

# Symbolic Capital Habits in Civil Society in Song Dynasty —Takes "Marrying a Woman" As an Example

Yubin Liang<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Applied Psychology, Division of Science and Technology, Beijing Normal University-Hong Kong Baptist University, Zhuhai, Guangdong, 519000

**ABSTRACT.** As an important part of modern society, symbolic capital has become an important link to maintain social relations, obtain identity, and achieve social structure and ideological reproduction with the development of human history. At the same time, the symbolic capital system that makes the symbolic capital meaningful has also been embedded in the social structure of human beings, and the symbolic capital can be reproduced as a symbol. This paper will use the theory of symbolic capital to analyze the symbolic capital system in the Song Dynasty civil society, study its occurrence, development and role under the historical background of the Song Dynasty, and find out the universality of the civil society in the historical development.

## 1 Introduction

The Song Dynasty was a peak of the development of ancient Chinese cities, which has been the conclusion of the academic circle, with countless research on its argumentation and research. With the development of the city, a large number of urban population has flooded into the city. The population of Bianliang City in the Northern Song Dynasty has exceeded one million, about 1.2 million [1] to 1.5 million [2], which was the most densely populated city in the world at that time, which also made the civil society of the Song Dynasty show unprecedented prosperity. At the same time, along with the development of the civil society, the civic culture of the Song Dynasty was developed. The imperial examination system tended to be stable in the Song Dynasty. As an official thought and culture, Confucianism was spread and consolidated based on this extensive selection and education system, and once again became the mainstream of mass culture. The symbolic system existing in Confucian culture, such as the binding of social status and corresponding symbols, morality and ethics, and behavior norms, has also become a mass culture with its development of mainstream status and civic culture itself. Therefore, the symbolic capital system in the civil society of the Song Dynasty developed with the development of the former two, and also became an important part of the Chinese mass culture from this time.

Therefore, as a peak of the development of ancient Chinese cities, the citizen culture of the Song Dynasty is of great significance to the study of the formation and development of ancient Chinese citizen culture and the relationship between traditional Chinese culture and modern Chinese mass culture. In *Dongjin Menghua Lu's*

book, we can find the continuity between the citizen culture of the Song Dynasty and modern Chinese mass culture, and the habit of celebrating festivals, such as the Spring Festival (*Yuan Dan*), the Lantern Festival (*Yuan Xi*), and the Dragon Boat Festival (*Duan Wu*). Or daily habits, such as marriage, childbearing, or daily diet. Although nearly 1000 years have passed, we can still see their original appearance or the appearance after their development in today's Chinese public life. As a cultural system that still maintains a high degree of consistency in many aspects after a long period of time, the study of Chinese mass culture in history is to study the occurrence and development of current Chinese mass culture.

## 2 Clear concept -- Bourdieu symbolic capital system theory

Bourdieu's main theoretical contribution is the theoretical system of "*field-habit-symbolic capital*", which revolves around the theory of symbolic capital system. The first two have been relatively mature discussions in the domestic academic circles. The only thing to point out is that the *field* domain should not be imagined as a bounded and closed space in its use, but a space existing by an open structure that can interact with the elements "outside the *field*".

What is necessary to focus on the concept of symbolic capital [4], which has not been widely used in domestic academic circles, and is difficult to understand or due to name translation and other reasons. Therefore, due to the research needs, the concept should be differentiated.

In Bourdieu's discussion on symbolic capital through "the gift act for the purpose of return", the premise and background condition for the effectiveness of symbolic capital is the default of this behavior, that is, the default

\*e-mail: [jsnsenstardust@gmail.com](mailto:jsnsenstardust@gmail.com)

of "the return gift will be received". First, it is that the gift behavior itself and the value of the gift need to be endowed by social structure, culture, ethics, market exchange value, and the second is that the word "default" essentially refers to the idea that "the gift will be received after the gift" is unconscious. That is, Bourdieu here points out that his essence is the unconscious behavior caused by social structure, namely habit.

And the production of symbolic capital occurs after the gift behavior: because "should return to gift" is a common social default, but for gift is generally not prescribed (gift and gift are prescribed need to discuss otherwise), and has not yet returned "gift" can be considered according to the value of the abstract with universal value of capital symbol, namely a symbol of capital. As capital, one of the inherent properties is to act as a universal medium of exchange: that is, before the gift is returned, the gift itself is not determined, and the recipient can return the actual goods and actions: such as labor, finance and money; or return the symbolic gifts: such as reputation, social status, etc. At the same time, the symbolic capital itself separated by the symbolic abstraction can also be transmitted to others like money: if A helps B and B helps C, then C can directly repay A to replace B with A. According to the above discussion, Bourdieu has proposed three kinds of symbolic capital: honorary capital, social capital and cultural capital. Reputation capital is the symbolic reputation of the individual or collective, generally speaking, the reputation of the individual or collective in the same *field* will be considered as a whole, namely, the sum of "good reputation" and "bad reputation". The final reputation is exported as a sum, without considering its internal differences, and thus becomes a capital symbol of universal value. Cultural capital generally refers to the cultural symbols of knowledge, technology and skills with exchange value due to the cultural *field*. In the same end, the cultural symbols in the same *field* often ignore their differences and calculate the sum total. Finally, social capital, social capital is the symbol of social status, power and other symbols with exchange value due to the social structure. Generally speaking, the social symbol in the same social background (i. e., under the same *field*) will also be ignored by the difference and calculate the sum. The above three types of symbolic capital can be transformed with each other, but also with the actual capital (means of production and survival, currency, etc.). The mutual conversion of symbolic capital in the same *field* can be considered as a trading activity in the same market environment, while the exchange of symbolic capital between different *fields* is a trade activity between different market environments.

