

Original Paper

Analysis of the Influence of Modern Western Philosophical Thoughts on Contemporary College Students

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Abstract

Modern Western philosophical thoughts mainly include: Western scientism, Western pragmatism, Western humanism and so on. These modern Western philosophical thoughts have exerted a wide influence on contemporary college students, both positive and negative aspects. This paper analyzes the influence of modern Western philosophical thoughts on contemporary college students.

Keywords

modern Western philosophical thoughts; contemporary college students; thought; influence

Preface

Analyzing the influence of modern Western philosophical thoughts on our society, especially on contemporary college students is of great significance for contemporary college students to have a comprehensive view of Western philosophical thoughts and strive to cultivate correct values on life.

1. Analysis of the Influence of Western Scientism on Contemporary College Students

1.1 In Science Education, the Rational and Scientific Nature of Science Education Are Weakened

Scientism holds that science is the only way to know truth, and science does not need and should not be limited by any moral, ethical, ideological and social life style. Scientific method is just a tool for understanding the world, scientific research itself has no moral value, and scientists are just seekers of truth. They maintain that truth is something objective and unquestionable, and the rest is secondary. Therefore, in science education, students only need “technical education”, that is, to impart knowledge and skills. Under such a guiding ideology, there have been tendencies of “knowledge-based” and “technology-based” in science education in China’s schools. Knowledge education mainly emphasizes

imparting knowledge and skills from books. In terms of teaching content, it only pays attention to the imparting and memorizing of knowledge, but neglects the cultivation of students' comprehensive quality and ability. In addition, teachers mainly impart knowledge and skills learned from books, but do not pay attention to the education of ideological and political education, moral education, outlook on life, world outlook, values, etc., and do not let students understand and master a variety of abilities and qualities needed for social development. As a result, students only learn knowledge from books at school, lack the ability and method of independent thinking, analyzing and solving problems, but also do not know how to behave and do things.

In ideological and political education, the wrong views such as "scientism", "the theory of futility of science", "the theory of omnipotence of science and technology", and "technological determinism" are created in college students.

By the early 1970s, our country had initially established a relatively complete education system and science and technology system. However, due to the needs of social development, the characteristics of science and technology itself, and the influence of Western scientism on our education of science and technology, contemporary college students also have the idea of "scientism". The main reason is that in the process of reform and opening up, the western social ideological trends have been introduced into China through various channels. Facing the impact of various trends of thought in the world, some new trends of thought have emerged in western society, such as democratic socialism, neo-liberalism, neo-conservatism, ecologism and so on. These trends of thought have had a certain influence on the college students' thought, and "scientism" is one of its main manifestations. The so-called "scientism" is to judge the value of things and evaluate people's behavior with scientific knowledge as the only standard. It emphasizes that scientific knowledge is the sole criterion of all social value judgments. Therefore, in its view, the achievements of natural science only represent the level of human ability to understand and transform the natural world during a certain historical period. It requires that all people must accept scientific education, scientific research and scientific application, and thinks that only in this way can they succeed in social life. The so-called "new liberalism" is the social ideological trend that pursues the maximization of individual interests as the goal of all activities. This trend of thought believes that science and technology is the highest achievement of human development, technology itself represents the increase of economy and wealth, science and technology is the basic motive force of all social progress and civilization progress, technological progress can promote the all-round development of human and society, etc.

1.2 College Students Have Misconceptions of Advocating Science and Superstition in Their Daily Life

In their daily life, college students mainly learn about the world through the Internet, mobile phones and other media. The spread of information on the Internet makes it more convenient for college students to contact various ideas and concepts, and absorb various nutrients from them. Influenced by the trend of thought of western scientism, some college students think that science is omnipotent and technology is supreme, they oppose all superstition, worship science, and use science to solve various problems in life.

