社交形式的变迁——论齐美尔的社会美学及其当代意义

The change of social forms —— Simmel's social aesthetics and its contemporary significance

袁敦卫 ① 著



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《文化东莞专项资金资助出版丛书 (2013年社科类)》编委会

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让理论思想之光照亮前行之路

潘新潮

《文化东莞专项资金资助出版丛书(2013年社科类)》,是按照2012年年底市委、市政府关于建设岭南文化精品名城的有关规定,从全市申报的成果中,经过初评、终评和公示等程序,严格评选出来的首批6部作品之汇编。这6部作品具体研究领域涉及哲学、经济学、政治学、管理学、语言学、美学等学科。

东莞是一个缤纷多彩、充满活力的城市。从基本市情来说,东莞有五个特殊:特殊的地理位置、特殊的行政架构、特殊的产业结构、特殊的人口结构、特殊的城乡结构;从文化角度来说,东莞有五个地位:中国近代史开篇地、东江抗日根据地、改革开放前沿地、转型升级先行地、多元文化融合地;从城市特质来说,东莞有六个特色:一是不断转型升级的制造业之城,二是"海纳百川、厚德务实"的融合之城,三是体育激情无处不在的运动之城,四是机会遍地、充满希望的梦想之城,五是"让所有梦想都开花"的幸福之城,六是"每天绽放新精彩"的活力之城。

正是这样一座城市,积淀了名史名人文化、书法绘画文化、岭南建筑文化等丰富的传统历史文化资源,创造了改革创新文化、开放包容文化、务实低调文化、打工文化等众多当代文化资源。这些丰富的文化资源和生动的实践为社科理论工作者提供了理论研究创作的深厚土壤和养分。同时,市委、市政府对文化建设高度重视,审时度势作出建设文化名城战略部署,陆续出



台《东莞市建设文化名城规划纲要(2011—2020年)》和《东莞市建设岭南文化精品名城实施意见(2011—2020年)》等政策文件,为全市社科理论工作者关注东莞、研究东莞提供了良好的政策环境和保障机制。全市社科理论工作者喜乘文化名城建设的东风,近年来推出了一批批思想性强、学术价值高、地方特色浓、对策操作性强的社科理论成果。这次入选首批资助出版的6部作品,就是其中的优秀代表。

当前, 东莞正处在转型升级 "爬坡越坎"、突破"拐点"的关键时期。加快转型升级、建设幸福东莞、实现高水平崛起的核心任务和战略目标, 赋予了社科理论界新使命新任务。希望全市社科理论工作者始终坚持"为人民服务、为社会主义服务"的方向和"百花齐放、百家争鸣"的方针, 恪守学术道德规范, 立足东莞, 深挖井, 接地气, 以更独到的观察、更充沛的激情、更深邃的笔触, 创作更多更好的社科理论精品, 展现精彩东莞!

让理论思想之光, 照亮东莞文化名城前行之路!

(作者系中共东莞市委常委、宣传部部长)

本书重点考察德国近代文化哲学家齐美尔(Georg Simmel, 1858~1918) 的社会美学思想,并试图从中引申出一条思考当代社会审美现象的特殊 途径。

齐美尔提出的"社会美学"是一个具有特定内涵的美学范畴,在当代东西方美学研究中基本处于半休眠状态。按照齐美尔的定义,"社会"并不是指人类活动的整体形态(如马克思和韦伯所认定的那样),而是单指人与人之间的社会交往形式。"社会交往"与"社会交往形式"的差别在于:前者包含丰富的社会生活内容,而后者仅强调形式意义。譬如商人与顾客的社会交往,通常涉及商品种类、顾客类型以及买卖方式(如批发、零售、现金付款、赊账)等经验性内容;而从社会交往形式来看,商人与顾客的关系只有一种形态,即交换(exchange)。或者说,交换乃商人与顾客之间唯一的社会交往形式;一旦脱离这一形式,则商人与顾客相应的社会身份必然发生变化(当然,并非只有"商人/顾客"这种社交组合才体现交换关系)。因此,社会交往形式乃是剔除了社会交往的经验内容之后留存下来的纯粹形式(齐美尔的社会学理论因而也被称为"纯粹社会学"),齐美尔也正是在这个意义上使用"社会"这一概念的。因此,"社会美学"的恰切内涵乃是"社会交往形式的美学"(aesthetics of social forms)。

