

Exploring the Basic Experience of Chinese Moral Education in the Past 40 Years (1978-2018)*

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Abstract—In the past 40 years, China's moral education and China's development path have made exploration in many important ways, such as from political service to great virtue, from public norms to requirements of social morality, from individual cultivation to practice of personal virtue, which have gradually formed a new era paradigm of combining great virtue, social morality and personal virtue. Taking the overall development of human beings as the core, meeting the needs of national construction and development, meeting the basic moral needs of social citizens, and satisfying the quality needs of individuals, a new core paradigm and system of moral education in China have been formed, and great innovations in moral education theory and practice have been realized. In the new moral education of the state, it has constructed a large moral education system, realized "ten-major" education system of curriculum, scientific research, practice, culture, network, psychology, management, service, financial assistance and organization, and started the "three-all" education system of all staff, all-process, and all-round. China's moral education finds its own way of moral education in the course of 40 years' exploration.

Keywords—moral education; paradigm; great virtue; social morality; personal virtue

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the past 40 years, China's moral education, along with China's development path, has been developing in the

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exploration, and has formed a new paradigm of China's moral education in development. From 1978 to 2018, China's reform and opening up has undergone 40 years of great exploration. In the past 40 years, China's social development has undergone tremendous changes. After several rounds of paradigm shifts, China's moral education has also formed a new era paradigm of combining great virtue, social morality and personal virtue. With the overall development of human beings as the core, it has met the needs of national construction and development, met the basic moral needs of social citizens, and met the quality needs of individual fields. A new core paradigm and core system of moral education in China has been formed. Great innovations in moral education theory and practice have been realized, which will be of great practical significance and historical significance for further promoting the progress of Chinese civilization, improving the education of socialist core value system, and realizing the great rejuvenation of the nation and Chinese dream.

II. FROM POLITICAL SERVICES TO GREAT VIRTUE

In the early stage of China's reform and opening up, more moral education emphasized China's political will, and eliminated the serious damage of "the Gang of Four" to China's ideology and school ideological and political education. In April 1978, Comrade Deng Xiaoping made it clear at the National Conference on Education that "thoroughly eliminating the evil effects caused by 'the Gang of Four' was an extremely serious political task related to consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat." This evil effect refers to "the destruction of education", "the alarming decline in the quality of scientific and cultural education", "the serious damage to the ideological and political education in schools", "the corruption of school discipline", "the erosion of the socialist revolutionary atmosphere", "the creation of 'illiterate plus hooligans' and so on. [1] Therefore, China's moral education work was mainly to rectify the chaos for a long time. In the political direction, the social ideology put forward by the state and the full-time work regulations of primary and secondary schools clearly put the

firm and correct political direction in the first place. In 1978, the Constitution of the People's Republic of China" clearly stipulated in the form of the fundamental national law that the Party's educational policy was "education serving proletarian politics..." This has a very clear national orientation. Moral education in China must achieve political tasks, otherwise, it is illegal. In 1979, the "Summary of the National Symposium on Ideological and Political Education in Primary and Secondary Schools" of the Ministry of Education put forward that attention should be paid to the emerging doubtful politics, such as doubting the direction of socialism, the leadership of the Communist Party, the Mao Zedong Thought, and Marxism-Leninism. Then it further put forward that special emphasis should be placed on sticking to political leadership and putting politics first. In 1980, the Ministry of Education and the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League jointly issued the "Opinions on Strengthening the Ideological and Political Work of College Students", and the Ministry of Education issued the "Opinions on Improving and Strengthening the Political Course of Middle Schools" to carry out the political task of rectifying the chaos. In 1983, the Second Plenary Session of the Twelfth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China proposed that mental pollution should not be carried out. Since 1984, it has been suppressed. At the end of 1986, there were some academic trends. In 1989, there were political disturbances. There were still some problems in political service, which need to be seriously summarized. It was not until 1990 that "the ten-year plan for national economic and social development and the eight five-year plan" issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China had been adjusted. The Party's educational policy was revised: "Education must serve the socialist modernization construction..." Subsequently, the "Outline of China's Educational Reform and Development" in 1993 and the "Education Law of the People's Republic of China" in 1995 all expressed the same idea, transforming "political service" to "serving for socialist modernization", returning the cultivation of human beings to the construction of material civilization and spiritual civilization, returning to the all-round development of morality, intelligence and physical education, and then adding "labor". Moral education in China serves for training "builders and successors". In fact, the transformation of this paradigm is the deepening of the understanding of great virtue. Political character, national morality, national rejuvenation, national prosperity, patriotism and socialism are the moral education embodiment of the Chinese spirit and the common value pursuit of all the people.