Some college students do not solve the problem through their own efforts, but believe in the power of science and technology. For example, when they encounter difficulties, they always want to solve them through science. Other college students also believe in the power of gods or superstition when they encounter problems. For example, some college students believe that “God” or “panacea” can cure or cure all problems. What’s more, some students think that fortune-telling is superstitious and oppose all feudal superstitious activities such as fortune-telling and divination. They doubt and deny some views in the trend of thought of western scientism on the omnipotence of science and the supremacy of technology. Of course, this understanding is one-sided. We cannot deny all their efforts just because some people were influenced by the trend of thought of western scientism. We should encourage college students to learn scientific knowledge and scientific spirit, establish scientific consciousness, humanistic consciousness and critical consciousness, and use scientific theories and methods to analyze and solve problems.

2. The Influence of Western Pragmatism on the Thought of Contemporary College Students

2.1 Enhances College Students’ Social Responsibility and Sense of Historical Mission

Pragmatism philosophy believes that the value of life is to meet individual needs, so the goal of life is to realize one’s own value in life. College students are the main force of social construction, they shoulder the historical mission of realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. However, due to the lack of social and life experience in the process of growth, college students are easily affected by pragmatism philosophy. Contemporary college students often pay too much attention to practical interests, but ignore the social development trend, the law of human progress, the law of human history development. They only see the immediate interests, but do not consider the long-term interests and overall interests, thus ignoring their own social responsibility. To a certain extent, the trend of thought of pragmatism has educated and guided college students to pursue the immediate interests, but there are some phenomena among college students, such as selfishness, disregard justice at the sight of profit, and seek personal gain at the expense of others, which has seriously affected the formation of college students’ correct values. But with the implementation of the reform and opening -up policy and the improvement of the socialist market economic system, profound changes have taken place in our society, and college students feel the changes of the times. They pay more attention to the needs of national and social development, national security, national future and personal fate. They also have new plans and prospects for their own future development, and hope to contribute to the development of society with their own knowledge. Therefore, college students have a strong sense of the importance of their own responsibilities, and have enhanced their sense of social responsibility and historical mission.

2.2 Diversify College Students’ Life Value Orientation

Value orientation is people’s subjective views and attitudes on life and work goals, which determines people’s behavior, and thus determines a person’s life goals and purposes, that is, value ideals. In modern society, people’s value orientations are more diversified, choosing different life value orientations will

affect their own development, so it is an inevitable trend for contemporary college students to pursue diversified life value orientations. The trend of thought of pragmatism in the West is practical- oriented, with the color of utilitarianism, which has a certain impact on the formation of college students' correct outlook on life, value and world. This kind of impact is mainly manifested in the following aspects: First, under the influence of the trend of thought of pragmatism, college students pay more attention to the harmony and unification of personal interests and social interests, partial interests and overall interests, and the harmony and unification of personal ideals and social ideals. They no longer think that the pursuit of personal ideals is a selfish behavior, but that it is an indispensable prerequisite to realize the value of life. This change of concept is conducive to college students to combine the realization of personal values with the realization of social values, making college students' life value orientation more in line with the needs of social development. Second, college students pay more attention to their own quality and ability training. The trend of thought of pragmatism focuses on the cultivation and improvement of personal ability, and conducts self-evaluation and planning in accordance with the needs of society. This kind of life value orientation can make college students pay more attention to the cultivation of their own quality and ability, and help them realize their own value better in the era of knowledge economy. Third, college students' life value orientation pursues freedom and individual liberation. The trend of thought of pragmatism advocates individual freedom and individual liberation, opposes hierarchy and traditional bondage, and advocates individual liberation.

2.3 Strengthening College Students' Spiritual Pursuit

With the development of globalization, the trend of thought of pragmatism has been introduced into our country as a kind of value, ideological system and ideology, which makes college students pay more attention to the reality of society. College students' spiritual world presents a pluralistic state, showing a strong desire for knowledge, for exploration and for novelty and difference. This kind of spiritual pursuit is strengthened under the influence of the trend of thought of western pragmatism, and college students actively explore the meaning of life, and take the pursuit of truth and happiness as the ultimate goal of life value.