"社会美学"是齐美尔社会学理论的精魂。他再三否认自己是社会学



家,而希望学界把他当作哲学家,源于他执著、深厚的美学情怀。"社会美学"思想的孕育和阐发,既显示了齐美尔的个人敏锐,也反映了时代的某种精神趋向。在他看来,传统宗教想象和艺术形式的衰落,给西方造成了普遍的心灵虚空;寻求新的灵魂寄托物必然成为现代人的共同选择。在涂尔干之后,齐美尔更为清晰地看到:日益活跃的社会生活开始侵入现代人的灵魂空间并成长为新的精神中心。拜金拜物、追逐时尚、纵身爱欲最为典型地暴露了现代人深重的精神危机:外在的丰富总是难以逃脱内在贫乏的追赶。

但是,齐美尔对现代人日常心灵的关注既不是道德主义的,也不是实用主义的,而是审美主义的。此处的"审美主义"可从两个层面来看:一是他的整个理论构思都散发着审美主义的精神气质:拒绝价值夷平,拒绝理性化和同质化,这是他的基本立场(在这方面,尼采对他的影响极为深刻);二是他的形式分析法本质上是一种美学方法:它剔除了社交形式"辖制"之下的道德化、经验性的内容,仅存"形式"维度(齐美尔申明乃是受康德"美在形式"观念的影响)。如在探讨社交形式中的爱欲时,他重点剖析了现代卖淫活动中的两性关系,但几乎不涉及妓女的道德价值问题和社会大众的情感态度。就此而言,齐美尔又不乏自然科学家的严谨、客观和冷静。

毋庸讳言,一切社会活动都体现一定的社交形式,不分轻重、主次的笼统分析只会损害"社会美学"的前瞻性构想。针对现代人的主要精神病症,并对应于拜金拜物、追逐时尚、纵身爱欲,齐美尔主要对三种社交形式的具体文本展开了细致的经验分析,即体现普遍人际关系的货币、展示阶层(群体)关系的时尚以及演绎性别关系的爱欲。通过考察三者的形式变迁,齐美尔试图以一种颇为个性化的方式为现代性把脉。

齐美尔认为:货币本质上是一种社交关系的体现,但在不同的历史阶段,货币所呈现的社交关系——严格说是社交形式颇有差异。远古时期,货币是以神灵祭品的形式出现的,主要体现着人与神灵之间的交换关系。此种交换与现代交易中的等价意识绝缘,并以"时间延搁"(指完成交换过程需要很长的时间)为表现形式。及至前现代和现代社会,由于货币在实物形态和功能上发生变化,它所体现的社交形式也变得光怪陆离,且与现代的"文化逻辑"(丹尼尔·贝尔语)颇有相通之处。

与货币一样,时尚、爱欲都是社交形式的典型经验文本。齐美尔运用形

式方法,条分缕析,虽偶有偏激之语和"印象主义哲学家"(卢卡奇对齐美尔的评价)的随意散漫,但深刻揭示了货币、时尚、爱欲所演绎的现代社交形式的基本特征,从一个崭新的角度诊断了"时代的精神状况"(雅斯贝尔斯语)。

在三份经验分析的基础上, 齐美尔进一步从理论上概括现代社交形式的精神特质和审美功能, 并引入经康德、席勒之手改造过的游戏说, 把社交形式的美学品格与游戏的无功利性结合起来, 赋予现代社交形式以更丰富、更深厚的文化底蕴——使之成为继踵宗教、艺术之后的又一心灵拯救之途。但齐美尔也深切看到: 任何社交形式都带有某种社会修辞功能, 它使个体在社会生活中缺乏足够的自省意识, 将外在的丰富代替内在的充实, 忽视生命的本质乃在于"额外生命和多于生命"(齐美尔语)。