III. FROM PUBLIC NORMS TO REQUIREMENTS OF SOCIAL MORALITY

As early as in the "Common Programme" in 1949, the public morality education of China put forward the national public morality of "Five Love", which had an important moral impact on people for quite a long time after the founding of the People's Republic of China. People live in society, not only as individuals, but also as the main body of social obligations. They are the people of society, the people of the public sphere and the people of the country. They

should do their duty for the society, the country and the public sphere. In traditional Chinese society, there are considerations of "serving the public", such as "respect for elders, princes, and monarchs". Later, it is developed into "serving the public" for the state and government. Back to the society, it is necessary to "serve public sphere". The state starts to rule the country by law. In the aspect of rule of law, it repeatedly emphasizes "citizens". For the rule of law and the legal system, human beings are a body of rights and obligations. In the traditional society, "the family and the country are one" and "the man is responsible" have endowed "the people" with many "public" moral responsibilities and moral obligations. In a period of time, China had experienced serious moral anomies, moral deficiencies and moral vacancies in the public sphere, such as the Falun Gong, the Runner Fan, the problem of the elderly falling to the ground without being helped, "My father is Li Gang", and the problem of Ma Jiajue, etc. People began to reflect deeply on the moral problems of citizens in the public sphere, establishing qualified citizen morality in legal sense in daily life, social morality in strangers' environment, and social morality in everyday life, such as "rule of law citizen", "joint ownership, sharing, abiding and protection", "moral citizen", "honorary citizen" and social morality ecology. Later, it developed into exploring the professional ethics, the spirit of great powers, the spirit of craftsmen, etc. so as to make up for the historical deficiencies in the public sphere and build up the social morality system of modern citizens. For this part, the representative articles in 2018 are Lei Yun's "Classification of social moral behavior and educational strategies", Ma Shuming's "social moral construction can't lag behind", "From private to public and then to the private — the development of social moral behavior of children in contemporary China and its enlightenment to moral education". In 2017, the representative articles are Wan Jun and others' "social moral education based on the differences among college students", Wang Ying's "Analysis of the dilemma of the construction of social morality and way out", Fu Weili's "The formation mechanism of the dilemma of social morality and its enlightenment to social moral education in schools". In 2016, the representative article is Zhang Xiaoyang's "Cultivation of social morality based on moral imagination". In 2015, the representative articles are Fu Weili's "Realistic path of social moral education in schools in China", Ding Daoyong's "Two kinds of social moral education: based on the experience of the republic of China", and Yu Jiandong's "Conflict and harmony of contemporary social and personal virtue". In 2014, the representative articles are Wang Zhankui's "Historical context and contemporary mission of Chinese civil education", Wu Xiaohua's "Thoughts on strengthening college students' professional ethics education", Chen Jiaqi's "Re-talking about social and individual morality and cultivating children's public consciousness". All of these have all made great contributions to the study of social morality. With the further advancement of the national reform, the issue of social morality has gradually been incorporated into the major system of national spiritual civilization. For example, in 1982, it proposed to "love the motherland, the people, labor, science and socialism". In

1990, the "Teaching Outline of Ideological and Moral Education for Nine-year Compulsory Education in Full-time Primary Schools" still contained the content of "Five Love". In 1996, "Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Strengthening Several Major Issues in the Construction of Socialist Spiritual Civilization" clearly stated that "we should vigorously advocate the social moralities, such as good manners, protecting public property, protecting the environment, and abiding by the discipline and law". In 2001, the "Outline of Implementing Civil Morality" was promulgated. The state clearly required all citizens to follow it in social interaction and public life. In 2006, the state put forward the "Eight Honors and Eight Disgraces". In the report of the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2012, it put forward the "Three Advocates". In 2013, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued the "Opinions on Cultivating and Practicing the Core Socialist Values", which clearly put forward the core socialist values. The report of the 19th National Congress in 2017 pointed out that Chinese people should cultivate and practice socialist core values, and turn them into emotional identity and behavior habits, which were new theoretical and practical requirements at the level of social morality.

