2. Monopoly of social resources, manipulating politics, and endangering state rule

Clan is a huge blood group. Clan has advantages in resources in the society and has its own special interests, controlling most of the land in the society and monopolizing a large number of social resources. At the local level, clan forces monopolize local political economy and threaten the central dynasty, clan forces form interest groups, and threaten imperial power.

Clan organizations were opposed to the powerful landlords of the Eastern Han Dynasty who controlled the economic lifeline of local administration. Their excessive expansion of local power caused the emperors of the Eastern Han Dynasty unable to solve it, and the excessive collection of big families was also an important reason for the collapse of the Eastern Han Dynasty. The two Jin dynasties that inherited the Eastern Han Dynasty expanded the power of the big family to the extreme, which could even abolish the emperor and control the imperial power.

In the Ming Dynasty, the Japanese families of the coastal areas harmed the country for hundreds of years until the Jiajing period and gradually died out. However, the role of the coastal families in the coastal families colluded with the Japanese pirates. The excessive expansion of the clan power has formed its own specific interest chain. The negative effect of clan society is obvious, because it has a huge religious network. In today's period of rapid social and economic development, the corruption shown by clan network is repeatedly banned, and corrupt elements make "nepotism" through the use of clan social network relations, which needs us to attract attention.^[8]

Imprison the thought, kill the human nature

Although clan through enlightenment can educate villagers, but the basis of Confucian ethics, with the development of commodity economy, human nature gradually liberated, clan to maintain the rule and hype backward feudal morality, strengthen the thought of people, even implement personal persecution, especially for the persecution of women. For example, women were restricted by binding their feet, the idea of "three principles and four virtues" was publicized on women, and clans forced widows not to remarry and forced them to keep their duties. These ideas can no longer adapt to our current social

development content.

5. Conclusion

The research of clan mainly starts with genealogy, tablet inscriptions, anthologies and local Chronicles. This paper briefly discusses the causes, characteristics and functions of clan society from the perspective of sociology. However, China has a vast territory, and clan organizations in various regions have their specific contents and forms of expression, and different regions obviously have different clan organization systems and clan culture systems. Therefore, they have both characteristics, content differences, and essential similarities, which need to be grasped in specific research work. The study of the function of clan society has positive significance for us to understand rural social culture and better govern rural society.

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