围绕社会美学这一中心线,本书最后梳理了齐美尔与舍勒、曼海姆、海德格尔和吉登斯四人的思想联系。虽然众多思想家在思考当代社会生活与个人生命意义之关系时,观点颇为歧异,但都充分意识到了社交形式对当代心灵的特殊影响。遗憾的是,此种影响的性质和意义至今尚未得到全面清理——齐美尔只不过是打开了一扇窗而已。事实上,社会美学对现实的指导意义并不局限于齐美尔的时代,当代思想家哈贝马斯(Jürgen Habermas)一再称誉齐美尔为"时代诊断者",或许不是没有深意的吧!

The change of social forms——Simmel's social aesthetics and its contemporary significance

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on theory of social aesthetics advanced by Georg Simmel (1858~1918), a modern cultural philosopher from Germany, then tries to stretch a special way of pondering contemporary aesthetic phenomena of society.

In fact, "social aesthetics" is a particular field of aesthetics, in the east and west research of aesthetics, it is basically in a state of semi-dormancy. In accordance with the definition of Simmel, "society" does not mean the overall patterns of activity of people (as Karl Marx and Max Weber have identified), but only refer to the forms of social interaction between people. The difference between "social interaction" and "forms of social interaction" is that: the former contains rich content of social life, while the latter only emphasizes the meaning of forms. For example, the social interaction between merchants and customers, usually involves multiple content of social experience such as merchandise type, customer type, as well as trade manners (such as wholesale, retail, cash payment, credit), and so on; however, when referring to forms of social interaction, the relationship between merchants and customers there is only one form, that is, exchange. In other words, the exchange is the only form of social interaction between merchants and customers; if deviates from this form, the relationship between them will change (of course, not only this combination of "business/customers" exemplifies social



exchange relations). Therefore, the forms of social interaction are pure forms which exclude the experiential content of social interaction (Simmel's sociological theory are known as "pure sociology"), Simmel also in this sense adopted the concept of "society". Therefore, "social aesthetics" is pertinently the meaning of "formal aesthetics of social interaction" (aesthetics of social forms).

"Social aesthetics" is the spirit of Simmel's social theory. That he repeatedly denied that he was a sociologist, and hoped that scholars regard him as a philosopher, was based on his inflexible and deep feelings of aesthetics. The gestation and elucidation of "social aesthetics" presents not only Simmel's acuity, but also reflects trend of thought of the time. In his view, the traditional forms of religious imagination and the decline of arts in the west had resulted in widespread spiritual void; to search for a new soul centre of life is bound to become a common selection of modern people. After Durkheim, Simmel realized more clearly: an increasingly active social life, had invaded modern people's soul space and become new center of spirit. Money worship and fetishism, fashion—chasing, wallowing in Eros, all these exposed profound spiritual crisis of modern people typically: external abundance always cannot escape the chase of inherent poorness in people.

However, Simmel's concern on people's everyday soul is neither based on moralism, nor pragmatism, but aestheticism. Here "aestheticism" can be analyzed into two levels: first, his strain of aestheticism distributes throughout his theory: to refuse value averaged, to refuse rationality and homogenization, all these are his basic position (In this regard, the impact of Nietzsche is obvious); second, the pattern he adopted is essentially a method of aesthetics: it removed the moral and empirical content under kinds of social forms, and the forms are pure (Simmel affirmed that this method comes from Kant's mind, "the beauty consists in form"). For example, when exploring the social form of Eros, he focused on analysis of modern gender relations in prostitution, but hardly involving moral values and social attitudes of the public sentiments towards prostitutes. In this sense, there is no lack of preciseness, objectivity and calmness of scientists in his method.

Needless to say, all social activities must reflect some social forms; the general

analysis without degree will damage the forward-looking vision of "social aesthetics". Against the major spiritual diseases of the time, corresponding to money worship and fetishism, fashion-chasing, wallowing in Eros, Simmel carried out specific empirical analysis by three text of social forms, that is, money reflecting the universal relationship of people, fashion showing the relationship of class (group) and Eros materializing gender relationship. Through exploring the change of the three forms, Simmel was trying to feel the pulse of modernity in an individual way.