3. The Influence of Western Humanism on College Students' Thought

3.1 Human Nature: Hedonistic Tendency in College Students' Value Realization

As an important social trend of thought in the West, the trend of thought of western humanism focuses on human beings in the understanding of human society, and pays full attention to the realization of human values. In the view of the trend of thought of western humanism, human beings, as part of the nature, are social beings in essence, and human nature is the essential characteristic of human society, so the trend of thought of human beings' own value is highlighted in its value pursuit. Fundamentally speaking, this kind of value pursuit is based on "human nature", and takes human beings as the means to realize the ultimate ends and values of human beings. In this process, "people-centered" has become the most distinct characteristic of the trend of thought of western humanism. However, as a kind of value and

practice way, the trend of thought of western humanism has some deviations and misunderstandings in the process of practice for human nature itself and the realization of human nature. As the main force and the backbone of the future construction and development of socialism, college students' ideological value orientation and behavior way are to some extent influenced by the trend of thought of western humanism.

3.2 Individual and Collective: The Contradiction between Instrumentalism and Individualism in College Students' Value Orientation

The mainstream of college students' thought is positive, but with the development of market economy, some bad thoughts begin to penetrate into the group of college students. From the angle of human value, the trend of thought of western humanism puts forward a series of problems, such as "individual and collective", "human freedom and dignity", "individual freedom and social responsibility". There are two kinds of value orientations in college students: one is instrumentalism, which equates individual value with collective value and takes the maximization of individual interests as the core goal; the other is individualism, which equates individual value with social value and takes the maximization of individual interests as the only value pursuit of society. From the survey of college students' thought, it is found that college students think it is advisable to give consideration to both collective interests and social interests while realizing the maximization of individual interests. But when there is a conflict between the two, they are more inclined to choose the latter. There are certain contradictions between college students' individual and collective, individual interests and social interests. This contradiction has some negative influence on college students' thought: they think that collective interests and social interests are external factors, not internal factors, and collective activities will interfere with their thinking and understanding of themselves, thus affecting their self-realization.

3.3 Individual and Society: The Tendency of Egocentrism and the Lack of Social Responsibility in College Students' Value Orientation

The trend of thought of western humanism pursues human freedom, individuality and rights, which ultimately point to the self-realization of individual, that is, the realization of human value. Man is a social existence. When a person obtains self-realization in society, he also needs to undertake certain social responsibility. As the main force in the construction and development of socialism with Chinese characteristics, college students shoulder the historical mission of building a modern powerful socialist country with Chinese characteristics and realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. However, there is a certain degree of egocentrism in college students' value orientation, which mainly shows as the lack of due sense of responsibility and mission to themselves, to others and to society. College students should make a correct choice between individual interests and national interests, collective interests and others' interests. However, under the influence of western thoughts, contemporary college students generally lack the awareness and identification of social responsibility and collectivism. When facing the conflict of national interests, collective interests and individual interests, some college students tend to focus on their own interests and ignore the collective interests. Some college students are more willing to pursue personal satisfaction as a goal to pursue the realization of life value, rather than to undertake more

social responsibility to realize self-worth.

3.4 Ideal and Reality: The Contradiction between the Ideal Pursuit and the Social Reality in College Students' Value Ideal

The trend of thought of western humanism is a kind of solipsism in essence, which emphasizes the subjective value of individual. Therefore, in their view, human itself is a kind of value, and only when the subjectivity of human is developed and respected can individual self-realization be realized. Under the guidance of this kind of value idea, they advocate individual freedom, individual liberation, and the unity of individual value and social value. College students are the main force in the construction and development of our country, and their ideological situation is directly related to the process and future of our socialist modernization construction. Therefore, it is particularly important to strengthen the ideological and political education of college students. However, under the influence of western humanism, there are serious individualism, hedonism and extreme individualism in college students.

4. Summary

For contemporary college students, while accepting the influence of modern western philosophical thoughts, they need to examine and criticize it, actively absorb its advantages, avoid its disadvantages, so as to better use philosophical thinking to solve problems, and gradually mold themselves into new talents with social responsibility, innovative thinking and the ability to solve complex problems.

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