At the same time, because of its capital nature, symbolic capital also follows the general capital logic: symbolizing capital appreciation, such as using reputation to obtain the dominant position in the capital market, after the profit to further increase their reputation; or using money to buy learning opportunities to obtain knowledge, and then knowledge as part of their productivity for the actual capital appreciation. Consumption and consumption, the former such as using reputation to obtain "benefits". But without no bottom line, their reputation is damaged; the latter uses cultural symbols such as

entertainment and knowledge, which holders can sell for other capital. The rest, such as the concentration of capital, capital exploitation, etc.

In view of the fact that culture can be imagined as a system that gives symbolic meaning, while the subject holds and uses symbols to interact within it, Bourdieu's field theory, habitual theory and symbolic capital theory are of great significance to the study of cultural system, which can help us analyze and understand the motivation and mechanism of people's cultural behavior, whether consciously or unconsciously. Therefore, this paper will use Bourdieu's theories to study the characteristics of the habit of "Qu Fu" (marry a women) in the Song Dynasty.

### 3 The symbol of capital in the Song Dynasty civil society habit- -take "Married woman" as an example

As mentioned above, the Song Dynasty was a peak of the development of civil society in ancient China, especially in terms of civic culture, and the cities of the Song Dynasty, especially the capitals, developed a more complex civic culture than before. This paper selects volume 5 of *Dongjin MengHua Lu*[4], Marry a Women, because it describes the marriage habits in detail in the civil society in the Song Dynasty. *Dongjin Menghua Lu*, as an important historical material for the study of civil society in the Song Dynasty, recorded in detail the lives of a large number of citizens in Kaifeng, the capital of the Song Dynasty, including but not limited to the celebration methods of major festivals, daily diet, cultural consumption, the working habits of workers in various industries, and the daily behavior habits of citizens.

and marriage is also an important part of the civil culture, at the same time, this article introduces a large number of symbolic capital interactions within the civil class during the marriage preparation period and the habits of individuals involved in them, so this paper is selected as the material for analysis.

#### 3.1 Ritualized gifts-return behavior

*Then the men's family sent people to carry the burden to make marry wine. Xu wine with silk wine bottles, loaded with eight big flowers, eight brightly colored silk or silver wins, and with red silk wrapped on the wine bear, called "Jiao Dan Hong", to the woman's home. The woman's family should put two bottles of fresh water, three or five live fish, a pair of chopsticks, all put in the original bottle, called "Hui Yu Zhu".*

As pointed out above, The prescribed gifts and returned gifts need to be analyzed separately: although they are still based on the default conscious or unconscious action of the society, they can be considered a ritual act because the content and form of the prescribed gifts have been prescribed. Through this gift-return ceremony, in the possible "in-laws" between the field by this action is produced again: the domain in the "last" (before the ritual activity) production, the ritual activity abstractively rep-

resents the domain construction process, and through the ritual activity makes the domain representation, and then the ritual behavior will again in the public makes this as a "married" habit background sexual field is produced again.

Although because of "Jiao Dan Hong" and "Hui Yu Zhu" as a whole and the symbolic meaning of various elements have no textual research, so cannot alone from the behavior itself analysis of its production *field* and the structure between the two families and can not infer how the symbolic value exchange generated by this cultural behavior is, but it can be inferred that remove the *field* and structure, the behavior still produced the symbolic capital: the man's family gift on exchange value (market price) is higher than the woman's family gift, so the gift as the price difference is still not be returned, here is produced as a ritual activity remaining symbolic capital, This process makes it possible to return symbolic capital or actual capital. It also paved the way for the behavior after the "marrying the woman".