Simmel deemed that money is essentially a manifestation of social relations, but at different historical stages, social relations, strictly speaking, social forms presented by money are quite different. In ancient times, money was a form of divine sacrifice, mainly reflected the exchange relations between gods and people. Such exchange transactions had nothing to do with modern equivalent exchange, and presented with "time delay" (it means that to the exchange process takes a long time). In pre-modern and modern society, because of the physical and functional changes on money, the social forms embodied by money have become bizarre, and are quite similar to modern-day "cultural logic" (Daniel Bell's remark)

And like money, fashion and Eros is typical experiential text of social forms. Simmel adopted formal methods to anatomize, cannot avoid occasional extreme remarks and the random of "impressionist philosopher" (Georg Lukacs's remarks on Simmel), but profoundly revealed the basic characteristics of social forms embodied by money, fashion and Eros, offering a diagnosis of "mental state of the time" (Jaspers' remark) from a new angle of view.

On the basis of empirical analysis of three text, Simmel further theoretically summed up the spiritual characteristics and aesthetic function of modern social forms, and introduced the game—theory improved by Kant and Schiller, combine aesthetic characteristics of social forms and non—utilitarian essentiality of game, endowed modern social forms with richer, more profound cultural meaning, and finally made it a salvation of mind following traditional religions and arts. However, Simmel also deeply realized: all social forms have rhetorical functions, which allow people in social life to lose his sufficient self—awareness, replacing the inherent wealth



by outside richness, losing sight of that the essence of life is "more than life and additional life" (Simmel's remark).

Around the thread of social aesthetics, this paper finally carding the connection between Simmel and Max Scheler, Karl Mannheim, Martin Heidegger and Antony Giddens. About the relationship between social life and individual, many contemporary thinkers' opinions are quite a discrepancy, but they are fully aware of the special effects of social forms on modern soul. Unfortunately, the essence and significance of the impact has not yet been fully envisaged, Simmel only opened a window. In fact, the significance of social aesthetics to reality is not confined to the time of Simmel, that J ü rgen Habermas repeatedly praised Simmel as a "diagnoser of the time" perhaps is not meaningless.

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在十九、二十世纪之交的欧洲学界,德国人齐美尔(Georg Simmel,^① 1858~1918)是一位颇难划分学科归属的思想家。假如一定要给他戴上专业学者的帽子,这些帽子势必叠得很高:哲学家、历史学家、社会学家、美学家、学术随笔大师……可颇具反讽意味的是:二十世纪的大半时间里,这位具有高度原创性(originality)的思想家几乎处于被遗忘的边缘,他的思想"飘到四方,消散于他人思想之中"。^②

思想者的命运由时代决定。至少齐美尔对自己身后的尴尬是有预感的, 他在临死前的一篇日记中不无伤感地写道:

我知道我将在没有学术继承人的情况下死去,事实也应如此。我的 遗产就如同现金(cash),分赠给许多继承人,每个人各按自己的天分将 所获得的那一份变化使用,但从他们的使用中,不再能看出它们受惠于

① Simmel一词译名杂多,如西美尔、西梅尔、席美尔、齐梅尔、辛迈尔、辛穆尔、齐默尔、西默尔等,为表述明确,该词在本书所有场合中都一律译为齐美尔(其他人名尽量统一);Georg则一律译为格奥尔格。本书所有专名(包括书名、概念、关键词等)之后所附的外文单词均来自相关著作,非作者主观对译;另外,为避免混淆,重要的专用人名在必要时附注外文原名,并尽可能同时加注其人生卒年。

② 皮兹瓦拉(E.Przywara):《齐美尔、胡塞尔、舍勒散论》,宋健飞译,见王岳川等主编:《东西方文化评论》(第四辑),北京:北京大学出版社,1992年,第256页。说明:由外文翻译的专著尽可能在书名后加注初版年份或所依据版本的年份。