IV. FROM PERSONAL CULTIVATION TO THE PRACTICE OF PERSONAL VIRTUE

Traditional education is essentially self-cultivation, family unity and world peace. Emphasis is laid on the "cultivating personal virtue by the quietness and modesty." After adjusting the educational policy, the state began to explore people who serve the society seriously, strengthen the moral education at the individual level, put people first, serve the personal development, emphasize the unity of knowledge and practice, attach importance to moral cognition, moral emotion, moral practice, attach importance to the needs of human development and the law of human development, so as to complete the development of human virtue and realize humanization. Marx pointed out in "Das Kapital" that "Man is a creature of society by nature, and only in society can he develop his true nature." [2] Human beings are the main body of society, and the real builders and successors of society. It is precisely because of the importance attached to natural people and social people. The state has made important guiding principle in quality education: to follow the law of human growth and return to human growth. In 1999, the "Decision of the State Council of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Deepening Educational Reform and Promoting Quality Education in an All-round Way" clearly required that we should follow "the law of students' growth", form "progressive levels of goals", and explore the transformation of moral education in the development of human quality education. This exploration makes the education of personal virtue closer to life, to human growth, to different levels, and to the law of development. In the exploration, the education of personal virtue in primary school, middle school and university links up different curriculum systems, such as ideological and moral character, moral accomplishment, legal basis, etc. It has obvious hierarchy in breadth, depth

and specific social practice. In 2005, the Ministry of Education issued "Opinions on the Overall Planning of the Moral Education System in Primary and Secondary Schools and Universities". It once again clearly put forward the concept of "people-oriented". And it proposed that we should be close to reality, life and students, and we should make vertical connection, horizontal penetration and spiral rise. Therefore, the principle of humanism, three principles of closeness, and the principle of vertical connection and spiral rise of moral education have been established. The development of moral education has realized the continuous transformation from political service, social morality education and personal virtue education. Moral education has begun a lively situation under quality education. At the eighteenth and nineteenth congresses of the Communist Party of China, we continued to deepen the reform and promote the construction of moral education, and clearly put forward the idea of "taking morality as the fundamental task of education". Therefore, some personal moral practices, bottom line thinking and self-discipline requirements have also been incorporated into the content of personal moral education, and turned to the personal virtue education in the national education system.

V. GREAT VIRTUE, SOCIAL MORALITY AND PERSONAL VIRTUE HAVE FORMED A NEW COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL MORAL EDUCATION

China's traditional morality has established a system of home, country and the world. The small is home, the middle is country, and the big is world. With the development of the times, national construction and social development need a new core value system on a new platform. Socialist core values are gradually improved and finalized. In the report of the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the state issued: "we should advocate the prosperity, democracy, civilization and harmony, advocate the freedom, equality, justice and the rule of law, advocate the patriotism, dedication, integrity, friendliness, and actively cultivate and practice the socialist core values." The system of moral education began to move towards the combination of three levels. It advocates the prosperity, democracy, civilization and harmony in terms of great virtue. It advocates the freedom, equality, justice and rule of law in terms of social morality. And it advocates the patriotism, dedication, honesty and friendliness in terms of personal virtue. From May 23 to 24, 2014, Xi Jinping made an investigation in Shanghai and put forward that "socialist core values should be daily, concrete, visualized and life-oriented. Everyone can perceive and understand them, internalize them into spiritual pursuits, and externalize them into practical actions, achieving great virtue, social morality and personal virtue." In order to do this work well for the whole society, we should especially focus on key groups, such as leading cadres, public figures, adolescents and advanced models. [3] On May 2, 2018, Xi Jinping held a symposium with teachers and students of Peking University and made an important speech. "Virtue is the foundation of education." This is the dialectics of talent cultivation. Running a school must respect this law. Otherwise, it won't run well. We should take the effectiveness of "strengthening moral education and