### 3.2 "Send Post" — Homogenization of symbolic capital and actual capital

*Whoever marries a daughter-in-law, the first thing is to be a post. Two families of men and women allow, and then draft detailed posts, writing the names of great-grandparents, ancestors, fathers, as well as the close marriage of the marriage, the land property, the official position and so on.*

The original author Meng Yuanlao (the specific life is unknown) has a detailed account of the post drafted by his wife, mainly including the names, social status, official positions of the relatives (especially the immediate family) family members, and family property (Tian property, people, etc.). It is not hard to see, the two sides for the other family situation (at least in form) is overall, *field*, people, property and other actual capital and culture (such as the imperial examination level), official, social status, credit, etc. as symbol capital is measured as the same reference standard, namely the two kinds of capital in essence because it can transform each other, at the same time can be used as the overall family assets appreciation, Therefore, these elements have been erased as their own characteristics and regarded as equivalent capital.

This overall calculation to cultural, social symbols and material, everything has a distinct capital, which can be confirmed from the side that the production mode of capitalism has become common in the civil society of the Song Dynasty. Urban residents' life means that the old smallholder production mode from: the number of farmland in the city is not enough to make the urban population cannot only rely on labor directly obtain survival data, so citizens need to through labor production has higher exchange value of products, with currency as intermediary exchange survival data, this is the capitalist mode of production. On this economic basis, as mentioned above, the capitalist way of thinking and culture have also become a part of the mass culture.

### 3.3 The "Confirm" — symbolizes the female position in the capital exchange

*Since then, the man's family or small, or big, or go to the woman's home to see the daughter-in-law, or not look. If you look at the daughter-in-law, by the male elders or maternal generation to the woman's home, if you look like, with the hair chai inserted in the crown, called "inserted chai son"; if not like, leave one end of the color satin, to the girl, then the marriage will not be.*

In this paragraph, it is clear that the confirmation of the marriage is solely determined by the man's family: the man's family will take someone to the woman's family and then confirm whether the woman in the marriage is "appropriate" (not specified here). However, it is not only the individual women who do not have the right to choose here, but also the women's family who has no "power" to decide whether this man should be the object of marriage. It can be seen that in the hierarchical relationship of this structure, the status of the woman's family is lower than that of the man's family, that is, the family with a son has the symbol of "having a son", or the symbol of "giving birth to a daughter" damages the family's social status. This cultural phenomenon still exists in some parts of Chinese society today.

But on the other hand, although the male family in the *field*, but the man still has no decision to this relationship, the marriage relationship to determine completely by the male and female families, and It is almost entirely the man's family members who decide whether the marriage is suitable or not, female individual and male individual which as marriage subjects during this progress are almost completely materialized, as a personal will is completely deprived, only by the family in aesthetic, culture, social and other symbol level to decide whether the marriage relationship is "appropriate", and as personal men and women here only as the carrier of symbols.

## 4 Conclusion

Through the study of the practice of marrying women in the civil society of the Song Dynasty, it can be believed that the capitalist thinking mode became common in daily life at the latest. The reason is that the change of the production mode as the economic basis gave birth to the corresponding culture, social structure and ideology. This can also testify, in the song dynasty, at least in China's cities, the capitalist production and life mode has widely become the main way of mass production and living, and the combination of ancient Chinese traditional culture more promote the development of ancient Chinese citizen culture and civil society, but also makes the old traditional culture, social structure on the premise of retaining its characteristics toward more modern direction, maintain the Chinese nation in history, in the cultural and social level of identity.

At the same time, we should also see that this capitalist cultural system has produced real alienation of individuals in it. Its form is typical. For example, the alienation of labor caused by the alienation of labor products (Chapter 3.2), which grades families or individuals hold-

ing these factors in the marriage market by unifying different labor products or production factors. At the same time, this process will also participate in the production and reproduction of social hierarchical order. As well as the alienation of both parties of the marriage subject and their respective family members (Chapter 3.3), the man becomes the carrier of symbolic capital and real capital, while the woman is completely commercialized. What the family members of both parties expect is also the alienated marriage, that is, it is no longer the combination of men and women as individuals, but the combination of their property (whether symbolic or actual). Therefore, although as a cultural tradition, many cultural habits related to marriage have been retained for thousands of years, we still can not deny that they are oppressive to all individuals involved, regardless of whether they profit from it or not.

The future research is limited to civil society in the Song Dynasty and Dongjin Menghua Lu's book, and there are countless cases for research. For example, in the festival celebration, the interaction between citizens of different social strata (including the emperor himself) includes the exchange of symbolic capital and actual capital based on the social hierarchy. As well as in the daily life of citizens, the value orientation of citizens for different behaviors and the unique social behaviors of employees in different industries, among which there are many cultural habits that continue to the current Chinese civil society culture. Each direction has sufficient re-

search value and depth, and has not been involved yet. Based on the study of these historical materials, we can analyze the composition of ancient Chinese civil society and ancient Chinese mass culture, and explore the relationship between ancient Chinese mass culture and modern mass culture. The modern Chinese mass culture, as a cultural system highly identical with the historical Chinese mass culture in many aspects, and the mass culture in the civil society of the Song Dynasty, as a peak of the development of the ancient Chinese mass culture, will be necessary for the study of Chinese mass culture.

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