cultivating people" as the basic criterion to test all the work of schools. And we can truly cultivate people with culture and morality, and constantly improve students' ideological level, political consciousness, moral quality, and cultural literacy, so as to achieve great virtue, social morality and strict personal virtue. We should internalize the concept of "strengthening moral education and cultivating people" into all fields, aspects and links of university construction and management, so as to take the concept of "cultivating people" as the core and the concept of "strengthening moral education" as the basis. [4] The 2018 edition of the ideological and political textbook "Ideological and Moral Cultivation and Legal Basis" clearly contains a chapter, "Understanding great virtue, following social morality and obeying personal virtue strictly", so as to promote classroom moral education. On September 17, 2018, the Opinion of the Ministry of Education on Accelerating the Construction of High-level Undergraduate Education and Improving the Ability of Talent Cultivation in an All-round Way" put the basic principles. "We should adhere to the principle of establishing morality and cultivating people, and put moral education first. We should internalize the concept of "strengthening moral education and cultivating people" into all fields, aspects and links of university construction and management, adhere to the principle of cultivating people with culture and morality, constantly improve students' ideological level, political consciousness, moral quality and cultural accomplishment, and educate them to understand great virtue, follow social morality and obey personal virtue strictly." [5] Obviously, the national moral education system links the three levels of moral education together organically, establishes an internal and unified system of interconnection and interpenetration, and realizes the unity of values, objectives, orientation and codes of conduct at the national, public and individual levels.

VI. GREAT VIRTUE, SOCIAL MORALITY AND PERSONAL VIRTUE HAVE COMPLETED GREAT THEORY AND PRACTICE INNOVATION OF MORAL EDUCATION IN THE NEW PERIOD

The organic combination of great virtue, social morality and personal virtue has not only become a new paradigm in the field of education in China, but also an important paradigm in China's political life. On March 10, 2018, Xi Jinping participated in the deliberations of the Chongqing delegation at the first session of the 13th National People's Congress. "Leading cadres should stress political morality. Political morality is the vane of moral construction in the whole society. To establish political morality, we must understand great virtue, follow social morality and obey personal virtue strictly." [6] The state clearly regards this as the "vane of moral construction in the whole society", stressing ideals, beliefs, party spirit, the concept of wholeheartedly serving the people, self-restraint and personal integrity. This is an important moral practice at the national level, not only has great practical significance for educating students, but also has great moral practical value for forming the national fashion. In theory, the organic combination of great virtue, social morality and personal virtue has formed the combination of three levels of the state, collective and individual, which has great theoretical value

for further optimizing the moral ecology, enhancing the value of moral practice, promoting the comprehensive exploration of theory, and promoting the further development of moral theory. Only by stressing great virtue can we not lose our direction, ideal and belief, withstand the test of great storms and waves, and have a large pattern; only by holding social morality can we better grasp the purpose, dare to shoulder, serve the people, and better shoulder the mission of the times; only by being strict with personal virtue can we be self-disciplined, self-respecting, moral, and exemplary, and have corresponding ethics and bottom line. The organic combination of the three is of great moral value to the country, the public and the individual. Chen Ying (2014), honorary president of the Chinese Ethics Society and researcher of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, pointed out that the three levels of core values reflect the "most core value requirements" at all levels when visiting BBS of people.com.cn. [7] Li Dequan (2015) of Chongqing Academy of Arts and Sciences holds that socialist core values, as an organic unity of the state, society and citizens, have "realized the organic unity of the sinicization and popularization of Marxism, realized the value guidance of social pluralism, and realized a high degree of generalization and theoretical sublimation of socialist ideology, which are the theoretical innovation that the communist party of China keeps deepening its understanding of the law of socialist construction." [8]

VII. CONCLUSION

Briefly, the exploration of moral education in China has been improving and progressing all the time. It does not stay in the long course of history or completely denies history. Instead, drawing on historical experience and lessons, it constantly brings forth new ideas, makes the improvement and progress, and forms new moral concepts, new moral practices and new moral theories. These valuable explorations, together with the great progress of the nation, cultivate reliable builders and successors for the times in the great construction of the nation. Feng Jianjun who is in Institute of Moral Education, Nanjing Normal University, the key research base of Humanities and social sciences of the Ministry of Education, said in 2018, "... Moral education truly becomes the moral education of "cultivating human beings", "strengthening virtue", and "achieving the task", which radiates the charm of human nature. [9] In this big paradigm, the state is building a large moral education system. It aims at realizing the "ten-major" education system of curriculum, scientific research, practice, culture, network, psychology, management, service, subsidization and organization, and starting the "three-all" education system of all staff, all-process, and all-round. China's moral education has found its own way of moral education in the course of 40 years' exploration. It has created a new situation of moral education in China by making a strong moral education joint force and actively promoting the innovation of moral education theory and practice.

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